THE

HISTORY

OF

WHITTINGTON

AND HIS

CAT.

WITH COPPER-PLATE CUTS.

LONDON:

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1820.

Elizabeth Robinson's
Book
The gift of her
Sister Mary.
1833

The poor lad burst into tears. But his masters ear having caught the word, he ordered puss to be brought, and made Whittington *deliver her up with his own hands, to the captain.*

see page 16.

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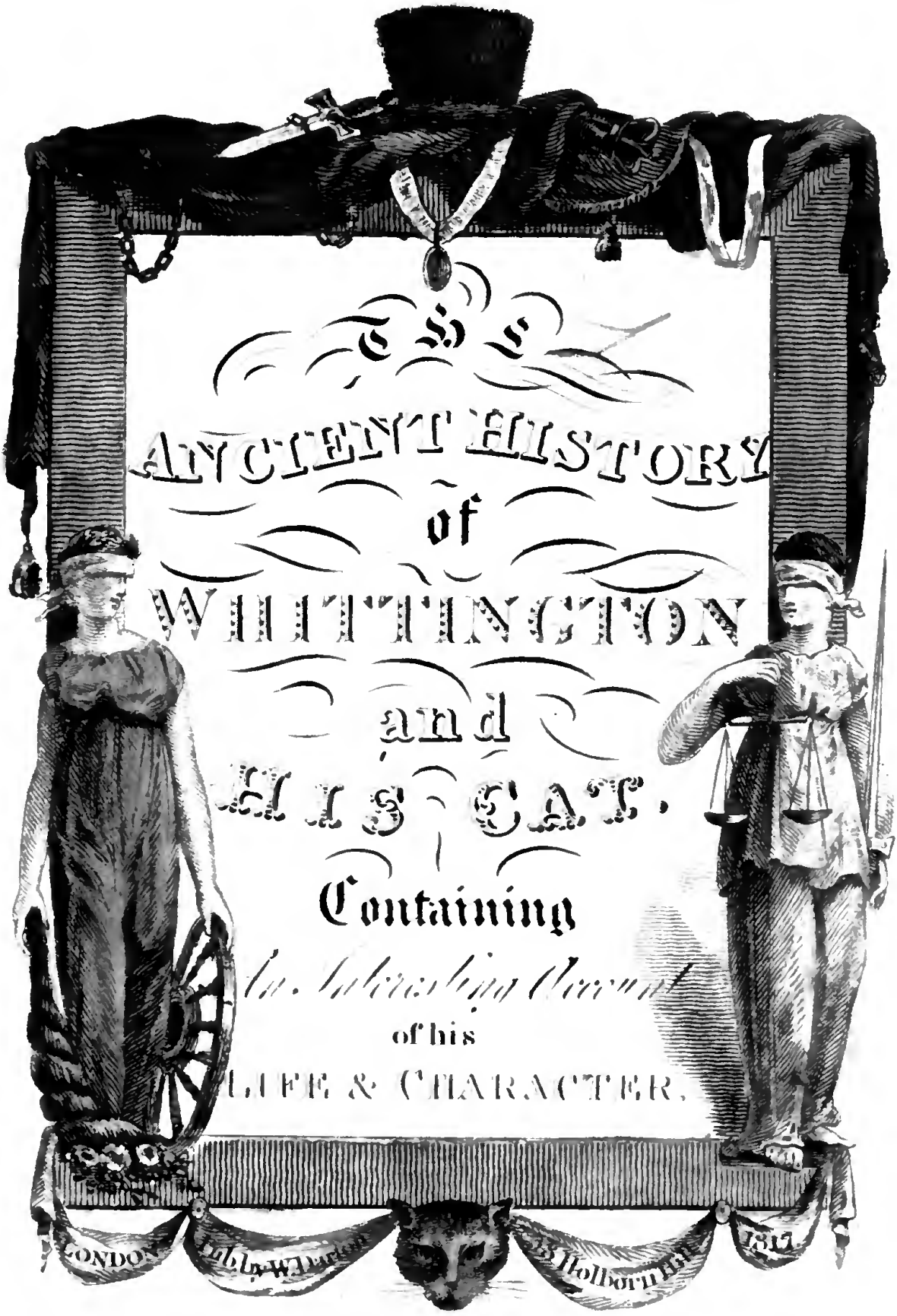
THE
ANCIENT HISTORY
of
WHITTINGTON
and
HIS CAT.
Containing
An Interesting Account
of his
LIFE & CHARACTER.
LONDON
Pubd by W Darton
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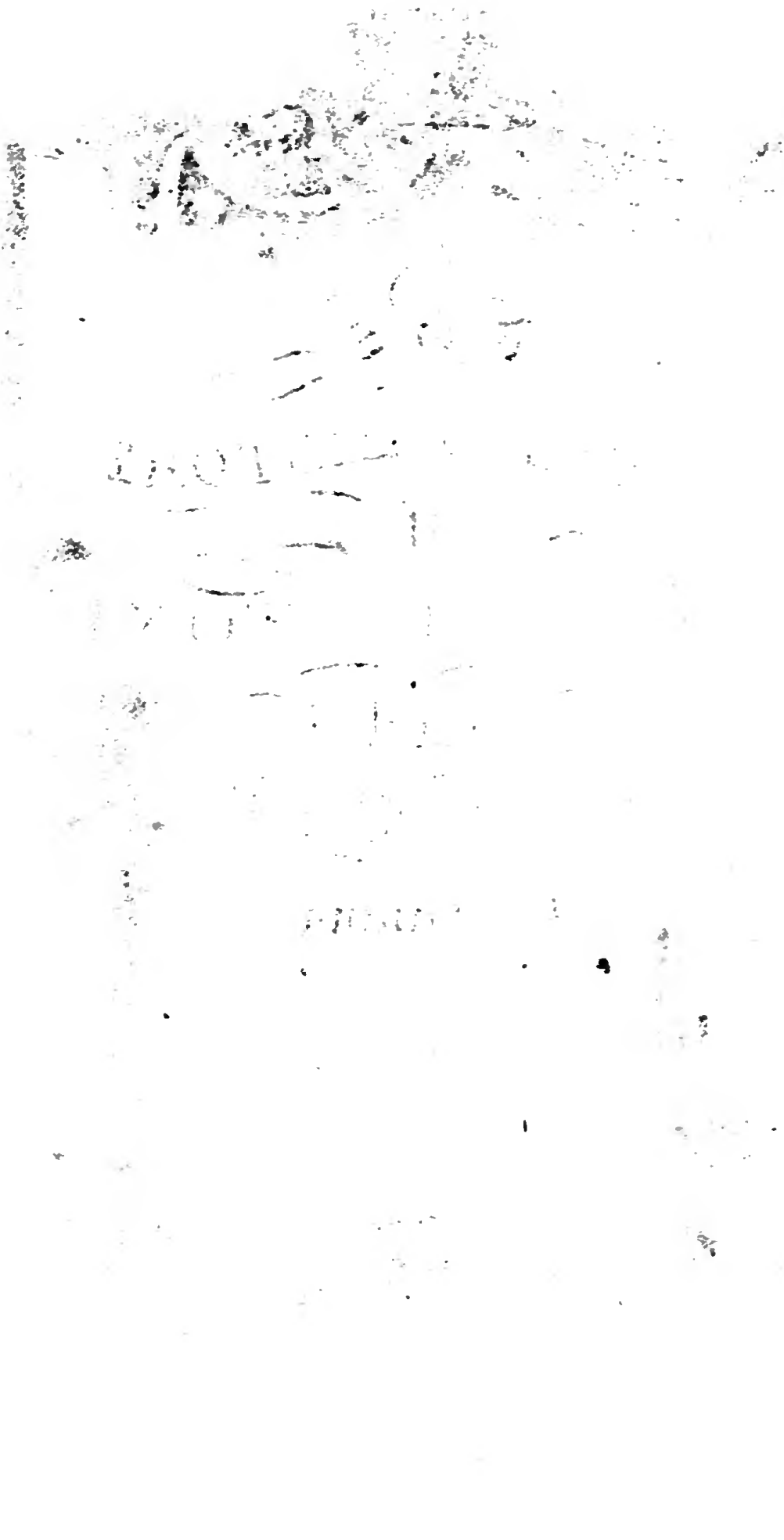
1817



HISTORY OF WHITTINGTON, *AND HIS CAT.*

WHO has not heard of "Whittington and his Cat?" Nay, the fact is, that the cat is much more famous than this her master, in the histories already brought forward in Whittington's name; for, whilst Madam Puss has all her merits set out to the best advantage, because she happened to be the source of her master's great wealth, the wonderful conduct of her wonderful master in his high-raised condition is thrown into shade: whereas, it is our resolution, by the help of Stowe, the ancient chronologist, to do perfect justice to both the one and the other in due order; and therefore, of course, begin this our history with her master.

Little Whittington was a poor orphan; and this at so early an age, as not to have any trace in his memory of what he was, or what he might have been, from being totally ignorant of what his parents were.

A worthy old woman in the village where he first became sensible of his forlorn condition, who had nothing more in her power than to give him an occasional bit of bread

and an uncertain sheltering roof, could, it is however supposed, have informed him wherefore he became so destitute of bread at so helpless a period; but that, having only such things to relate as she conceived would distress his young mind, without benefiting him in the smallest respect, she thought it best to seem as great a stranger to every thing concerning him except his distress, as others really were around him.

The poor lad, being born with that ardent curiosity which Dr. Hobbes affirms is a token of very uncommon understanding, hearing London mentioned by some of the children he mixed with, would often offer to do them any act of kindness in his power, if they would but talk to him a little about that city of cities; its wealth, the number of people it contained, and how easy it of course must be for industry to get money under the shadow of its wing. The good old woman soon perceived the poor child had got something in his head that would harm him; and Whittington being unused to say the thing that was not, in other words, to tell falsehoods, she soon drew from him the secret desire of his heart to go to London; and, trembling at the dangers that must beset so innocent and so helpless a creature, she

resolved, in order to deter him from thinking of such a step, to paint the happiness and the safety of a country life, on the one hand, and the noise and evils of great cities, on the other hand, in such striking colours as to fix his choice at once. Whittington listened to what she said with surprise, next with anxiety, and next with doubtful apprehension; but at length remembering that his kind and tender friend was too feeble to walk out, even to ask her neighbours how they did, professed it of little concern to her how the world went, as she was unable to make it better than she was told it was; and, above all the rest, she rejoiced that Providence had placed her at a distance from the town, its vices, and its distresses. Whittington, young as he was, concluded that the difference in opinion between him and her arose solely from her being grown old, and therefore loving quietness better than any thing else, and that, from his being young, he liked to hear and see all that was going forward: under which idea he resolved to forbear mentioning his desires in future; for to art he was an entire stranger, though he well understood that, to make any one unhappy, was cruel, was wicked: lessons the worthy old woman had strongly impressed on his mind.

And, surely, those we love and ought to honour for their kindness to us, were never to be made unhappy by us, whoever they may be. Accordingly, persuading herself she had shut the door of his heart against every future wish that would disturb his peace, being far advanced in years, she was soon taken from him, soothing herself with the belief that he would remain where he was, and there be secure from calamity.

Whittington felt her loss with the regret of a child for a beloved parent; and, having in vain looked around the spacious neighbourhood for a friend to supply to him what she had been: "What have I to do longer here," cried he, "where my grief is unpitied, and my wants unnoticed? where I may die of famine or despair, and no one feel or care what is become of me?" He therefore spoke to a waggoner, to let him walk by the side of his waggon to London, as the greatest of all favours; and the waggoner, happening to be a good-natured, thoughtless fellow, consented, without once considering what was afterwards to become of him: adding, he should sleep all night in his waggon. And poor Whittington, being transported with joy at his good fortune, packed up the little he could call his

own in a small bag, which he slung across his shoulder, set off, and soon began to beat time with his feet to his companion the waggoner's whistle, without the least fear or dread of what might be in store for him. When left for the night in the waggon, as by agreement, his little mind however began to set itself to work. He was without one relation in the world: whilst other little boys had a father to protect them, and a mother to serve them, he had no friends, no money. What could he then have to hope? what had he not to fear? But, recollecting the last words of his dear mother, as he called her, that there was a Father to the fatherless, and that he would bless and preserve him if he was only a good child, he implored his pity to a poor helpless child, promising evermore, to the best of his power, to deserve it; and then composed himself to sleep.

So profound was the sleep he fell into, that the waggon was far on its way before he awoke; when, being relieved in mind and body, he joined his whistle to that of his fellow-traveller, until the happy moment arrived that he was bid to look up, for there was London before his eyes! The waggoner, having made him partake of his supper, and given him a few pence for the

morning, out of pure good-nature, left him asleep in a hay-loft, into which he had lifted him; bidding good-bye being somewhat touching, he believed, to every one's feelings as well as his own. But, as the people of the inn had no motives, in their opinion, for treating any body kindly, he was soon roused by the ostler, and bade to go about his business.

Poor Whittington instantly obeyed this word of command; but knew not where to go. All, however, around him was astonishing, was delightful! Every body seemed happy;—every body seemed employed; whence, according to his arithmetic, every body must be getting money: he could, therefore, have nothing more to do than to seek to gain a master. It was true, indeed, (and he could not help sighing deeply whilst he acknowledged that truth,) he had been bred to no trade whatever; could neither read nor write: "but then," whispered Hope, "you have feet to walk upon far and wide; hands to work where no particular skill is required; and a tongue to speak your own wants, or deliver any message you may be entrusted with." The poor boy was so enlivened by this hint, that he cried out aloud, "Who is afraid! I have, moreover,

in my pocket sufficient to buy me this day's support! I will therefore spend this whole day in seeing London."

Whittington, however, soon discovered that seeing London was not so pleasurable a task as he had flattered himself he should find it; for, whenever he stopped to gaze on any object that took his fancy, he was driven on this side, and pushed on that; and, in a word, to his unutterable surprise, when he little thought he was in any body's way, he found himself in every body's way, wherever he came. As the evening drew on, he began to feel an anxiety he had not taken into his account, namely, where he could pass the night. He had been cast out, to all intents and purposes, at the inn; and had but one penny remaining of the waggoner's bounty. As the only choice he had, however, was either to walk the streets all night, or creep under some bulk to hide himself and try to sleep, he at length fixed on a hard pillow; on which, nevertheless, he could have slept, if undisturbed by the guard of the night: for crying the hour was the source of terror to him, though to all those who felt their safety insured thereby, it was the voice of glad tidings.

He passed the next day with scarcely any

food, for his last and only penny had fallen out of his pocket. Hungry, weary, faint, and deeply dejected, he was ashamed to beg, and knew not who to ask for work; when, on passing a gentleman's door in the Minories, in this deplorable state, he resolved to knock at it: his mind telling him (he knew not why nor wherefore), he should be benefited thereby. He with much difficulty reached the knocker; but, unable to prevent his sinking down on the steps, it slipped so suddenly out of his hand as to cause a loud rap; and the door was opened in a moment by the gentleman's cook-maid, a woman of a most ungentle and unfeeling temper. Offended therefore, highly offended, on beholding the low creature she had hurried herself to wait upon, she threatened to spurn him away, if he did not immediately remove himself. At this menaced harsh treatment he endeavoured to get out of her way, but was unable to do so; when his kind star sent home the master of the house, one Mr. Fitzwarren, a mercer and a great merchant, with his daughter in his hand, to save him. Mr. Fitzwarren was all benevolence; his young daughter all compassion towards the distressed: and poor Whittington's heart was so relieved by their looks, that he told

and poor Whittington's *heart was so relieved by their looks, that he told his tale of woe with a degree of courage, and a degree of pathos or touching language, that astonished even himself.*

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his tale of woe with a degree of courage, and a degree of pathos, or touching language, that astonished even himself, and had so happy an effect on the feelings of his humane hearers, that the young lady entreated, and her father commanded the wretched boy to be taken into the house, fed, and put to bed, until he had recovered his strength, and could walk from thence, and get his livelihood. Miss in a short time slipped into the kitchen, having formed a most unfavourable opinion of Mrs. Cook's humanity from what she had seen of her behaviour to the poor boy, to know how they went on; and, having learned from himself how long he had been an orphan, and how he was allured by false tales to come to London, as also the grievous distress that journey had plunged him into, returned to her father and mother, with tears in her eyes, and pleaded for him with such success, that it was settled, if he proved a good boy, he should remain in the family till he could be better provided for; as the only work that family could give him, was assisting the cook on all occasions, cleaning shoes, &c. &c.

But, most unfortunately, as it *then* appeared, the choice of where he should sleep being left to this cook, she had the cruelty

to hoist him up into a loft, common in old-built houses, which, superadded to the comfortless distance from every one, and the hard bed she destined him to lie on, was, to her certain knowledge, infested with rats and mice without number.

Whittington nevertheless resolved not to complain; for, under the roof with such worthy people as Mr. Fitzwarren and his wife, not forgetting their little daughter, he thought his lot had fallen in good ground: but, as delivering himself from such great annoyances was an object not to be disregarded, (for the disagreeable creatures ran over his face when asleep, and waked him continually,) he set it down in his memory to buy a cat with the very first money he got. Nor was it long before he had both the means and the opportunity of so doing; for, very early in the morning, within the same week, an old woman passed the door, as he was cleaning it, with a cat in her arms, which, on his noticing, she offered to sell him, but required more money than the poor boy could raise; when, perceiving he had tears in his eyes, and a tempting penny in his hand, she came down to his price, out of compassion, as she pretended; though the truth was, she was as glad to receive

the penny as he was to receive the cat. The delighted boy called this a most lucky day; for he not only got up safe to his loft with his purchase before Mrs. Cook's bright eyes were open, but, passing through a lumber-room, saw a wicker-basket with a cover to it, which, by being in a dusty condition, he believed he might venture to help himself to as a cast-off, for his cat to live in during his absence in the day, to prevent her running out of the loft, and Mrs. Cook from getting a sight: for he knew her ill-temper to be such, that, if she ever beheld her, she would turn her out into the street.

Having surmounted these prodigious difficulties, he began to amuse himself at stolen moments, when he ran up stairs to ask Puss how she did, with thinking what name he should like to give her; when, hoping (he could not tell wherefore) that one day or other she would become a favourite with his young mistress, he called her *Felice;* having heard some one in the parlour, when he brought in coals, say that *Felix* was the Latin word for *happy*.

But it may, perhaps, be agreeable to our little readers, from good-will to Puss, to hear something about cats in general. Cats, it is well known, are so much like tigers in

form, that they tell part for part with each other, when dissected; and, in their wild state, their nature is nearly the same: they dart on their prey, and worry the creature before they give it the death-wound. But, when tame, and living in families, cats are as well tempered and as tractable as dogs, sportive as monkeys, and evermore sing their little song of gratitude to their kind friends for favours received: although, on having food given them, they betray their savage origin, by grumbling over it whilst they are devouring it.

Accordingly, Whittington's cat, besides being what history bespeaks her, a grave well-practised mouser, had all the sportive talents of her tribe; whence, so soon as her master found himself perfectly freed from his late tormentors, he began to call them forth into exercise; and accordingly, having received a few lessons only, Mrs. Puss would creep into his pocket like a squirrel, follow him as far as he would permit it, and, like a little puppy dog, jump over his hands at a nod of command. In a word, she became as lively and entertaining a companion as she had proved herself to be a useful one, and was the whole solace of his life. In one of these happy moments, for they were the only

happy moments he ever enjoyed out of his kind master and mistress's presence, he was at length surprised by his young mistress; for, the cook being gone out, he forgot to guard against other visitors; and, at his young mistress's request, Puss went through all her pleasant manœuvrings with equal honour to herself and her master. Whittington besought the young lady not to mention a word of her discovery to any person on earth; and, as she was so good as to promise she would comply with his request, and being moreover greatly pleased with Puss, she contrived to have a quarter of an hour's play with her every day, when the family dined at home. Puss, as well as her master, improving much on acquaintance, Miss Fitzwarren (though drawing was taught but to few in those days, genius being not confined to either sex or country), drew Whittington and his Cat to perfection; and, above the rest, was so kind as to let the picture become an ornament of his loft: and proud enough he was of possessing such a gift. These halcyon periods were however short-lived; for the poor boy was the slave of an arrogant and barbarous woman's temper, who not only made him her turnspit, but spurned him and beat him at will.

Miss Fitzwarren and Whittington were nearly of the same age. Her person was not indeed beautiful, but the very first-rate of agreeable, and her disposition sweetly amiable: no wonder therefore that, to a poor lad, smarting under all the evils of a contrary disposition, she should appear nothing less than an angel. Whilst the modesty of Whittington's demeanour; his uncommonly good language for his condition; his grateful, his respectful conduct, made her his friend: insomuch, that she begged her father would let one of the clerks teach the poor fellow to read and write; as he was an orphan, she said, and had no other chance of learning what might be so useful to him in future. One of the clerks was therefore ordered to set him copies and hear him read; and the boy's application and improvement were astonishing.

Mr. Fitzwarren, being a silk-mercer and a great merchant, imported large quantities of silk from India, just in the state it was spun by the little worms which are thence called silk-worms, and are so numerous in the Eastern world, that mulberry-trees are planted and cultivated in order to furnish leaves for their food. Of course, this gentleman sent out such articles as were best

received abroad in exchange; and it being his benevolent custom, when a ship freighted at his own expense was ready to sail, to call all his family around him, that every one might provide a little venture, according to their wishes or abilities, to be improved to the best advantage by the captain, who was a man after his own heart, without guile: on looking about him, on such an occasion, he found Whittington was absent, and had him sought for. But the poor lad had hid himself, from the shame of being the only one incapable of benefiting by his master's liberal-mindedness. Miss however begged she might call him; when her voice instantly drew him forth, and she would not return to the parlour without him. "You have been weeping," said she, "with Puss, I suppose: but wherefore do you shed tears thus over a creature that neither can understand your grief, nor in any degree sooth it?"—"She does both," replied Whittington: "is lively when I am lively; sorrowful when I am sorrowful: for, pardon my freedom, Miss, she reads my feelings, as you have the goodness to do, in my face."

Whittington assured his master he had every due sense of his kindness, but had not

an article he could call his own. His young lady entreated she might buy something for him; but her father told her that would not do, for it must be his own to be a fortunate venture. "You have, Dick, a cat," said Miss. The poor lad burst into tears. But his master's ear having caught the word, he ordered Puss to be brought, and made Whittington deliver her up, with his own hands, to the captain; but not until Miss, in order to shew the value of Dick's venture to all present, had made her perform all her sportive tricks, to the equal surprise and pleasure of the whole company, except the surly cook, who beheld the boy part from her with a heart-breaking look and sigh, wholly unmoved.

Whittington a second time hid himself, to conceal his grief from all eyes. But, strange to tell, the whole scene operated so maliciously on the cook's mind, from thinking the boy was too kindly treated, and such-like ideas, that she made it her daily practice to teaze and torment him, either about having parted with his poor cat, that he pretended to have so much love for, she would say, or his vanity and folly in setting so high a value on her. "A fine cargo, no doubt," cried she, "she will bring you in return. Perhaps

herself: that is," she would add, "her skin stuffed, to supply the place of her lifeless body, and to make her look for all the world as if she were alive!"

Whittington was so distressed by these taunts and jeers, that he was obliged to call all his reason, and all the good lessons his old deceased friend had taught him, in aid, to enable him to support them: for her unprovoked malice embittered his life; and the more especially as, by losing his cat, he was cut off from the consoling looks and words of his dear young mistress.

At length, however, quite terrified at his own feelings, without having the relief of breathing them to any one, he resolved to run away; for, in his poor opinion, to die of grief that ought to be conquered, or by human means, was alike offensive to his Maker. Having tied up a trifle or two, he contrived to slip them out of doors, and soon followed them. He stopped, and looked back on the paradise he had quitted with heartfelt anguish. Never should he hear his master's kind voice more;—never more receive his mistress's gentle commands, nor behold his dear young lady again! But finding, the more he lingered, the more languid his resolution became, in compli-

ance with stern necessity he set off, and never once stopped until he reached the stone near Holloway, which, from his having been known to sit and to rest himself on it, is called *Whittington's Stone* to this day.

The poor fellow's mind was so agitated, he knew not what he saw or heard; until roused into attention by Bow-bells, which, as it was their custom on All-hallow's day, began to ring a peal, that, by the force of fancy, sounded to his ear,

Turn again, Whittington,
Lord-mayor of London!

He suddenly jumped up, and rubbed his eyes, that he might be certain he was awake. "O!" cried he, "is it I?—I, the forlorn, the outcast Whittington, that shall be Lord-mayor? Then shall I see those I love best once again!" Still, still the bells continued their song. "It is enough," said Whittington: "what would not any one endure to arrive at such greatness and honour! I will therefore go back, and patiently sustain all I must suffer, only to gain myself a chance for such glory and such happiness." And thus making *hope* his *walking-stick*, as Shakspeare expresses it, he returned back, exercising it against despairing thoughts: and all this was unobserved by any one.

Whilst Whittington was bowing his neck to the yoke of an usurped tyranny, Puss and her fellow-voyagers made way, with all their sails, for the East. But sailing was then a nice and difficult art; for the compass, that now tells us how to steer, was then wholly unknown: whence the winds and the waves sported with ships, and often tossed them out of their latitude; as was the case with the Unicorn, to the delay and alarm of all on-board.

Puss, during her passage, however, presented the captain with a young family of kittens, who soon grew up as sportive as their mother, and thereby beguiled to the sailors many a tedious hour. Hopeless, however, at length, of regaining their lost track, and terrified by the view of their reduced provisions, (for at sea the remedy for such an evil is dreadful but to think of,) they were reduced to the horrible extremity of casting lots who should die, when they were relieved in the moment of their deepest despair by seeing land: and this land, when they reached it, proved to be a kingdom on the African coast, abounding with mines of wealth, but altogether unknown to England.

The arrival of a ship on this coast was so pleasurable, because so unusual, a thing,

that the king sent some of his high courtiers to congratulate them on their safety, if compelled by a tempest to visit them. The captain made suitable returns to their compliments, and accepted the invitation sent him by the king and queen, together with such persons as he chose should share the honour to dine with them. But what must be his surprise, when, on an elegant dinner being served up, an incredible number of rats and mice rushed forth and devoured it; or, at least, rendered what they left behind them unfit to be eaten. On Whittington's *venture* occurring to his remembrance, he told the king and queen he had an animal that would soon destroy all these troublesome visitors.

The king, queen, and the whole court, heard of this astonishing animal with wonder and delight, and were impatient to bring her talents to proof. Puss was therefore soon brought into the royal presence; and a new repast being provided, the instant the rats and mice began to show their heads, jumping out of her wicker-basket, she put the whole host of her enemies to flight without beat of drum. The king, the queen, and all present, were desirous of caressing her, but could not persuade themselves it was safe for strangers so to do, until repeatedly and

repeatedly assured by the captain of her kind disposition towards all but the creatures she was formed to be at eternal enmity with. She was then stroked and patted by every one; and the sum given for her is well known to have been immense, if even exaggerated by fame in some small degree.

Her majesty, however, with Puss in her lap, where she had very speedily sung herself fast asleep, appeared lost in thought: the cause of which being inquired into, she said, that, from feeling the past, she could not forbear being alarmed for the future; as there could be little doubt, if the cat died, the offensive animals would renew their old practices; which could not fail of exciting tenfold distress and disgust, by their having been for some time free from their violence. How agreeable therefore must the news be, that the captain could furnish them with a whole family, sufficient, in process of time, to stock the kingdom: which family was likewise presented to their majesties, who were enraptured at the sight of them, and admired their playfulness beyond measure.

The queen had a tender mind, and, having heard the captain, at her own request, many times repeat poor Whittington's his-

tory; his orphan infancy, his friendless state; and his distress at parting from his cat, though for the greatest hoped-for advantage; she told the king, and his majesty was perfectly of the same opinion, that, having made them so happy, it was their duty to render him happy also. "Therefore," cried she, "tell him to receive back his beloved cat; lest, without that addition to his wealth, he may be unable to enjoy all we bestow upon him." Puss was accordingly recommitted to her wicker basket by the queen's own hands, having first tried and proved that the progeny she left behind were as capable as herself of protecting the palace from the late invaders. And there is every reason to be certain her progeny were esteemed so long as their then majesties lived: and from far better motives than the otherwise-enlightened Egyptians could assign for paying cats, as was their custom, divine honours.

The captain now a second time hoisted his flag, unfurled his sails, and, with a fair wind and most encouraging gale, set sail for England. But the ship Unicorn had been for so many months unheard-of, that Mr. Fitzwarren concluded it was buried, and all it contained, in the deep; and

whilst poor Whittington was shocked at remembering his loss, when so many of his fellow-beings were gone to the bottom, yet was he unable to forget the love he bore his cat, or forbear to lament he had exposed her to the perils of the sea.

Mr. Fitzwarren, to whom the captain was endeared from his manifold virtues, he setting him down for a human gem above all price, was greatly concerned to think he was no more. One morning however, when these friendly regrets were nearly overpowering his mind, who should he behold at his door but the very man he utterly despaired of ever seeing again! The meeting was touching on both sides; and the ladies, being present, were much affected by the view thereof. When no longer able to suppress her desire to know how Puss had borne her voyage, Miss Fitzwarren telling the captain as much, he immediately opened on their knowledge the wonderful events that animal had produced: adding, that he much feared it would be dangerous to let the poor lad know all his good fortune at once, or perhaps even to be made master of the wealth he had brought him. "Let him be called," cried Mr. Fitzwarren; "instantly called," said the worthy man, with heartfelt joy at the news.

"The gifts of Providence must be held sacred; and the whole gift of Providence, on this occasion, is the orphan's due."

Whittington slowly appeared: but his appearance was most dismaying, for the cook had just complimented him with a ladle of dripping over his clothes; which, though by no means the best he was master of, were decent, and more than suited to the business he was engaged in, namely, turning the spit and cleaning his master's shoes.

"My worthy fellow," said Mr. Fitzwarren, seizing his dirty hand, "be of good cheer. Patient sufferers seldom pass unrewarded. Instead, therefore, of the scullery and the kitchen, to which you never more return, you are—yes, my late forlorn child, you are now become my equal: and as with me virtue, much rather than money, makes the man, you shall henceforth, in honour of your virtues, be my beloved friend, my favourite companion." Whittington's astonishment rendered him for some time speechless; the ladies wept without reserve; and Mr. Fitzwarren and the captain turned aside their heads, to hide a humane and manly tear that would not be suppressed.

"You, sir," at length cried Whittington,

" are much too good to sport with the unhappy, or to wound the defenceless. I therefore believe what you tell me to be true, because *you* tell it me, as unable as I am to comprehend wherefore such blessings are poured down on my head. Those trunks," continued he, pointing to them, " are marked, I see, as mine: but, O sir, that mark is a false one! They are yours; and you must either deign to consider them as such, or their contents can never be enjoyed in any manner by me."

" Idle, idle!" said Mr. Fitzwarren. " Do not, dearest sir," resumed Whittington, " do not plunge me into despair: do not drive me from your beloved presence in the very moment you wish to see me happy. Give me to be your humble, your grateful friend, if such is your generous desire; but take the wealth: for your friendship is all the riches, all the honour, and all the happiness, I would obtain." " Bravo! my dear Whittington," cried Mr. Fitzwarren; " and be your happiness whatever you choose to make it."

Whittington rose, and was preparing to retire to improve his dress. " Hold! hold!" said the captain; " these trunks are not all the king and queen have sent you.—Hollo,

there!" cried he to a sailor in the hall, "bring in that article." When, lo! what should present itself to the delighted eyes of Whittington, but the well-known wicker-basket, out of which leaped Mrs. Puss, and paid her due compliments to the company, (for the creature knew them all;) rubbed her head against her master's face; twirled herself round Mr. Fitzwarren's legs; looked up at Mrs. Fitzwarren, and purred; and, jumping up into Miss Fitzwarren's lap, composed herself, and seemed to feel herself perfectly at home. But, on her master's retiring to dress, she eagerly followed him; and such was the pleasure her return gave him, that he forgot his wealth whilst he caressed her, and promised her he would never part with her more to the end of her or his life.

Mr. Fitzwarren told his wife and the captain, that, in the first knowledge of Whittington's amazing good fortune, he did not dare to oppose either his humour or his wishes, lest all the circumstances of his new condition should be too much for him to bear; but, so soon as his mind recovered its firmness, he would duly regulate matters between them. He spoke highly of the merits of both his head and his heart; and said he

would pledge himself for his doing honour to himself, his country, and mankind, by rendering his wealth a blessing to multitudes. "For," continued this gentleman, "it is evident to me the poor worthy fellow will perform all the different parts assigned him by Providence on the great stage of human life with first-rate claims to applause; and that, however humble his entrance, his exit will be glorious. 'The elements,' as our famous English bard, Shakspeare, has it, 'are so mixed up in him, that Nature might come forth, and say, This is a man!'"

Whittington soon rejoined them, dressed in his Sunday clothes; and a very smart, well-looking youth he became, with little advantage from his wardrobe; made his best bow with a very good grace; took his seat (happy, happy creature! as his countenance bespoke him), between his master and mistress, being not only invited, but kindly commanded so to do, with his old friend, Mrs. Puss, purring at his feet; and, dinner being served up, except a blush or two of grateful diffidence and modest sensibility, proved, by his whole behaviour, he was at length got into his real, right place.

The next thing to this establishment of his happiness, his great concern was to

reward every person that had been indulgent or serviceable to him; not forgetting the waggoner who brought him to London, or even Mrs. Cook herself, whose very unkindness to him, he said, had wrought out his good fortune; for, had she not lodged him in the loft, he had never bought his cat. And what obligations must he then be under to his young lady, who was particularly and immediately the cause of his sending her abroad! The cook, however, was never able to behold him, from the ill-treatment she had given him, without confusion of both heart and face; though he cheerfully and repeatedly desired her to cease to remember what he had forgot, and to look upon him henceforward only as a friend.

To the captain, under Mr. Fitzwarren's instruction, or rather restraining voice, (for Whittington's gratitude knew no bounds,) he made a noble present. He rejoiced the hearts of the whole ship's crew by his bounty; and, in closing the lid of the jewel-box, sent as part of the purchase of his cat, which was of great value, he wrote thereon "Miss Fitzwarren," who received a nod from her father not to contradict him at that time. "And, my honoured madam," said he to his mistress, "what token of my re-

Mr Fitzwarren called Whittington *his son elect; Mrs Fitzwarren, her dearest boy; and Miss Fitzwarren confessed she preferred him to his whole sex.* *p. page 33.*

spect, my—my—feelings, (for his heart had not an expression equal to his wish,) can I offer you?" "Give me your hand," replied that worthy woman: "let me have the pleasure of seeing you composed; for your present happiness is too agitating for your spirits, and you will greatly oblige me."

When sufficient time, in Mr. Fitzwarren's opinion, had elapsed to render them all tranquil, and, as he called it, rational creatures, he was first surprised, and next quite angry, at Whittington's persisting to refuse the possession of his fortune, even at length to the degree of telling him he did not deserve it. Whittington defended his conduct with much address: "For, sir," said he, "I wish to be independent; that is, to make myself happy in my own way. What wealth Providence has so miraculously given me, I know not how to dispose of, or to enjoy. I must be broke in, sir, to my good fortune by degrees. What money is of my own getting, I shall know the value of,—shall feel my own; and, by habit, all the flutter of astonishment, which my heart is now unable to throw off, will gradually subside. But, to rush from the extremity of poverty into unbounded prosperity,—believe me, sir, I

have no powers equal to sustaining the shock; and you must, therefore, either have the goodness to save me from myself, or leave me to be undone."

There was so much good sense and worthy-mindedness in his argument, that Mr. Fitzwarren was overcome. "I consent to be your banker," said he, "your guardian, so long as you choose to call yourself a minor; but shall rejoice to be informed that my much-valued Whittington is no longer a boy, and, of course, capable of acting for himself.

Whittington, being now, as he called it, master of himself, withdrew from his friends, to collect his thoughts and begin to be calmly happy. He recalled to his memory every moral and excellent lesson his worthy deceased friend had given him. "Blessed spirit!" cried he, "the persons to whom I owe my birth are wholly unknown to me: but your tender compassion for my orphan state, which flowed solely from the benevolence of your heart; that guarded me in my helpless infancy; watched over my growth; and, above all, the manifold acts of kindness bestowed upon me, your anxiety, and daily prayers that my soul should prove upright, my life useful to myself and others, and my death happy: I feel myself unut-

terably indebted to you; nor shall they, to the best of my ability, be unfulfilled. Your goodwill for me therefore shall teach me universal goodwill for my fellow-beings; your kind relief of my infant necessities, make me acquire wealth, as a steward, for those who want the means of subsistence; and your virtues, by my practising them, give more glory to my name than all that honours or riches can bestow!"

Accordingly, Whittington soon started forth the man of business; and, amongst the other money-getting methods he pursued, bought up, in Leadenhall-market, all what was then, and is at this time in Ireland, called the offal, that is, the intestines of cattle, superintended their cleaning, until in a fit condition to be exposed to sale for those ranks that were glad to make a cheap purchase of however coarse food; and the refuse was sold for dogs' and cats' meat, with very considerable profit. He, moreover, according to Stowe, dealt largely in wool, leather, cloth, and pearls, much worn by the British ladies at that time. Out of the returns of which, he went about feeding the hungry, clothing the naked, releasing the prisoner, and wiping the tears from the cheeks of the worthy distressed, wherever

he found them. All his undertakings flourished in his hands; and, in this fulness of self-obtained prosperity, Mr. Fitzwarren resolved to question him as to his true motive of conduct respecting the purchase-money for his cat; for Mr. Fitzwarren, as a kind father, became anxious to see his beloved and only child the wife of an honest and valuable man, when such a one as Whittington would evermore conclude his wishes upon that subject.

But poor Whittington was so careful to conceal his regard for Miss Fitzwarren, lest it should be thought presumptuous, and thereby deprive him of the friendship of a family he so highly prized, that no one suspected such a thing; and his master, from delicacy, and a fear of laying a constraint on his grateful feelings, had never so much as hinted at the subject. "My beloved fellow," said he, however, to him, one morning, when they were quite by themselves, "wherefore do you exclude me from a knowledge of what passes in your heart?—what its views, what its desires are? as also why you, who are so active in making others happy, are so backward in promoting your own happiness?" Whittington sighed, cast his eyes on the ground, and, from the high

respect he bore his master, (as he would still often call him,) could only say, "You, sir, have a daughter." Mr. Fitzwarren, on the instant, recollected many, very many, instances of tender attachment that, with all his caution, had escaped him; and, being convinced that no young woman, whose affections were not engaged, could dislike either his person or his behaviour, whilst every worthy woman must be charmed with his goodness of heart, he caught him by the hand, and cried, "Be it so: let the name of father be added to the name of friend, and thereby make me completely happy. She is yours, my Whittington, if with her own consent." "And, without her own consent, I would die," replied Whittington, "before I would receive her hand." Miss and her mother were sent for; and never was there a party more endeared to each other. Mr. Fitzwarren called Whittington his son elect; Mrs. Fitzwarren, her dearest boy; and Miss Fitzwarren confessed she preferred him to his whole sex.

And yet, strange to tell! the wonderful history of this wonderful man is written only for young readers; a circumstance that can be no otherwise accounted for, than that the fashions of the times are so changed

that either Whittington's virtues would make some of our modern great folks blush, or the history of our present men of fashion would put Whittington's virtues out of countenance. And, having thus brought him to the eve of marriage with his master's daughter, we must conclude our work, from the records of Stowe, Cotton, and other ancient writers.

According to all ancient testimony, Mr. Whittington was three times Lord-mayor of London; and was pronounced, by all who knew him, one of the most upright and vigilant magistrates the city of London could ever boast; and, from the immense sums of money he lent Richard the Second and Henry the Fifth, besides various other modes of circulating cash, had the name given him of "the Golden Merchant."

Thus, abounding in wealth and reputation, he became the husband of his master's daughter; and there were present at the wedding the Lord-mayor and Aldermen, the great John of Gaunt, Chaucer the poet, and numbers of other celebrated persons. The wedding-feast lasted a whole week; and the roast-beef of Old England was the sheet-anchor at every table, whilst the quantity of sack and Barbary wine that was

drank surpassed almost all belief: and never, it is recorded, was there a more happy couple.

He entertained Henry the Fifth and his queen, after that sovereign's return from the battle of Agincourt; who, in reward of his superb and magnificent feast, bade Mr. Whittington kneel down; when, the king having flourished his sword, as is the custom in creating a knight, over his head, he bade him "Rise, Sir Richard Whittington:" honours the worthy merchant would much rather have declined than accepted, only that he felt them so many testimonies that Mr. Fitzwarren had not disgraced either himself or his daughter by bestowing her upon him. We can however only add, from the smallness of our work, that, to the best of husbands, were superadded to his name the best of fathers and the best of sons-in-law; and that, having built alms-houses for widows, hospitals for the sick and wounded, schools for the maintenance and education of poor children, besides giving a large sum towards endowing St. Bartholomew's Hospital, he built himself a house in Grub-street, which is now surrounded by other buildings, and little remarked by the public; to which house he

at length retired with his family, all of them greatly preferring tranquillity to the bustle of life; where he resided till a good old age, and where he died, as beloved as lamented by all around him. Nor must we omit the mention of poor Puss, who, having ended a remarkable long life for one of her species, died in the arms of Mrs. Whittington, (for she was not then her ladyship,) and was buried, with much decent attention, at the bottom of her master's garden.

Let not our young readers, then, we conjure them,—let them not suffer so truly worthy a man to have lived, much less to have died, in vain; but, by imitating his virtues, emulating his renown, and remembering that the precepts of his humble friend the old woman, by being so deeply engraven on his heart, though by so feeble a hand, were blessed with such abundant increase, as to be an additional confirmation of what we read in Holy Writ, namely, "Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it."

FINIS.

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