

**Harris's Cabinet.**

*Thomas & David*

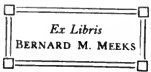
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CHILDREN'S BOOK  
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LOS ANGELES



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BERNARD M. MEEKS



FRONTISPIECE.



"When lo! from the regions of air, &c."

THE  
PEACOCK AND PARROT,  
*ON THEIR TOUR*

TO DISCOVER

THE AUTHOR OF

“THE PEACOCK AT HOME.”



ILLUSTRATED WITH ENGRAVINGS.



**London :**

PRINTED FOR J. HARRIS, CORNER OF ST. PAUL'S.

1810.



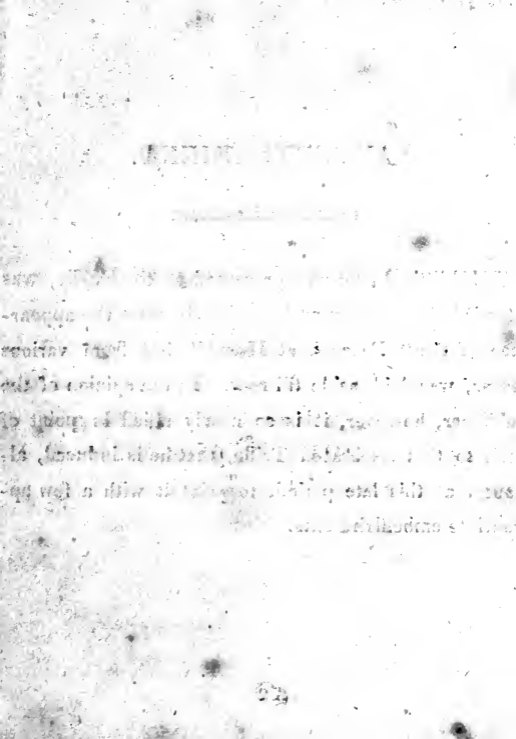
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H. Bryer, Printer, Bridge-Street, Blackfriars, London.

## ADVERTISEMENT.

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THE little Poem now presented to the Public, was intended for publication immediately after the appearance of the "Peacock at Home," but from various causes, was laid aside till now. In the opinion of the Publisher, however, it is so nearly allied in point of merit to that celebrated Trifle, that he is induced, although at this late period, to print it with a few appropriate embellishments.





THE  
PEACOCK, &c.

---

YE votaries of Fashion, who have it to boast,  
That your names to posterity will not be lost ;  
That the last *Morning Chronicle* due honor paid  
To the still-blooming Dowager's gay Masquerade ;  
That the Minister's Dinner has blaz'd in *the Times*,  
That the Countess's Gala has jingled in rhymes ;  
Oh ! tell me, who would not endeavour to please,  
And exert ev'ry nerve, for rewards such as these ?

It was early in Spring—but no matter what year,  
 That the PEACOCK, delighting in noise, and good cheer,  
 Determin'd, for dear notoriety's sake,  
 A dash in the whirlpool of Fashion to make.  
 A Concert and Ball, their attractions united,  
 To which the *Beau-Monde* were politely invited.  
 Away they all flew, it was heavenly weather,  
 And soon at the PEACOCK's arriv'd, in full feather.  
 The scene was enchanting! for taste so refin'd  
 Had never appear'd with such splendor combin'd.  
 The Dance was all gaiety, frolic, and glee;  
 The Music transporting! the Supper *exquis!*  
 The Beaux were all *prime*, and the flow'r of the nation,  
 The Belles were all style, beauty, grace, fascination:  
 Good humour presided, where pleasure was law,  
 And the guests, more or less, all came off with *eclat*.  
  
 But, alas! Time has wings; and tho' still vastly clever,  
 We cannot make Balls last for ever and ever,

When day was seen breaking, the company parted ;  
 And none, I am told, ever went lighter hearted.

“ I knew,” cried SIR ARGUS, “ *my* Gala would shine :  
 “ Oh ! charming distinction, Oh ! pleasure divine.  
 “ Yes ! *I* too shall see myself figure away  
 “ In the records of fashion, the buz of the day ;  
 “ And the world shall admire, in ages to come,  
 “ The brilliant display of the PEACOCK at Home.”

Two months had now pass'd, and SIR ARGUS, one morning,  
 Was ruffling his plumes, and his person adorning,  
 When lo ! from the regions of air, quick descending,  
 A PIGEON appear'd, and his neck gently bending,  
 Presented a Billet ; then silently bow'd,  
 And, spreading his wings, was soon lost in a cloud.

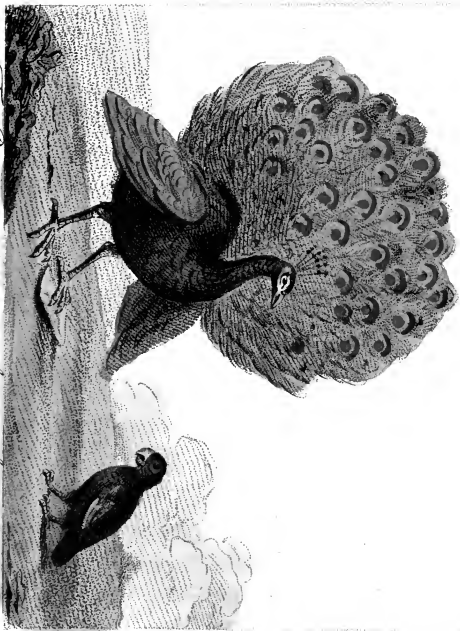
SIR ARGUS, astonish'd, in haste now uncloses  
 The paper, perfum'd with fresh Otto of Roses.

- “ In fortune’s dear name,” he exclaims, “ what is this  
 “ ‘ *The Peacock at Home!*’ Oh ! superlative bliss !  
 “ My feelings, prophetic, the honor foretold ;  
 “ Yes! *The Peacock at Home* shall be printed in gold :  
 “ How just the description ! what grace, and what spirit !  
 “ Aye—this is indeed a production of merit.”

Be it known, that the great *Biped Lords of Creation*,  
 Of every class, and in every station,  
 All secretly cherish, what all yet disclaim,  
 That feeling, which we *curiosity* name.  
 Now our PEACOCK imperial, tho’ too proud to own,  
 That the fav’rite of Juno had ever been prone  
 To a weakness, he always had *wish’d* to believe  
 Was exclusively felt by the *Daughters of Eve*,  
 Yet died with impatience to know who had written  
 The elegant verses, with which he was smitten.  
 His thoughts were all now on discovery bent,  
 And, in haste, for the PARROT he instantly sent :



*"The Peacocks with vanity fully inflated."*



Who shortly arriv'd, overjoy'd beyond measure,  
And, strutting, demanded SIR ARGUS's pleasure?

The PEACOCK, with vanity fully inflated,  
Erected his plumes, and the triumph related ;  
Then quiv'ring his wings, and expanding his breast,  
The listening PARROT in these words address'd :—

“ My friend, I acknowledge the Poem divine,  
“ And that genius and wit breathe thro' every line ;  
“ But it is not enough that to Fame we devote it,  
“ You, the Herald of 'Ton, must inform me who *wrote it.*”

The PARROT, who now was expiring to speak,  
Twirl'd his ebony tongue, and then op'ning his beak,  
In a tone of importance, without hesitation,  
Directly began a high-sounding oration.

“ SIR ARGUS, no mortal could e'er have desir'd,  
“ More exquisite verses than those you've inspir'd.

“ The Muse has for *you*, indeed, tried all her art,  
 “ And with envy, no doubt, has fill’d many a heart :  
 “ I wonder not, then, you are anxious to know  
 “ From *whose* pen these strains of sweet harmony flow.  
 “ ’Tis true, I have chanc’d in my wanderings to meet  
 “ With *some* secrets ; and *such* anecdotes cou’d repeat !  
 “ However, no matter ; I give you my word,  
 “ That who wrote this fine Poem, I never yet heard ;  
 “ But it much wou’d delight me the truth to discover,  
 “ Altho’ I shou’d fly for it all the world over :  
 “ What say you, SIR ARGUS, the fact to insure,  
 “ Suppose we were both to set out on a tour ?”

“ Agreed ! my good Sir ; far as England extends,  
 “ Then together we’ll travel, and visit our friends :  
 “ Endeavour to find out the name of our Poet,  
 “ And e’er we return, ten to one but we know it.”



A tempting repast they now hastily shar'd,  
 Of grain and dried cherries, already prepar'd :  
 Then sipping some drops from a neighbouring spring,  
 Made no further delay, but directly took wing.

Awhile they fled on, over meadow, thro' grove,  
 Delighted, for novelty's sake, thus to rove :  
 Yet sometimes alighted, preferring a walk,  
 The PEACOCK for ease, and the PARROT for talk ;  
 Till, at last, poor SIR ARGUS began to complain,  
 Of the sad inconvenience he felt from his train,  
 And propos'd, as the sky seem'd to threaten a shower,  
 To rest till the morning, at Nightingale Bower ;  
 The obsequious PARROT replied by a bow,  
 And they went on as fast as their strength would allow.

PHILOMELA, to whom her retirement was dear,  
 Felt vex'd at beholding the flutterers near ;

For living in harmony, softness, and quiet,  
 She hated all bustle, intrusion, and riot ;  
 And tho' a *few* trips to the gay world she made,  
 Her heart, still unalter'd, remain'd in the shade.  
 However, our fair pensive warbler well knew,  
 Some sacrifice still to politeness was due ;  
 She, therefore, soon hasten'd the coxcombs to meet,  
 And welcom'd them both to her rural retreat.  
 A delicate supper before them was plac'd,  
 Not with splendor, indeed, but simplicity grac'd ;  
 At which she presided with elegant ease,  
 And that native good breeding, that always must please.  
 SIR ARGUS seem'd charm'd, and shew'd great condescension,  
 Was all affability, grace, and attention :  
 Till growing impatient, without much preamble,  
 He eagerly mention'd the cause of his ramble.  
 But no information, alas ! he receiv'd,  
 At which he was hurt, and the NIGHTINGALE griev'd ;

But hop'd he wou'd be more successful ere long,  
 And propos'd, *en attendant*, to give him a song.  
 Delighted, he begg'd PHILOMEL would proceed ;  
 She complied ; and 'twas something *like* singing, indeed.  
 No cadence was ever perform'd with such neatness :  
 Grassini herself never sang with such sweetness.  
 The favor was next of the PARROT requested,  
 Who, clearing his throat, was quite hoarse, he protested :  
 Yet gave " Pretty Poll,"\* with such fine intonation,  
 SIR ARGUS cried " Bravo!" and scream'd approbation.

The Travellers now with fatigue were opprest,  
 So they both bade adieu, and retired to rest :  
 A sun-shiny morn to their slumbers succeeded,  
 When, wak'd to new life, on their way they proceeded.

---

\* The Song of " Pretty, pretty Poll," in the Beggar's Opera.

A poor captive STARLING, who liv'd near the road,  
 They soon spied, and enquir'd for the Poet's abode :  
 But 'twas useless, indeed ! tho' they made a great rout,  
 For he only kept crying, " I cannot get out !"  
 This want of attention the PEACOCK enrag'd,  
 And he fiercely exclaim'd, " Ha ! 'tis well thou art cag'd !  
 " But, dear Mr. PARROT, methought that I saw  
 " The gilt Ball on the Dome of the LADY MACAW :  
 " With *her* we will breakfast at Aviary Hall,  
 " And who knows what success may our visit befall."  
 Now it luckily happened on this very day,  
 That the COUNTESS was giving a grand *Dejeuné* ;  
 And she actually started—so great her delight,  
 When the elegant Visitor came within sight.  
*He*, of course, was receiv'd with respect most profound ;  
 And her Ladyship curtsied quite down to the ground.  
 The PARROT was likewise made welcome, *surtout*,  
 By that pink of all fashion, *La belle COCKATOO* ;



*"A poor captive Starling who liv'd near the road." p. 14*



While his little smart Cousin, the gay PEROQUET,  
 Declar'd that the party was now quite complete.

The most exquisite dainties the Spring wou'd afford,  
 Arrang'd with much taste, soon appear'd on the board ;  
 And when breakfast was over, the PEACOCK arose,  
 His plans and his triumph at once to disclose.  
 His magnificent train he now rais'd from the ground,  
 Spread its glories to view ; and then flourishing round,  
 Deliver'd the Poem, with great exultation,  
 And caus'd in the circle no small agitation.

\*Baron STORK and the fair DEMOISELLE were delighted ;  
 While some, less distinguish'd, conceiv'd themselves slighted :  
 The SPARROW was most opportunely engag'd,  
 Or *he* wou'd have been beyond all bounds enrag'd.

\* Vide "The Peacock at Home."

However, the Author not one could divine,  
 Tho' they ponder'd, and ponder'd, at every line :  
 And all only serving to puzzle them more,  
 SIR ARGUS continued as wise as before.  
 Distracted, he knew not well whither to go,  
 This last disappointment afflicted him so ;  
 But at length, on reflection, thought only one fowl  
 Cou'd have sense to inform him, and that was the OWL.  
 To her he resolv'd, then, a visit to make,  
 And her Supper, the following night, to partake.

In the meanwhile, the PARROT with quickness rehearses,  
 Again, and again, the most charming of verses.  
 Smart things fly about ; Repartees, and Bon-Mots,  
 With too many *secrets* that *all the world knows* :  
 Old Anecdotes came on the *topis*, new drest,  
 And season'd with Satire, to give them a zest.



But the COUNTESS was shock'd ! and declar'd with much feeling,

- “ *She* hated the faults of her neighbour revealing.  
 “ Detraction, of late, had been full of employment,  
 “ And truly, *some* folks knew no other enjoyment.  
 “ ’Twas said, tho’ for *her* part, she thought it quite cruel,  
 “ That Monsieur LE COQ had been kill’d in a *duel*.  
 “ The *Hedge-SPARROW* publicly swore all was true,  
 “ That so long had been told of the Tyrant CUCKOO ;  
 “ And the BULLFINCH *did* whistle indeed to some tune,  
 “ When he said a *great* *Pledder* had stolen a spoon !”

“ It is false !” cried a little bird, known as a *wag* ;

“ And *I* would indite him, at once, for *Scan. Mag.*”

All the Company now rais’d their pinions and eyes,

And protested their plumes stood on end with surprise !

While young Mrs. PEE-WIT, dear sweet gentle creature !

Evinc’d *her* abhorrence in every feature :

Her soft bosom swell'd, and she thought it was grievous,  
 That malice should lead the world thus to deceive us :  
 For *she* too had heard a long, odious relation  
 Of cruel oppression, and vile speculation ;  
 And own'd, (tho' it *might* be as false as the rest,)  
 It was whisper'd, the Goldfinch had feather'd *her* nest.

How ev'ry one star'd! " what detestable stories !"  
 The PARROT aloud cried, " O ! tempora, O ! mores !"  
 But Phœbus advancing, now brought on the day,  
 And the PEACOCK declar'd he must hasten away.  
 His Companion directly Sir Argus obey'd,  
 And both to the Countess some compliments paid ;  
 Then bow'd a farewell, spread their light wings again,  
 And found themselves, shortly, once more, *en chemin*.

They walk'd, and they flutter'd, they hopp'd, and they flew,  
 And weary enough ere the evening grew ;



"They watch'd the Owl's residence, they said 'Sower'." p. 10



But a pure chrystal stream *some* refreshment afforded,  
 And each, in his crop, certain treasures had hoarded.  
 Exerting their energies, both then proceeded,  
 Tho' many disasters their progress impeded :  
 His train now again poor Sir Argus tormented,  
 And the loss of *some* feathers cou'd not be prevented :  
 The PARROT was ruffled, and torn, and distress,  
 But still, *curiosity* reign'd in his breast :  
 This, *this* was the spur that our Travellers sped,  
 And urg'd them both onward, tho' almost half dead.  
 At length, to their joy, at no very late hour,  
 They reach'd the Owl's residence, Ivy-clad-Tower.  
 But what were their feelings, when after such rambling,  
 They still must encounter fresh clawing and scrambling ?  
 The sage Bird of Night had long chosen her station  
 Aloft, where she sat in profound meditation :

The clustering Ivy her lone dwelling shaded,  
 Which no glaring Sun-beam had ever pervaded ;  
 Within it, the Stranger had never intruded,  
 And there she had liv'd, from all Idlers secluded.  
 How great, then, were now her dismay and surprise;  
 Thrice she call'd on Minerva, and thrice rubb'd her eyes ;  
 But doubted not long ; for the Visitors now  
 Came full in her presence, and made a low bow.  
 The Dame, tho' annoy'd, did not wish to be rude,  
 So she wisely receiv'd them as well as she could.  
 A frugal repast was prepar'd very soon,  
 Which together they shar'd, by the light of the Moon.  
 Some berries and seeds, the OWL thought would suffice,  
 In addition to *her* stew of Small-birds and Mice ;  
 And if no costly Viands awaited them here,  
 Keen hunger made up for the want of good cheer.

The supper dispatch'd, our illustrious Guest,  
 Till his Story was told, not a moment cou'd rest ;

While the OWL her brain rummag'd, (now quite on th' alert,)  
 For a few scraps of learning, by way of dessert :  
 But the PEACOCK had no inclination to wait,  
 And the PARROT was still more impatient to prate :  
 So the Poem was read, and the OWL vow'd she never  
 Had heard any Verses she thought half so clever.

But, "*who is the Author?*" this still was the theme  
 Of Sir Argus's Song, and his night and day dream.

" Oh ! let me," he cries, " of your kindness implore,

" Dear, sweet Mrs. OWLET, yet one favor more !

" Acquaint us, I pray, with the name of our Poet ;

" Its worth will be doubled, to *you* when we owe it."

" Dear Sir," said the Dame, who lov'd flatt'ry as well,

As if folly had made her a mere modern Belle,

" Much joy would it give me to grant your request,

" But, in truth, I am not of this secret possest.

“ I have thought a good deal, and feel really vex'd ;

“ For the more I consider, the more I'm perplex'd :

“ However, *thus* much I will venture to tell ;

“ A *female* alone could have written so well.”

Sir Argus believ'd the Dame *might* have guess'd right ;

Yet, *entre-nous*, thought her not very polite :

But that was a trifle ; he now had a clew

To assist his research ; and more satisfied grew :

Since the OWL's well-known wisdom, and vast penetration,

From time immemorial had claim'd admiration.

But ev'ning clos'd in, and we well may suppose,

That our Travellers long'd for a little repose :

While the Moon-loving Dame, who had no wish to sleep,

Meant in pensive delight, her lone vigil to keep :

So her Guests took their leave, with a friendly adieu,

And, forthwith, to a neighbouring Lime Tree withdrew.



Their eyes now soon close, the night passes away,  
 And the LARK calls them up, at the first peep of day:  
 When, quickly descending, each shakes his bright plumes,  
 And with fresh expectation his journey resumes.

The PEACOCK is now more accusom'd to travel;  
 And less inclin'd, therefore, at trifles to cavil:  
 So, cheerfully lends his smooth wings to the breeze,  
 And with rapture extols ev'ry prospect he sees.  
 O'er many a bank, with sweet violets spread,  
 Green field, blooming garden, and hyacinth-bed;  
 Thro' daisy-deck'd vallies, o'er soft swelling hills,  
 Across velvet-clad lawns, and beside limpid rills,  
 Our Travellers roam'd; till they found a young TURTLE,  
 Who liv'd with her Mate, in an arbour of Myrtle:  
 But what cou'd be learnt from two countrified DOVES,  
 Who were thinking, from morning to night, of their loves?

No! they begg'd to observe nothing *rude* was intended,  
 But Concerts and Balls, *DOVES* had *never* attended:  
 In rural enjoyments *they* pass'd time away,  
 And car'd for no Poems, nor Poets—not they!  
 Our Birds of *haut-ton* set them down for a pair  
 Of the silliest creatures that flutter'd in air!  
 But breakfast appearing, a kind invitation  
 To share it, still met with their full approbation;  
 So both ate as much as they knew how to carry,  
 And vow'd they no longer a moment cou'd tarry:  
 Then hurrying off, without further ado,  
 Said, “good morning, my friends,” and the *TURTLES* cried,  
 “Coo!”

Our Travellers now again anxiously thought  
 Of the elegant Authoress, eagerly sought;  
 And still of each female they met, as they flew,  
 Impatiently ask'd, “is it you ma'am? or *you*?”





*"To the banks of a lake, where resided the Swan!"* p. 35

*W. H. W.*

But vain was the question; so both hasten'd on,  
 To the banks of a lake, where resided the SWAN;  
 But *she* was in majesty sailing away  
 On her silver domain, and gone out for the day.  
 They, therefore, proceeded to Turkey-Cock Farm,  
 And caus'd in the family there, some alarm:  
 But the PEACOCK his *Cousin* most kindly embrac'd,  
 And the fright of the Youngsters was shortly effac'd:  
 So the PARROT, with spirit, the Poem recited,  
 And all were, or seem'd to be, highly delighted.  
 But as for the *Writer*—alas! they as soon  
 Cou'd have told them the name of the Man in the Moon:  
 And the 'TURKEY-COCK'S SPOUSE her Guests calmly entreated,  
 To quit the pursuit, and be quietly seated.

But all wou'd not do; so, by way of excuse,  
 They pleaded a visit to good MOTHER GOOSE;

Who near, on a common, *en passant*, they saw,  
 And had heard she had lately come out of the straw.  
 But the GOOSE of their tale not a word understood,  
 And still cackled away to her terrified brood;  
 While immers'd in a pond, to complete their ill luck,  
 Topsy-turvy appear'd, at a distance, the DUCK!

What *now* cou'd they do? why, they both persever'd,  
 While the hope of succeeding their bosoms still cheer'd.  
 On the WOODCOCK they call'd; on the PARTRIDGE and  
 PHEASANT;

And, killing time thus, thought exceedingly pleasant:  
 'Till grown somewhat weary, in order to rest,  
 A sandwich they took at the GUINEA-FOWL's nest.  
 But how shall we count all the visits they pay,  
 To the RAVEN, the MAGPIE, the ROOK, and the JAY?  
 To the FINCHES of fashion, the GOLD and the GREEN,  
 To the BLACKBIRD, the THRUSH, and the ABERDAVINE?

With a great many more, who wère now all so busy,  
 To fix their attention, was not very easy.  
 The WREN was employ'd in constructing a nest;  
 And the LINNET had join'd in a song, the REDBREAST :  
 The BITTERN was gone to the river, to fish,  
 And procure, before dinner, his favorite dish :  
 The SWALLOW was building; the \*HARRIER hunting,  
 The BANTAM was sitting, and so was the BUNTING.  
 In vain, then, our Travellers hop'd to obtain  
 But a word, or a hint, that might soften their pain.  
 From county to county they thus made their way,  
 And submitted to all things, except to delay.  
 From Norfolk they came up to town in a hurry,  
 And found themselves soon on the borders of Surry.

---

\* The HEN HARRIER—a bird of prey, of the Hawk tribe.

From thence off to Lincoln, and Heaven knows where,  
 Till they got into Yorkshire, almost in despair :  
 And well might they feel nearly hopeless, indeed,  
 When their rambling at last brought them down to the Tweed !

They look'd at each other, in silent dismay,  
 And the PARROT for once, cou'd not tell what to say !  
 But, at length, recollecting, they turn'd short about,  
 Not a single jot wiser, than when they sat out.  
 Yet their warm bosoms still for the dear secret panted,  
 And this friend, and that, supplied all else they wanted.  
 So, drooping and sorrowful, harrass'd and sore,  
 They skimm'd the blue mountain, and cross'd the black moor,  
 And the PARROT, by this time quite clamorous grown,  
 Declar'd *he* should die of impatience alone.

However, consulting, they thought it was best  
 Now to steer a *new* course ; so went down to the West.



On a high Cliff, in Cornwall, they found out the CHOUGH ;

But how shou'd *he* learn what was passing below ?

Thro' Devon, so fam'd for its picturesque views,

They pass'd with a haste one can scarcely excuse ;

From thence got to Somerset, almost benighted,

And soon on the summit of Mendip alighted.

There, most *à propos*, they immediately found

A \* Moss-cover'd Root-house, with evergreens bound ;

Beneath whose kind shelter, fatigu'd and opprest,

They gladly agreed till the morning to rest.

SIR ARGUS now cried, with a sigh and a tear,

“ I wish that our travels, my friend, could end *here* :

“ Yet dread lest we many miles further should go,

“ And never, at last, our sweet Poetess know !”

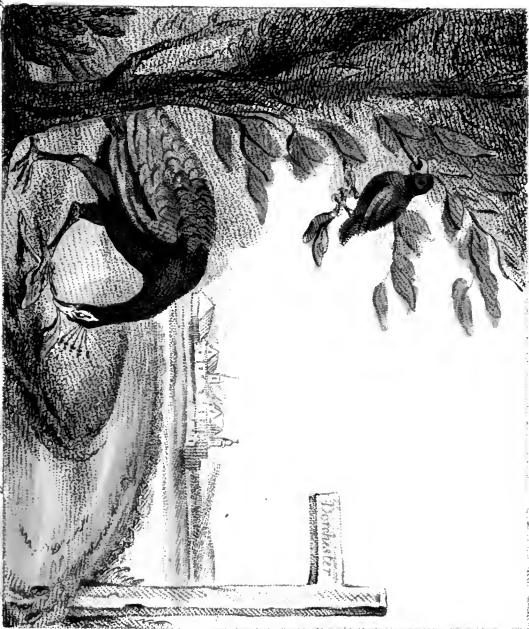
\* A Moss-cover'd Root-house, in the Plantation at Mendip Lodge—the charming seat of the Rev. Dr. Whalley.

But Fortune, capricious, who sports at her leisure,  
 With birds, as with men, when it suits her good pleasure,  
 Resolv'd, after teasing Sir Argus awhile,  
 To reward, in the end, all his toils with her smile.

Aurora with splendor unusual arose,  
 When the PEACOCK and PARROT awoke from repose,  
 And how were their bosoms delighted and cheer'd,  
 When before them a perfect Elysium appear'd!  
 Reluctant they left it, again to explore,  
 Unconscious what happiness yet was in store:  
 But the country they travers'd was smiling and gay,  
 While the Sun, brightly shining, illumin'd their way;  
 And we all know how cheerful, how sweet is the scene,  
 When Nature unfolds her new livery of green:  
 The Birds carol'd round them, the Butterfly play'd,  
 And the soft vernal breeze kindly lent them its aid.



"Gill all their arms over in DORSET they found her." p. 3.

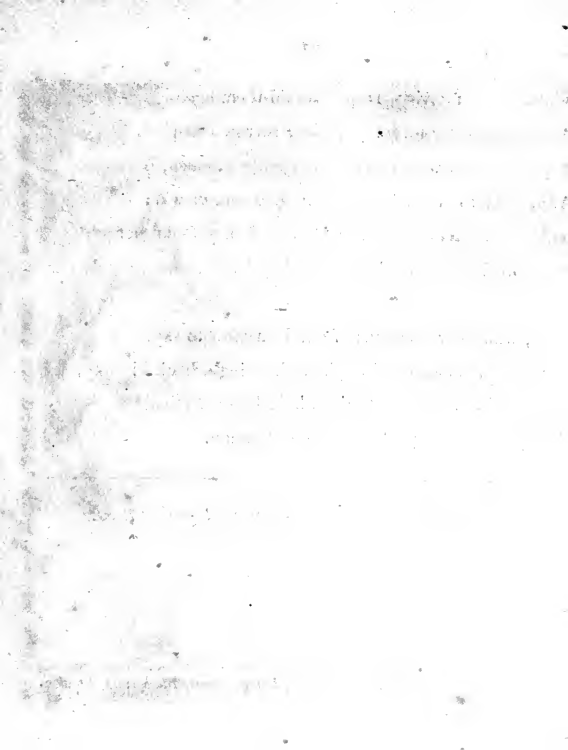


Thus, gently reviving, Hope sooth'd them again,  
 And they shortly forgot both their sorrow and pain.  
 A path strew'd with flowers, they gaily pursued,  
 And, in fancy, their long-sought Incognita view'd ;  
 Till, *all their cares over*, in DORSET\* they found her  
 And, plucking a wreath of green Bay-leaves, they *crown'd* her.

Now, what more remains of our PEACOCK to say,  
 But that, homeward, triumphant, he wing'd back his way,  
 Proclaim'd his success to the whole Biped Nation,  
 And proudly accepted their congratulation.

---

\* Mrs. DORSET was the *Authoress* of "*The Peacock at Home.*"



PLH.

