

INSCRIPTION
FOR THE FRONT OF SINGLETON ABBEY *.

TO MISS MALTHUS'S †,
THE BELOVED, THE RESPECTED FRIENDS
OF HIS EARLY YOUTH.

KNOW, Trav'ler, in this sweet, sequester'd cell,
No weeping maids, no flighted virgins dwell;
Within these walls are found a vestal train,
The loveliest maids that e'er adorn'd the plain;

* This name was chosen by Mr. B.

† Several very beautiful accomplished young ladies, and some with highly cultivated minds. The eldest of them very little turned of twenty-two years, used to declare that they would not wait to be derided by the gentlemen as *old maids*, if any GENTLEMAN can give such names. That they would prepare some fine old abbey, join their fortunes, and there reside, excluding all men whatever, before the time arrived that English, not Irish, gentlemen usually leave off their attentions to the ladies. In bare justice to Irishmen, of fashion, it must be said, *their* politeness is as perfect to the matron of sixty as to the nymph of sixteen: they are

Nor yet esteem this pile a specious tomb,
Where beauty pines in never-ending gloom;
No mattins here disturb the morning sleep,
No lovelorn maids forsake their couch to weep;
Along these walls no gloomy torches burn,
Nor sad disclose where rests some mould'ring urn;
Before no sculptur'd saints they prostrate weep,
Nor at their shrines the midnight vigil keep;
Here dwell the Graces three, the Sisters nine,
And them alone these maidens deem divine;

too correctly well-bred to talk nonsense to a dowager, or a matron. Mr. B. declared that it would be impracticable to exclude ALL gentlemen; that they must have a receiver of their rents, &c. and that he insisted on having *that* office. A very elegant amiable young gentleman, educating for the church, and of which he is now an ornament, being a most excellent parish minister, the Reverend H. R. Master of Arts, assured them that they must have a chaplain. These two favoured youths were therefore to be admitted. Mr. B. said, "If they would retire, it should not be into obscurity, for that he would write an inscription, and fix it up in large gold letters." The idea occasioned much innocent mirth. Most of the sixteen are happily married. It is the fault of the remainder that they are still fit for SINGLETON Abbey.

By fancy led, they fought these pleasing shades,
And are what vulgar mortals call Old Maids;
Yet many a native charm they still possess,
Unborrow'd from the gaudy art of dress;
Still on each cheek the bloom of youth appears,
And prudence is their *only* proof of years.