

CHEAP TRACTS,

Calculated to promote the Interests of Religion, Virtue, and Humanity.

No. XII.

Tales of Instruction:

In Verse and Prose.

CONTAINING :

THE

HERMIT,

By PARNEL.

CONTENT,

A Vision, by COTTON.

THE FATHER & JUPITER,

A Fable, by GAY.

A PARABLE against PERSECUTION

By FRANKLIN.

AND,

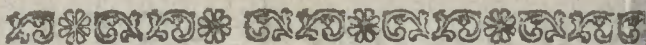
The WISDOM of PROVIDENCE:

An Apologue, from the German of GELLERT.

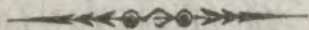
— — — — —
DUNBAR :

Printed by G. MILLER :—at whose Shop may be had a variety of Pamphlets, Ballads, Children's Books, Pictures, Catechisms, &c.

WHOLESALE AND RETAIL.



THE
HERMIT.



*Yet, O my soul, thy rising murmurs stay,
Nor dare th' all-wise Disposer to arraign,
Or against his supreme decree
With impious grief complain.*

FAR in a wild, unknown to public view
From youth to age a rev'rend Hermit
grew ;
The moss his bed, the cave his humble cell
His food the fruits, his drink the chrysta
well :
Remote from man, with God he pass'd his
days,
Pray'r all his bus'ness, all his pleasure praise
A life so sacred, such serene repose,
Seem'd heav'n itself, 'till one suggestion rose
That vice should triumph, virtue vice obey
This sprung some doubt of providence's sway
His hopes no more a certain prospect bore
And all the tenure of his soul is lost.
So, when a smooth expanse receives improve
Calm nature's image on its wat'ry breast,
Down bend the banks, the trees depending
grow,

And skies beneath with'answ'ring colours glow:
 But if a stone the gentle sea divide,
 Swift ruffling circles curl on ev'ry side,
 And glimm'ring fragments of a broken sun,
 Banks, trees, and skies, in thick disorder run.

To clear this doubt, to know the world
 by sight,
 To find if books, or swains report it right,
 (For yet by swains alone the world he knew,
 Whose feet came wand'ring o'er the nightly
 dew)

He quits his cell; the pilgrim-staff he bore,
 And fix'd the scallop in his hat before.

Then with the sun a rising journey went,
 Sedate to think, and watching each event.

The morn was wasted in the pathless grass,
 And long and lonesome was the wild to pass:
 But when the southern sun had warm'd the
 day,

A youth came posting o'er a crossing way;
 His raiment decent, his complexion fair;
 And soft in graceful ringlets wav'd his hair.
 Then near approaching, Father, hail! he
 cry'd;

And, Hail! my son, the rev'rend sire reply'd:
 Words follow'd words, from question answer
 flow'd,

And talk of various kind deceiv'd the road:
 Till each with other pleas'd, and loth to part,
 While in their age they differ, join in heart.
 Thus stands an aged elm, in ivy bound;
 Thus youthful ivy clasps the elm around.

Now sunk the sun, the closing hour of day
 Came onward, mantl'd o'er with sober grey:
 Nature in silence bid the world repose:
 When near the road a stately palace rose.
 There by the moon thro' ranks of trees they

pass,
 Whose verdure crown'd their sloping side:
 of grass.

It chanc'd, the noble master of the dome,
 Still made his house the wand'ring stranger's
 home:

Yet still the kindness from a thirst of praise
 Prov'd the vain flourish of expensive ease.
 The pair arrive: The liv'ry'd servants wait
 Their Lord receives them at the pompous
 gate.

The table groans with costly piles of food,
 And all is more than hospitably good.
 Then led to rest, the day's long toil they
 drown,
 Deep sunk in sleep, and silk, and heaps of
 down.

At length 'tis morn, and at the dawn of
 day,

Along the wide canals the Zephyrs play:
 Fresh o'er the gay parterres the breezes creep
 And shake the neighb'ring wood to banish
 sleep.

Up rise the guests, obedient to the call;
 An early banquet deck'd the splended hall
 Rich luscious wine a golden goblet grac'd,

Which the kind master forc'd the guests to
taste.

Then, pleas'd and thankful, from the porch
they go;

And, but the landlord, none had cause of
wo:

His cup was vanish'd; for in secret guise
The younger guest purloin'd the glitt'ring
prize.

As one who 'spies a serpent in his way,
Glistning and basking in the summer-ray,
Disorder'd stops to shun the danger near,
Then walks with faintness on, and looks with
fear:

So seem'd the fire, when, far upon the road,
The shining spoil his wiley partner show'd.

He stopt with silence, walk'd with tremb-
ling heart,

And much he wish'd, but durst not ask to
part:

Murm'ring he lifts his eyes, & thinks it hard,
That gen'rous actions meet a base reward.

While thus they pass, the sun his glory
shrouds,

The changing skies hang out their sable clouds;

A sound in air presag'd approaching rain,

And beasts to covert scud across the plain.

Warn'd by the signs, the wand'ring pair re-
treat,

To seek for shelter at a neighb'ring seat.

'Twas built with turrets, on a rising ground,

And strong, and large, and unimprov'd a-
round;

It's owner's temper, tim'rous and severe,
Unkind and gripping, caus'd a desert there.

As near the Miser's heavy doors they drew
Fierce rising gusts with sudden fury blew;
The nimble light'ning mixt with show'rs be-

gan,
And o'er their heads loud rolling thunder
ran.

Here long they knock, but knock or call in
vain,

Driv'n by the wind, and batter'd by the rain.
At length some pity warm'd the master's
breast,

('Twas then his threshold first receiv'd a guest)
Slow creaking turns the door with jealous
care,

And half he welcomes in the shiv'ring pair:
One frugal faggot lights the naked walls,
And nature's fervour thro' their limbs recalls.
Bread of the coarsest sort, with eager wine,
(Each hardly granted) serv'd them both to
dine,

And when the tempest first appear'd to cease,
A ready warning bid them part in peace.

With still remark the pond'ring hermit
view'd,

In one so rich, a life so poor and rude;
And why should such (within himself he
cry'd)

Lock the lost wealth, a thousand want be-
side ?

But what new marks of wonder soon took
place,

ev'ry settling feature of his face,
 When from his vest the young companion
 bore
 That cup the gen'rous landlord own'd be-
 fore,
 And paid profusely with the precious bowl
 The stinted kindness of this churlish soul !
 But now the clouds in airy tumult fly,
 The sun emerging opes an azure sky ;
 Fresher green the smelling leaves display,
 And glitt'ring as they tremble, cheer the
 day ;
 The weather courts them from the poor re-
 treat,
 And the glad master bolts the wary gate.
 While hence they walk, the pilgrim's bo-
 som wrought
 With all the travail of uncertain thought.
 His partner's acts without their cause appear ;
 'Twas there a vice, and seem'd a madness
 here :
 Detesting that, and pitying this, he goes,
 Lost and confounded with the various shows.
 Now night's dim shades again involve }
 the sky }
 Again the wand'ers want a place to lie, }
 Again they search, and find a lodging nigh ; }
 The soil improv'd around, the mansion neat,
 And neither poorly low, nor idly great :
 'T seem'd to speak its master's turn of mind ;
 Content, and not for praise, but virtue kind.

Hither the walkers turn with weary feet,
Then bless the mansion, & the master greet :
Their greeting fair bestow'd, with modest
guise,

The courteous master hears, and thus re-
plies :

“ Without a vain, without a grudging heart,

“ To him who gives us all, I yield a part;

“ From him you come, for him accept it
here,

“ A frank & sober, more than costly cheer.”

He spoke, and bid the welcome table spread.

Then talk'd of virtue till the time of bed ;

When the grave household round his hall re-
pair,

Warn'd by a bell, and close the hours with
pray'r.

At length the world, renew'd by calm re-
pose,

Was strong for toil, the dappled morn arose.

Before the pilgrims part, the younger crept

Near the clos'd cradle, where an infant slept,

And writh'd his neck ; the landlord's little
pride,

O strange return ! grew black, and gasp'd,
and dy'd.

Horror of horrors ! what ! his only son !

How look'd our hermit when the fact was
done !

Not hell, tho' hell's black jaws in sunder part,

And breathe blue fire, could more assault his
heart.

Confus'd, & struck with silence at the deed,
 He flies, but trembling fails to fly with speed.
 His steps the youth pursues. The country
 lay

Perplex'd with roads; a servant shew'd the
 way :

A river cross'd the path; the passage o'er
 Was nice to find; the servant trode before.
 Long arms of oaks an open bridge supply'd,
 And deep the waves beneath the bending,
 glide.

The youth, who seem'd to watch a time to
 sin,

Approach'd the careless guide, and thrust
 him in.

Plunging he falls, and rising lifts his head,
 Then flashing turns, and sinks among the
 dead.

Wild, sparkling rage inflames the father's
 eyes;

He burst the bands of fear, and madly cries,
 Detested wretch—but scarce his speech be-
 gan,

When the strange partner seem'd no longer
 man;

His youthful face grew more serenely sweet;
 His robe turn'd white, and flow'd upon his
 feet;

Fair rounds of radiant points invest his hair,
 Celestial odours breathe thro' purpled air;
 And wings, whose colours glitter'd on the
 day,

Wide at his back their gradual plumes display.

The form etherial bursts upon his sight,
And moves in all the majesty of light.

Tho' loud at first the pilgrim's passion
grew,

Sudden he gaz'd, and wist not what to do ;
Surprize in secret chains his words suspends,
And in a calm his settling temper ends.

But silence here the beauteous angel broke,
(The voice of music ravish'd as he spoke.)

Thy pray'r, thy praise, thy life to vice unknown,

In sweet memorial rise before the throne.
These charms success in our bright region
find,

And force an angel down to calm thy mind ;
For this commission'd, I forsook the sky—
Nay cease to kneel,—thy fellow-servant I :

Then know the truth of government divine,

And let these scruples be no longer thine.

The Maker justly claims that world he
made,

In this the right of providence is laid :

Its sacred majesty thro' all depends,

On using second means to work his ends :

'Tis thus, withdrawn in state from human eye,

The power exerts his attributes on high ;

Your actions uses, nor controuls your will,

And bids the doubting sons of men be still.

What strange events can strike with more
 surprize,
 Than those which lately struck thy wondring
 eyes?
 Yet, taught by these, confess th' Almighty
 just,
 And where you can't unriddle, learn to trust!

The *great, vain man*, who far'd on costly
 food,
 Whose life was too luxurious to be good;
 Who made his iv'ry stands with goblets shine,
 And forc'd his guests to morning-draughts
 of wine;
 Has, with the cup, the graceless custom lost,
 And still he welcomes, but with less of cost.

The mean, suspicious *wretch*, whose bol-
 ted door
 Ne'er mov'd in duty to the wandring poor;
 With him I left the cup, to teach his mind,
 That heav'n can bless, if mortals will be
 kind.

Conscious of wanting worth, he views the
 bowl,
 And feels compassion touch his grateful soul.
 Thus artists melt the sullen ore of lead,
 With heaping coals of fire upon its head;
 In the kind warmth the metal learns to glow,
 And loose from dross, the silver runs below.

Long had our *pious friend* in virtue trode,
 But now the child half wean'd his heart from
 God;

(Child of his age) for him he liv'd in pain,

And measur'd back his steps to earth again.
 To what excesses had his dotage run ?
 But God, to save the father, took the son.
 To all, but thee, in fits he seem'd to go,
 (And 'twas my ministry to deal the blow.)
 The poor fond parent, humbled in the dust,
 Now owns in tears the punishment was just.

But how had all his fortune felt a wreck,
 Had that false *servant* sped in safety back ?
 This night his treasur'd heaps he meant to
 steal !

And what a fund of charity would fail !

Thus heav'n instructs thy mind ; this trial
 o'er,
 Depart in peace, resign, and sin no more.

On sounding pinions here the youth with-
 drew :

The sage stood wondring as the seraph flew.
 Thus look'd Elisha, when, to mount on high,
 His master took the chariot of the sky :
 The fiery pomp ascending left the view ;
 The prophet gaz'd and wish'd to follow too.

The bending hermit here a pray'r begun,
 Lord, as in heaven, on earth thy will be done ;
 Then gladly turning, sought his ancient place,
 And pass'd a life of piety and peace.

CONTENT:

A VISION.

*If solid happiness we prize,
Within our breast this jewel lies;
And they are fools who roam.*

*The world has nothing to bestow,
From ourselves our joys must flow,
And that dear hut our home.*

MAN is deceiv'd by outward show—
'Tis a plain home-spun truth, I know;
The fraud prevails at ev'ry age,
So says the school boy and the sage;
Yet still we hug the dear deceit,
And still exclaim against the cheat.
But whence this inconsistent part?
Say, moralists, who know the heart:
If you'll this labyrinth pursue,
I'll go before and find the clue.

I dreamt ('twas on a birth-day night)
A sumptuous palace rose to sight:
The builder had, thro' ev'ry part,
Observ'd the chastest rules of art;
Raphael and Titian had display'd
All the full force of light and shade;
Around the liv'ry'd servants wait
An aged porter kept the gate.

As I was traversing the hall,
 Where Brussels' looms adorn'd the wall,
 (Whose tap'stry shews without my aid,
 A nun is no such useleſs maid)
 A graceful person came in view,
 (His form it ſeems is known to few;)
 His dreſs was unadorn'd with lace,
 But charms ! a thouſand in his face.

This, Sir, your property ? I cry'd—
 Maſter and manſion coincide ;
 Where all, indeed, is truly great,
 And proves, that bliſs may dwell with ſtate.
 Pray, Sir, indulge a ſtranger's claim,
 And grant the favour of your name.

“ CONTENT,” the lovely form reply'd,
 But think not, here that I reſide :
 Here lives a courtier, baſe and fly ;
 An open, honeſt, ruſtic, I.
 Our taſte and manners diſagree ;
 His levee boaſt no charms for me :
 For titles, and the ſmiles of kings,
 To me are cheap unheeded things.
 ('Tis virtue can alone impart
 The patent of a ducal heart :
 Unleſs this herald ſpeaks him great,
 What ſhall avail the glare of ſtate ?)
 Thoſe ſecret charms are my delight,
 Which ſhine remote from public ſight ;
 Paſſion ſubdued, deſires at reſt—
 And hence his chaplain ſhares my breaſt.

There was a time (his Grace can tell)
 I knew the Duke exceeding well ;
 I knew ev'ry secret of his heart ;
 In truth, we never were apart :
 But when the court became his end,
 He turn'd his back upon his friend.

One day I call'd upon his Grace,
 Just as the Duke had got a place :
 I thought (but thought amiss, 'tis clear)
 I shou'd be welcome to the peer :
 Yes, welcome to a man in power ;
 And so I was—for half an hour.
 But he grew weary of his guest,
 And soon discarded me his breast ;
 Upbraided me with want of merit,
 But most for poverty of spirit.

You relish not the great man's lot ?
 Come then, I'll take thee to my cot.
 Think me not partial to the great,
 I'm a sworn foe to pride and state :
 No monarchs share my kind embrace ;
 There's scarce a monarch knows my face :
 CONTENT shuns courts, and oftner dwells
 With modest worth in humble cells ;
 There's no complaint, tho' brown the bread,
 Or the cold stone sustain the head ;
 Tho' hard the couch, and coarse the meat,
 Still the brown loaf and sleep are sweet.

Far from the city I reside,
 And a thatch'd cottage all my pride.
 True to my heart I seldom roam,
 Because I find my joys at home :
 For foreign visits then begin,
 When the man feels a void within.

But tho' from towns and crouds I fly,
 No humourist, nor cynic, I.
 Amidst sequester'd shades I prize
 The friendships of the good and wise.
 Bid VIRTUE and her sons attend,
 VIRTUE will tell thee, I'm her friend ;
 Tell thee, I'm faithful, constant, kind,
 And meek and lowly and resign'd ;
 Will say, there's no distinction known
 Betwixt her household and my own.

Author. If these the friendships you pursue,
 Your friends, I fear, are very few.
 So little company, you say,
 Yet fond of home from day to day !
 How do you shun detraction's rod ?
 I doubt your neighbours think you odd !

Content. I commune with myself at night,
 And ask my heart, if all be right :
 If, "right," replies my faithful breast,
 I smile and close my eyes to rest.

Author. You seem regardless of the town :
 Pray, Sir, how stand you with the gown ?

Content. The clergy say, they love me well;
 Whether they do, they best can tell:
 They paint me modest, friendly, wise,
 And always praise me to the skies;
 But if conviction's at the heart,
 Why not a correspondent part?
 For shall the learned tongue prevail,
 If actions preach a different tale?
 Who'll seek my door, or grace my walls,
 When neither dean nor prelate calls?

With those my friendships most obtain,
 Who prize their duty more than gain;
 Soft flow the hours whene'er we meet,
 And conscious virtue is our treat;
 Our harmless breasts no envy know,
 And hence we fear no secret foe,
 Our walks ambition ne'er attends,
 And hence we ask no pow'ful friends;
 We wish the best to church and state,
 But leave the steerage to the great;
 Careless, who rises, or who falls,
 And never dream of vacant stalls;
 Much less by pride or int'rest drawn,
 Sigh for the mitre, and the lawn.

Observe the secrets of my art,
 I'll fundamental truths impart:
 And if you'll my advice pursue,
 I'll quite my hut and dwell with you.

The passions are a numerous croud,
 Imperious, positive, and loud :
 Curb these licentious sons of strife ;
 Hence chiefly rise the storms of life ;
 If they grow mutinous and rave,
 They are thy masters, thou their slave.

Regard the world with cautious eye,
 Nor raise your expectation high.
 See that the balanc'd scales be such,
 You neither fear nor hope too much.
 For disappointment's not the thing ;
 'Tis pride and passion point the sting.
 Life is a sea, where storms must rise ;
 'Tis folly talks of cloudless skies :
 He, who contracts his swelling sail,
 Eludes the fury of the gale.

Be still, nor anxious thoughts employ ;
 Distrust imbitters present joy :
 On God for all events depend ;
 You cannot want when God's your friend.
 Weigh well your part, and do your best ;
 Leave to your Maker all the rest.
 The hand which form'd thee in the womb,
 Guides from the cradle to the tomb.
 Can the fond mother slight her boy ;
 Can she forget her prattling joy ?
 Say then, shall SOV'REIGN LOVE desert
 The humble and the honest heart ?
 Heav'n may not grant thee all thy mind ;
 Yet say not thou, that Heav'n's unkind.

God is alike, both good, and wise,
 In what he grants and what denies :
 Perhaps, what goodness gives to-day,
 To-morrow goodness takes away.

You say that troubles intervene,
 That sorrow darkens half the scene.
 True—and this consequence you see,
 The world was ne'er design'd for thee :
 You're like a passenger below,
 That stays perhaps a night or so ;
 But still his native country lies
 Beyond the bound'ries of the skies.

Of heav'n ask virtue, wisdom, health,
 But never let thy prayer be wealth.
 If food be thine, (tho' little gold)
 And raiment to repel the cold ;
 Such as may nature's wants suffice,
 Not what from pride and folly rite ;
 If soft the motions of thy soul,
 And a calm conscience crowns the whole ;
 Add but a friend to all this store,
 You can't in reason wish for more ;
 And if kind Heav'n this comfort brings,
 'Tis more than heav'n bestows on kings.

He spake—The airy spectre flies,
 And strait the sweet illusion dies.
 The vision, at the early dawn,
 Consign'd me to the thoughtful morn ;
 To all the cares of waking clay,
 And inconsistent dreams of day.

THE FATHER & JUPITER, a FABLE.

*Know then this Truth, (enough for Man to know)
VIRTUE alone is happiness below.*

THE man to Jove his suit preferr'd ;
He begg'd a wife; his prayer was heard,
Jove wonder'd at his bold addressing,
For how precarious is the blessing !

A wife he takes. And now for heirs
Again he worries heaven with prayers.
Jove nods assent. Two hopeful boys
And a fine girl reward his joys.

Now more solicitous he grew,
And set their future lives in view ;
He saw that all respect and duty
Were paid to wealth, to pow'r and beauty.

Once more, he cries, accept my prayer.

Make my lov'd progeny thy care :

Let my first hope, my fav'rite boy,
All fortune's richest gift's enjoy.

My next with strong ambition fire,

May favour teach him to aspire,

'Till he the step of power ascend,

And courtiers to their idol bend.

With ev'ry grace, with every charm,

My daughter's perfect features arm.

If Heav'n approve, a father's blest,

Jove smiles, and grants his full request.

The first, a miser at the heart,
 Studious of ev'ry griping art,
 Heaps hoards on hoards with anxious pain,
 And all his life devotes to gain.
 He feels no joy, his cares increase,
 He neither wakes nor sleeps in peace,
 In fancy'd want, (a wretch complete)
 He starves, and yet he dares not eat.

The next to sudden honours grew,
 The thriving art of courts he knew ;
 He reach'd the height of power and place,
 Then fell the victim of disgrace.

Beauty with early bloom supplies
 His daughter's cheek, and points her eyes ;
 The vain coquette each suit disdains,
 And glories in her lover's pains.
 With age she fades, each lover flies,
 Contemn'd, forlorn, she pines and dies,

When Jove the father's grief survey'd,
 And heard him heaven and fate upbraid,
 Thus spoke the God. By outward show
 Men judge of happiness and woe ;
 Shall ignorance of good and ill
 Dare to direct th' eternal will ?
 Seek virtue ; and of that possess,
 To providence resign the rest.

A PARABLE AGAINST PERSECUTION.

*Let not this weak unknowing hand
Presume thy bolts to throw,
And deal damnation round the land,
On each I judge thy foe.*

AND it came to pass after these things, that Abraham sat in the door of his tent, about the going down of the sun. And behold a man bent with age, coming from the way of the wilderness leaning on a staff. And Abraham arose, and met him, and said unto him, Turn in, I pray thee, and wash thy feet, and tarry all night; and thou shalt arise early in the morning and go on thy way. And the man said, Nay; for I will abide under this tree. But Abraham pressed him greatly: so he turned, and they went into the tent: and Abraham baked unleavened bread, and they did eat. And when Abraham saw that the man blessed not God, he said unto him, Wherefore dost thou not worship the most high God, Creator of heaven and earth? And the man answered and said, I do not worship thy God, neither do I call upon his name; for I have made to myself a god, which abideth always in my house, and provideth me with all things. And Abraham's zeal was kindled against the man; and he arose and fell upon him, and drove him forth with blows into the wilderness. And God called unto Abraham, saying, Abraham, where is the stran-

er? And Abraham answered and said, Lord, he would not worship thee, neither would he call upon thy name; therefore have I driven him out from before my face into the wilderness. And God said, Have I borne with him these hundred and ninety and eight years, and nourished him, and clothed him, notwithstanding his rebellion against me; and couldst not thou, who art thyself a sinner, bear with him one night?

THE WISDOM OF PROVIDENCE:
An Apologue.

*Cease then, nor Order Imperfection name:
Our proper Bliss depends on what we blame.*

DURING the violence of a storm, a traveller implored relief from Jupiter, and intreated him to assuage the tempest. But Jupiter lent a deaf ear to his intreaty. Struggling with the unabating fury of the whirlwind, tired, and far from shelter, he grew peevish and discontented. "Is it thus (he said) the gods, to whom our sacrifices are offered daily, heedless of our welfare, & amused with our sufferings, make an ostentatious parade of their omnipotence?" At length, approaching the verge of a forest, "here (he cried) I shall find that succour

and protection which Heaven, either unable or unwilling to aid me, hath refused." But as he advanced, a robber rose suddenly from a brake, and our traveller, impelled by instant terror, and the prospect of great danger, betook himself to flight, exposing himself to the tempest of which he had so bitterly complained. His enemy, mean while fitting an arrow to his bow, took exact aim; but, the bow-string being relaxed with the moisture, the deadly weapon fell short of its mark, and the traveller escaped uninjured. As he continued his journey, a voice issued awful from the clouds: "Meditate on the providence as well as on the power of Heaven: the storm which you deprecated so blasphemously hath been the means of your preservation. Had not the bowstring of your enemy been rendered useless by the rain, you had fallen a prey to his violence."

F I N I S.