

THE
MAD PRANKS
OF
TOM TRAM,
SON-IN-LAW TO MOTHER WINTER.

TO WHICH ARE ADDED
HIS MERRY JESTS, ODD CONCEITS,
AND
PLEASANT TALES:
BEING VERY DELIGHTFUL TO READ.



GLASGOW,

Printed by J. & M. ROBERTSON, SALTMARKET,
MDCCCLII.

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EDINBURGH

THE
MAD PRANKS
OF
TOM TRAM.

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CHAP. I.

*A merry Jest betwixt old Mother Winter, and
her Son-in-law Tom.*

THERE was an old woman, named Mother Winter, that had but one son-in-law, and his name was Tom; and though he was at man's estate, yet would do nothing but what he listed, which grieved his old mother to the heart. Upon a time being in the market, she heard a proclamation, *That those that would not work should be whipped.* At which the old woman leap'd, and with great joy home she comes, meets with her son, and tells him the mayor of the town had made a decree, which was, *That all those that would not work should be whipped.* Has he so, says he, marry, my blessing on his heart; for my part, I'll not break the decree. So the old woman left her son, and went again to the market; she was no sooner gone but her son looks into the stone pots, which she kept small beer in: and when he saw that the beer did not work, he

takes the pot, strips off his doubiet, and with a carter's whip he lays on them as hard as he could drive. The people who saw him do it, told his mother what he had done; which made the old woman cry out, O! that young knave will be hanged. So in that tone home she goes. Her son seeing her, came running and foaming at the mouth to meet her, and told her, that he had broke both the pots; which made the old woman to say, O thou villain! what hast thou done? O mother, quoth he, you told me it was proclaimed, That all those that would not work, must be whipp'd; and I have often seen our pots work so hard, that they have foamed so much at the mouth, that they besouled all the house where they stood; but these two lazy knaves, said he, told me; That they did never work, nor never meant to work; and therefore, quoth he, I have whipped them to death, to teach the rest of their fellows to work, or never look me in the face again.

CHAP. II.

Another Jest of old Mother Winter, and her Son Tom.

UPON a time mother Winter sent her son Tom into the market, to buy her a penny worth of soap and gave him twelve-pence, and charged him to bring it home safe. Tom told her it should be so; and to

that end it should be safe brought home, according to his mother's charge, he goes and buys one penny-worth of soap, and hired two men with a hand barrow to carry the soap, and four men with brown bills to guard it along to her, giving them the eleven-pence for their pains; which made his mother in great fury, go to the mayor of the town, who committed him to prison: Now, the prison window joining close to the mayor's chamber window, Tom, and some other merry prisoners like himself, getting a cup of good liquor in their heads, began to sing and roar and domoneer, insomuch that the mayor heard them that night, and charged them they should leave off drinking and singing of bawdy songs, and sing good plains. Tom told him, That he should hear that he would amend his life, if he would pardon his fault. The mayor said that for their misdemeaners, they should be that night in prison, and upon amendment, being neighbours, he would release them in the morning. They thanked the mayor, and Tom Tram prevailed so far with a friend of his that he borrowed three shillings; which three shillings he spent upon his fellow prisoners, which made the poor men be ruled by him, and do what he enjoined them to do; so when the mayor was gone to bed, the prison window, as before observed, being close to the chamber window, they began to sing plains so loud, that the mayor

could take no rest; which made him cause one of his servants to bid them leave off singing. Tom Train said, That it was the mayor's good counsel that they should sing psalms, and sing they would, as long as they lived there. Which made the mayor bid the jailor turn them out of prison, without paying their fees.

CHAP. III.

How Tom served his Hostess, and a Tobacco Seller, being another of his Feasts.

IT happened that Tom was sent on an errand forty miles from his abode, over heaths and plains, where having dispatched his business, he chanced to be lodged in a room that opened into a yard, where his hostess kept many turkeys; which Tom seeing, he thrusts pins into two of their heads and in the night they died. The woman in the morning wondered how the fowls should come to die, Tom persuaded her that there was a great sickness where he dwelt amongst all manner of fowls, and wished his hostess to fling them away, the which she did. Tom watched where she flung them, and when he took his leave of his hostess, it was at such a time when she was busy setting bread into the oven, so that he was sure she could not look after him. So he goes and wraps the turkeys in his coat, and away he runs; but finding his two turkeys

heavy, he sees a man that sold tobacco up and down the country, at the foot of a hill, where he alighted to lead his horse down the hill, at the bottom of which he falls down, and lies crying as if he had broke one of his legs, and makes to the man a most piteous lamentation; that he was six or seven miles from any town, there being no house near; and that he was like to perish for want of succour. The man asked, Where he dwelt? he said with a knight, to whom Tom did live as a jester. The man knowing the knight, and thinking Tom's leg had really been broken, with much ado lifted him upon the horse. When Tom was mounted, he prayed the man to give him his master's turkeys. Tom made the horse to gallop away, crying out, I shall be killed! I shall be killed! O my leg! what shall I do! O my leg! The man seeing him gone stood in amaze, and knew not what to think; nevertheless, he durst not leave his turkeys behind him, for fear of displeasing the knight, but carried them lugging along fretting and swearing in his boots, till he came to the next town, where he hired a horse to overtake Tom, but could not, until he came to the knight's house, where Tom stood to attend his coming, looking out at the window. When the man alighted, Tom then called to him so loud, that most of the house heard him; O, said he, now I see thou art an honest man, I had thought you had set me upon your

headstrong horse, on purpose to deceive me of my turkeys. The man replied, A pox take you and your turkeys, for I never was play'd the knave with so in my life; I hope that you will pay for the hire of the horse, which I was forced to borrow to follow you withal. That I will, said Tom, with all my heart.

C H A P. IV.

How Tom paid the Man for his Horse Hire.

TOM asked the man what way he intended to travel? Marry, said the man, I must go back with the horse I have hired. Quoth Tom, what did you give for the hire of him? Said the man, I gave five shillings. Well, said Tom, I will set you to the next public house, and then we will eat one of the turkeys; and I will bring you in good silver, the five shillings for the horse hire. The place appointed being two miles off, Tom appoints three or four of his companions to meet him, who did not fail, for they were there before Tom and his friend, who came riding upon the horses, Tom upon the hired horse, and the man upon his own. Tom alighted, and called the hostler to set up his horse, and to give him oats enough, and caused a turkey to be roasted with all possible haste; which, according as he commanded, was performed. But Tom whispered to his consorts, and wished them

to ply the man with drink; whilst he, in the mean time, went to the host, and told him, They came to be merry, and money was short with him and desired he would lend him ten shillings upon his horse. The host having so good a pawn, lent it him, knowing it would be spent in his house. So Tom went and gave the man five shillings for the hire of the horse, and spends the other five shillings freely upon him: by that time the day was very nigh spent, so that the man could get no further that night, but Tom and his companions took their leaves and returned home and the man went his way to bed little suspecting the trick Tom had put upon him. In the morning, the man rising betimes, thinking to be gone, could have but one horse, unless he paid ten shillings, for Tom had left word with his host, that paying the money, he should have both horses. The man seeing himself cozened again by Tom, paid the ten shillings, and wished all such cheating knaves were hanged, so away he went fretting and foaming to see himself abused.

CHAP. V.

How Tom served a Company of Gentlemen.

IT happened that a company of gentlemen being disposed to create mirth, rode some miles from home to be merry, one of them would needs have Tom to wait upon him,

and Tom was as willing as he to be in that company but as they were coming home, one of them cuts the reins of Tom's bridle; so that when Tom mounted upon his horse, the reins broke, and the horse ran away with him in the midst of a great heath whereon stood a large gallows against which the horse stood, and rubbed his neck, so that the gentleman hoop'd and hallow'd, and said, Farewel, Tom, farewel; but Tom alighted from his horse, and made fast his reins, and with his sword cut three or four chips from off the gallows; and at the next tavern Tom met with them, where they jeer'd him not a little; but Tom very earnestly entreated them to forbear; yet the more he entreated them, the more they play'd upon him: But to be even with them, in the morning Tom calls the ostler, and sends him for nutmegs and ginger, and gets a grater; and when he had grated them, he also grated the chips of the gallows, and mix'd with the spice only a little nutmeg and ginger he laid towards one end of the trencher for himself, and with a gallon of ale into the gentlemen's chamber he goes, begging of them not to mock him any more with the gallows; and he would give them that ale and spice; and so, says he, gentlemen, I drink to you all. Now as soon as he had drank, the ostler call'd him, as he gave him charge before so to do, down stairs runs Tom, as fast as he could: the gentle-

men made all possible speed to drink up the ale and spice before he came up again, and that was what Tom desired. When he came again, seeing all the ale and spice gone, he says, Gentlemen, will you know why my horse carried me to the gallows? Yes, says one of them, Well, says Tom, it was to fetch you some spice to your ale, and if you want I have more for you; and with that shewed them the chips out of his pocket, and away he runs, leaving the gentlemen to look one upon another, studying how they should be revenged on him.

CHAP VI.

How Tom rode a Gossiping.

TOM heard of a company of women that would meet at the place a house-warming, to welcome one of the house. These women had formerly abused Tom, and now he thought to be even with them, so he goes to an apothecary's shop, buys a pound of purging comfits, and puts them in a cake with other spices, and dresses himself in women's apparel, and gets a horse and a pannel, and to the house he comes, knocks at the door, and asked the maid, whether there were many women, came a house-warming? The maid said, Not yet: I pray says Tom, take this cake, and if I come not at the meeting, let them eat it and be merry; for I must go to a woman that is ready

lie down, and away he goes. The women came, and wondered what woman it could be that left that cake; some of them supposed that it was some midwife: They said a while, and the person they expected to be with them not coming, they fell to their meat, and at last to the cake. But it was not long in their bellies before it began to work, so that one must go to stool, another to vomiting, and all of them were so sick, that the smell of them perfumed the house, and the breath of them was so strong, that none could endure it: In which time Tom shifts himself into man's apparel, and with a staff in his hand, came where his cousins were, and hearing them groaning all the house over, opened the door and asked them what was the matter? They answered, they were all poisoned. Marry, quoth Tom, hope not, if you please to let me have a horse, I will ride to Mr. Doctor's and fetch an antidote to expel the poison. Take my horse, quoth one; take my horse, said another; or mine, said a third. Well, well, said Tom, I will take one. And into the stable he goes, and takes three horses, and to the doctor's he rides, and told him, that all the people of such a house had eaten something that hindered them from going to stool; and prayed him that he would without delay, carry them some Glysters; and that they had sent a horse for him and another for his man. The doctor, greedy of money,

hasted thither with his glyster-pipes as fast as the horses could carry him and his man; but the doctor no sooner came into the house, but he smell'd there was no need of glysters. In the mean time Tom told not only all he met with, that there were such women met to be merry at such a place; and not only they, but all the women of the house were poisoned but went likewise to their husbands, and told them the like; so that all the people thereabouts repaired thither; which made the women so ashamed, that they knew not which way to look, because all that saw them judged they were drunk; so that instead of comforting them, which they expected, they fell a reviling them; the women also fell to scolding among themselves, and would have fought, had not their husbands parted them, by carrying them home.

CHAP. VII.

How Tom served a company of Gypsies.

IT happened on a day, towards night that there came a company of Gypsies into a town, and had not very long been there till Tom met them, and asked them, What they made there? They said, they came to town to tell the people their fortunes, that thereby they might withstand ensuing dangers. Aye, says Tom, and where do you die to-night? They told him they could not tell. Nay, said Tom, if you will be con-

tented to lie in straw, I will bring you where you may lie dry and warm. They thanked him, and told him they would tell him his fortune in the morning for nothing. Tom thanked them, and therefore conveys them into a little thach'd house which had a ditch round about it, very close to the wall thereof; that house Tom help'd them to fill with straw, and see them take their lodging; and then, it being dark, Tom bad them good-night; and as soon as he was over the bridge, which was a plank, he drew it after him; and in the dead time of the night, Tom gets a long pole, with a wisp of straw at the end of it, and sets the straw on fire, calling out to the rest of the fellows to ⁴lift for themselves; who thinking to run over the bridge, fell into the ditch, crying and calling out for help, while, by Tom's means, most part of the town stood to see the jest; and as the gypsies waded through the ditch, they took them, and carried them into an house, where there was a good fire, for it was in the midst of winter; where Tom counsels them, that they should never make him believe that they could tell him any thing, that did not know what danger should befall themselves: But, says he, because you cannot tell me my fortune, I will tell you yours; For to-morrow in the forenoon you shall be whipped for deceivers, and in the afternoon be hanged for setting the house on fire. The gypsies hearing this so strick sentence, made haste to dry

themselves, and next morning stole out of town, and never came any more there.

CHAP. VIII.

How Tom sold his mother's Trevot, and cozened an Aquavita Man that sold hot water.

IN a winter night, coming home very late, Tom Tram fell with his arms before him, and at the last run his nose against a post; what, quoth Tom, is my nose longer than my arms? And afterwards he dropped into a well that was in the yard, and crying out, help, help, all is not well that is in the well, the neighbours came and pulled him out, and he dropp'd like a pig that had been roasted on a spit; but he was then in a cold condition, so he went to bed, and covered himself; but before morning, having a sooseness in his belly, Tom had beshit the sheets; and when some, by the quick scent of their noses, had discovered the fault, he told them, it was nothing but the clear mud of the well that came away from him; and if he died of that sickness, he would be buried by torch-light, because none should see him go to his grave. Just as he had so said, in came a hot water man, of whom he requested to give him a sup; which having tasted, he feigned himself to be in a hot fever, and rose up in his clothes, ran away with the aquavita man's bottle of hot water, and took his mother's trevot, and sold it for a long

working pole, and a falconer's bag? which being tied to his side, and having drunk up the poor man's hot water, he came reeling me with an owl upon his fist, saying, It is gentleman-like to be betwixt hawk and buzzard; and he told the aquavitæ man, that he had sent the trevot with three legs, to the next town to fill your bottles again.

C H A P. IX.

Tom Tram's wooing Cicily Summers, the neat Wench of the West.

CICILY Summers, whose nose was then as fair as the midnight sun, which shined as bright as Baconthine, was beloved by young Tom Tram; and a sad story to tell, he grew not worth the bread he eat, through pining away for her love. Tom was loth to speak but still whistled; At last, when Cicily made no answer, he burst out thus: O Cicily Summers, if I Tom Tram, son of mother Winter, and thou Cicily Summers, be joined together what a quarter shall we keep, as big as three half years; besides, Cicily Summers, when thou scoldest, then Winter shall presently cool thy heat; and when we walk on the street they'll say, yonder goes Summer and Winter; and for children, we shall beget every year a generation of Almanacks. So they went to the parson and were married; but they fell out so extremely, that she scolded all the summer

season; and Tom he drank good ale, and told old tales all the winter time, and so they could never but thrive all the year thro'. Tom lived by good ale, and his wife by eating oatmeal; and when Tom went to be drunk in the morning, she put oatmeal in the ale, and made caudle with mustard instead of eggs, which bit Tom so by the nose, that it would run water; but the next day he would be drunk again.

CHAP. X.

How Tom used a singing man of a Cathedral Church in the West.

ONCE there was a cathedral singing man, that had very much anger'd Tom, and had made songs and jests on him; whereupon Tom got upon his back an ox-hide, with the horns set upon his head, and so lay in a hedge bottom, waiting till the singing man came by, who he was sure must pass that way: at last came the singing man, up started Tom out of the hedge bottom in his ox-hide, and followed him: the singing man cried out, the devil! the devil! No, quoth Tom, I am the ghost of goodman Johnson, living hard by the church stile, unto whose house ye came and sung catches, and owes me Five Pounds for ale, therefore appoint me a day when ye will bring me my money hither, or else I will haunt thee still. The singing man promised that day se'enight,

and accordingly he did; and Tom made himself brave clothes with the money, and sweethearts came about him as bees do about a money pot; but Tom wore a rope in his pocket and being asked if he would marry, would pull it out, and laugh, saying, I have broken my shins already, and will be safer hereafter; for I am an old coit, and I may have as much wit as a horse.

C H A P X I.

How he hired himself to the justice, and what pranks he played while with him.

THE justice at this time being without a man, and finding Tom to be a lively fellow, asking him, if he would serve him. Yes, quoth Tom, for I am a great many miles from the country. As soon as they had agreed for wages, Tom was immediately entertained: But he had not liv'd long here before the justice and his family was obliged to go to London, leaving no body at home but Tom. Now in the justices absence, an officer brought a lusty young woman and a little man with a complaint; so they knocked at the door, and Tom let them in; then placing himself in his master's chair, he asked the woman what she had to say, who told him that the man whom she had brought before him had lain with her by force. Adzooks, quoth Tom, is it possible that such a little fellow as this could force

such a strapping dame as you, Alas! Sir said she, although he is little he is strong. Well, little whipper-snapper, quoth Tom what do you say to this; He replied, Like your worship it is false what she says; the truth it this: I have been at sea, and coming ashore, where I received my pay, I met with this woman, and agreed with her for half a crown, and when it was over, I pulled out my purse to pay her honestly what I had agreed for; but she seeing that I had a considerable sum of money, contrary to our bargain, would force me to give her ten shillings, and because I would not, she has brought me before your worship. Have you got that purse of money? quoth Tom: Yes Sir, said the seaman. Give it into my hand said Tom. He receives it, and turning to the woman, said, Here take it and get about your business. She replied, I thank your worship, you are an honest good man, and have done me justice. The little seaman the meanwhile wrung his hands and bitterly cried out, I am ruined, for it is every penny I had in the world. Well, quoth Tom, haste after her, and take it from her again. According to Tom's order he runs after her and when he came after her, he said, I must and will have my purse again: Then she fell about his ears and cufft him; nay, this did not satisfy her, but she dragged him back again to Tom, who sat as justice, and told him, that the fellow followed her for the

se, which he in justice gave her. Well, said Tom, and has he got it? No, said she, think not, before he should take it from me, I'd tear out both his eyes. Let me see again, says Tom: She gives it to him. all the money in it? quoth he. Yes, Sir, said she, every penny. Why then, said he, ye little whipper-snapper, take your purse again; and as for you, Mrs. Impudence, had you defended your honesty as well as you did the money, I never had been troubled with this complaint. Here, Mr. Constable, give her an hundred lashes at the town's whipping-post: which was accordingly done, and Tom was applauded for his just proceedings.



SEVERAL

MERRY TALES.

 TALE I.

Of a Scholar and a Tapster on a Winter night.

THE tapster said, Sir, will you go to bed. No, quoth the scholar, there are thieves abroad, and would not willingly be taken napping. So the tapster left him, and be-

ing gone, in came a spirit into the chamber with his head under his arm, so that he durst not stir, but cried out, Help! help! fire! thieves! thieves. So when they of the house came to him they asked him, what was the matter! Oh, quoth he, the devil was here, and spoke to me with his head under his arm; but now I will go to bed, and if he comes again, I will send him to the tapster to help him to make false reckonings: It being a cold night, quoth he, I will first put fire to toe, that is, I will warm my toes by the fire, then I'll go to bed. And so he did, and a great reckoning the next morning put the scholar out of his jest, saying, that was in earnest made too large a reckoning, he being but poor Sir John of Oxford.

TALE II.

ONE that was going to a wedding had a great occasion to untruis a point; whereupon he went under a hedge, but the place not pleasing him; he went under a haystack and then into a saw-pit, and afterwards into a hog-stye, where he did his business. Now the other clowns that were with him, asked him if he had done his task and days labour; Yes, quoth he, I have shit three shillings in nine-pences, go and fetch them they are more than a day's labour will come to. So they went to the wedding house,

and when they came thither, they were making a reckoning for the fidler, and every one gave what he listed. Oh, quoth one of them, if you want money to make up the reckoning, here is one that can shite three shillings in nine-pences. If he can, quoth the guests, let him bring them hither in his mouth, for I fear they are of so soft a metal, that they will melt in spite of his teeth. So after they had danced a while, a fart was discharged; whereupon says one, this fart was full charged, for it yielded a large vent; meaning his shirt.

T A L E III.

DOWN in the west country a certain conceited fellow had a great nose; so a country-man by him with a sack of corn, settled him, saying, your nose stands in my way; whereupon the other fellow with the great nose, took his nose in his hand, and held it to the other side, saying, A pox on thee, go and be hanged.

T A L E IV.

ONCE there was a company of gypsies that came to a country fellow on the highway, and would needs tell him his fortune: amongst other things, they had him assure himself his worst misfortunes were past, and that he would not be troubled with crosses as he had been: so coming home, and hav-

ing sold the cow at the market, he look in his purse for the money, thinking to ha told it to his wife; but he found not much as one cross in his purse; whereup he remembered the words of the gypsies as said, that the gypsies had said true that should not be troubl-d with crosses, and th they had pick'd his pocket, and left not penny in his purse. Whereupon his wi basted and cudgelled him so soundly, th he began to perceiv that a man that had cursed wife should never be without a cro tho' he had never a penny in his purse; an because it was winter-time, he sat a wh by the fire-side, and after went to bed fu perless and penniless.

T A L E V.

A FARMER'S wife in the west had thr pigs, which she loved exceedingly well, an fed them with good butter-milk and whey but they would come running into the hou and befoul the rooms: whereupon she r solved to sell them at the market, becau they were better fed than taught, but aft wards they were stolen away from he whereupon she supposed they were driven to London to learn manners; but said sh they were too old to learn to turn the fi in Bartholomew fair, and therefore believ some butchers had stole them away.

Her cock had a piece of cloth sewen abc

an, and was left upon the perch, but afterwards stolen; whereupon she said, that her ck was turned scholar in a black gown; and so she went to Oxford to a conjurer, to know what was become of her pigs and her ck. The scholar smiled, and told her, the three pigs were blown home, and the ck was made a batchelor of arts in one of the colleges. I thought so, said the woman, for sure batchelors of arts are very coxcombs.

T A L E VI.

ONE in the country having bought a oak of one that stole it, or made it by right of hand, he was challenged for it; and being troubled in mind, asked a friend of his, a very witty fellow in the parish, how he might come off? His friend replied, he would tell him for a quart of sack. So to the tavern they went, and having drunk a pint, he desired to know how he might come off? When we have drunk the other half of sack, quoth his friend, I'll tell you how you may come off. The quart being drunk off, he replied, he would not tell him all they were in the street. So going out of the tavern, Do you see, quoth he, yonder hollow seller's-shop, pointing as it were, with his finger; do but buy a rope there and hang thyself with it, and I warrant thee thou shalt come off, and never be troubled for that matter.

T A L E VII.

A COUNTRY Clergyman meeting a neighbour who never came to church, although an old fellow of about fifty, he gave him some reproof on that account, and asked him if he never read at home? No, replied the clown, I cannot read. I dare say said the parson, you don't know who made you? Not I, in troth, cried the country man. A little boy coming by at the same time, Who made you child? said the parson, God Sir, said the boy.—Why look you there, quoth the Clergyman, are you not ashamed to hear a child of five or six years old, tell me who made him, when you that are so old a man, cannot!—Ah! said the country man, it is no wonder that he should remember; he was made but t'other day, and it is a long while measter since I was made.

F I N I S.



G L A S G O W,

Printed by J. & M. ROBERTSON, Saltmarket,

M D C C C I I.