

# **Essays in Rhyme on Morals and Manners**

Jane Taylor

## Table of Contents

|   |          |
|---|----------|
| <b><u>Essays in Rhyme on Morals and Manners</u></b> ..... | <b>1</b> |
| <u>Jane Taylor</u> .....                                  | 1        |
| <u>PREJUDICE</u> .....                                    | 1        |
| <u>EXPERIENCE</u> .....                                   | 16       |
| <u>EGOTISM</u> .....                                      | 24       |
| <u>POETRY AND REALITY</u> .....                           | 30       |
| <u>AIMS AT HAPPINESS</u> .....                            | 35       |
| <u>A FABLE</u> .....                                      | 39       |
| <u>RECREATION</u> .....                                   | 40       |
| <u>THE SQUIRE'S PEW</u> .....                             | 43       |
| <u>ACCOMPLISHMENT</u> .....                               | 45       |
| <u>A TOWN</u> .....                                       | 46       |
| <u>A PAIR</u> .....                                       | 48       |
| <u>THE WORLD IN THE HOUSE</u> .....                       | 52       |
| <u>THE WORLD IN THE HEART</u> .....                       | 57       |

# Essays in Rhyme on Morals and Manners

Jane Taylor

This page copyright © 2002 Blackmask Online.

<http://www.blackmask.com>

- PREJUDICE.
- EXPERIENCE.
- EGOTISM.
- POETRY AND REALITY.
- AIMS AT HAPPINESS.
- A FABLE.
- RECREATION.
- THE SQUIRE'S PEW.
- ACCOMPLISHMENT.
- A TOWN.
- A PAIR.
- THE WORLD IN THE HOUSE.
- THE WORLD IN THE HEART.

## PREJUDICE.

IN yonder red-brick mansion, tight and square,  
Just at the town's commencement, lives the mayor.  
Some yards of shining gravel, fenced with box,  
Lead to the painted portal where one knocks :  
There, in the left-hand parlour, all in state,  
Sit he and she, on either side the grate.  
But though their goods and chattels, sound and new,  
Bespeak the owners *very well to do*,  
His worship's wig and morning suit betray  
Slight indications of an humbler day

That long, low shop, where still the name appears,  
Some doors below, they kept for forty years :  
And there, with various fortunes, smooth and rough,  
They sold tobacco, coffee, tea, and snuff.  
There labelled drawers display their spicy row  
Clove, mace, and nutmeg : from the ceiling low  
Dangle long *twelves* and *eights* , and slender rush,  
Mix'd with the varied forms of *genus* brush ;  
Cask, firkin, bag, and barrel, crowd the floor,  
And piles of country cheeses guard the door.  
The frugal dames came in from far and near,  
To buy their ounces and their quarterns here.  
Hard was the toil, the profits slow to count,  
And yet the mole-hill was at last a mount.

## Essays in Rhyme on Morals and Manners

Those petty gains were hoarded day by day,  
With little cost, for not a child had they ;  
Till, long proceeding on the saving plan,  
He found himself a warm, *fore-handed* man :  
And being now arrived at life's decline,  
Both he and she, they formed the bold design,  
(Although it touched their prudence to the quick)  
To turn their savings into stone and brick.  
How many an ounce of tea and ounce of snuff,  
There must have been consumed to make enough !

At length, with paint and paper, bright and gay,  
The box was finished, and they went away.  
But when their faces were no longer seen  
Amongst the canisters of *black* and *green* ,  
Those well-known faces, all the country round  
'Twas said that had they levelled to the ground  
The two old walnut trees before the door,  
The customers would not have missed *them* more.  
Now, like a pair of parrots in a cage,  
They live, and civic honours crown their age :  
Thrice, since the Whitsuntide they settled there,  
Seven years ago, has he been chosen mayor ;  
And now you'd scarcely know they were the same ;  
Conscious he struts, of power, and wealth, and fame ;  
Proud in official dignity, the dame :  
And extra stateliness of dress and mien,  
During the mayoralty, is plainly seen ;  
With nicer care bestowed to puff and pin  
The august lappet that contains her chin.

Such is her life ; and, like the wise and great,  
The mind has journeyed hand in hand with fate :  
Her thoughts, unused to take a longer flight  
Than from the left-hand counter to the right,  
With little change, are vacillating still,  
Between his worship's glory, and the till.  
The few ideas moving, slow and dull,  
Across the sandy desert of her skull,  
Still the same course must follow, to and fro,  
As first they traversed three-score years ago ;  
From whence, not all the world could turn them back,  
Or lead them out upon another track.  
What once was right or wrong, or high or low  
In her opinion, always must be so :  
You might, perhaps, with reasons new and pat,  
Have made *Columbus* think the world was flat ;  
There might be times of energy worn out,  
When his own theory would *Sir Isaac* doubt ;  
But not the powers of argument combined,  
Could make this dear good woman change her mind,

Or give her intellect the slightest clue  
To that vast world of things she never knew.  
Were but her brain dissected, it would show  
Her stiff opinions fastened in a row,  
Ranged duly, side by side, without a gap,  
Much like the plaiting on her Sunday cap.

It is not worth our while, but if it were,  
We all could undertake to laugh at *her* ;  
Since vulgar prejudice, the lowest kind,  
Of course, has full possession of her mind ;  
Here, therefore, let us leave her, and inquire  
Wherein it differs as it rises higher.

As for the few who claim distinction here,  
The little gentry of our narrow sphere,  
Who occupy a safe enclosure, made  
Completely inaccessible to trade,  
Where, 'tis a trespass on forbidden ground,  
If any foot plebeian pass the bound ;  
Wide as the distance that we choose to make  
For pride, precedence, and for custom's sake,  
Yet philosophic eyes (though passing fine)  
Could scarcely ascertain the boundary line ;  
So that, if any should be found at all,  
The difference must be infinitely small.  
The powdered matron, who for many a year  
Has held her mimic routs and parties here,  
(Exchanging just the counter, scales, and till  
For cups of coffee, scandal, and quadrille)  
Could boast nor range of thought, nor views of life,  
Much more extended than our grocer's wife.  
Although her notions may be better drest,  
They are but vulgar notions at the best,  
Mere petrifications, formed as time runs by,  
Hard and unmalleable, and dull and dry,  
Ne'er to the test of truth and reason brought,  
Opinions made by habit, not by thought.

Then let inquiry rise, with sudden flight,  
To reason's utmost intellectual height ;  
Where native powers, with culture high combined,  
Present the choicest specimen of mind.  
Those minds that stand from all mankind aloof,  
To smile at folly, or dispense reproof ;  
Enlarged, excursive, reason soars away,  
And breaks the shackles that confine its sway :  
Their keen, dissecting, penetrating view,  
Searches poor human nature through and through ;  
But while they notice all the forms absurd,  
That prejudice assumes among the herd,

## Essays in Rhyme on Morals and Manners

And every nicer variation see,  
*Theirs* lies in thinking that themselves are free.

There is a science reason cannot teach ;  
It lies beyond the depth her line can reach ;  
It is but taught by Heaven's imparted grace,  
The feet of Jesus is the only place ;  
And they who mental riches largely share,  
But seldom stoop to seek their wisdom there.  
'Not many mighty' in His train appear ;  
The simple poor adorn it best ; and here,  
While prejudice the mental sight impairs  
Of vulgar minds, 'tis like a *beam* in theirs.

Religion, as in common course professed,  
Is first a question with them, then a jest :  
Quick to discern the ludicrous and base,  
With which blind votaries have deformed her face,  
Errors, abuses, creeds imposed by man,  
Are undistinguished from the Scripture plan.  
Rome's proud ambition, tyranny, and fraud,  
The Christian standard's bloody deeds abroad,  
Priestcraft, the same in every age and clime,  
From earliest record to the present time,  
Contending parties' never-dying strife,  
Each calling vengeance on the other's life,  
The wretched hypocrite, the wild extreme  
Of blind fanatics, the enthusiast's dream,  
The lives of those who bear the Christian name,  
Of this, of all, religion bears the blame ;  
Though these are men who most reject its sway,  
And know as little what it means as they.  
There's not a wolf within the church's fold,  
But what the Bible has itself foretold ;  
Yet these triumphantly are brought to view,  
To prove that word of prophecy untrue.

A cold acknowledgment of one Supreme,  
Avoids, they argue, every wide extreme ;  
And this, if made by Christian, Turk, or Jew,  
Is all the same in His impartial view.  
But all beyond their rational degree  
Of distant homage to the Deity,  
A firm attachment to the truth *revealed* ,  
(Truth which with blood the Lord of glory sealed)  
Zeal to obey, as well as to adore,  
Is vulgar prejudice, and nothing more.  
Thus, christian service, spiritual and free,  
They class (with pleased and proud complacency)  
With rights impure that pagan India boasts,  
The blood-dyed Koran, and the idol hosts ;

## Essays in Rhyme on Morals and Manners

The cross, perhaps, held up with least respect,  
The hated symbol of the hated sect :  
That seal which marks it Heaven's appointed way,  
They caring nor to read, nor to obey,  
That whoso names that name, must first depart  
From all iniquity of life and heart.

Or, should the Christian code from all the rest  
Be singled out, and owned to be the best,  
The same keen shafts of ridicule are bent  
Against its spirit, and its true intent.  
Of all that gives it energy bereft,  
There are but some mere scraps of ethics left,  
Scarce more enlightened than were heard to flow  
From Socrates and Plato long ago :  
As though, had Scripture never solved a doubt,  
We might have managed vastly well without.

Religion's nature, and its worth, are known  
To those by whom it is possessed alone.  
The Christian's aims and motives, simple, grand,  
The wisest worldlings *cannot* understand :  
Those views which worldly principles condemn,  
Are so incomprehensible to them,  
That they, unanimous in self defence,  
Pronounce them mere delusion or pretence ;  
And prejudice (a favourite word) explains  
All that still unaccounted for remains.

Mid the strong course of passion's wonted sway,  
What makes the wicked man forsake his way ?  
Conquers the habits years had rooted in,  
All fear subduing, but the fear of sin ?  
And him who toiled for earthly bliss, arise,  
Leave all, and lay up treasure in the skies ?  
These are phenomena that, strange to say,  
Religion is presenting every day ;  
Changes, which they who witness dare not doubt,  
Though little heard of by the world without.  
The man now goes rejoicing on his way,  
With inward peace, and cheerful, though not gay ;  
Unseen the motives that his path define ;  
His life is hidden, though his graces shine.  
He walks through life's distracting changes now,  
With even pace, and with an even brow ;  
Hears the vain world's tumultuous hue and cry,  
Just turns his head, and passes calmly by ;  
Yet takes his cheerful share when duty draws,  
And still is foremost found in mercy's cause.

## Essays in Rhyme on Morals and Manners

What works this strange philosophy in him,  
Is it misanthropy, or merely whim ?  
No ; 'tis the glowing, present sense he feels  
Of things invisible, which faith reveals.  
And should the man thus walking with his God,  
Be one unpolished as the valley's clod,  
Should all his science but amount to this,  
To loathe iniquity, and long for bliss ?  
This is *not* prejudice or if it be,  
'Twere well if all were prejudiced as he !

But things to come the vast unfathomed state,  
To which death opens instantly the gate,  
Although the thought of that expected change,  
Affords the finest intellectual range,  
Although that change must soon become our lot,  
Whether the subject suit our taste or not,  
Although objectors cannot well reply,  
That 'tis a vulgar prejudice to die,  
The subject seems (howe'er it came to pass)  
Avoided much by this enlightened class.

All other themes, whose tendencies appear  
To add to our accommodation here,  
Every contrivance of contriving men  
To make a pleasant three-score years and ten,  
Inventions and improvements, whether made  
In science, commerce, agriculture, trade,  
The arts, *belles lettres* , politics, finance,  
*Their* value is acknowledged at a glance ;  
And these are studied, patronised, and taught,  
With active diligence, and so they ought.  
But since a moment may some moment *must*  
Consign our interest in them all to dust,  
Has not the business of the world to come,  
Mid all our thoughts, at least a claim to some ?  
But these are things mysterious and obscure,  
Not tangible, and rational, and sure ;  
'Tis such a vague untenable expanse :  
In short, they mean to wait, and take their chance.

Could you but show by demonstration clear,  
How forms and things invisible appear ;  
Produce your apparatus, bright and clean,  
And try experiments on things unseen ;  
Rare specimens, in due assortment bring,  
Of seraph's eyes, and slips of angel's wing,  
Or metaphysic air-pumps work, to show  
A disembodied soul in *vacuo* ;  
Then 'twere a study worthy of alliance  
With any other branch of modern science.



## Essays in Rhyme on Morals and Manners

But mere assertion of a future state,  
By unknown writers, at a distant date,  
If this be all its advocates advance,  
It is but superstition and romance.

Thus, mental pride, unsubject to control ;  
To God a secret enmity of soul ;  
That stubbornness which scorns to yield assent  
To aught unfounded on experiment ;  
A wretched clinging to the present state,  
That loathes to dwell on things beyond its date ;  
That dread of death which ne'er the thought pursues,  
And which the Christian's hope alone subdues,  
Combine a veil of prejudice to place  
Between dark reason and the light of grace ;  
A prejudice as hopeless as can bind  
The meanest, most illiterate of mankind.

Would that the films of error were allowed  
But by the vulgar worldling, or the proud !  
But this distemper of the moral eye  
Never affects it more inveterately,  
Than when the *false* of prejudice's view  
Is intermingled with a little *true* .  
And hence, the conscientious and sincere,  
Who know essential truth, and hold it dear,  
If education (as she doubtless can)  
Have formed their souls upon the narrow plan,  
Permit no notion from its nook to stir ;  
Most obstinately certain where they err.  
Thus are opinions, as received in youth,  
Wedged down immovably with slips of truth ;  
Assured of part, they deem the whole is right ;  
And what astonishment it would excite,  
Should any have the boldness to allege,  
That all is rubbish but the golden wedge !  
'Tis pity, for the sceptic world without  
Produce the *error* to confirm their doubt,  
Therefore refuse the sterling to behold ;  
And thus the rubbish tarnishes the gold.

There is a tender, captivating glow  
Which certain views on certain objects throw :  
Taste, and poetic feeling, range alone  
A fairy world exclusively their own ;  
And delicacies gather that arise,  
Where'er they turn, unseen by vulgar eyes.  
Their dainty aliment serenely floats  
On every breeze they live like gnats on motes.  
There they might safely, innocently stray ;  
But when they come and stand in Reason's way,

They blind her views, demean her princely air,  
And do more mischief than their smiles repair.  
Why she their interference should restrain,  
A simple instance shall at once explain.

When Paul the walks of beauteous Athens trod,  
To point its children to their 'unknown God,'  
If some refined Athenian, passing by,  
Heard that new doctrine, how would he reply ?  
Regarding first, with polished, scornful smile,  
The stranger's figure and unclassic style,  
Perceiving then the argument was bent  
Against the gods of his establishment,  
He need but cast his tutored eye around,  
And in that glance he has an answer found :  
Altars and theatres, and sacred groves,  
Temples and deities where'er it roves,  
Each long perspective that the eye pervades,  
Peopled with heroes, thickening as it fades;  
Those awful forms that hold their silent sway,  
Matchless in grace, while ages roll away;  
There, softly blending with the evening shade,  
Less light and less, the airy colonnade ;  
Here, in magnificence of Attic grace,  
Minerva's Temple, rising from its base ;  
Its spotless marble forming to the eye  
A ghostly outline on the deep-blue sky :  
'Enough the doctrine that would undermine  
These forms of beauty *cannot* be divine.'  
Thus taste would, doubtless, intercept his view  
Of that 'strange thing,' which after all was true.

When Luther's sun arose, to chase away  
The 'dim religious light' of Romish day,  
Opposing, only, to the mellow glare  
Of gold and gems that deck the papal chair,  
And each imposing pageant of the church,  
Good sense, plain argument, and sound research ;  
Here taste, again, would prove a dangerous guide,  
And raise a prejudice on error's side.  
Behold the slow procession move along !  
The Pontiff's blessing on the prostrate throng ;  
The solemn service, and the anthem loud,  
The altar's radiance on the kneeling crowd :  
Or seek, at summons of the convent bell,  
Deep, sacred shades, where fair recluses dwell ;  
See the long train of white-robed sisters come,  
Appearing now now lost amid the gloom,  
Chanting shrill vespers in the twilight dim,  
The plaintive music of the Virgin's hymn :  
Then would not taste and fancy join the cry

## Essays in Rhyme on Morals and Manners

Against the rude, barbarian heresy,  
That sought those sacred walls to overthrow,  
And rend the veil from that seducing show ?  
And yet, according to our present light,  
That barbarous, tasteless heretic was right.

It might not be convenient had we gone  
To carry this reflection further on.  
But whether, mid the faint and foggy ray,  
Of ages past, or at the present day,  
Truth's native lustre ever must decline  
When human art attempts to make it shine :  
Truth is too strong to need the proffered hand  
Of human feebleness to make it stand.

Inveterate prejudice, infirm and blind,  
May take possession of an honest mind :  
Though weakly yielding to its stubborn sway,  
'Tis not *determined* to be led astray.  
But is there not a sin that must not claim,  
Though near of kindred, such a gentle name ?  
A daring sin, that comes with open face,  
To rear its standard in the holy place ?  
E'en from that day, when some would fain condemn  
The works of those who followed not with them,  
And for that early spark of party rage  
Received reproof designed for every age,  
Down to the present noisy moment, when  
'Tis spiriting from the tip of many a pen,  
E'en from that day to this, with ceaseless reign,  
Has party spirit been the church's bane.

Then, let the verse trace clearly as it can,  
The finer features of the party man.  
By birth, connexion, interest, pride, or taste,  
On one or other side we find him placed ;  
No matter which, nor is there need to say,  
For there he is and there he means to stay.  
That point decided, 'tis his second care  
To find a reason for his being there ;  
Some reason that may make a brave defence  
Against assaults from truth and common sense ;  
Supposing for the present, that his ground  
Is not exactly tenable all round.

He, not contented like the vulgar herd  
To take his creed on other people's word,  
And urged amain, by intellectual pride,  
To prove he is not on the weaker side,  
His choicest stores of wit and fancy draws,  
To prop and beautify the needy cause :

## Essays in Rhyme on Morals and Manners

And well do wit and fancy suit *their* end,  
Who seek not to *examine* , but *defend*.  
*His* is no simple scrupulous mistake,  
Like the weak brother, wrong for conscience' sake ;  
But prejudice, in him, has had to bind  
A knowing, subtle, and enlightened mind.  
Hence, at each step, he has to bear along  
The secret consciousness of something wrong ;  
But that suspicion, unavowed of course,  
Serves but to nerve his arm with triple force ;  
Provokes his zeal to lend its utmost aid,  
And gives the edge of keenness to his blade.

His mind is formed, as though 'twere nature's plan  
To cut him out to be a party man,  
And send him down, in pity, to his post,  
As foremost champion of the weaker host :  
Not of that grander, philosophic tone,  
That lets all party littleness alone ;  
But keen, sagacious, armed for quick reply,  
And, though not visible to every eye,  
Nor from his courteous manner to be guessed  
A dash of gall and wormwood in his breast.  
Yet, every harsher quality is graced  
With wit and learning, eloquence and taste ;  
Yes and as charity delights to say,  
Much *self* deceived, and hoping that he may,  
While gratifying self, and party spleen,  
Squeeze in some love to God and man between.  
A show of candour too, at times, is lent,  
To add its lustre to his argument :  
To those who advocate the favorite notion,  
It flows as wide as the Atlantic Ocean ;  
But towards the heretic who turns it over,  
About as narrow as the straits of Dover.

It seems too much for either side to boast  
The right in *every* contest, if in most :  
Yet our true partizan from none withdraws,  
But lends his talents out to every cause.  
Each new encounter prompt to undertake,  
Asking no questions first for conscience' sake :  
'Tis not for him the right and wrong to sift,  
Enough to know his party wants a lift ;  
And, though so hazardous none other can,  
He boldly takes the field with 'I'm your man !'

And thus he dares the controversial fray ;  
Though careful, first of all, to clear away  
A little rubbish, till he finds a stone  
Just broad enough to set his foot upon.

## Essays in Rhyme on Morals and Manners

On that one stone he loudly stamps, to show  
How firm a standing—place it is, although  
Should he advance a step, or step retire,  
He plunges all at once knee—deep in mire.  
If thence beat off by some opposing band,  
He finds some neighbouring jutment where to stand ;  
There followed, seeks the old support amain,  
Driv'n off anew slips back again.  
draft board may exemplify the thing ;  
When chased from post to post, one hapless king,  
At length, betakes him to by marches short,  
The double corner as his last resort ;  
Where long, from square to square he bravely courses,  
And stands his ground though robbed of all his forces.

Meantime, he trusts the checks his arms receive  
But few will hear of fewer still believe ;  
Hopes the dry record will be little sought ;  
And feels a Jesuit—pleasure at the thought.  
It seems the choicest secret of his art,  
To ward invasion from the weaker part ;  
To veil all blemishes, and make the most  
Of what he has, or thinks he has, to boast.  
Of full exposure more than all afraid,  
He trusts to neat manoeuvres to evade  
That thorough search, in every hole and nook,  
Which unencumbered truth alone can brook ;  
And labours hard, by hiding all the traces,  
To intimate that there are no such places.  
His fairest movements seem to wear disguise ;  
His plans are rather politic than wise ;  
Not to elicit truth, but o'er the dross  
To spread a plausible and specious gloss,  
But he, who finds it needful, on his part,  
To ply the mean artillery of art,  
And sharpen every arrow that he draws,  
May well suspect the soundness of his cause.  
Suspect he may, but vain that lucid doubt,  
Devoid of nobleness to search it out.

Between the man on controversial ground,  
Panting for truth *wherever* it be found,  
And him who does but seek it on one side,  
There lies a gulf immeasurably wide.

Two brother sportsmen, on a blithsome morn,  
Obey the summons of the inspiring horn :  
One, predetermined to pursue the chase  
Within the limits of a certain space ;  
The other, glowing with the bold intent,  
Lead where it may, to follow up the scent.  
They start the hare and after many a bound

## Essays in Rhyme on Morals and Manners

Doubling and winding on file aforesaid ground,  
She leaps the fence and gains the neighbouring mead ;  
At which our doughty sportsman checks his steed ;  
Rather than follow boldly on to that,  
He stays behind the hedge and starts a cat ;  
Pursues poor puss with vast advantage thence,  
And has brave sport within his blessed fence.  
Then having clipt and trimmed her, here and there,  
Assures the world that he has caught the hare ;  
And should his sporting friends confirm the lie,  
Ere there is time to ask the reason why,  
A hare though common sense should stand appalled  
She was, is now, and ever shall be called.

Meantime, the brother sportsman does not fail  
To chase his victim over hill and dale ;  
The five-barred gate, tall rampart, hedge and ditch,  
Alike to him he leaps, and cares not which  
At length he sees, nor sees without dismay,  
The pack strike off an unexpected way ;  
The path they take, by *tact* unerring shown,  
Must cross a fine enclosure of his own ;  
The fair plantation, on his favorite grounds,  
Is rudely torn and trampled by the hounds :  
Safe from attack the sheltered spot appeared ;  
His fathers raised it, and himself revered :  
Though startled, he disdains to call them back,  
But leaps, and follows the sagacious pack ;  
Tramples the ground himself, with noble pride,  
And hears the death-cry on the other side ;  
Secures his prey content to bear the shame,  
If such it be, for he has got the *game*.

Interest its secret bias may impart,  
When least suspected, to an upright heart :  
But when a creed and worldly views unite,  
Where interest is the *only* rule of right ;  
Where loaves and fishes all our goodly show  
Depend on people's thinking so and so ;  
What pompous, loud, declamatory wrath,  
The mere expression of a doubt calls forth !  
The weight of argument is balanced here,  
Against so many thousand pounds a year ;  
What dreadful, dangerous heresy is taught !  
It must be silenced will not bear a thought !

Is party spirit, therefore, only found  
In one enclosure of disputed ground ?  
No ; while *Nathaniels* stand on either side  
The boundary lines that differing sects divide,  
Unchristian tempers every form may take,

And truth itself be loved for party's sake.

The man whom conscience, less than mental pride,  
Early enlisted on the opposing side,  
Proves that the flames of an unhallowed fire,  
Not love to God and man, his zeal inspire.  
Pleased, proud to differ, eloquent to teach  
The lesser doctrines that enlarge the breach,  
In bold defiance of the christian rule,  
Says to his brother, 'raca,' and 'thou fool ;'  
Or vainly hopes to violate its laws,  
Beneath the sanction of a righteous cause.  
Rejoiced, not grieved in spirit, to behold  
Abuses thicken in the neighbouring fold ;  
And doubting, grudging, backward to concede  
That any sheep within that pasture feed.  
Intent his controversial shafts to draw,  
Omits the weightier matters of the law ;  
Wont more on points of party strife to dwell,  
Than emulous to save a soul from hell.  
Yet, if his soul be free from *wilful* guile,  
Believes he does God service all the while.  
But oh ! the darkest candidate for bliss,  
Who seeking that, spares not a thought for this,  
Though much encumbered should his notions be,  
Is safer, happier, nearer Heaven than he.

Come, let us rise from party's noisy sphere,  
To trace an honest mind in its career ;  
And see how far true greatness spreads its flight  
Above the *cleverness* of party spite.  
He, from the regions of a calmer day,  
Hears the faint clamour of the distant fray :  
Hears but to pity while in tranquil mood  
He holds his course in happy solitude.  
Truth his sole object, this, with simple aim,  
He follows, caring little for the name ;  
Not with the poor intent to make her stand  
And wave *his* party's ensign in her hand,  
Mocking his neighbour's pitiful mistake ;  
But for her own invaluable sake.

That is the truly philosophic mind,  
Which no inferior influence can bind ;  
Which all endeavours to confine were vain,  
Though the earth's orbit were its length of chain.  
But not that boldness which delights to break  
From what our fathers taught, for license' sake,  
Through all dry places wandering, still in quest,  
Like lawless fiends, of some unhallowed rest ;  
The love of truth is genuine, when combined

With unaffected humbleness of mind.  
*He* values most, who feels with sense acute  
His own deep interest in the grand pursuit ;  
Who heaven-ward spreads his undiverted wing,  
Godly simplicity the moving spring.  
No meaner power can regulate his flight,  
Too much is staked upon his going right.  
Dry, heartless speculation may succeed,  
Where the sole object is to frame a creed ;  
The sophist's heart may suit their eager quest,  
Who only aim to prove *their* creed the best ;  
But not such views *his* anxious search control,  
Who loves the truth because he loves his soul.  
Truth is but one with Heaven, in his esteem,  
The sparkling spring of life's eternal stream ;  
And hence, with equal singleness of heart,  
He traces out each less essential part :  
No worldly motives can his views entice ;  
He parts with all to gain the pearl of price.

Why is opinion, singly as it stands,  
So much inherited like house and lands ?  
Whence comes it that from sire to son it goes,  
Like a dark eye-brow or a Roman nose ?  
How comes it, too, that notions, wrong or right,  
Which no direct affinities unite,  
On every side of party ground, one sees,  
Clung close together like a swarm of bees ?  
Where one is held, through habit, form, or force,  
The rest are all consented to of course,  
As though combined by some interior plot ;  
Is it necessity, or chance, or what ?  
Where'er the undiscovered cause be sought,  
No man would trace its origin to *thought* :  
Then shall we say, with leave of *Dr. Gall*,  
It comes to pass from thinking not at all ?

Though man a *thinking* being is defined,  
Few use the grand prerogative of mind :  
How few think justly of the thinking few !  
How many never think, who think they do !  
Opinion, therefore such our mental dearth  
Depends on mere locality or birth.  
Hence, the warm tory, eloquent and big  
With loyal zeal, had he been *born* a whig,  
Would rave for liberty with equal flame,  
No shadow of distinction but the name.  
Hence, Christian bigots, 'neath the pagan cloud,  
Had roared for 'great Diana' just as loud ;  
Or, dropped at Rome, at Mecca, or Pekin,  
For *Fo* , the prophet, or the man of sin,



## Essays in Rhyme on Morals and Manners

Much of the light and soundness of our creed,  
Whate'er it be, depends on what we read.  
How many clamour loudly for their way,  
Who never heard what others have to say :  
Fixt where they are, determined to be right,  
They fear to be disturbed by further light ;  
And where the voice of argument is heard,  
Away they run, and will not hear a word.  
Form notions vague, and gathered up by chance,  
Or mere report, of what you might advance ;  
Resolve the old frequented path to tread,  
And still to think as they were born and bred.

Besides this blind devotion to a sect  
Custom produces much the same effect.  
Our desks with piles of controversy groan ;  
But still, alas ! each party's with its own,  
Each deems his logic must conviction bring,  
If people would but read ; but there's the thing !  
The sermons, pamphlets, papers, books, reviews,  
That plead our own opinions, we peruse ;  
And these alone as though the plan had been  
To rivet all our prejudices in.  
'Tis really droll to see how people's shelves,  
Go where you will, are labelled like themselves.  
Ask if your neighbour he whose party tone,  
Polemic, or political, is known  
Sees such a publication naming one  
That takes a different side, or sides with none ;  
And straight in flat, uncomfortable-wise,  
That damps all further mention, he replies,  
'No, sir, we do not see that work I know  
Its general views ; *we* take in so and so.'  
Thus each retains his notions, every one ;  
Thus they descend complete from sire to son ;  
And hence, the blind contempt so freely shown  
For every one's opinions but our own.  
How oft from public or from private pique,  
Conscience and truth are not allowed to speak :  
Reasons might weigh that now are quite forgot,  
If such a man or party urged them not ;  
But oh, what logic strong enough can be,  
To prove that *they* have clearer views than *we* !

In times like ours, 'twere wise if people would  
Well scrutinize their zeal for doing good.  
A few plain questions might suffice, to prove  
What flows from party what from christian love.  
Our prayers are heard some Mussulman, at last  
Forsakes his prophet some Hindoo his caste ;  
Accepts a Saviour, and avows the choice ;

## Essays in Rhyme on Morals and Manners

How glad we are, how much our hearts rejoice !  
The news is told and echoed, till the tale,  
Howe'er reviving, almost waxes stale.  
A second convert Gospel grace allures  
Oh, but this time he was not *ours* but *yours* ;  
It came to pass we know not when or how ;  
Well, are we *quite* as glad and thankful now ?  
Or can we scarce the rising wish suppress,  
That *we* were honoured with the whole success ?

There is an eye that marks the ways of men,  
With strict, impartial, analyzing ken :  
Our motley creeds, our crude opinions, lie  
All, all unveiled to that omniscient eye.  
He sees the softest shades by error thrown ;  
Marks where His truth is left to shine alone ;  
Decides with most exact, unerring skill,  
Wherein we differ from His word and will.  
No specious names nor reasonings to His view,  
The false can varnish, or deform the true ;  
Nor vain excuses e'er avail, to plead  
The *right* of theory for the *wrong* of deed.  
Before that unembarrassed, just survey,  
What heaps of refuse must be swept away ;  
How must its search from every creed remove  
All but the golden grains of truth and love !  
Yet, with compassion for our feeble powers,  
For oh ! His thoughts and ways are not as ours.

There is a day, in flaming terrors bright,  
When truth and error shall be brought to light.  
Who then shall rise, amid the shining throng,  
To boast that *he* was right, and *you* were wrong ?  
When each rejoicing saint shall veil his face,  
And none may triumph, but in glorious grace !  
No meaner praise shall heavenly tongues employ :  
Yet, *they* shall reap the more abundant joy,  
Who sought His truth, with simple, humble aim  
To do His will, and glorify His name.

### EXPERIENCE.

A COSTLY good ; that none e'er bought or sold  
For gem, or pearl, or miser's store, twice told :  
Save certain watery pearls, possessed by all,  
Which, one by one, may buy it as they fall.  
Of these, though precious, few will not suffice,  
So slow the traffic, and so large the price !

It is for wrinkled brows, grey locks, and sighs,

EXPERIENCE.

## Essays in Rhyme on Morals and Manners

Not for bright blooming cheeks and sparkling eyes ;  
When those have faded, these as dimly shine  
Then, in their stead, Experience may be thine.  
Books will assert, and sires and pulpits teach,  
And youth may listen to their sober speech,  
And smiling lips pronounce a careless 'yes,'  
While neither eye nor heart can acquiesce.  
But grief extorts conviction ; brings to view  
Those slightest words, and answers 'very true.'  
Surprised, reluctant, yet at last compelled  
To own, what long in doubtful scale was held,  
That life, whate'er the course our own has led,  
Is much the same as what our fathers said.

A tattered cottage, to the view of taste,  
In beauty glows, at needful distance placed :  
Its broken panes, its richly ruined thatch,  
Its gable graced with many a mossy patch,  
The sunset lighting up its varied dyes,  
Form quite a picture to poetic eyes ;  
And yield delight that modern brick and board,  
Square, sound, and well arranged, would not afford.  
But, cross the mead to take a nearer ken,  
Where all the magic of the vision then ?  
The picturesque is vanished, and the eye,  
Averted, turns from loathsome poverty ;  
And while it lingers, e'en the sun's pure ray  
Seems almost sullied by its transient stay.  
The broken walls, with slight repairs embossed,  
Are but cold comforts in a winter's frost :  
No smiling, peaceful peasant, half refined,  
There tunes his reed on rustic seat reclined ;  
But there the bended form and haggard face,  
Worn with the lines that vice and misery trace.  
Thus fades the charm, by vernal hope supplied  
To every object it has never tried ;  
To fairy visions, and elysian meads,  
Thus vulgar, cold reality succeeds.

When sanguine youth the plain of life surveys,  
It does not calculate on rainy days.  
Some, as they enter on the unknown way,  
Expect large troubles at a distant day ;  
The loss of wealth, or friends they fondly prize ;  
But reckon not on ills of smaller size,  
Those nameless, trifling ills, that intervene,  
And people life, infesting every scene ;  
And there with silent, unavowed success,  
Wear off the keener edge of happiness :  
Those teasing swarms, that buzz about our joys,  
More potent than the whirlwind that destroys ;

EXPERIENCE.

## Essays in Rhyme on Morals and Manners

Potent, with heavenly teaching, to attest  
Life is a pilgrimage, and not a rest.

*That* lesson, learned aright, is valued more  
Than all experience ever taught before ;  
For this her choicest secret, timely given,  
Is wisdom, virtue, happiness, and heaven.  
Long is religion viewed, by many an eye,  
As wanted more for safety by and by,  
A thing for times of danger and distress,  
Than needful for our present happiness.  
But after fruitless, wearisome assays  
To find repose and peace in other ways,  
The sickened soul when Heaven imparts its grace,  
Returns to seek its only resting place ;  
And sweet Experience proves, as years increase,  
That wisdom ways *are* pleasantness and peace.  
Yes, and the late conviction, fraught with pain,  
On many a callous conscience strikes in vain.

Blind to ourselves to others not less blind,  
We slowly learn to understand mankind.  
Sanguine and ardent, indisposed to hold  
The cautious maxims that our fathers told,  
We place new objects in the fairest light,  
And offer generous friendship at first sight ;  
Expect (though not the first-rate mental powers)  
A mind, at least, in unison with ours ;  
Free from those meaner faults, that most conspire  
To damp our love, if not put out its fire.  
Cold o'er the heart the slight expression steals,  
That first some trait of character reveals ;  
A fault, perhaps, less prominent alone,  
But causing painful friction with our own.  
Long is the harsh, reluctant thought suppress,  
We drive the cold suspicion from our breast ;  
But when confirmed, our generous love condemn,  
Turn off disgusted with the world and them  
Resolve no more at Friendship's fane to serve,  
And call her names she does not quite deserve.  
But this is rash Experience would confess  
That friendship's very frailties chill us less  
(Sincere and well-intentioned all the while)  
Than the world's complaisant and polished smile.  
With other chattels, nameless in my verse,  
Friends must be held 'for better and for worse ;'  
And that alone true friendship we should call,  
Which undertakes to love us *faults and all* ;  
And, she who guides this humble line could prove  
There is, there *is*, such candid, generous love :  
And from the life, her faithful hand could paint

EXPERIENCE.

## Essays in Rhyme on Morals and Manners

Glowing exceptions to her own complaint.

But that, of all discoveries life can boast,  
Which disappoints us and surprises most,  
Is, when the pleasing veil that serves to hide  
*Self* from itself, by chance is drawn aside.  
As when, perhaps, some kindred mind is shown,  
In which we trace a portrait of our own :  
Dissolved at once, as by the morning ray,  
The mists of self-delusion pass away,  
As that bright moment's unexpected glare  
Shows us the best and worst of what we are.  
Or some chance word, in hasty converse dropt,  
By which the wheel-work of the mind is stopt,  
That movement which in daily course goes round,  
And leaves us just precisely where it found :  
This casual word creates a wholesome pause ;  
The startled mind its quick conclusion draws,  
Perceives the form it wears to other eyes,  
The proper level where its talents rise,  
And ere returning to a different theme,  
Sinks a degree or two in self-esteem ;  
Then off it goes again, with little cost,  
Save that the multiplying wheel is lost.

But if such sudden shock abate its force,  
Experience aids it by a slower course :  
Time, spite of fools and flattery, lets us see  
Just what we are, not what we thought to be.  
Midway in life we pause, compare with shame  
Our present progress with our early aim ;  
Look back on years with purpose high begun,  
In which the task intended was not done,  
And see beyond us a declining sun ;  
Fair opportunities for ever fled ;  
The vigorous impulse dying, if not dead ;  
And we, in knowledge, habit, temper, state,  
Nothing superior to the common rate.

How false is found, as on in life we go,  
Our early estimate of bliss and woe !  
Some sparkling joy attracts us, that we fain  
Would sell a precious birth-right to obtain.  
There all our hopes of happiness are placed ;  
Life looks without it like a joyless waste ;  
No good is prized, no comfort sought beside ;  
Prayers, tears implore, and will not be denied.  
Heaven pitying hears the intemperate, rude appeal,  
And suits its answer to our truest weal.  
The self-sought idol, if at last bestowed,  
Proves, what our wilfulness required a goad ;

EXPERIENCE.

## Essays in Rhyme on Morals and Manners

Ne'er but as needful chastisement is given  
The wish thus forced, and torn, and stormed from Heaven :  
But if withheld, in pity, from our prayer,  
We rave, awhile, of torment and despair,  
Refuse each proffered comfort with disdain,  
And slight the thousand blessings that remain ;  
Meantime, Heaven bears the grievous wrong, and waits  
In patient pity till the storm abates ;  
Applies with gentlest hand the healing balm,  
Or speaks the ruffled mind into a calm ;  
Deigning, perhaps, to show the mourner soon,  
'Twas special mercy that denied the boon.

Our blasted hopes, our aims and wishes crost,  
Are worth the tears and agonies they cost,  
When the poor mind, by fruitless efforts spent,  
With food and raiment learns to be content.  
Bounding with youthful hope, the restless mind  
Leaves that divine monition far behind,  
But tamed at length by suffering, comprehends  
The tranquil happiness to which it tends ;  
Perceives the high-wrought bliss it aimed to share,  
Demands a richer soil, a purer air ;  
That 'tis not fitted, and would strangely grace  
The mean condition of our mortal race ;  
And all we need in this terrestrial spot,  
Is calm contentment with 'the common lot.'

Oh, who that takes a retrospective view  
Of years, now fading in the distant blue,  
The snares to which impetuous we had flown,  
Restrained by God's resistless arm alone.  
How, ever yielding to our own self will,  
We would refuse the good, and choose the ill,  
He interposing still on our behalf,  
Still safely guiding by His rod and staff ;  
But with subdued, submissive heart would cry,  
"Choose *Thou* my portion, guide me with thine eye ;  
One sole condition would I dare suggest  
That thou wouldst save me from mine own request !"

In many streams may trouble wind its course ;  
But to ourselves we still must trace its source,  
And 'tis a thing impossible, we find,  
Go where we will, to leave *ourselves* behind.  
Feeling that burden wearisome to bear,  
We seek to shift the scene and change the air ;  
From homespun cares commence our sanguine flight,  
And on some verdant, peaceful vale alight.  
Sweet is the scene, and sweet the tranquil hour ;  
The harassed mind perceives its soothing power ;

EXPERIENCE.

## Essays in Rhyme on Morals and Manners

For that short moment novelty can please,  
Imagines health and joy in every breeze ;  
That moment past, the quick returning mood  
Spreads its own tinge on wood, and vale, and flood ;  
The pearly heaven is tintured with our pain,  
And casts its faint reflection on the main ;  
The hills' bare outline seems to represent  
The very features of our discontent ;  
The rock's fantastic fragments range as though  
Fresh shivered to the pattern of our woe.  
In vain we argue with ourselves, and *prove*  
The scene delightful, just the kind we love ;  
In vain we urge and strain the languid sense,  
To wring a drop of happiness from thence :  
Yet, charge not rocks and hills with thy complaint,  
The scene is lovely, but the heart is faint :  
Invite sweet peace and charity to flow,  
And nature brightens to her purest glow.

When hope her seat to memory has resigned,  
And our chief solace is to look behind,  
Then shall we learn, perhaps too late, to know  
That sin weighs heavier on the mind than woe.  
Grief, genuine grief, that comes at God's command,  
In which our own misconduct has no hand,  
Though, for the present, not a joyous thing,  
Yet, when it passes over, leaves no sting.  
The pains we feared, the ills we dreaded most,  
Departed seem a weak and harmless host ;  
We suffered, wept, but now can smile serene,  
And wonder that our anguish was so keen :  
Or if some blow that struck the tenderest part,  
Has left its deep impression and its smart ;  
Still years allay it, and at length diffuse  
A pleasing sadness that we would not lose.  
But when by conscience, memory's eye is cast,  
Pained and reluctant, on the guilty past,  
And sees life's path bestrewed on every side  
With sins and follies, thick and multiplied,  
Follies for which our shame arrives too late,  
Sins that Heaven only can obliterate,  
And what slight efforts had restrained their powers  
How bitter the remembrance to this hour !

Once in a town remote in Britain's isle,  
A female stranger lodged in humble style :  
The village gossip, roused when first she came,  
At last discovered little but her name ;  
And scandal, weary with its fruitless quest,  
Conjectured and invented all the rest.  
Her quiet habits, and abstracted cast,

EXPERIENCE.

## Essays in Rhyme on Morals and Manners

Repelled inquiry, and it dropt at last.  
Her years were waning, and her whole array  
Bespoke neglect, indifference, and decay ;  
Yet no wild look betrayed a wandering brain,  
It was not 'crazy Kate,' nor 'crazy Jane ;'  
Nor high expression marked some sudden fall,  
A common care-worn person that was all.

Year after year she wandered up and down,  
Mid the dull out-skirts of that little town :  
She loved a lonely turn, but 'twas her way  
To put it off till towards the close of day ;  
And there, all winter long, she might be met  
Taking her walk as soon as sun was set.  
When the dark sky foretold a stormy night,  
And all the parlour fires were blazing bright,  
Just as their social parties came to meet,  
They used to see her pacing down the street.  
'Twas said she used a wishful eye to cast  
On such a lively circle as she passed,  
As though the smiling group and cheerful blaze  
Waked some remembrance of her early days ;  
But still her lonely wanderings would prefer,  
For she was strange to them, and they to her.

Beyond the town some low, damp meadows lay,  
Through which a sluggish stream pursued its way ;  
Tall reeds in that slow, silent water stood,  
And curling vapours rested on its flood :  
This walk she chose, and though it seemed so dull,  
It pleased her much, because her heart was full ;  
And there, unheeded by the passing breeze,  
She used to vent it in such words as these.

"There's something suits the temper of my mind  
In the deep howlings of this wintry wind :  
How the sky lowers ! all darkly overspread,  
Save one horizon streak of awful red :  
So lowers *my* sky, and that bright line appears,  
Like the last glimmer of departed years.  
If those who loved me then, could see this sight,  
Me, wandering here on such a cheerless night,  
A poor, lone stranger in this friendless wild,  
How they would mourn for their deserted child !  
But they are gone, and now these storms may blow,  
And I, unheeded, wander to and fro,  
And not in all this peopled world, find one  
To screen and cherish me as they had done.  
I thought the world was kinder, and would prove  
Some compensation for my parents' love :  
I thought of friends that once united band

EXPERIENCE.



With whom I used to journey hand in hand ;  
But some are gone whence traveller ne'er returns,  
The rest are eager in their own concerns ;  
They might not spurn me, but I would not go  
To tax them with the burden of my woe.  
This rugged world affords, at last, no rest  
Like the safe covert of a parent's breast.  
Oh, they had pity for my slightest pain,  
I never sought *their* sympathy in vain !  
My dear indulgent father, how he strove  
To train and win me by his patient love ;  
Endured my froward temper, and displayed  
A kind forbearance that was ill repaid ;  
To thwart my little pleasures ever loth,  
They yielded much, he and my mother both.  
I was a sickly one, and all her skill,  
And all her pity came when I was ill :  
I can remember how she was distressed,  
And took more thought for me than all the rest ;  
And what a sweet relief it seemed to be  
To lay my aching head upon her knee :  
Then she would moan, and stroke my sickly cheek,  
And I was better while I heard her speak.  
Thus I was fostered, thus my early days  
She would enliven in a thousand ways,  
My slightest pleasure to her own prefer  
Yet, I grew up, and was not kind to her.  
I grew up selfish, full of thoughts and cares  
For my own good, but unconcerned for theirs ;  
I had my tastes and pleasures, but despised  
The homespun comforts that my parents prized ;  
Warm friendships cherished, but I felt above  
The common claims of dutiful filial love :  
I gave cold service, but the smile that cheers,  
The softer tone that soothes declining years,  
These I withheld they felt it and the dart  
That wounded them, now rankles in my heart.  
They had their failings ah, dear parents ! how  
Those few infirmities are vanished now !  
Would that I now could bear them, now too late,  
Sustain and soothe instead of aggravate !  
Would they could hear these wailings ! but they died  
There, there they sweetly slumber, side by side !  
And would not lift a hand, nor raise an eye,  
To bid me cease this unavailing cry."

'Twas thus, in those dull evenings, all alone,  
She used, from time to time, to make her moan ;  
And long frequented she the meadow's side,  
In that desponding way : at last she died.

## Essays in Rhyme on Morals and Manners

Far having wandered, let the muse rehearse,  
And gather up the fragments of her verse.  
It seems, at last, Experience does but show  
What sense and conscience witnessed long ago ;  
Decides the whole dispute 'twixt Heaven and Earth,  
Proving *her* promise to be nothing worth ;  
And that He knew our hearts and wants, who spoke  
Of a light burden and an easy yoke.  
Could we but credit Heaven's unerring pen,  
We need not wait till three-score years and ten.  
He says His ways are pleasant not alone  
To pure, bright spirits bending round the throne,  
But pleasant, peaceful, suited to the powers  
Of such poor sordid, earthly souls as ours ;  
We doubt and all Experience claims to do,  
Is simply this to prove the statement true.

### EGOTISM.

YE powers fantastic ! goblin, sylph and fay,  
Whose subtle forms no laws material sway ;  
Ethereal essences, that dart and glide  
Wherever pleasure or caprice may guide ;  
Who leap with equal ease, if ye are bid,  
A lady's thimble and a pyramid,  
And scale, alike regardless of a fall,  
The parlour fender and the Chinese wall,  
Slip through a key-hole, 'neath the listed door,  
Or from the smallest crevice in the floor ;  
Or steer your way (and man's devices mock)  
Through the dark mazes of a patent lock ;  
Of you I sing not but my theme shall be  
Of things as quick and volatile as ye,  
Those busy, subtle pronouns, *I* and *Me*.  
Unsought, and unexpected they appear ;  
No barriers heed they, and no laws revere;  
But wind and penetrate, with dextrous force,  
Through all the cracks and crannies of discourse.

Of those with whom *self* proves the darling theme,  
Not all indulge it in a like extreme ;  
Some have the sense to cover it no doubt ;  
Would they had sense enough to root it out !  
We therefore bring, as first upon the list,  
The loud, loquacious, vulgar egotist ;  
Whose *I's* and *Me's* are scattered in his talk,  
Thick as the pebbles on a gravel walk.  
Whate'er the topic be, through thick and thin  
Himself is thrust, or squeezed, or sidled in.  
Conceiving thus his own importance swells,

EGOTISM.

He makes himself a part of all he tells ;  
And still to this he winds the subject round :  
Suppose his friend is married, sick, or drowned,  
*He* brought about the match, he lets you know ;  
Told him about Miss B. a year ago ;  
Or never shall forget, whate'er ensues,  
How much he felt when first he heard the news.  
A horseman thrown, lay weltering in the mud;  
*He* thought of something that would stop the blood.  
A neighbour had a quarrel with his wife ;  
*He* never saw such doings in his life !  
A fire broke out at midnight in the town ;  
*He* started up, threw on his flannel gown,  
Seized an old hat full twice as large as his,  
And said, *says he* , 'I wonder where it is !'  
Was doubtful if 'twere best to stay or go,  
And trembled like a leaf, from top to toe.  
In vain at times, some modest stander-by,  
Catching a pause to make his brief reply,  
Cries, 'dear!' or 'only think!' or, 'so did I ;'  
For he, by no such obstacles deterred,  
Runs on, must tell his tale, and *will* be heard.

Woe to themselves, and woe to small and great,  
When two good egotists are *tête-à-tête* !  
A battle this, though not of swords, but tongues,  
And he the victor who has strongest lungs,  
Too eager each in what himself recites,  
To see how little interest it invites,  
Each takes the attention his companion shows,  
For pleasure in the story as it goes ;  
Though judging by himself, he might have known,  
He is but waiting to begin his own,  
Watching some gap in the opponent's speech  
To force it in like soldiers at a breach.

Few *talkers* can detain themselves to weigh  
The true impression made by what they say ;  
And of all talkers, egotists are last  
E'en to suspect that they may talk too fast,  
But often, while pursuing their career,  
Rejoiced that while they speak the rest must hear,  
Some dry observer, whom they scarce perceive,  
Sits smiling in his philosophic sleeve,  
Impelled (while others carelessly condemn)  
To blush for human nature and for them.

But 'tis not only with the loud and rude  
That *self* betrays its nature unsubdued ;  
Polite attention and refined address  
But ill conceal it, and can ne'er suppress :

## Essays in Rhyme on Morals and Manners

One truth, despite of manner, stands confest  
They love themselves unspeakably the best.

Many monopolists of words have been  
Unconscious quite of their besetting sin ;  
Of strong susceptibility possessed,  
Enraptured oft, and oft as much distress,  
They deem themselves, nor others deem them less,  
Affectionate and feeling to excess :  
The charge of selfishness, or unconcern  
In other's weal, with indignation spurn,  
And think their failing and their weakest part,  
Is having, as the phrase is too much heart.  
But tender hearts as well were hearts of stone,  
If what they feel is for themselves alone.

Have you no knowledge of this species ? then  
Take fair *Matilda* for a specimen ;  
Compare the sketch with faces you have known,  
And ere you quite discard it with your own.  
What ! has *Matilda* , then, no heart to feel  
Generous emotion for another's weal ?  
Oh yes, she has the doubt she would declare  
Hard and unjust to *her* , beyond compare ;  
Her friends' and neighbours' interests to forget  
She were the last to bear the blame but yet  
Engrossed by cares and interests of her own,  
In *fact* , she gladly lets her friends alone ;

Too eager, and too busy to reflect,  
What others may, and what they do expect.

Calm observation, and acute survey  
Of others and ourselves, are swept away  
By that strong, rude velocity of thought,  
Which meets no proper barrier where it ought,  
But rushes on, impetuous and unstemmed :  
Astonished, and abashed, and self-condemned,  
Would stand *Matilda* , could she once be shown  
Not other people's failings, but her own ;  
And see, how borne on that perpetual tide,  
She thinks and talks of self, and none beside :  
Then might she learn to check its rapid force,  
Abate its swiftness, and divert its course,  
Make it through other fields meandering go,  
And drain, in time, the selfish channel low.

*Matilda's* friend, as few besides had done,  
(A patient, quiet, unpretending one)  
Sits cheerful and unwearied day by day,  
To hear, as usual, what she has to say.

EGOTISM.

## Essays in Rhyme on Morals and Manners

By long experience, now at length, she learns  
To drop all reference to her own concerns ;  
The insipid 'dear !' or 'sure !' too well declares  
Impatience in discussing those affairs ;  
And then, the eager tone and altered brow,  
How much her own are dearer so that now,  
Whether her heart be aching, or it swell  
With some sweet hope, 'twould be a joy to tell  
She checks the inclination, to attend  
To some new project of her eager friend :  
How she intends, as soon as winter's o'er,  
To make a passage to the nursery door,  
Enlarge the parlour where she loves to sit,  
And have the Turkey carpet made to fit ;  
Or, how she means next spring to go to town,  
And then to have her aunt and uncle down.  
Or if more intellectual in her mood,  
How she employs her hours of solitude ;  
Her plans, how much they fail, or how succeed ;  
What last she read, and what she means to read ;

What time she rises, and what time retires,  
And how her deeds fall short of her desires.  
All this is very well, perhaps you cry ;  
True, if her friend might whisper, 'so do I.'

Whene'er from home *Matilda* has to go,  
With the same theme her letters overflow ;  
Sheet after sheet in rapid course she sends,  
Brimful and crossed, and written at both ends,  
About her journey, visits, feelings, friends :  
Still, still the same ! or if her friend had cast  
Down in a modest postscript in her last,  
Some line, which to transactions may refer,  
Of vital consequence, perhaps, to her  
*Matilda* , in reply, just scrawls, you know  
Along that slip on which the seal must go,  
'I'm glad, or grieved, to hear of so and so.'

How can she pardon such unkind neglects ?  
Why 'tis poor human nature, she reflects ;  
Judging with kindness, candour, and good sense,  
Takes it from whence it comes, without offence :  
And she, with meekness gifted to endure  
The evil she laments, but cannot cure,  
Too wise to censure or resent the ill,  
Sees it, and smiles, as even friendship will ;  
Resolves to watch *herself* with double toil,  
And root the selfish weeds from nature's soil.  
And so should we, for we are selfish all,  
Without one real exception since the fall

## Essays in Rhyme on Morals and Manners

Good nature and good sense in some, 'tis true,  
Do much the vicious temper to subdue ;  
While some unwittingly allow its growth,  
Who yet might fair pretensions make to both.  
Of all impostors he least wisdom shows  
Who can and does upon himself impose.  
Self-knowledge of all knowledge is the best ;  
By most pretended, but by few possessed.  
That true philosophy not understood,  
The aim to do ourselves or others good  
Proves weak ; for they who to themselves are blind,  
Rarely attain the knowledge of mankind.  
But self-acquaintance is a certain guide ;  
That key unlocks ten thousand hearts beside ;  
There, in a glass, the common cast is shown ;  
He knows the world who truly knows his own.

The tattered wretch, who scrapes his idle tunes  
Through our dull streets on rainy afternoons,  
The lawless nuisance of the king's highway,  
Houseless and friendless, wander where he may :  
Suspected, spurned, unbound by social ties,  
With none to mourn or miss him when he dies ;  
Still, to himself, that vagrant man appears  
The central object of revolving spheres,  
Not less than he, who sweeps with regal robe  
Half the circumference of the peopled globe.  
All seem for *him*, that eye or thought can view,  
The ground he treads, and heaven's ethereal blue,  
The sheltering hovel he has gained from far,  
And the hint glimmer of the utmost star.  
Nought he regards by art or nature made,  
But as it serves his pleasure or his trade ;  
Mankind, should he define them, this the sense,  
Things bearing purses yielding pence :  
The ranging doors that meet his practised eye,  
But places seem where he may knock and try ;  
Where'er he stands, creation's dearest spot ;  
For what were all to him if *he* were not ?

'Twas thus I mused as he was passing by,  
Roused by the tones of his harsh minstrelsy ;  
And smiled and marvelled that such low estate  
Wrought not indifference in him to his fate :  
Till, unperceived, my roving thoughts had flown,  
Far from *his* fate and feelings, to my own ;  
And deep engraven in my heart I saw  
The same strong influence and imperious law.  
Self, self, with all the weight of woe it bears,  
All its infirmities, and wants, and cares,  
Its untold bitterness, its shame and ill

## Essays in Rhyme on Morals and Manners

Why is it magnified and worshipped still ?  
When shall we break that bondage and be free  
See our own interests but as others see ?  
And feel, as down the ceaseless stream we pass,  
But viewless atoms in the mighty mass !

To view ourselves with stern and stoic eye,  
Calm and unbiassed, like a stander-by,  
Keeping aloof, and looking from above,  
Detached from interest, prejudice, self-love,  
This, while it humbles, yet exalts the mind  
Above the common level of mankind.  
The soul that knows its mean and bounded length  
Makes some approach to grandeur and to strength :  
Conscious of littleness it learns to tower,  
Knowing its feebleness, attains to power :  
This makes the grand distinction that befalls,  
Between the mind that soars and that which crawls.  
That is a vulgar mind, which never learns  
The just dimensions of its own concerns ;  
But sunk in petty interests, private cares,  
Fancies vast import in its small affairs.  
True, the philosopher himself is caught  
Absorbed, at times, in low and selfish thought ;  
But here the difference lies, that he can smile  
At that contracted temper all the while ;  
And thence his soul, with glad transition, springs  
Tired and disgusted up to nobler things.

Poor human nature ! whither should it flee,  
Undone, infirm, and weak beyond degree,  
But to the well of life ? that healthful tide,  
Whose waters, when by humble faith applied,  
Raise up the impotent, restore the blind,  
And cure the inveterate maladies of mind.  
*He* knows, who fashioneth our hearts the same,  
Every *minutia* of their inmost frame ;  
To which in that blest volume he has writ,  
The line and precept admirably fit :  
They reach, not actions only, but the thought  
That tends to folly not alone are brought  
Against the act that does our neighbour wrong,  
They teach the egotist to hold his tongue.

How vainly may we follow and digest  
What human wits and moralists attest ;  
E'en those who studied human nature most,  
Shakespeare and Johnson, Locke and all the host ;  
And even pore in vain on that bright page  
Which teaches and consoles from age to age ;  
Unless we come imploring help and cure,

EGOTISM.

Guilty and impotent, and blind and poor,  
Asking for 'all things new,' by faith and prayer ;  
Not with some little failing here and there,  
Which, proving inconvenient where it stands,  
We wish completely taken off our hands ;  
But seek (accounting all beside it loss)  
A thorough renovation at the cross.  
Then would the healing streams of mercy wind  
Throughout the sickly mazes of the mind ;  
The weed of selfishness would droop and die,  
And plants of charity their place supply ;  
That fruitful stream, refreshing as it flows,  
Would make the desert blossom as the rose.

### POETRY AND REALITY.

THE worldly minded, cast in common mould,  
With all his might pursuing fame or gold,  
And towards that goal too vehemently hurled  
To waste a thought about another world,  
Has one advantage which yon lofty host,  
His intellectual betters, may not boast :  
Neither deceiving nor deceived, he knows  
He and religion are inveterate foes ;  
He loves it not, and making no pretence,  
He shows his honesty, if not his sense.

But we have seen a high-flown, mental thing,  
As fine and fragile as *libella's* wing,  
All soul and intellect, the ethereal mind  
Scarcely within its earthly house confined,  
On heaven oft casting an enraptured eye,  
And paying compliments to the Most High ;  
And yet, though harsh the judgment seem to be,  
As far from Heaven, as far from God, as he :  
Yes, might the bold assertion be forgiven,  
A *poet's* soul may miss the road to Heaven !

'Tis Sabbath morning, and at early hour,  
The poet seeks his own sequestered bower :  
The shining landscape stretches full in view ;  
All heaven is glowing with unclouded blue ;  
The hills lie basking in the sunny beams,  
Enriched with sprinkled hamlets, woods, and streams :  
And hark ! from tower and steeple, here and there,  
The cheerful chime bespeaks the hour of prayer.  
The poet's inmost soul responsive swells  
To every change of those religious bells ;  
His fine eye ranging o'er the spacious scene,  
With ecstasy unutterably keen ;



His mind exalted, melted, soothed, and free  
From earthly tumult, all tranquillity ;  
If this is not devotion, what can be ?

But, gentle poet, wherefore not repair  
To yonder temple ? God is worshipped there.  
Nay, wherefore should he ? wherefore not address  
The God of nature in that green recess,  
Surrounded by His works, and not confined  
To rites adapted to the vulgar mind ?  
There he can sit, and thence his soul may rise,  
Caught up in contemplation, to the skies,  
And worship nature's God on reason's plan :  
It is delusion, self-applauding man !  
The God of nature is the God of grace ;  
The contrite spirit is his dwelling-place ;  
And thy proud offering, made by reason's light,  
Is all abomination in His sight.

Let him distinguish (if he can indeed)  
Wherein *his* differs from the deist's creed :  
Oh, he approves the Bible, thinks it true,  
(No matter if he ever read it through)  
Admits the evidence that some reject,  
For the Messiah professes great respect,  
And owns the sacred poets often climb  
Up to the standard of the true sublime.  
Is this then all ? is this the utmost reach  
Of what man learns when God descends to teach ?  
And is this all and were such wonders wrought,  
And tongues, and signs, and miracles, for nought ?  
If this be all, his reason's utmost scope,  
Where rests his faith, his practice, and his hope ?  
'Deny thyself' that precept, binding still  
As when first issued, how does he fulfil ?  
Where lies the cross that he would daily bear ?  
Where that reproach the Saviour's flock must share ?  
What is the dear indulgence he denies ?  
Which of his virtues is a sacrifice ?  
Is it his aim to keep the world at bay  
Where then the faith that overcomes its sway ?  
How has he learned the easy yoke to take,  
And count all things but loss for Jesus' sake ?

Nay, this is all irrational, absurd ;  
And yet, it is the Bible, word for word :  
Well, but it grates upon his classic ear ;  
'He that hath ears to hear it, let him hear. "  
Ne'er could he take, his gentle lips within,  
So unpoetical a word as *sin* ;  
He knows it not, and never felt its chains,

## Essays in Rhyme on Morals and Manners

While unmolested in his heart it reigns ;  
His self complacence is its own reward  
He wants not such a Saviour as the Lord.

Pride and indulgence, fallen nature's fruit,  
Religion strikes at, to the very root ;  
And where they hold an undisputed rule,  
That heart was never in the Gospel school.  
And he that makes religion turn and wind,  
To suit the delicacy of his mind,  
Bids God's own word his proud caprice obey,  
Takes what he likes, and throws the rest away,  
The man, whatever he may boast beside,  
Is still a slave to intellectual pride.  
His heathen altar is inscribed, at best,  
To 'God unknown,' unhonoured, unaddressed ;  
His Heaven, the same Elysian fields as theirs,  
Much such a world as this, without its cares ;  
Where souls of friends and lovers, two and two,  
Walk up and down, with nothing else to do.  
He, in that path the ancient sceptic trod,  
'Knows not the Scripture, nor the power of God ;'  
Nor loves nor looks to Sion's heavenly gate,  
Where many mansions for believers wait ;  
Where ransomed sinners round their Saviour meet,  
And cast their crowns rejoicing at His feet ;  
And where, whate'er pursuits their powers employ  
His presence makes the fulness of their joy.  
This is the bliss to which the saint aspires,  
This is that 'better country' he desires ;  
And ah ! while scoffers laugh, and sceptics doubt,  
The poor way-faring man shall find it out.

Indulgence slumbers in the arms of pride,  
This sin with that in closest bonds allied ;  
And he is still an epicure in kind,  
Who lives on pleasure, though it be refined.  
'Tis true, the love of nature genuine taste,  
Has ever minds of finest texture graced,  
And they who draw no soft emotion thence,  
Possess but half a soul, and want a sense :  
Yes, and the *Christian* poet feels its force  
With double zest, and tastes it at its source.  
But mark our fond enthusiast where he strays ;  
In pensive musings glide his tranquil days ;  
In nature's beauties, not content to find  
That bliss subordinate which God designed,  
With soothing influence, mid corroding cares,  
To cheer the hour of leisure duty spares ;  
It is his very end and chief employ,  
To view, invoke, adore it, and enjoy :

## Essays in Rhyme on Morals and Manners

He deems his aim and happiness well placed,  
Counfounding picturesque, with moral taste.

The village church, in reverend trees arrayed,  
His favourite haunt he loves that holy shade ;  
And there he muses many an eve away,  
Though not with others, on the Sabbath day.  
Nor cares he how they spend the sacred hour,  
But how much ivy grows upon the tower.  
Yes, the deluded poet can believe,  
The soothing influence of a summer's eve  
That sacred spot the train of pensive thought,  
By osiered grave and sculptured marble brought,  
The twilight gloom, the stillness of the hour,  
Poetic musings on a church yard flower,  
The moonshine, solitude, and all the rest,  
Will raise devotion's flame within his breast :  
And while susceptible of the magic spell,  
Of sacred music, and the Sabbath bell,  
And each emotion nature's form inspires,  
He fancies this is all that God requires.

Indeed, the Gospel would have been his scoff,  
If man's devices had not set it off ;  
For that which turns poor non-conformists sick,  
Touches poetic feeling to the quick :  
The gothic edifice, the vaulted dome,  
The toys bequeathed us by our cousin Rome,  
The pompous festival, the splendid rite,  
The mellow window's soft and soothing light,  
The painted altar, and the white-robed priest,  
(Those gilded keep-sakes from the dying beast)  
The silken cassock, and the sable vest,  
Please him so well that he endures the rest.  
Like him, how many ! (could we make the search)  
Who while they hate the Gospel, love ' the Church.'

That Gospel, preached by Jesus to the poor,  
Simple, sublime, and spiritual, and pure,  
Is not constructed, and was ne'er designed,  
To please the morbid, proud, romantic mind :  
'Tis not in flowers, or fields, or fancy found ;  
Nor on Arcadian, nor on *holy ground* ;  
'Tis not in poetry, 'tis not in sound ;  
Not even where those infant lips respire  
A heaven of music from the fretted quire,  
Chanting the prayer or praise in highest key,  
*Te Deum* , or *Non nobis Domine*.

He shuns the world, but not alone its toys  
Its active duties, and its better joys :

## Essays in Rhyme on Morals and Manners

'Tis true he weeps for crime at least his muse ;  
And sighs for sorrows that he never views ;  
Indulges languid wishes that mankind  
Were all poetical, and all refined ;  
Forms lofty schemes the flood of vice to stem,  
(But preaching Jesus is not one of them ;)   
And thus in waking dreams, from day to day,  
He wears his tranquil, harmless life away.  
But true benevolence is on the wing ;  
'Tis not content to look sublime and sing ;  
It rises energetic, to perform  
The hardest task, or face the rudest storm.

Crossing the poet's sacred haunt, behold,  
One formed in other, and in ruder mould.  
Rapid his pace and see, he checks it not,  
To gaze or muse on that sequestered spot :  
Perchance his eye, untutored, only sees  
In that fine shade, *St. Something's* church and trees ;  
All lost on him its magic, all in vain  
The bright reflection on the gothic pane ;  
Or, should he feel the charm, he will not stay,  
But mounts the stile, and plods his onward way.  
'I wonder, rustic stranger, who thou art !'  
I'll tell thee, gentle bard, with all my heart  
A poor Itinerant start not at the sound !  
To yonder licensed barn his course is bound ;  
To christened heathens, upon Christian ground,  
To preach or if you will, to rant and roar  
That Gospel news they never heard before.  
Two distant hamlets this same day have heard  
His warning voice, and now he seeks the third.  
No mitred chariot bears him round his See,  
Despised and unattended, journeys he :  
And want and weariness, from day to day,  
Have sown the seeds of premature decay ;  
There is a flush of hectic on his cheeks,  
There is a deadly gasping when he speaks,  
How many a rich one, less diseased than he,  
Has all that love can do, or doctor's fee ;  
Nursed up and cherished with the fondest care,  
Screened from the slightest blast of evening air ;  
At noon, well muffled in his ermined gown,  
Takes his short airing with the glasses down,  
Each novel dainty that his taste may suit  
The quivering jelly, or the costly fruit,  
Love racks invention daily to present,  
And if he do but taste it, is content.  
But not so he, nor such is his reward,  
Who takes his cross, and follows Christ the Lord.  
A brief, coarse meal, at some unseemly board,

Snatched as the hasty intervals afford ;  
Fresh from the crowded preaching-house to meet  
The keen, night vapour, or the driving sleet ;  
And then the low, damp bed, and yet the best  
The homely hamlet yields its weary guest ;  
And more than all, and worse than all to bear,  
Trial of cruel mockings every where.  
That persecution, they who do His will,  
And love their Lord in truth, shall suffer still ;  
Not such, indeed, as his fore-fathers saw,  
(Thanks to the sheltering arm of *civil* law)  
But scorn, contempt, and scandal, and disgrace,  
Which hunt His followers still, from place to place :  
Such are the hardships that his sickly frame  
Endures, and counts it joy to suffer shame.

Yes, and he reaps the fruit of all his toll ;  
He sows the seed, and God has blest the soil :  
He sees the wicked man forsake his ways :  
The scoffing tongue has learned to perfect praise ;  
The drunken quits his revelry and strife,  
And meekly listens to the word of life ;  
The noisy village, wanton and profane,  
Grows neat and decent, peace and order reign :  
At length, wide districts hail the Gospel rays,  
And the once savage *miner* kneels and prays,  
Through his dark caverns shines the heavenly light,  
And prejudice grows silent at the sight.

Now, let the *light of nature* boasting man,  
'Do so with his enchantments,' if he can !  
Nay, let him slumber in luxurious ease,  
Beneath the umbrage of his idol trees,  
Pluck a wild daisy, moralize on that,  
And drop a tear for an expiring gnat,  
Watch the light clouds o'er distant hills that pass,  
Or write a sonnet to a blade of grass.

### AIMS AT HAPPINESS.

HOW oft has sounded whip and wheel,  
How oft is buckled spur to heel,  
How many a steed in short relay  
Stands harnessed on the king's highway,  
How many a pleasure-freighted sail  
Has danced before a summer gale,  
How oft along the dusty road  
The long machine has borne its load,  
How many a step ! and all to find  
What has no place but in the mind,

## Essays in Rhyme on Morals and Manners

(Unbound to ocean, earth, or air :)  
And he who does not find it there,  
For what he seeks would vainly look,  
Though steersman made to *Captain Cook*.

Panting for pleasure never yet possessed,  
Since restless man first sought an earthly rest,  
*Felix* projected many a fair essay,  
To make life fritter pleasantly away ;  
And 'twas his firm intent to range and roam  
For what, if found at all, is found at home.  
But still restrained beneath a tutor's care,  
No wonder that he could not find it there :  
And then, his father's ways, and mother's whim,  
Were most intolerable *bores* to him.  
But these are grievances which soon give way,  
Fathers and mothers die and so did they.  
Now, with an income of sufficient size  
To gratify his wishes as they rise,  
He wants for nothing that can bliss confer,  
Freedom nor gold ; ' Well, are you happy, sir ?'  
Hear him with peevish restlessness reply,  
' Not yet, sir, but I shall be by and by.  
I can't endure this old paternal spot,  
Nor ever could, in fact ; I tell you what  
I mean to sell the place and build a cot.'

How happy they whom poverty denies  
To execute the projects they devise !  
But *Felix*, well supplied with evil's root,  
Endured the penance while he plucked the fruit.  
He sold his house, relenting all the while,  
And built his cottage, quite in cottage style ;  
Each rural ornament was quick bespoke ;  
And down they came, all fresh from London smoke.  
The tasty trellis o'er the front is seen,  
With rose and woodbine woven in between :  
Within, the well-paid artist lays it out,  
To look ten times more rural than without :  
The silver paper, or the stuccoed wall,  
Are here discarded 'tis enchantment, all  
Arcadian landscapes, 'neath Italian skies  
Profusely glow, and 'Alps o'er Alps arise ;'  
In bright relief Corinthian columns stare,  
Intwined with leaves that grow by magic there ;  
And there you sit, all safe and snug at home,  
And gaze at Spain and Turkey, Greece and Rome.

Ah, there he sits ! poor *Felix*, sits and yawns,  
In spite of paper trees and painted lawns.  
It did at first, when all was fresh and new,

AIMS AT HAPPINESS.

While people wondered, for a day or two :  
But always, always, that eternal view !  
Yes, there they are ! behold it when he will,  
The dancing shepherds, always standing still ;  
The mountains glowing just the same as ever ;  
And there the rising sun, that rises never ;  
Oh, he would give the gaudy trappings all,  
For a brown wainscot or a whited wall !

*Felix*, at length, while groaning with *ennui*,  
All in a breath, bethought him of the sea :  
Ah ! that was it ! choked up with hills and trees,  
Who could exist ! he panted for a breeze.  
So, off he sped forthwith, and travelling post,  
Like a king's messenger, he seeks the coast ;  
From yon steep hill, descries with ardent glee,  
The first blue strip of horizontal sea ;  
Again 'tis lost for many a weary mile,  
He thirsting to behold it all the while :  
At length bare hills bespeak his near advance ;  
Now straight before him rolls the wide expanse ;  
The road, with sudden turn and steep descent,  
Reveals it to him to his heart's content,  
But so abrupt and near, it seems as though  
Himself, and chaise, and all, to sea must go.  
And now the crowded lodgings searching through,  
For one to suit him, with a fine sea-view,  
He's forced, at last, though not for want of cash,  
To take a shabby room and single sash ;  
Where, 'twixt two sloping roofs, there just may be  
A slice triangular of rolling sea,  
A narrow stint ; and there he sits alone,  
Refreshed with zephyrs from the torrid zone,  
And watching all the morning, scarce can fail  
To spy a passing oar or distant sail :  
'How pleasant,' then, in languid tone, he'll cry,  
'To sit and see the boats and ships go by !'

Now 'tis high water, and with hundreds more,  
He goes to catch a breeze along the shore ;  
Or pace the crowded terrace, where one sees  
Fashion and folly, beauty and disease.  
The waning belle, come down to sport her face,  
And try her fortune at a watering-place ;  
The alderman, wheeled out in gouty chair ;  
The love-sick girl, sent down for change of air ;  
The sickly child, to bathe his crippled knee ;  
The hopeless hectic, come to try the sea ;  
The queer-faced artist, standing like a post,  
To watch the effect of sun-set on the coast :  
Then one, perchance, who differs from the rest,

## Essays in Rhyme on Morals and Manners

As much as Oh, too much to be expressed !  
He, nature's genuine lover, casts his eye,  
Lit up with intellect, on sea and sky,  
Drinks in the scene, and feels his bosom swell  
With what he could not, what he would not tell ;  
(They would have stared and sneered, or thought him mad,  
Or wondered at his oddness, if he had.)  
He goes unnoticed by the motley race ;  
But not so they he has an eye to trace  
The lines of character in every face.  
His, not the broad, unmeaning, vacant stare ;  
He does but turn to study nature there :  
The eye of suffering ventures not to meet,  
Detects the latent smirk of self-conceit,  
The even arch with hopeless dulness fraught,  
The wandering eye, bespeaking distant thought,  
The languid smile, that strives to smooth in vain  
Features contracted by incessant pain ;  
Nor his, the cold, severe, sarcastic quest ;  
A pure philanthropy has warmed his breast ;  
And many a generous sigh from thence will steal,  
For woes and vices that he cannot heal.

Meantime the vacant tribes that pass him by,  
Possessed, like him, of ear, and heart, and eye,  
(At least, if some might question it, I know  
Any anatomist would tell you so)  
See not, nor feel, nor hear a word of this,  
But find in common objects common bliss.  
To them the sea is water, and the sky  
Is full of stars, they think, and blue, and high :  
'Delightful, charming, pleasant,' they agree,  
All that of course one must admire the sea.  
And then they gape and turn, or stop to chat  
With Mrs. *This*, and then with Mr. *That*.

And such was *Felix* and he wondered still,  
Since he was neither ugly, old, nor ill,  
Why town nor country, villa, land, nor sea,  
Made him as happy as he wished to be.  
Instead of wondering, had he been inclined  
To sit and speculate about his mind ;  
Observe its inward work and native bent,  
And trace the hidden springs of discontent ;  
Mark its high destiny, and learn from thence,  
Not to insult it with the joys of sense ;  
Then were he nearer to the envied goal,  
Than e'er before, with body *versus* soul :  
The very mental effort were a feast,  
Itself, *akin* to happiness at least.



But this he knew not, and with fruitless aim  
Soon posted back no wiser than he came.  
The lessons taught at Disappointment's knee,  
Some dunces cannot learn, no more could he.  
Where next he sped to find the mystic spell,  
And how he failed, the time would fail to tell ;  
So close his story with a little fable,  
Hoping the muse will drop it on his table.

## A FABLE.

ONE day a sage knocked at a chemist's door,  
Bringing a curious compound to explore.  
'Behold ! said he, as from his vest he drew it,  
'This little treasure in a golden cruet :  
A life, a long one, for my locks are grey,  
In ceaseless toil has slowly passed away,  
To gain that treasure, now my search must stop,  
And see, I have but saved this little drop !  
To know the worth and nature of the prize,  
I bring it here for you to analyze.  
The best philosopher could never quite  
Its origin and essence bring to light ;  
But you, they say, by some mysterious arts,  
Reduce all substances to simple parts :  
Your nomenclature differs, sir, from his,  
We call it *happiness*, and here it is.'

And now the learned chemist strove to guess  
With what this curious stuff would coalesce :  
First sprinkled on a layer of golden dust,  
But this recoiled, and seemed to gender rust ;  
Now sundry essences in turn he tries,  
Distilled from all that golden dust supplies  
Castles and villas, titles, vassals, land,  
Coaches, and curricles, and fours-in-hand,  
Silks, jewels, equipages, parties, plays,  
Madeira, venison, turtle-soup, and praise ;  
But strove in vain a union to produce  
With one of these, and that small drop of juice ;  
As though impatient of the vain essay,  
It did but effervesce and fume away.

With more success the chemist next imparts  
Extracts from the *belles lettres* and the arts.  
No sooner do they reach it, than he sees  
It has some small affinity with these ;  
But yet, his nicest skill could not prevent  
A large residuum of discontent.

## Essays in Rhyme on Morals and Manners

Two curious phials next he brings to view,  
The first bright green, the next of roseate hue ;  
And first unstopped them with the greatest care,  
For when exposed to atmospheric air  
They frequently evaporate, and vain  
All efforts then to bottle them again.  
Essence of friendship from the former flows ;  
And though the drop it did not decompose,  
The chemist said, it rather seemed to fix,  
Or float upon the surface, than to mix.

Long from the next a trembling drop suspends,  
That roseate phial and at last descends ;  
'Ah,' cried the chemist, with reviving glee,  
'A perfect coalition here I see !  
Distilled from love this gentle fluid came ;'  
And then he told the sage its Latin name ;  
Then looked again, to watch the process on,  
But found, alas ! the sage's prize was gone !  
The sudden contact caused a heat extreme  
It could not brook, so passed away in steam.  
Alone the essence pale and watery lay ;  
The sage demands his treasure with dismay ;  
They search the cruet, and behold it hid,  
At last, in pearly drops upon the lid.

Though foiled, the patient chemist will not stop,  
But aiming still to decompose the drop,  
A potent acid cautiously applies,  
And straight it separates in wondrous wise.  
For first, appears at bottom of the phial  
A large precipitate of self-denial ;  
Of patience, next, a copious layer is laid ;  
Of conscience, twenty scruples nicely weighed ;  
Humility and charity, they find,  
With half a dram of self-esteem combined ;  
Labour, attached to energy of soul,  
And moderation to correct the whole ;  
Feeling and taste in airy gas unite,  
And knowledge rises in a flame of light.

### RECREATION.

WE took our work, and went, you see,  
To take an early cup of tea.  
We did so now and then, to pay  
The friendly debt, and so did they,  
Not that our friendship burnt so bright  
That all the world could see the light ;  
'Twas of the ordinary *genus*,

RECREATION.

## Essays in Rhyme on Morals and Manners

And little love was lost between us  
We loved, I think, about as true  
As such near neighbours mostly do.

At first, we all were somewhat dry ;  
Mamma felt cold, and so did I :  
Indeed, that room, sit where you will,  
Has draught enough to turn a mill.  
'I hope you're warm,' says Mrs. G.  
'O, quite so,' says mamma, *says she* ;  
'I'll take my shawl off by and by.'  
'This room is always warm,' *says I*.

At last the tea came up, and so,  
With that, our tongues began to go.  
Now, in that house, you're sure of knowing  
The smallest scrap of news that's going ;  
We find it *there* the wisest way  
To take some care of what we say.

Says she, 'there's dreadful doings still  
In that affair about the *will* ;  
For now the folks in Brewer's Street  
Don't speak to *James's* when they meet.  
Poor Mrs. *Sam* sits all alone,  
And frets herself to skin and bone.  
For months she managed, she declares,  
All the old gentleman's affairs ;  
And always let him have his way,  
And never left him night nor day ;  
Waited and watched his every look,  
And gave him every drop he took.  
Dear Mrs. *Sam*, it was too bad !  
He might have left her all he had.'

'Pray ma'am,' says I, 'has poor Miss A.  
Been left as *handsome* as they say ?'  
'My dear,' says she, 'tis no such thing,  
She'd nothing but a mourning ring.  
But is it not *uncommon* mean  
To wear that rusty bombazeen !'  
'She had,' says I, 'the very same  
Three years ago, for what's his name ?'  
'The Duke of *Brunswick* very true,  
And has not bought a thread of new,  
I'm positive,' said Mrs. G.  
So then we laughed, and drank our tea.

'So,' says mamma, 'I find it's true  
What Captain P. intends to do ;  
To hire that house, or else to buy

RECREATION.

## Essays in Rhyme on Morals and Manners

'Close to the tan-yard, ma'am,' says I ;  
'Upon my word it's very strange,  
I wish they mayn't repent the change !'  
'My dear,' says she, 'tis very well  
You know, if *they* can bear the smell.'

'Miss E.' says I, 'is said to be  
A sweet young woman, is not she ?'  
'O, excellent ! I hear,' she cried ;  
'O, truly so !' mamma replied.  
'How old should you suppose her, pray ?  
She's older than she looks, they say.'  
'Really,' says I, 'she seems to me  
Not more than twenty-two or three.'  
'O, then you're wrong,' says Mrs. G.  
'Their upper servant told our *Jane*,  
She'll not see twenty-nine again.'  
'Indeed, so old ! I wonder why  
She does not marry then,' says I ;  
'So many thousands to bestow,  
And such a beauty, too, you know.'  
'A beauty ! O, my dear Miss B.  
You must be joking now,' says she ;  
'Her *figure's* rather pretty,' ' Ah !  
That's what *I* say,' replied mamma.

'Miss F.' says I, 'I've understood,  
Spends all her time in doing good :  
The People say her coming down  
Is quite a blessing to the town.'  
At that our hostess fetched a sigh,  
And shook her head ; and so, says I,  
'It's very kind of her, I'm sure,  
To be so generous to the poor.'  
'No doubt,' says she, 'tis very true ;  
Perhaps there may be *reasons* too :  
You know some people like to pass  
For *patrons* with the lower class.'

And here I break my story's thread,  
Just to remark, that what she said,  
Although I took the other part,  
Went like a cordial to my heart.

Some innuendos more had passed,  
Till out the scandal came at last.  
'Come then, I'll tell you something more,'  
Says she, ' Eliza, shut the door.  
I would not trust a creature here,  
For all the world, but you, my dear.  
Perhaps it's false I wish it may,

RECREATION.

But let it go no further, pray !  
'O,' says mamma, 'You need not fear,  
We never mention what we hear.'  
And so, we drew our chairs the nearer,  
And whispering, lest the child should hear her,  
She told a tale, at least too *long*  
To be repeated in a song ;  
We panting every breath between,  
With curiosity and spleen.  
And how we did enjoy the sport !  
And echo every faint report,  
And answer every candid doubt,  
And turn her motives inside out,  
And holes in all her virtues pick,  
Till we were sated, almost sick.

Thus having brought it to a close,  
In great good-humour we arose.  
Indeed, 'twas more than time to go,  
Our boy had been an hour below.  
So, warmly pressing Mrs. G.  
To fix a day to come to tea,

We muffled up in cloak and plaid,  
And trotted home behind the lad.

## THE SQUIRE'S PEW.

A SLANTING ray of evening light  
Shoots through the yellow pane ;  
It makes the faded crimson bright,  
And gilds the fringe again :  
The window's gothic frame-work falls  
In oblique shadow on the walls.

And since those trappings first were new,  
How many a cloudless day,  
To rob the velvet of its hue,  
Has come and passed away !  
How many a setting sun hath made  
That curious lattice-work of shade !

Crumbled beneath the hillock green  
The cunning hand must be,  
That carved this fretted door, I ween,  
*Acorn, and fleur-de-lis ;*  
And now the worm hath done her part  
In mimicking the chisel's art.

In days of yore (that now we call)

## Essays in Rhyme on Morals and Manners

When the first *James* was king,  
The courtly knight from yonder hall  
Hither his train did bring ;  
All seated round in order due,  
With broidered suit and buckled shoe.

On damask cushions, set in fringe,  
All reverently they knelt :  
Prayer-books, with brazen hasp and hinge,  
In ancient English spelt  
Each holding in a lily hand,  
Responsive at the priest's command.

Now, streaming down the vaulted aisle,  
The sunbeam, long and lone,  
Illumes the characters awhile  
Of their inscription stone ;  
And there, in marble bard and cold,  
The knight and all his train behold.

Outstretched together, are expressed  
He, and my lady fair,  
With hands uplifted on the breast,  
In attitude of prayer ;  
Long visaged, clad in armour, he,  
With ruffled arm and bodice, she.

Set forth, in order as they died,  
The numerous offspring bend ;  
Devoutly kneeling side by side,  
As though they did intend  
For past omissions to atone,  
By saying endless prayers in stone.

Those mellow days are past and dim,  
But generations new,  
In regular descent from him,  
Have filled the stately pew ;  
And in the same succession go,  
To occupy the vault below.

And now, the polished modern squire,  
And his gay train appear,  
Who duly to the hall retire,  
A season, every year,  
And fill the seats with belle and beau,  
As 'twas so many years ago.

Perchance, all thoughtless as they tread  
The hollow sounding floor,  
Of that dark house of kindred dead,

THE SQUIRE'S PEW.

## Essays in Rhyme on Morals and Manners

Which shall, as heretofore,  
In turn, receive to silent rest,  
Another and another guest,

The leathered hearse and sable train,  
In all its wonted state,  
Shall wind along the village lane,  
And stand before the gate ;  
Brought many a distant county through,  
To join the final rendezvous.

And when the race is swept away,  
All to their dusty beds,  
Still shall the mellow evening ray  
Shine gaily o'er their heads;  
While other faces, fresh and new,  
Shall occupy the squire's pew.

### ACCOMPLISHMENT.

HOW is it that masters, and science, and art,  
One spark of intelligence fail to impart,  
Unless in that chemical union combined,  
Of which the result, in one word, is a *mind* ?

A youth may have studied, and travelled abroad,  
May sing like Apollo, and paint like a Claude,  
And speak all the languages under the pole,  
And have every gift in the world, but a soul.

That drapery wrought by the leisurely fair,  
Called *patchwork*, may well to such genius compare ;  
Wherein every tint of the rainbow appears,  
And stars to adorn it are forced from their spheres

There glows a bright pattern (a sprig or a spot)  
'Twixt cluster of roses full-blown and red hot ;  
Here magnified tulips divided in three,  
Alternately shaded with sections of tree.

But when all is finished, this labour of years,  
A mass unharmonious, unmeaning appears ;  
'Tis showy, but void of intelligent grace ;  
It is not a landscape, it is not a face.

'Tis thus Education (so called in our schools)  
With costly materials, and capital tools,  
Sits down to her work, if you duly reward her,  
And sends it home finished according to order.

## Essays in Rhyme on Morals and Manners

See French and Italian spread out on her lap ;  
Then Dancing springs up, and skips into a gap ;  
Next Drawing and all its varieties come,  
Sewed down in their place by her finger and thumb.

And then, for completing her fanciful robes,  
Geography, Music, the use of the Globes,  
&c. &c. which, match as they will,  
Are sown into shape, and set down in the bill.

Thus Science distorted, and torn into hits,  
Art tortured, and frightened half out of her wits,  
In portions and patches, some light and some shady,  
Are stitched up together, to make a young lady.

### A TOWN.

A BUSY town mid Britain's isle,  
Behold in fancy's eye ;  
With tower, and spire, and civic pile,  
Beneath a summer sky :

And orchard, garden, field, and park,  
And grove, and sunny wall ;  
And ranging buildings, light and dark,  
As evening shadows fall.

Then listen to the ceaseless din  
Of hammer, saw, and crane ;  
And traffic passing out and in,  
From alley, street, and lane.

The sound, without a pause between,  
Of foot, and wheel, and hoof ;  
The manufacture's loud machine  
From yonder lengthened roof.

And children at their evening sports,  
Parading to and fro ;  
Assembled in the quiet courts  
Of yonder cottage row.

Gay streets display their shining wares  
To every roving eye,  
As eager in their own affairs,  
The busy tribes go by.

And ah ! what varied forms of woe,  
What hope and fear are found ;  
What passions rise, what scandals grow,

A TOWN.



## Essays in Rhyme on Morals and Manners

Within this narrow bound !

To pass the peaceful dwellings by,  
No stranger eye might guess  
Those scenes of joy and agony,  
Of discord and distress.

Pain writhes within those stately walls ;  
Here pallid want hath been ;  
That casement where the curtain falls  
Shows death has entered in.

The dwelling ranging next to this,  
A youthful group displays ;  
Elate they seem with present bliss,  
And hope of distant days.

There at her chamber-window high,  
A lonely maiden sits ;  
Its casement fronts the western sky  
And balmy air admits :

And while her thoughts have wandered far  
From all she hears and sees,  
She gazes on the evening star  
That twinkles through the trees.

Is it to watch the setting sun  
She does that seat prefer ?  
Alas ! the maiden thinks of one  
Who never thinks of her.

But lively is the street below,  
And ceaseless is the hum,  
As some intent on pleasure go,  
On schemes of profit some.

Now widening seems the stream to be,  
As evening stretches o'er ;  
Plebeian tribes from toil set free  
Pour forth from every door.

A school, arranged in order due,  
(Before the sun goes down)  
Lady and lady, two and two,  
Comes winding through the town.

And what drives up to yonder door  
The gaping crowd among ?  
A wedding train of chaises four,  
And all the bells are rung.

A TOWN.

The laden waggon tinkles by,  
The post is going out,  
The lights are lit, the coaches ply  
To tavern, ball, and rout.

Thus closed that merry summer's day ;  
And would you ask me how  
You might the busy scene survey,  
And see those faces now ?

Then hither turn yon waving grass  
And mouldering stones will show ;  
For these transactions came to pass  
A hundred years ago.

## A PAIR.

THERE was a youth but woe is me :  
I quite forgot his name, and he,  
Without some label round his neck,  
Is like one pea among a peck.  
Go search the country up and down,  
Port, city, village, parish, town,  
And, saving just the face and name,  
You shall behold the very same  
Wherever pleasure's train resorts,  
From the Land's End to *Johnny Groat's* ;  
And thousands such have swelled the herd  
From *William*, down to *George* the Third.

To life he started thanks to fate,  
In contact with a good estate :  
Provided thus, and quite at ease,  
He takes for granted all he sees ;  
Ne'er sends a thought, nor lifts an eye,  
To ask what am I ? where ? and why ?  
All that is no affair of his,  
Somehow he came and there he is !  
Without such philosophic stuff,  
Alive and well, and that's enough.

Thoughts ! why, if all that crawl like train  
Of caterpillars through his brains,  
With every syllable let fall,  
*Bon mot*, and compliment, and all,  
Were melted down in furnace fire,  
I doubt if shred of golden wire,  
To make, amongst it all would linger,  
A ring for *Tom Thumb's* little finger.  
Yet, think not that he comes below

## Essays in Rhyme on Morals and Manners

The modern, average ratio  
The current coin of fashion's mint  
The common, ball-room going stint.  
Of trifling cost his stock in trade is,  
Whose business is to please the ladies ;  
Or who to honours may aspire  
Of a town beau or country squire.  
The cant of fashion and of vice  
To learn, slight effort will suffice :  
And he was furnished with that knowledge,  
Even *before* he went to college.  
And thus, without the toil of thought,  
Favour and flattery may be bought.  
No need to win the laurel, now,  
For lady's smile or vassal's bow ;  
To lie exposed in patriot camp,  
Or study by the midnight lamp.

Nature and art might vainly strive  
To keep his intellect alive.  
'Twould not have forced an exclamation  
Worthy a note of admiration,  
If he had been on Gibeon's hill,  
And seen the sun and moon stand still.  
What prodigy was ever known  
To raise the pitch of fashion's tone !  
Or make it yield, by any chance,  
That studied air of *nonchalance*,  
Which after all, however graced,  
Is apathy, and want of taste.

The *vulgar* every station fill,  
*St. Giles'* or *James's* which you will ;  
Spruce drapers in their masters' shops,  
Rank with right honourable fops :  
No real distinction marks the kinds  
The *raw material* of their minds.  
But *mind* claims rank that cannot yield  
To blazoned arms and crested shield  
Above the need and reach it stands  
Of diamond stars from royal hands ;  
Nor waits the nod of courtly state,  
To bid it be, or not be great.  
The regions where it wings its way  
Are set with brighter stars than they :  
With calm contempt it thence looks down  
On fortune's favour or its frown ;  
Looks down on those who vainly try,  
By strange inversion of the eye,  
From that poor mole-hill where they sit,  
To cast a downward look on it :

A PAIR.

## Essays in Rhyme on Morals and Manners

As robin, from his pear-tree height,  
Looks *down* upon the eagle's flight.

Before our youth had learnt his letters,  
They taught him to despise his betters  
And if *some* things have been forgot,  
*That* lesson certainly has not.  
The haunts his genius chiefly graces  
Are tables, stables, taverns, races ;  
The things of which he most afraid is,  
Are tradesmen's bills, and learned ladies  
He deems the first a grievous bore,  
But loathes the latter even more  
Than solitude or rainy weather,  
Unless they happen both together.

Soft his existence rolls away,  
To-morrow plenteous as to-day :  
He lives, enjoys, and lives anew,  
And when he dies, what shall we do !

Down a close street, whose darksome shops display  
Old clothes and iron on both sides the way ;  
Loathsome and wretched, whence the eye in pain  
Averted turns, nor seeks to view again ;  
Where lowest dregs of human nature dwell,  
More loathsome than the rags and rust they sell ;  
A pale mechanic rents an attic floor,  
By many a shattered stair you gain the door :  
'Tis one poor room, whose blackened wails are hung  
With dust that settled there when he was young.  
The rusty grate two massy bricks displays  
To fill the sides and make a frugal blaze.  
The door unhinged, the window patched and broke,  
The panes obscured by half a century's smoke :  
There stands the bench at which his life is spent,  
Worn, grooved, and bored, and worm-devoured, and bent,  
Where daily, undisturbed by foes or friends,  
In one unvaried attitude he bends.  
His tools, long practised, seem to understand  
Scarce less their functions, than his own right hand.  
With these he drives his craft with patient skill :  
Year after year would find him at it still :  
The noisy world around is changing all,  
War follows peace, and kingdoms rise and fall ;  
France rages now, and Spain, and now the Turk ;  
Now victory sounds ; but there he sits at work !  
A man might see him so, then bid *adieu*,  
Make a long voyage to China or Peru ;  
There traffic, settle, build ; at length might come  
Altered, and old, and weather-beaten, home,

A PAIR.

## Essays in Rhyme on Morals and Manners

And find him on the same square foot of floor  
On which he left him twenty years before.  
The self-same bench, and attitude, and stool,  
The same quick movement of his cunning tool  
The very distance 'twixt his knees and chin,  
As though he had but stepped just out and in.

Such is his fate and yet you might descry  
A latent spark of meaning in his eye,  
That crowded shelf, beside his bench contains  
One old worn volume that employs his brains :  
With algebraic lore its page is spread,  
Where  $a$  and  $b$  contend with  $x$  and  $z$  ;  
Sold by some *student* from an Oxford hall,  
Bought by the pound upon a broker's stall.  
On this it is his sole delight to pore,  
Early and late, when working time is o'er :  
But oft he stops, bewildered and perplexed,  
At some hard problem in the learned text ;  
Pressing his hand upon his puzzled brain  
At what the dullest school-boy could explain.

From needful sleep the precious hour he saves  
To give his thirsty mind the stream it craves :  
There, with his slender rush beside him placed,  
He drinks the knowledge in with greedy haste.  
At early morning, when the frosty air  
Brightens Orion and the northern Bear,  
His distant window 'mid the dusky row,  
Holds a dim light to passenger below.  
A light more dim is flashing on his mind,  
That shows its darkness, and its view confined.  
Had science shone around his early days,  
How had his soul expanded in the blaze !  
But penury bound him, and his mind in vain  
Struggles and writhes beneath her iron chain.

At length the taper fades, and distant cry  
Of early sweep bespeaks the morning nigh ;  
Slowly it breaks, and that rejoicing ray  
That wakes the healthful country into day,  
Tips the green hills, slants o'er the level plain,  
Reddens the pool, and stream, and cottage pane,  
And field, and garden, park, and stately hall,  
Now darts obliquely on his wretched wall.  
He knows the wonted signal ; shuts his book,  
Slowly consigns it to its dusky nook ;  
Looks out awhile, with fixt and absent stare,  
On crowded roofs, seen through the foggy air ;  
Stirs up the embers, takes his sickly draught,  
Sighs at his fortunes, and resumes his craft.

## THE WORLD IN THE HOUSE.

PILGRIMS who journey in the narrow way,  
Should go as little cumbered as they may.  
'Tis heavy sailing with a freighted ship ;  
'Tis pleasant travelling with a staff and scrip.  
Gold clogs the path, dispose it how we will ;  
Makes it fatiguing as we climb the hill :  
And 'tis but here and there you may descry  
The camel passing through the needle's eye.

'Love not the world ;' most merciful decree  
That makes its friendship enmity to Thee !  
Oh, if God had not said it, did I know  
Some way to bliss through luxury and show ;  
Might I have followed Christ to heaven's door,  
With gold and purple, in my coach and four ;  
I dare not choose it I would rather wait  
A safer convoy at the rich man's gate.

See yonder modern mansion, light and fair,  
Reared just beyond the taint of London air :  
But not beyond, by many a dale and hill,  
The taint of manners more unwholesome still.  
Wide spreads in front the soft and sloping lawn,  
With carriage roads in sweeping circles drawn :  
The ample gardens, neat and well disposed,  
Stretch far behind, by hectared walls enclosed ;  
The shrubbery—walks in serpent windings run ;  
The costly green—house blazes in the sun.  
Rare fruits and flowers the gardener's skill employ,  
More than the pampered owners can enjoy.  
Within, a palace shines, superbly planned ;  
No pains nor cost were spared to make it *grand* :  
Our thrifty merchants, fifty years ago,  
Nor thought nor dreamed of such a stately show.  
The bloated master stalks delighted thence,  
Proud of the thing, more proud of the expense.

Here dwells an old *professor* in his nest,  
With comely wife and dashing daughters blest ;  
They, fresh from school, with all the native graces  
They once possessed, quite polished off their faces ;  
A trifling, useless, unharmonious train,  
Accomplished, artificial, showy, vain ;  
In all they do and say, and look and wear,  
Aping the rank they were not born to bear :  
And she, his help—meet, ever in her pride,  
Teasing and pleading on the *worldly* side ;  
Such is his household, such, perchance, that he

Would blush to ask the Apostle *Paul* to tea.  
Not that the show and fashion of the place,  
Itself, could certify the want of grace ;  
(Though bounds there are, so wise and safe to keep,  
That watchful Christians rarely overleap :)  
But 'tis his soul retains the earthly leaven,  
Would fain keep terms and compromise with Heaven ;  
Striving, with pain, in Zion's paths to plod,  
But keeping Mammon for his household god.

Thus live our merchant and his hopeful train,  
Bound to the world, nor would they break the chain.  
Its laws they own, its stamp and image bear,  
There lies their portion, and their hearts are there.  
Where then appears the faith they yet profess ?  
Not in their looks, their language, or their dress ;  
But some cold forms remain, and some restraints,  
To keep their name and place among the saints.  
They never dance ; they never play at cards ;  
One day in seven he duly still regards :  
That tasty chapel, twice on Sabbath day,  
Sees him and his set out in fair array.  
And much they praise the ladies and their sire,  
The favourite preacher whom they all admire ;  
Some soft, and sleek, and seraph-spoken boy,  
The rabble's wonder and the ladies' toy ;  
Snatched immature from academic bowers,  
To dress up truth in artificial flowers.

Besides, our fair professor's name behold,  
On neat *Esquired* committee-lists enrolled,  
And long subscription-rows, that bring to light  
Name, place, donation, and the annual mite ;  
Duly proclaiming every right hand deed,  
Trusting the *left* has never learnt to read.  
A little gold, a morning or a day,  
Spent in the cause, he freely gives away :  
Perhaps, his pious zeal may even reach  
The neat dimensions of an annual speech,  
Gliding in well-turned compliments along,  
To every titled Christian in the throng.  
The ladies too, his daughters, draw up rules  
For lady-charities, and Sunday schools ;  
Set down their names, their fair committees call ;  
Busy and pleased, if they may manage all.  
Meantime, the pious bustle, praised and told,  
Has cost them nothing but their father's gold.

How customs and opinions change their place !  
Religion, now, is scarcely in disgrace :  
Her outward signs, at least, will even raise

## Essays in Rhyme on Morals and Manners

Your credit high in these convenient days.  
Fashion, herself, the cause of virtue pleads,  
Becomes chief patroness of pious deeds,

And lets us e'en pursue, without restraint,  
What once had stamped us *puritan* and *saint*.  
The good is done, let fashion bear her part,  
And claim the praise, with all the Christian's heart  
Motives are *all* in Heaven's impartial eye ;  
But 'tis not ours to doubt and give the lie :  
Let each grant credit to his neighbour's share,  
But analyze his own with utmost care,  
That thus the scale is turned, the praise is due  
To Him, who hears and owns the righteous few ;  
Whose silent prayers and labours Heaven employs  
To do the good, while others make the noise.

'Tis trite to praise the country's green retreats,  
Opposed to city smoke and noisy streets :  
And scores of epithets, all ready strung,  
That theme will furnish to be said or sung.  
The limpid streamlet and the whispering breeze  
Slip into rhyme with such spontaneous ease,  
That he must be an humble scribe indeed,  
Who could not write it or who loves to read.  
Trite though it be, it is a task I choose ;  
A hackneyed theme befits an humble muse :  
But leaving rills to ripple, woods to wave,  
And birds to warble out the other stave,  
I sing the choicest fruit of country air,  
The human plant that buds and blossoms there.

Happy the mother, who her train can rear  
Far 'mid its breezy hills from year to year !  
There healthful springs the body, and combined  
With health, more precious, to the precious mind.  
Not that there dwells a charm in country air,  
Or chemic power, to bleach the Ethiop fair :  
Romantic hope ! The poisonous breath of vice  
Tainted the very airs of Paradise.  
Sin spreads in every soil, in every gale ;  
O'er-runs alike the mountain and the vale  
But springs in cities, rank and noisome both,  
Their foul and sultry vapour speeds its growth. '  
Youth's sweetest grace, simplicity, is seen  
Sporting with native smiles in meadows green,  
In pleasant gardens, on the daisied ground,  
Where simple joys, and few besides are found.  
The *knowing*, forward, pert, and showy miss,  
Springs rarely up in such a soil as this ;  
For such a plant exotic, send us down

THE WORLD IN THE HOUSE.



## Essays in Rhyme on Morals and Manners

Some hot-house produce of the polished town.

The rage for competition, show, and style,  
Is London's plague, and spreads for many a mile.  
No rank, nor age, escapes that vulgar sin,  
Breathed in its nurseries, in its schools worked in :  
And thus the mania, in maturer years,  
In every form of pride and pomp appears,  
As each were striving for a near approach  
Climax of grandeur ! to the lord mayor's coach.  
How short the triumph, many a prison cell,  
And many a pining family could tell.  
The bridal equipage, in half a year  
Brought to the hammer of the auctioneer,  
Suffices not to liquidate the debt,  
And fame's last bugle sounds in the *Gazette*.

Regions of intellect ! serenely fair,  
Hence let us rise, and breathe your purer air.  
There shine the stars ! one intellectual glance  
At that bright host, on yon sublime expanse,  
Might prove a cure ; well, say they, let them shine  
With all our hearts, but let *us* dress and dine.

There are, above the petty influence placed,  
By human science and a mental taste.  
The man who feels the dignity of thought,  
By culture much refined, by science taught,  
To loved pursuits devoted, looks below,  
With true contempt upon the paltry show :  
Compared with those in pleasure's vortex hurled,  
He loves it not, and lives above the world.

But happier he who views the toys of time  
From loftier heights, from regions more sublime ;  
Who walks with God while yet he sojourns here ;  
His hopes still climbing to a brighter sphere.  
Is he of wealth and earthly good possessed ?  
He takes Heaven's bounty with a cheerful zest.  
His quarrel with the world you might not note  
From texture, cut, or colour of his coat ;  
For *studied* plainness, whether dress or speech,  
Defeats the very end it aims to reach.  
And yet, on all he has there stands imprest  
One truth conspicuous ' This is not my rest.'  
From that divine remembrance ever springs  
A moderated care for other things :  
Pilgrim and stranger in a desert spot,  
He holds them all as though he held them not.

## Essays in Rhyme on Morals and Manners

Peace, order, comfort, in his household reign ;  
And more than these he seeks not to obtain.  
His mansion, furnished in no costly style,  
Oft makes his tasty neighbours stare and smile ;  
But that unmoved and unavenged he bears,  
Unless it be, sometimes, to smile at theirs.  
His neat, plain parlour wants our modern air,  
But comfort smiles on every object there.  
Tables of costly wood, and chairs whose mould  
Bespeaks the fashion not a fortnight old,  
The window drapery's elegant *costume*,  
Arranged and deeply fringed to match the room,  
Carpets, where eastern patterns richly crawl,  
Vases, and mirrors blazing on the wall,  
Cupids that wave their waxen flames in air,  
Sideboards of plate, cut-glass, and china rare,  
These things he sees, and Oh ! surprising phlegm !  
Wastes not a thought nor wish for one of them.  
Still more surprising, that his house and board  
Are plainer far than he could well afford !  
No seasoned dainties on his table steal ;  
Frugal, though ample, is the daily meal.  
The 'olive plants' in graceful order sit ;  
No greedy hands implore the savoury bit ;  
Taught from the very cradle to despise  
The wish for more than hunger's claim supplies.  
A pampered body, and a vigorous mind,  
Are things, he deems, that cannot be combined ;  
And aiming thus the mental string to brace,  
He rears a hardy, independent race.

His girls, a blooming train, their home adorn ;  
Simply attired, and cheerful as the morn :  
Industrious, active, frugal, like their sire ;  
Trained to resist each frivolous desire ;  
To scorn the trifles that the sex pursues,  
And rise superior to its petty views.  
Slightly accomplished, but their minds are fraught  
With taste and knowledge, and inured to thought.  
Year after year, four precious hours a day,  
Is deemed by him too dear a price to pay  
E'en for that art, which all the world reveres,  
Up from the tradesman's daughter to the peer's.  
Yet not with narrow, much mistaken view,  
Would he deny them mental culture too ;  
Though vulgar zealots love to state the case,  
That human learning is a foe to grace ;  
And rear their ill-bred, rude, illiterate youth,  
To loathe their shackles, and despise the truth.

## Essays in Rhyme on Morals and Manners

Religion here, in all her native grace,  
Shines out serene in every heart and face ;  
Nor e'er is banished, though pursuits may claim  
Attention oft, that do not bear her name.  
Thus he adorns the doctrine he avows ;  
Thus in the fear of God, he guides his house.  
And while it prospers, that memorial word,  
'The poor are always with you,' still is heard.  
The hungry throng that crowd his open gate  
Not there, like *Lazarus*, unregarded wait ;  
Since each expensive pleasure is denied,  
Which, while it starves the needy, pampers pride.  
Many condemn his plan, and many deem  
He carries things to an absurd extreme ;  
Think he might live in style, and yet afford  
A decent crum from his superfluous board :  
Still there were other poor, and still the sums  
That style would cost might furnish other crumbs.  
'Tis thus he argues, *thus* that order reads,  
'Sell all thou hast, and give to him that needs.'  
At that hard saying, many turn away ;  
Let him who can, receive it, and obey.

Oh, for a soul magnanimous, to know,  
Poor world, thy littleness, and let thee go !  
Not with a gloomy, proud, ascetic mind,  
That loves thee still, and only hates mankind ;  
Reverse the line, and that my temper be,  
To love mankind, and pour contempt on thee!

### THE WORLD IN THE HEART.

BUT if the foe no more without presides,  
There is an inner chamber where it hides ;  
In that strong hold prepares its last defence ;  
And none but heavenly arms can drive it thence.  
This is the *Christian's* conflict, he alone  
Pursues its flight to that interior throne.  
This is the test that makes his title clear ;  
For only they approve their aim sincere,  
Who seek the flattering world to dispossess  
Where none but God and conscience have access.  
All modes by man devised to purchase bliss,  
Full well he knows are cheaper far than this :  
Hence the attempt, with penance, pain, and loss,  
And prayers, and alms, to frame a lighter cross.

To travel barefoot to some hallowed shrine,  
If this would do, how soon should Heaven be mine !  
To walk with God ; resigning every weight,

## Essays in Rhyme on Morals and Manners

To run with patience up to Zion's gate ;  
To hold affections fixt on things above ;  
To value heavenly more than earthly love ;  
To dread the frown of God's discerning eye  
More than the world's opprobrious calumny ;  
To keep faith's prospects prominent and clear ;  
To seek not rest, nor wish to find it here ;  
Is harder work too hard for arms like ours,  
Opposed by principalities and powers,  
Had He not covenanted to supply  
Helmet and shield from Heaven's armory.

A ceaseless round of mummery to fulfil,  
Leaves the world's empire unmolested still :  
Nor more effective every outward way,  
By which we seek to disavow its sway.  
The downcast look, grave habit, slow address,  
Are vain attempts to make the labour less ;  
There is an *inward* army to pursue ;  
A mere external conflict will not do.

They who sincerely bid the world depart  
Not only from the house, but from the heart,  
Retreating wisely, where its torrent roars,  
And anxious still to shut it out of doors,  
Contract their wishes to the sober size  
Of fire-side comfort, and domestic ties ;  
Yet *they* should deem the battle but begun,  
Nor think at such light cost the victory won.  
Whatever passes as a cloud, between  
The mental eye of faith and things unseen,  
Causing that better world to disappear,  
Or seem unlovely, and the present dear,  
That is our world, our idol, though it bear  
Affection's impress, or devotion's air.

They who the quiet walks of life may choose,  
Partly for Heaven's sake, partly for the muse ;  
Whose *taste* had led them from the giddy train,  
Even if conscience did not say 'refrain ;'  
Though wise and good the choice, had need beware,  
They shun an obvious, for a hidden snare ;  
The fair, bright paths of wit and learning may  
Lead off directly from the narrow way.  
The pride of intellect, the conscious height  
The soul attains to in her mental flight,  
At length may cause a less exalted seat  
To seem too lowly at the Saviour's feet.  
Music, the pencil, nature, books, the muse,  
Have charms, and Heaven designed them for our use ;  
Yet who that knows and loves them, but could tell

## Essays in Rhyme on Morals and Manners

The world disguised in all, in each may dwell,  
With charm as fatal, with a spell as strong,  
As that which circles pleasure's vacant throng.

'Tis true : and therefore some pronounce in haste,  
(Urged less by conscience than by want of taste)  
A sweeping censure on the cultured mind ;  
And safety hope in ignorance to find.  
Alas ! they know not how the world can cheat ;  
Or rather, know not their own heart's deceit :  
The ground that lies uncultured and unsown,  
With rampant weeds is quickly overgrown.  
And they who leave the mental field undrest,  
Deeming all knowledge useless but the best,  
And give those hours that duty freely spares,  
Not to superior, but to vulgar cares,  
Will find these lead from heavenly converse back,  
Not less than those, and by a meaner track.  
'Twas by no *mental* feast, no *studious* thought,  
*Her* soul was cumbered, and her Lord forgot,  
Who lost the unction of His gracious word,  
Which, waiting at His feet, another heard.  
Those toils engrossed her that may hold the heart  
In closest bondage from the better part :  
And though that board was spread for such a guest,  
As none may now bid welcome to a feast,  
Her guest, her Lord reproved her, as He will  
The busy *Marthas*, serving, cumbered still.

Ask the good housewife, mid her bustling maids,  
If ne'er the *world* her humbler sphere invades.  
But if (unconscious of its secret sway)  
She own it not, her eager looks betray.  
Yes, there you find it, spite of locks and bars,  
Hid in the store-room with her jams and jars ;  
It gilds her china, in her cupboard shines,  
Works at the vent-peg of her home-made wines,  
Each varied dainty to her board supplies,  
And comes up smoking in her Christmas pies.

The charms of mental converse some may fear,  
Who scruple not to lend a ready ear  
To kitchen tales, of scandal, strife, and love,  
Which make the maid and mistress *hand and glove* ;  
And ever deem the sin and danger less,  
Merely for being in a vulgar dress.

Thus the world haunts, in forms of varied kind,  
The intellectual and the groveling mind ;  
Now, sparkling in the muse's fair attire,  
Now, red and greasy at the kitchen fire.

THE WORLD IN THE HEART.

## Essays in Rhyme on Morals and Manners

And were you called to give a casting voice,  
One to select, from such a meagre choice,  
Deciding which life's purpose most mistook  
Would you not say, the worldly-minded *cook* ?  
Not intellectual vanity to flatter ;  
Simply, that mind precedence claims of matter.

And she, whose nobler course is seen to shine,  
At once, with human knowledge and divine ;  
Who mental culture and domestic rites  
In close and graceful amity unites ;  
Striving to hold them in their proper place,  
Not interfering with her heavenly race ;  
Whose constant aim it is, and fervent prayer,  
On earthly ground to breathe celestial air ;  
Still, *she* could witness how the world betrays,  
Steals softly in by unsuspected ways,  
Her yielding soul from heavenly converse bears,  
And holds her captive in its silken snares.  
Could she not tell the trifles that are brought  
To rival Heaven, and drive it from her thought ?  
Her heart (unconscious of the flowery trap)  
Caught in the sprigs upon a baby's cap ;  
Thence disengaged, its freedom boasts awhile,  
Till taken captive by the baby's smile.

But oh, how mournful when resistance fails,  
The conflict slackens, and the foe prevails !  
For instance yonder matron, who appears  
Softly descending in the vale of years ;  
And yet, with health, and constant care bestowed,  
Still comely, *embonpoint*, and *à la mode*.  
Once in her youthful days, her heart was warm ;  
At least, her feelings wore devotion's form ;  
And ever since, to quell the rising doubt,  
She makes that grain of godliness eke out.  
With comfort still, the distant day she sees,  
When grief or terror brought her to her knees ;  
When Christian friends rejoiced at what she told,  
And bade her welcome to the church's fold.  
There still she rests, her words, her forms the same ;  
There holds profession's lamp without the flame :  
Her Sabbaths come and go, with even pace ;  
Year after year you find her in her place,  
And still no change apparent, saving that  
Of time and fashion, in her face and hat.  
She stands or kneels as usual, hears and sings ;  
Goes home and dines, and talks of other things ;  
Enjoys her comforts with as strong a *goût*  
As if they were not fading from her view  
And still is telling what she means to do :

THE WORLD IN THE HEART.

## Essays in Rhyme on Morals and Manners

Talks of events that happen to befall,  
Not like a stranger, passing from it all,  
But eager, anxious in their issue still,  
Hoping this will not be, or that it will ;  
Getting, enjoying, all that can be had ;  
Amused with trifles, and at trifles sad :  
While hope still whispers in her willing ears,  
'Soul, thou hast goods laid up for many years.'  
A few brief words her character portray  
This world contents her, if she might but stay.  
When true and fervent pilgrims round her press,  
She inly wishes that their zeal were less.  
Their works of love, their spirit, faith, and prayers,  
Their calm indifference to the world's affairs,  
Reproach her deadness, and she fain, for one,  
Would call their zeal and ardour *overdone*.

But what her thought is what her hope and stay  
In moments of reflection, who shall say ?  
Time does not slacken, nay, he speeds his pace,  
Bearing her onward to her finished race :  
The common doom awaits her 'dust to dust ;'  
The young *may* soon receive it, but she *must*.  
What is the Christian's course ? the Scriptures say,  
'Brighter and brighter to the perfect day !'  
Oh ! does her earthly mind, her anxious heart,  
Clinging to life, *not* longing to depart,  
Her languid prayer, her graces dim and faint,  
Meet that description of the growing saint ?  
Let her inquire (for far is spent the night)  
If she be *meetened* for that world of light :  
Where are her fondest, best affections placed ?  
Death may *improve* but not *reverse* the taste :  
Does she indeed the things of time prefer ?  
Then surely Heaven could not be Heaven to her.

Are there not portions of the sacred word,  
So often preached and quoted, read and heard,  
That, though of deepest import, and designed  
With joy or fear to penetrate the mind,  
They pass away with notice cold and brief,  
Like drops of rain upon a glossy leaf ?  
Such as the final sentence, on that day,  
When all distinctions shall be done away,  
But that the righteous Judge shall bring to light,  
Between the left-hand millions, and the right ?  
Here, in His word, in beams of light, it stands,  
What will be then demanded at our hands ;  
Clear and unclouded now the page appears,  
As even then, illumed by blazing spheres.

## Essays in Rhyme on Morals and Manners

The question is not, if our earthly race  
Was once enlightened by a flash of grace ;  
If we sustained a place on Zion's hill,  
And called Him Lord but if we did His will.  
What, if the stranger, sick and captive, lie  
Naked and hungry, and we pass them by !  
Or do but some extorted pittance throw,  
To save our credit, not to ease their woe !  
Or, strangers to the charity whence springs  
The liberal heart, devising liberal things,  
We, cumbered ever with our own pursuits,  
To others leave the labour and its fruits ;  
Pleading excuses for the crum we save,  
For want of faith to cast it on the wave !  
Shall we go forth with joy to meet our Lord  
Enter His kingdom, reap the full reward ?  
Can such His good, His faithful servants be,  
Blest of the Father ? Read His word and see !

What, if in strange defiance of that rule,  
Made not in *Moses'*, but the *Gospel* school,  
Shining as clearly as the light of Heaven,  
'They who forgive not, shall not be forgiven,'  
We live in anger, hatred, envy, strife,  
Still firmly hoping for eternal life ;  
And where the streams of Christian love should flow,  
The root of bitterness is left to grow ;  
Resisting evil, indisposed to brook  
A word of insult, or a scornful look ;  
And speak the language of the world in all,  
Except the challenge and the leaden ball !

What if, mistrustful of its latent worth,  
We hide our single talent in the earth !  
And what if self is pampered, *not* denied !  
What if the flesh is never crucified !  
What if the world be hidden in the heart,  
Will it be, 'Come, ye blessed !' or, 'Depart ?'

Who then shall conquer ? who maintain the fight ?  
E'en they that walk by faith and not by sight :  
Who having 'washed their robes and made them white,'  
Press towards the mark, and see the promised land,  
Not dim and distantly, but near at hand.  
We are but marching down a sloping hill,  
Without a moment's time for standing still ;  
Where every step accelerates the pace,  
More and more rapid till we reach the base ;  
And then, no clinging to the yielding dust !  
An ocean rolls below, and plunge we must.  
What plainer language labours to express,

THE WORLD IN THE HEART.



Thus, metaphoric is employed to dress :  
And this but serves on naked truth to throw  
That hazy, indistinct, and distant glow,  
Through which we wish the future to appear,  
Not as indeed it is, true, awful, near.

And yet, amid the hurry, toil, and strife,  
The claims, the urgencies, the whirl of life,  
The soul perhaps in silence of the night  
Has flashes, transient intervals of light ;  
When things to come, without a shade of doubt,  
In terrible reality stand out.  
Those lucid moments suddenly present  
A glance of truth, as though the Heavens were rent ;  
And through that chasm of pure celestial light,  
The future breaks upon the startled sight :  
Life's vain pursuits, and Time's advancing pace,  
Appear with death-bed clearness, face to face ;  
And Immortality's expanse sublime,  
In just proportion to the speck of time :  
While Death, uprising from the silent shades,  
Shows his dark outline ere the vision fades ;  
In strong relief against the blazing sky,  
Appears the shadow as it passes by.  
And though o'erwhelming to the dazzled brain,  
*These* are the moments when the mind is sane.  
For then, a hope of Heaven the Savior's cross,  
Seem what they are, and all things else but loss.  
Oh ! to be ready ready for *that* day,  
Would we not give earth's fairest toys away  
Alas ! how soon its interests cloud the view,  
Rush in, and plunge us in the world anew !

Once *Paul* beheld, with more than mortal eye,  
The unveiled glories of the upper sky :  
And when descending from that vision's height,  
(His faith and hope thenceforward turned to sight)  
When he awoke and cast his eye anew,  
Still aching, dazzled, wondering at the view,  
On this dark world, how looked it ? mean and dim ;  
And such it *is*, as then it seemed to him.  
As when the eye a moment turns to gaze,  
Adventurous, on the sun's meridian blaze,  
The shining orb pursues whete'er it roves,  
And hides in gloom the fields, the hills, the groves :  
'Twas thus he saw the things that sense entice,  
Fade in the glorious beam of Paradise ;  
And felt how far eternal joys outweigh  
The light afflictions of our fleeting day.  
Well might he then press forward to the prize,  
And every weight, and every woe despise !

## Essays in Rhyme on Morals and Manners

Oh, with what pity would his bosom glow,  
For this poor world, and those who walk below,  
When fresh from glory fraught with Heaven, he viewed  
The busy, eager, earth-bound multitude !  
Each groping where his loudest treasure lies ;  
One at his farm, one at his merchandize :  
To see the cumbered Christian faintly strive  
To keep his doubtful spark of grace alive,  
By formal service, paid one day in seven,  
And brief, reluctant, misty thoughts of Heaven.  
How he would weep, expostulate, and pray !  
For he had seen but there the verse must stay :  
*Paul* could not utter nor his pencil draw,  
Yet, there it is that glory that he saw :  
Now, even *now* whatever vain designs  
Engross our worldly spirits there it shines !  
Oh ! place it not at time's remotest bounds  
In doubtful distance, when the trump shall sound ;  
Since what we hope for, yes, and what we fear,  
Is even near as death, and death is near !

The quiet chamber where the *Christian* sleeps,  
And where, from year to year, he prays and weeps ;  
Whence, in the midnight watch, his thoughts arise  
To those bright mansions where his treasure lies,  
How near it is to all his faith can see !  
How short and peaceful may the passage be !  
One beating pulse one feeble struggle o'er,  
May open wide the everlasting door.  
Yes, for that bliss unspeakable, unseen,  
Is ready and the veil of flesh between  
A gentle sigh may rend and then display  
The broad, full splendour of an endless day.  
This bright conviction elevates his mind ;  
He presses forward, leaving all behind.  
Thus from his throne the tyrant foe is hurled,  
This is the faith that overcomes the world.

THE END.