

WILLIAM AND ELLEN.

WHERE Nature gives exterior grace,  
 Oh might she inward worth impart !  
 Then safely charm'd the beauteous face ;  
 For form'd to bless the virtuous heart.

Young William houses had, and land,  
 And shining gold, a plenteous store ;  
 But he than house, or fertile land,  
 Or shining gold, lov'd Ellen more.

Where Ellen was, love would be there,  
 And his seducing arts employ ;  
 He waved the ringlets in her hair,  
 And shone in her resplendent eye.

Had other graces been allied,  
 Mingling her many charms among,



Tho' William's suit had been denied,  
He had not died of grief and wrong.

Tho' conquest 'twas her pride to gain,  
Small her desert true love to have;  
She frown'd on worth with cold disdain,  
And triumph'd in the pain she gave.

But patient William's gentle love,  
Tried every winning art to please;  
And still his constancy would prove,  
And apt occasions ever seize.

If Ellen were at fair or wake,  
At wake or fair was William too;  
Still some impression hop'd to make,  
And lovely Ellen's heart subdued.

He treated her with cakes most rare,  
Rich wine, to please the nicest taste,  
Gay ribbons to adorn her hair,  
And shining girdles for her waist.

At eve, when village maids return'd,  
And met around her cottage door,  
Displaying gifts their conquests earn'd,  
Ellen's exceeded far their store.



But ah! those gifts with scorn were ta'en,  
 Her hand to him she could refuse;  
 Nor join the dance with such a swain  
 As any other maid would choose.

But mighty Love has often sworn  
 To punish those who scorn his pow'r;  
 The pain they gave he will return,  
 And meet them in a fatal hour.

She, who would still at William sneer,  
 Could Edward's little merit raise;  
 To him incline a listening ear,  
 And brighten at his scanty praise.

Ah Ellen! wert thou rich as fair,  
 The churlish Edward careless cried,  
 Thy riches I should like to share,  
 And take thee, Ellen, for my bride.

If riches thou would'st have with me,  
 And rich, I soon should be thy bride;  
 My riches thou shalt quickly see,  
 The cruel Ellen straight replied.

On William now her shining eye,  
 Beam'd, soften'd of her wonted scorn;



She feign'd to meet the youth with joy,  
 Who late had deem'd himself forlorn.

How rais'd was William's drooping heart,  
 All banish'd his desponding fears ;  
 To him her smiles of hours impart,  
 Joy that o'erpaid the scorn of years.

She met him at the wake or fair,  
 And with him in the dance would join ;  
 Nor seem'd she to have other care,  
 Nor wish to other swain to shine.

My charming Ellen what delays,  
 He said, that we join willing hands ;  
 What now the happy minute stays,  
 Till we unite in wedlock's bands ?

Then Ellen forc'd a mimic sigh,  
 On him reclin'd her blushing face ;  
 Ah ! well if his too partial eye,  
 Had mark'd it not the blush of grace.

Can faithful William yet forgive  
 One boon that maiden pride demands ?  
 Granted, it shall no more survive ;  
 And straight, she said, we'll join our hands.



Whate'er my Ellen shall demand,  
 The rich reward, he cried, outweighs ;  
 Where she bestows her charming hand,  
 What favor can have equal praise.

Name thy request my lovely maid,  
 And make me happy to bestow ;  
 Some noble tribute should be paid,  
 William's unbounded love to show.

You, she return'd, I mean to wed ;  
 But, highly tho' you rate my charms,  
 Of William it shall ne'er be said,  
 He took a beggar to his arms.

Then bring to me a shining dower ;  
 'Tis but the whim and pride of youth ;  
 One effort of expiring power,  
 To try thy matchless love and truth.

Then bring me here thy shining gold ;  
 The writings of thy fertile land ;  
 And of thy buildings fair and bold :  
 To be return'd with my true hand.

For with the morrow's risen sun,  
 When thou hast me so nobly dower'd,



All shall to thee be truly done,  
Which thou hast generously empower'd.

For when our guests, sat round our board,  
Are viewing me, a beauteous bride,  
I'll spread thy gold, a shining hoard,  
And say, to love I gold confide.

And there I'll spread thy writings fair,  
And say, my William take my land ;  
I give thee too my houses rare ;  
For with myself my all command.

Then all our guests, with high applause,  
Shall say, Fair Ellen, nobly done ;  
A just reward crowns William's cause ;  
For he a generous maid has won.

And be it so, true William cried ;  
Soon shalt thou have the generous power,  
A splendid fortune to confide,  
And, with thyself, bestow a dower.

To her he counted out his gold ;  
To her he made his fertile land ;  
All his fair houses strong and bold :  
To be return'd with her true hand.



And now, he said, to-morrow's sun,  
 Shall not behold a happier swain ;  
 That charming maid shall then be won,  
 For whom I fear'd to sigh in vain.

William, she said, remember then,  
 That holy church shall make us one ;  
 To-morrow, at the hour of ten,  
 There meet the maid thou well hast won.

But never rose the morrow's sun,  
 On a more false or perjur'd maid ;  
 A maid was surely ne'er so won,  
 Or lover with such wrong repaid.

Nor was there at the hour of ten,  
 A youth so overwhelm'd with woe ;  
 To holy church went William then ;  
 And learnt what rent his heart to know.

At nine, false Ellen there had been,  
 And Edward met to give her hand ;  
 So wrong'd, what youth was ever seen,  
 Of love, of gold, of house and land !

William, a wretched wanderer goes,  
 And begs in bitterness each meal ;



That Ellen wrought his wrongs and woes,  
Doubles the pangs he's doom'd to feel.

Long years he wander'd thus in woe,  
Ere death would bring its kind relief ;  
Or wretched William was laid low,  
By want, and slow consuming grief.

Oft marriage may a veil remove,  
Which passion waits not to unfold :  
Ellen soon found that Edward's love,  
Was but the love of William's gold.

Then conscience rent her bleeding heart,  
For wrong to generous William wrought ;  
And to return some little part,  
She Edward tenderly besought.

Oh ! of his own to William give,  
She said, and soothe my heart with peace ;  
Oh ! grant him but the means to live,  
My tongue to bless thee shall not cease.

Unequal as the sunny beam,  
The hard unfeeling rock to melt,  
Did Ellen's words on Edward seem ;  
His flinty heart as little felt.



Yet ever thro' each mournful year,  
 To Edward she made fruitless prayer,  
 That he would to be just appear,  
 And hapless William something spare.

A wreck of sorrow, all but trace  
 Where dazzling charms were lov'd so well ;  
 But deadlier paleness spread her face,  
 When hollow sounded William's bell.

At night when all were gone to rest,  
 But she whose sorrow spared no room,  
 Dead William, in his grave-clothes drest,  
 To Ellen came, or seem'd to come.

Cold was the hand which touch'd her thrice ;  
 And pale the face she seem'd to see ;  
 And hollow was the trembling voice,  
 Which said, My Ellen come to me.

Not thy disdain my love could daunt ;  
 For years of scorn I well lov'd thee ;  
 Thro' years of wrong, and years of wai ;  
 And now, my Ellen, come to me.

Oh William ! thou art pale and cold,  
 She said ; and murder'd art by me ;



I cannot give thee back thy gold;  
 But, William, I will go with thee.

Thrice then he kiss'd her trembling hand;  
 And thrice, with clay-cold lips, her cheek;  
 Then forth he drew a silken band,  
 And bound it round her lily neck.

Upon her pillow, sunk her head;  
 She spoke no word, she heav'd no sigh;  
 She stretch'd herself upon her bed;  
 And so did hapless Ellen die.