

The drunkard's children. A sequel to The bottle. In eight plates / With a poem by by Charles Mackay.

Contributors

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THE
DRUNKARD'S CHILDREN.

A Sequel

TO

T H E B O T T L E.

IN EIGHT PLATES.

BY

GEORGE CRUIKSHANK.

PRICE ONE SHILLING.

PUBLISHED FOR THE ARTIST,

JULY 1st, 1848,

BY

DAVID BOGUE, 86. FLEET STREET, LONDON;

JOHN WILEY AND G. P. PUTNAM, NEW YORK; AND J. SANDS, SYDNEY, NEW SOUTH WALES

OF WHOM MAY BE HAD "THE BOTTLE."

THE DRUNKARD'S CHILDREN.

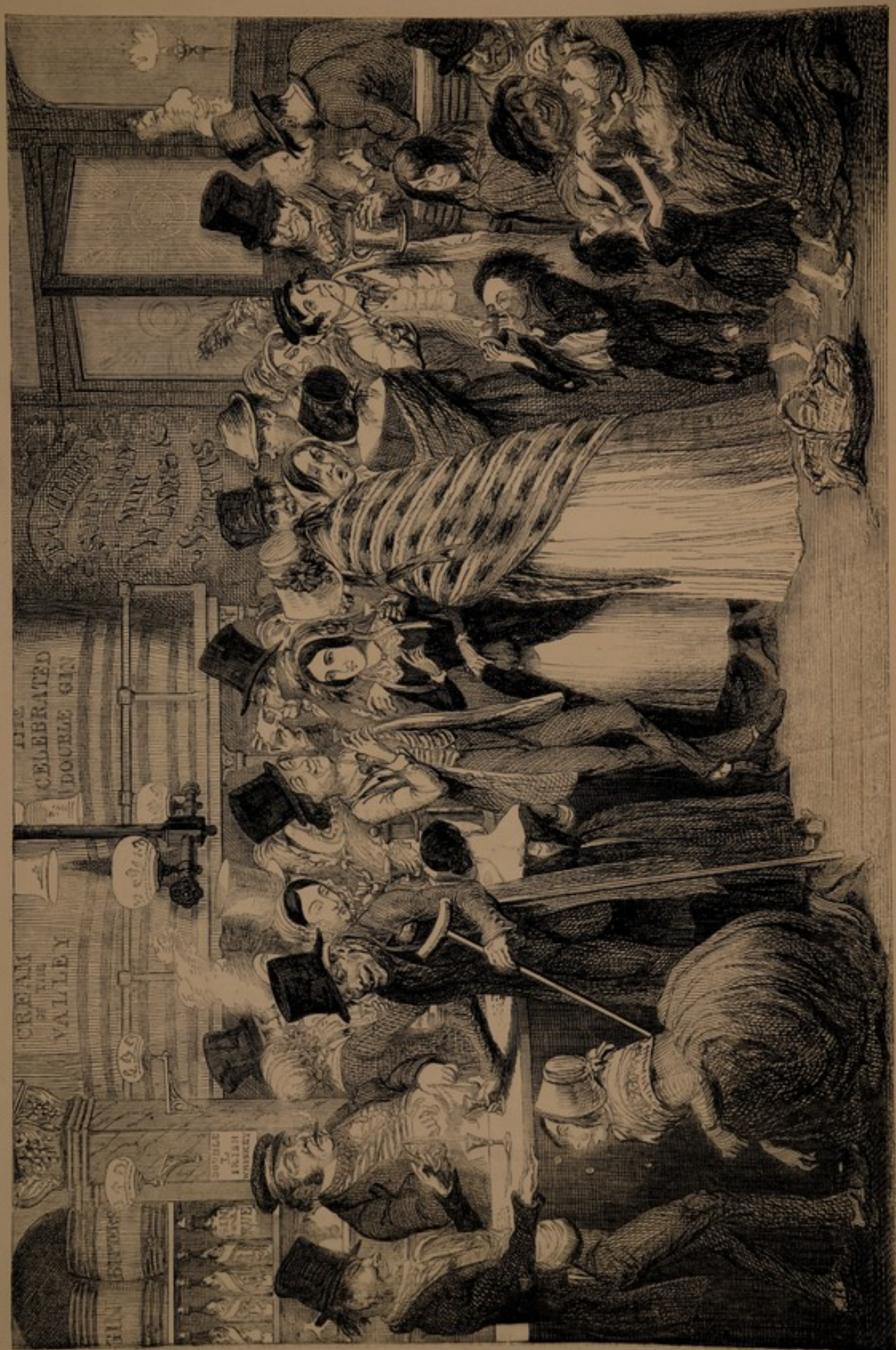


PLATE I.—NEGLECTED BY THEIR PARENTS, EDUCATED ONLY IN THE STREETS, AND FALLING INTO THE HANDS OF WRETCHES WHO LIVE UPON THE VICES OF OTHERS, THEY ARE LED TO THE GIN SHOP, TO DRINK AT THAT FOUNTAIN WHICH NOURISHES EVERY SPECIES OF CRIME.

THE DRUNKARD'S CHILDREN :

A SEQUEL TO "THE BOTTLE."

BY
CHARLES MACKAY, LL.D.

Part the First.

I.

Gin! ever gin! the nectar of the poor;
That slays to heal, that comforts to destroy;
The balm that aids the hopeless to endure,
And fills the suffering heart with transient joy.
Beloved of guilty man, and vicious boy,
The wretched woman's paramount delight;
Its cheap excitements never pall or cloy,
At morn or eventide, at noon or night—
To misery ever dear, to folly ever bright.

II.

In every dingy nook of "SQUALOR-LAND"—
Thick-peopled region, filthy to behold!—
Gorgeous to view, its flaring temples stand,
Bright amid gloom, and warm amid the cold;
Their tempting doors, aye open to unfold
The blaze, the comfort, and the wealth within—
These are the shrines, unknown in days of old,
Where clamorous crowds, 'mid hoarse incessant din,
Do homage to his power, and laud the Moloch, GIN!

III.

Here painful Thought seeks refuge from its care,
Here Vice imbibes the stimulus that feeds,
Here Conscience dulls the pangs it cannot bear,
Here Degradation germinates and breeds,
Here reckless Crime imagines new misdeeds,
Here Beggary, with sixpence in its purse,
Is king of sixpence, and hath royal needs;
Here sounds the jest obscene, the brutal curse,
And all that's good grows bad, and all that's bad grows worse.

IV.

"Short life, be merry," thinks young Edward Roy,
And treats his comrades from his gains ill won.
"Short life, be merry—mine the present joy,"
Thinks careless Emma, wretched and undone,

And so they snatch it as the moments run;
Pander, and paramour, and comrades throng,
And drink "Good ending to their schemes begun."
But, hark!—a voice, unmusical and strong,
Sounds shrilly from the street, and sings this doleful song.

The Gin-Fiend.

The Gin-Fiend cast his eyes abroad, and looked o'er all the land,
And numbered his myriad worshippers with his bird-like, long right hand;
He took his place in the teeming streets, and watched the people go
Around and about, with a buzz and a shout, for ever to and fro.
"And it's hip!" said the Gin-Fiend, "hip! hurra!—for the multitudes I see,
"Who offer themselves in sacrifice, and die for the love of me."

There stood a woman on a bridge; she was old, but not with years—
Old with excess, and passion, and pain—and she wept remorseful tears,
As she gave to her babe her milkless breast; then, goaded by its cry,
Made a desperate leap in the river deep, in the sight of the passers by.
"And it's hip!" said the Gin-Fiend, "hip! hurra!—she sinks—but let her be,
"In life or in death whatever she did, was all for the love of me."

There watched another by the hearth, with sullen face and thin;
She uttered words of scorn and hate to one that staggered in.
Long had she watched, and when he came, his thoughts were bent on blood;
He could not brook her taunting look, and he slew her where she stood.
"And it's hip!" said the Gin-Fiend, "hip! hurra!—my right good friend is he;
"He hath slain his wife, he hath given his life, and all for the love of me."

And every day in the crowded way he takes his fearful stand,
And numbers his myriad worshippers with his bird-like, long right hand;
And every day the weak and strong, widows, and maids, and wives;
Blood-warm, blood-cold, young men and old, offer the Fiend their lives.
"And it's hip!" he says, "hip! hip! hurra! for the multitudes I see
"That sell their souls for the burning drink, and die for the love of me."

V.

The voice was hushed. It was some cripple sang—
Few heard, few heeded—and he went his way.
But Emma listened, and his accents rang
Clear in her memory, and for many a day
Haunted her brain. The tune was sad—the lay
Recalled her mother's fate—but wherefore think?
Her friends and lovers, if she looked not gay,
Might weary of her. Courage should not sink:—
She checked the rising sigh, and sipped the proffered drink.

THE DRUNKARD'S CHILDREN.

Part the Second.

I.

FAIR was her face, and graceful was her form,
Poor Emma, victim of the brutal town ;
Over her graceful neck, in clusters warm,
Fell the abundant hair of deepest brown ;
Her skin was purest white, and soft as down ;
Her kindly smile was pleasant to the sight ;
Her open brow was guiltless of a frown ;
Her voice was low : her eyes of hazel bright
Poured forth luxurious beams of melancholy light.

II.

Her heart was loving and her temper sweet,
For others' grief her tears would ever flow,
And oft the ragged infant in the street,
Touched by her looks, would tell her all its woe ;
The scanty alms she could not well bestow
Were freely given ;—ill-gotten was her gain ;
But those who suffer fate's most cruel blow
Have kindest sympathy ;—there is no stain
Upon the humblest coin that soothes a wretch's pain.

III.

Dear to her lips the kisses of a child,
Dear were their words, and all their winning ways ;
In her sad heart one corner undefiled
Was kept to love them : thoughts of happy days
Beamed on her spirit from an infant's gaze.
Kind Nature meant her for a good man's wife,
The fire-side angel of his love and praise—
Oh, that such man had found her, ere the strife,
The taint, the grief, the sin, had soiled her budding life.

IV.

Often all day, in solitary hours,
Communing with her heart, she wept her fate,
And envied ev'n the humble drudge that scours
The door-steps, or the sempstress toiling late

Gaining their honest bread in low estate,
And wished the world had given her but a chance,
Nor shut all hope, and left her desolate.
Be silent, sighs—the hours of night advance—
Come, smiles, upon her cheeks—escort her to the dance !

V.

The gay Casino, her accustomed haunt,
Requires her presence. None so fair as she
Beams in that sphere ; and every "gent" would want
The choicest feature of the nightly "spree"
Were she not there amid the galaxy,
To dance the wanton Polka with the rest.
She hastes away to join the revelry ;
And, mingling in the scene with growing zest,
She quite forgets the care that rankles in her breast.

VI.

Thither the "fast" man, model of his school ;
Thither the "gent," the "swell," the "snob" resort ;
Thither the swindling knave, and swindled fool,
Flock, ere the midnight chimes, to pay their court
To trading beauty, and enjoy their sport
In dance lascivious, without blush or blame ;—
There, all night long, folly and vice consort,
And sneaks the heartless wretch without a name,
That calls itself a man, and lives on woman's shame.

VII.

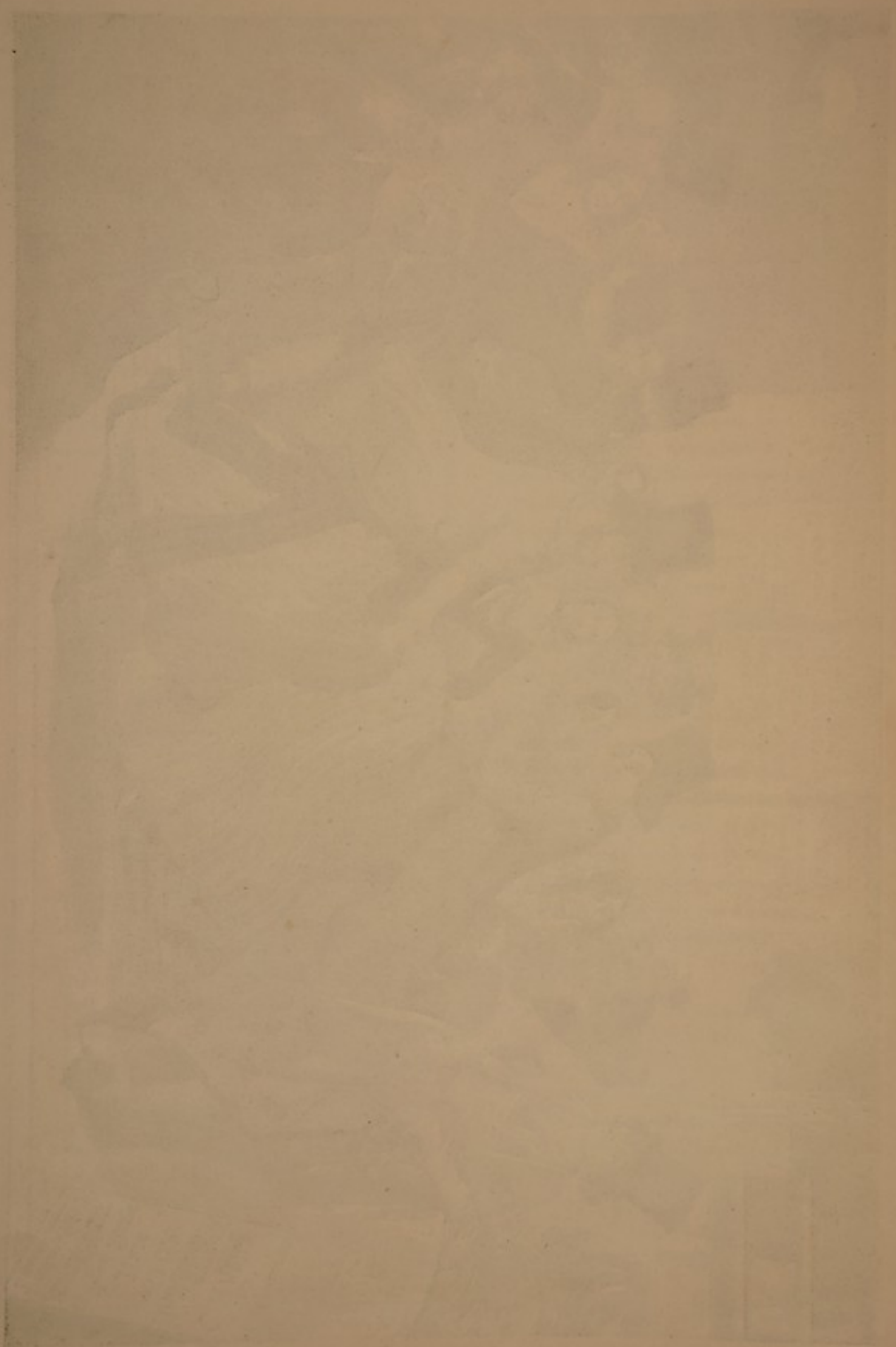
And this is pleasure ;—for such joys as these
Men sell their health, and barter fair renown ;
And hapless women, steeped in miseries,
Offer their youth to the defiling town.
How many a gentle flower thus trodden down,
Might have adorned the garden, odour fraught,
Or gleamed, a gem in Virtue's lily crown !
And thou, too, Emma !—but in vain the thought !
The victims never fail—for great is Juggernaut.

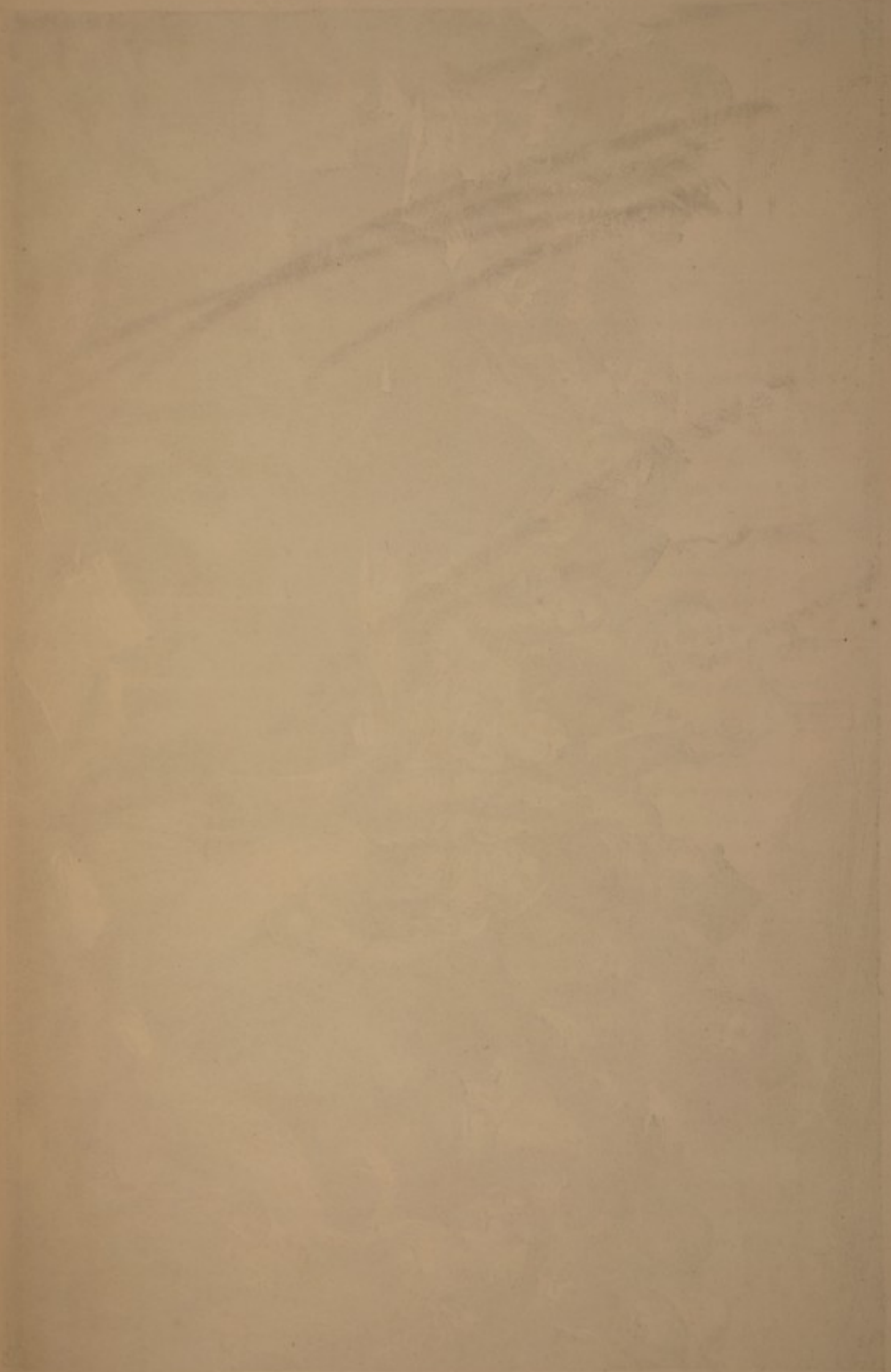
THE DRUNKARD'S CHILDREN.



PLATE III.—FROM THE GIN SHOP TO THE DANCING ROOMS, FROM THE DANCING ROOMS TO THE GIN SHOP, THE POOR GIRL IS DRIVEN ON IN THAT COURSE WHICH ENDS IN MISERY.

PLATE III.—VIEW OF THE GREAT WALL OF CHINA FROM THE GREAT WALL OF CHINA. THE GREAT WALL OF CHINA IS IN THE DISTANCE.





ИЗДАНИЕ КНИЖНОГО СПИСКА

THE DRUNKARD'S CHILDREN.



PLATE II. — BETWEEN THE FINE FLARING GIN PALACE AND THE LOW DIRTY BEER SHOP, THE BOY THIEF SQUANDERS AND GAMBLERS AWAY HIS ILL-GOTTEN GAINS.

THE DRUNKARD'S CHILDREN.

Part the Third.

I.

No charms can Edward in Casinos find—
Still meaner haunt than this, still deeper pit
Receives him nightly, when in idle mind
He seeks diversion, coarser and more fit,
'Mid boon companions of congenial wit,—
Let those that will take pleasure all night long
Through weary mazes of the ball to flit,
Give him the "BEER-SHOP'S" wild uproarious throng
The loud obstreperous laugh, the revel and the song.

II.

Far to the depths obscure of Drury-lane,
Amid its branching streets, thick swarming all
With dirty drabs, with children born in vain,
Old-faced, though young of limb—ill-featured, small;
With blear-eyed drunkards, speaking in a drawl,
He bends his steps whene'er the shades of night
Over the murky skies of London fall,
And seeks the Beer-shop's ever new delight,
To talk of race to come, and long-appointed fight.

III.

'Tis there that meet the comrades of his choice,—
There Bill the Dustman drinks his nightly beer;
There Moll, with woman's face, but manly voice,
Utters her coarse pollutions in his ear:—
There Jim the Cracksman strives to make it clear,
The favourite horse, and none but it, can win
The coming "Derby":—there with foolish leer
Tom the Dog-stealer, 'mid the general grin,
Trills forth a comic song, with trembling voice and thin.

IV.

There Ben, half-drunken, bonnets drunken Hal,
There Jack, that swept the crossing all the day,
Calls for his pipe and pot: there joyous Sal
Takes from her prostrate Joe his "yard of clay;"

Places her bonnet, decked in ribbons gay,
Upon his head, and sports his fantail hat;
And Costermonger Dick attempts a lay
From the "Flash Songster," dull, obscene, and flat—
All noises mixed in one, songs, laughter, shrieks, and chat.

V.

And Tim, well known on every racing ground,
Skill'd in all secrets of the ring and fair,
Cunning in dogs, in horses most profound,
Adept in thimble-rig and dodges rare,
And quite familiar with the bracing air
Of Cold-bath Prison, tries a friendly game
At cards with Edward: little can he spare,
But play for fun, he vows, is worse than tame,
And gain or loss to friends, is difference but in name.

VI.

The play proceeds with varying fortune still—
Now favouring Tim, on Edward smiling now;
Trying to temper when the cards run ill,
And calling wrinkles to the smoothest brow,—
Wrinkles that speak what words will not avow.
No matter: Fortune, though a fickle queen,
Cannot on frowning face her boon bestow
Merely for frowning;—luck obeys not spleen,
So Edward bears his loss, and keeps his brow serene.

VII.

He drinks, and smokes awhile; then plays again.
Fortune still flies him: desperate to recall
His losses past, he wagers high. In vain.
Plays double—treble stakes,—and loses all.
What shall he do? If Debt be fearful thrall,
Tim makes it worse, and claims his guineas won,
And Edward angry, swears unless he fall
In the law's trap, to pay ere set of sun;—
Then wanders to the streets, forlorn, deceived, undone.

THE DRUNKARD'S CHILDREN.

Part the Fourth.

I.

DECEIVED! undone! He knew it not as yet:
Much evil knowledge had the streets supplied,
But greater knowledge bound him in its net,
And greater evil flourish'd at his side:
It jobb'd him, wrought him, on his youth relied
For future aid in many a felon plan.
Wary and cool, 'mid difficulties tried,
Were those that lured him. Ever to trepan,
The cunning boy was dogg'd by far more cunning man.

II.

"When schemes of danger claim unwonted zeal,
When crime is perilous, who else can be
Safely entrusted for the common weal
With deed so desperate? Who else can see
The way to fortune half so well as he?"
And thus they flatter him with praise they feign—
Thus with fair speeches urge the tempter's plea;—
His all the glory, while for *them* remain
Great share of love for him—small fraction of his gain.

III.

Suspicious of the world, but not of them,
He nursed their poisonous flatteries in his breast,—
As mighty painters, should the world condemn,
Take painters' praises with a double zest;
As poets thrive on poets' praises best;
As statesmen love th' applause, perchance deferr'd,
That comes from rival statesmen, and are bless'd—
So amid thieves is Emulation stirr'd,
So Daring thrives on Fame, and battens on a word.

IV.

And powerful motives wrought in Edward's mind:—
To pay his debt; to gain the world's applause,
(His little world within whose scope confined
None lived that waged no warfare with the laws);

And Want, great dragon, from whose hungry jaws
He fled for ever, but could never fly—
That ever followed him and made no pause;—
All these combined to raise to fervour high
The courage that might fail, the purpose that might die.

V.

He formed his plan in silence and alone,—
Alone and silent, in the midnight murk,
He did the deed, and made the prize his own—
—Pleased with himself, rewarded by his work,
He paid his "debt of honour" with a smirk,
And gave his hours to bacchanal delight;
And if at intervals a thought might lurk
Of coming danger, let it wreak its spite—
It should not cloud to-day, it should not mar to-night.

VI.

The wealth of labour, like the kindly rain
Falling on fertile ground, bids wealth arise;
But wealth ill-gotten showers itself in vain:
It runs through sands—it sinks before our eyes,
And aids no fruit—no foliage as it dries.
And Edward's plunder took the common road
To drink, to cards, to lustful revelries:
A grief when lost, but when possess'd a load,
Soon won, but sooner done—ill-gotten, ill-bestow'd.

VII.

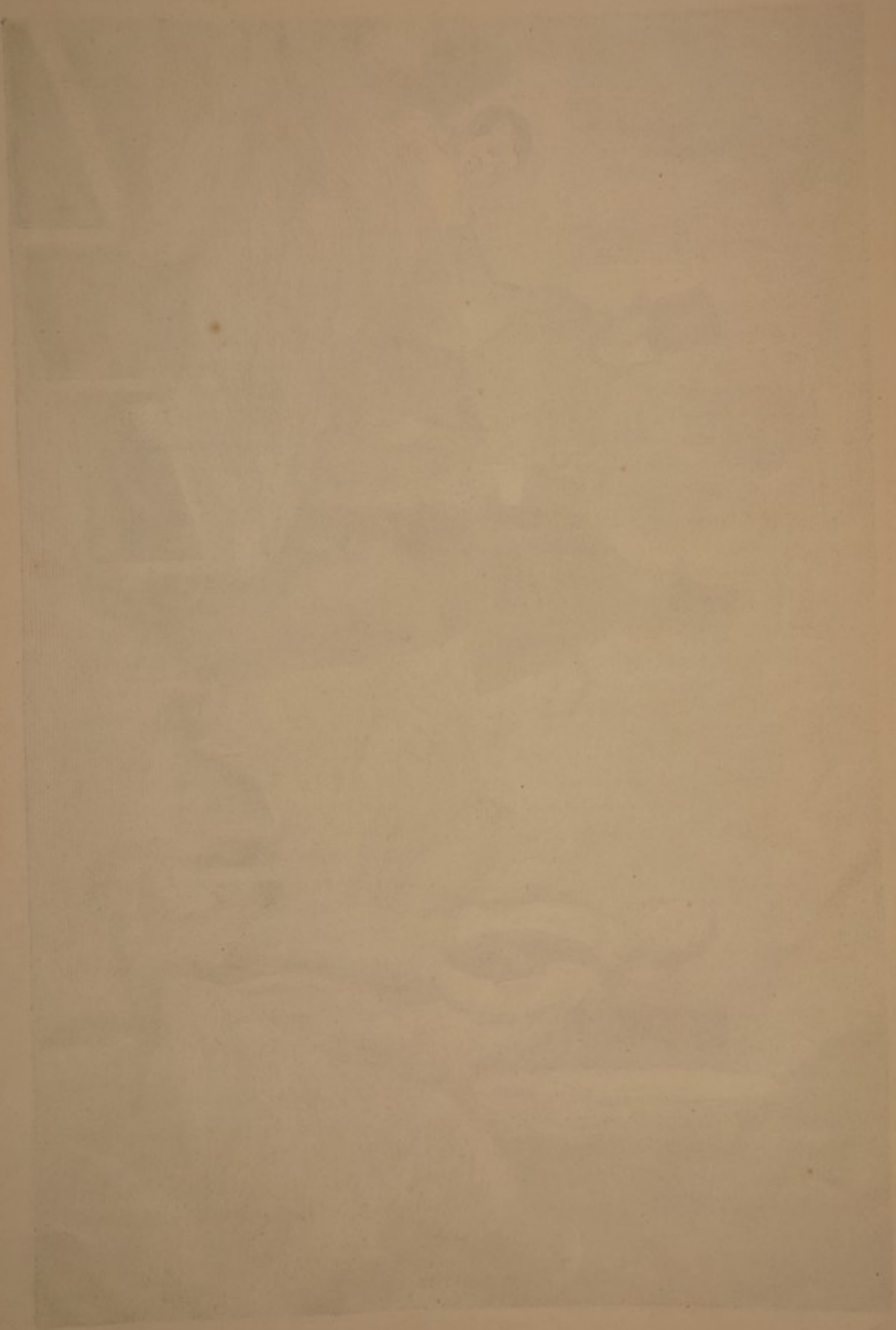
He starts—he flies! The law is on his track:
Its hounds, keen-scented, trail him as he goes.
Yet whither shall he fly?—what alley black
Shall give him shelter?—where shall he repose
Safe from the prying eyes of friends and foes,
Friends that betray, and foes insatiable?
Ay, dodge and double, though no tongue disclose
Your usual haunts, or lair where you may dwell,
The Law shall grasp its prize, and Justice sound your knell.

THE DRUNKARD'S CHILDREN.



PLATE IV.—URGED ON BY HIS RUFFIAN COMPANIONS, AND EXCITED BY DRINK, HE COMMITS A DESPERATE ROBBERY.—HE IS TAKEN BY THE POLICE AT A THREE-PENNY LODGING HOUSE.

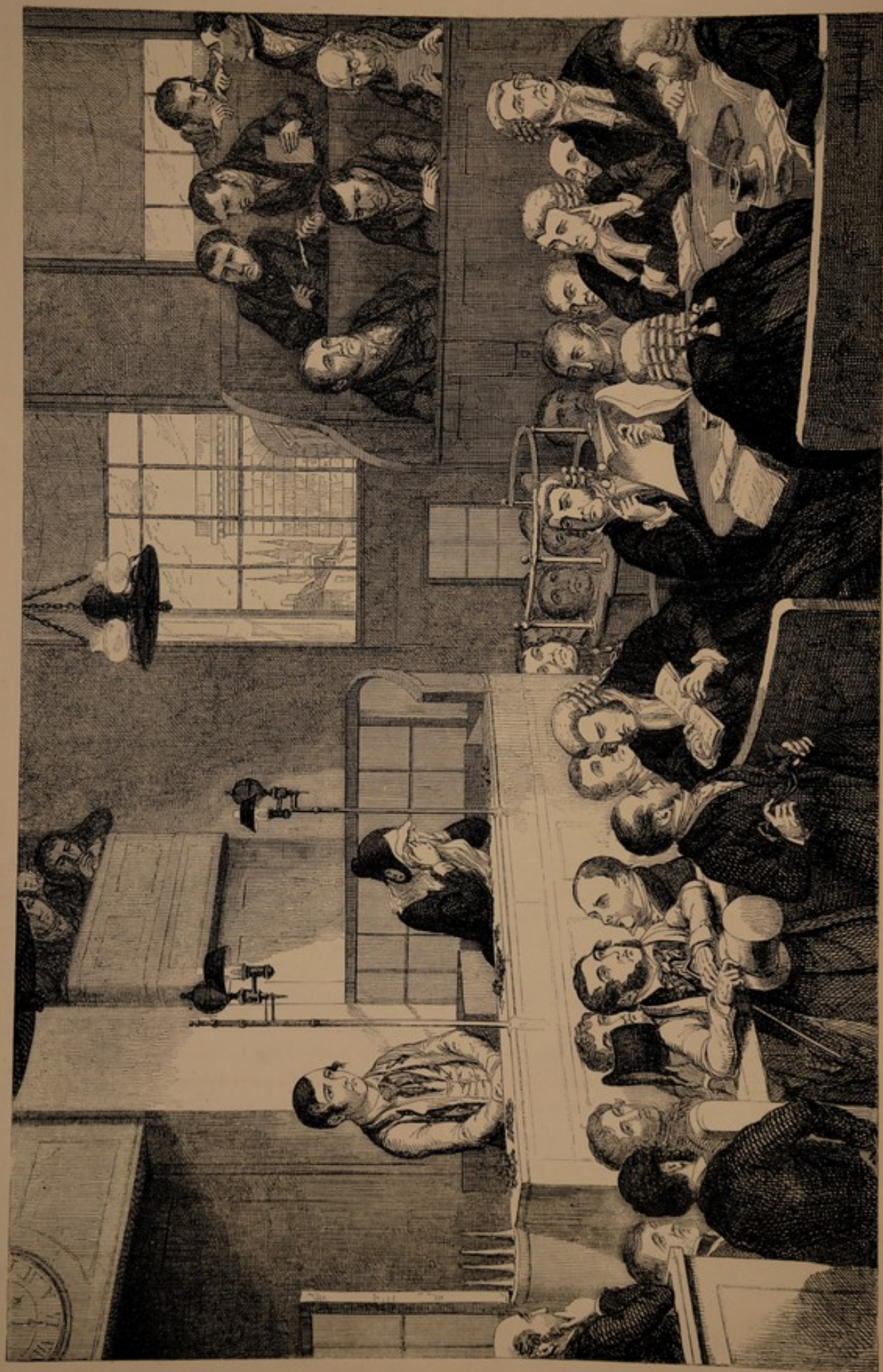
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THE DRUNKARD'S CHILDREN.



Part V. — FROM THE BAR OF THE GIN SHOP TO THE BAR OF THE OLD BAILEY IT IS BUT ONE STEP.

THE DRUNKARD'S CHILDREN.

Part the Fifth.

I.

THE crime to-day, the punishment to-morrow,—
At morn the honeyed cup, at night the gall,—
One hour short joy, the next enduring sorrow,—
Rapture at noon, Remorse at evening's fall—
So rolls for ever the unerring ball :
Cause and effect indissolubly blent.
The tree lies hidden in the acorn small ;
The full ripe apple in the seed is pent ;
And in the heart of crime throbs its own punishment.

II.

So found young Edward, hapless and alone ;
The seed had ripened, and the tree had borne ;—
But keener sorrow, grief, till then unknown,
Rushed o'er his spirit on the coming morn,
When at his side his sister, pale and worn,
Was placed to answer for her brother's shame.
She knew it not:—degraded and forlorn,
She might have sinned ; but for this deed no blame
Lay on her guiltless head, poor victim of her name.

III.

The court was opened—the indictment read ;
They stood together. Emma hid her face,
Flushed with her copious tears, and bowed her head,
Nor dared to look at Edward in his place,
Rightly accused of robbery most base.
But he, more calm, looked mournfully around
And watched intent the progress of the case ;
He saw the coil of evidence unwound,
And owned himself a wretch—a cumberer of the ground.

IV.

And, if his thoughts e'er wandered from the scene,
He thought of Emma and his hapless sire ;
Then looking on the Judge, whose face serene
Beamed kindly pity, not judicial ire,

He felt those soft, paternal eyes inspire
Hope for his sister. For himself, he knew
Hope was defunct—extinguished was its fire ;—
Guilty he was ; and yet what could he do ?
Oh, that the Judge could read his life's sad riddle through !

V.

Oh, that the mild and venerable man
Could trace his story. He might still deny
Forgiveness to his guilt ; but he might plan
Atonement for it ; might, perchance, apply
Kind words to soothe his mental agony.
Had he not struggled hard ? Had he not striven
To earn the honest bread of industry ?
Had he not failed ? Was every chance not riven
When he attempted it ? Was he not hunger-driven ?

VI.

Would he not now, if but a hope were left,
Gladly pursue it ? Would he not that day
Be proud to labour, not to be bereft
Of blessed Freedom ?—Then his thoughts would stray
Far from the Court to feed upon the day,
When through the fields he roamed a happy child,
And gathered garlands in the early May ;—
Ere his young heart was seared, his mind defiled,
When Earth was beautiful, and all creation smiled.

VII.

" Silence in Court ! " The Jury have agreed.
The sudden stillness broke his reveries ;
His weeping sister dried her tears to read
Her fate and Edward's in the Jurors' eyes.
" GUILTY " for him.—He heard without surprise ;—
" NOT GUILTY " for his sister.—*That was Joy !*
" SENTENCE DEFERRED." She checked her crowding sighs ;
She fell upon his neck :—" Remove the boy,
And take him to his cell." Go free, young Emma Roy !

THE DRUNKARD'S CHILDREN.

Part the Sixth.

I.

Ay, she was free ; but whither should she go ?
To sin, to grief, to the debasing town ?
Ay, back again ; to lead a life of woe—
Back to the haunts, uninjured by the frown
Of angry Justice ;—back, but lower down.
To herd with libertines for vile reward ;
To sell caresses to the meanest clown ;—
A worthless thing, beneath the world's regard,
Shut out from Virtue's sight, and from her paths debarred.

II.

One friend alone in all the world had she—
Her wretched brother. Fresh and pure for him
Burned young affection. Deepest sympathy
For all his sorrow made her sight grow dim
With gathering tear-drops quivering, on the rim
Of her red eye-lids, when her fancy drew
The hapless boy, with fetters on his limb ;—
Shut in a dungeon from the daylight's view,
Alone with bitter thoughts, pining the long night through.

III.

His crime was great. The sentence was severe—
Life-banishment from England's happy shore.
Happy ? Ah, no ! To him a land austere,
Harsh, and unfriendly. Why should he deplore ?
Why weep to quit her soil for evermore—
That niggard soil which had denied him bread,
But given him misery in double store ?
"Happy the day when he should go," he said,
"And feel the good ship heave with flowing sails outspread."

IV.

Such thoughts he whispered to the weeping girl,
Who came to Newgate for a last farewell ;
Th' attendant gaoler was no heartless churl ;—
'Twas a last meeting—they had much to tell,

And he allowed them till the evening bell
To unbosom each to each their hopes and fears—
The long sad story—how they stood—how fell.
And Emma spoke in sobs, and heard in tears ;
Nor felt one hope *he* felt of joy in future years.

V.

"Have you not heard," he said, with cheerful voice,
"Of fortunes made in far Australian clime ?
'Tis a poor chance ; but still a chance. Rejoice,
That I may grasp it, and atone for crime.
"Perhaps we'll meet again in happier time,
"And you shall come and join me o'er the sea.
"I'm but a boy ; and ere I reach my prime,
"I may wipe off the stain of infamy,
"Plough my Australian fields, and thrive in liberty !"

VI.

"Alas !" she said, "I would that I could trace
"And share your hopes, dear Edward ; but I know
"That never more my eyes shall see your face.
"There is a something whispers as I go—
"Something, I hear and feel, but cannot show,
"That when we part we shall not meet again !
"My life is short—I can but wish it so.
"But be you happy ; and when o'er the main,
"Think of my fate sometimes, nor let it warn in vain."

VII.

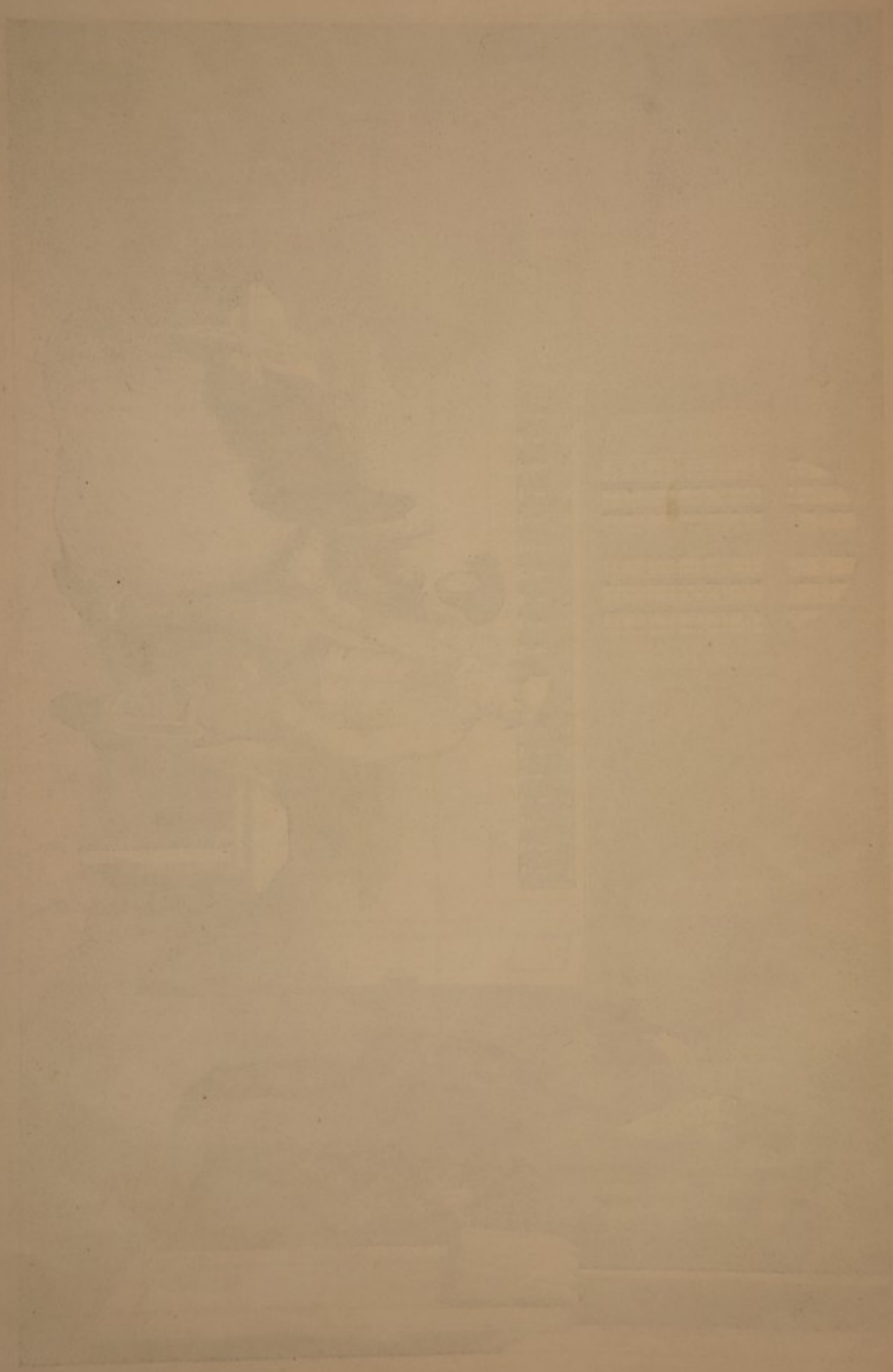
He strove to comfort her, but o'er him crept,
As time wore on, a sadness like her own ;
But stoic in his grief, he never wept,
Although his heart lay heavy like a stone,
As still he listened to his sister's moan.
Far happier he, if in that deep distress,
He, too, had wept. The bell sent forth its tone.
Once more, Farewell. Their burning hands they press ;
Farewell to Hope and Joy—Welcome to Wretchedness !

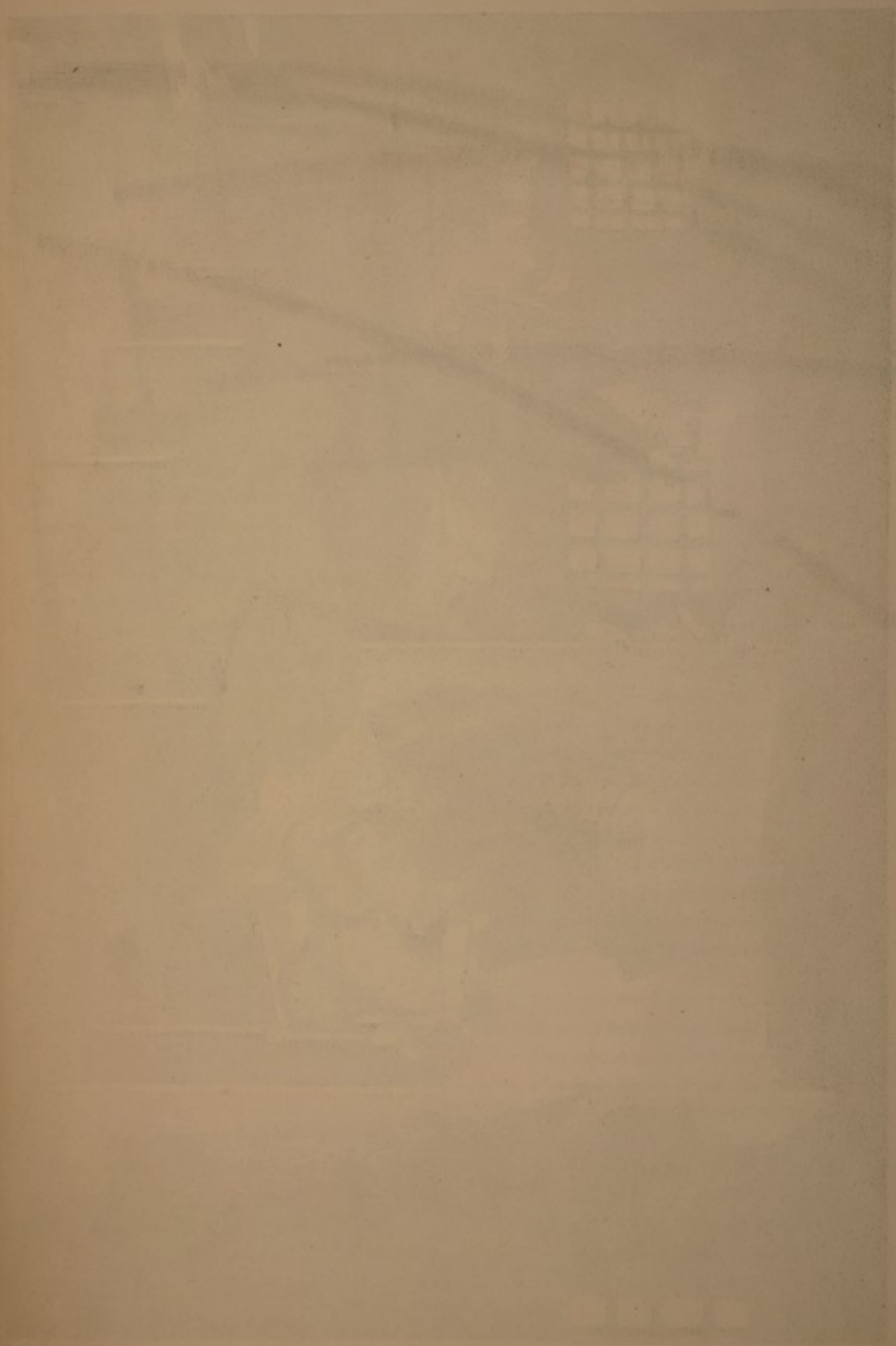
THE DRUNKARD'S CHILDREN.



PLATE VI.—THE DRUNKARD'S SON IS SENTENCED TO TRANSPORTATION FOR LIFE; THE DAUGHTER, SUSPECTED OF PARTICIPATION IN THE ROBBERY, IS ACQUITTED.—THE BROTHER AND SISTER FART FOR EVER IN THIS WORLD.

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THE DRUNKARD'S CHILDREN.



PLATE VII.—EARLY DISSIPATION HAS DESTROYED THE NEGLECTED BOY.—THE WRETCHED CONVICT DROOFS AND DIES

THE DRUNKARD'S CHILDREN.

Part the Seventh.

I.

THE deep cold shadow of a coming ill
Falls first upon the heart. Eye cannot see,
Sense cannot fathom it; creative will
Knows not its form, or shapes what it shall be;
But far away from dim futurity
Premonitory glooms their chillness pour;—
Though earth lie smiling—though the sky, cloud-free,
Show not a sign of tempests that may lour—
Th' instinctive heart is sad, and knows the evil hour.

II.

Sent to the hulks, a melancholy band
Waited with Edward till a ship should sail,
Laden with exiles from their native land
To bear hard fate in Australasian vale,
Or work in quarries on the scorching shale
Of Norfolk Island. Edward pined to know
The change of travel; thirsted to inhale
The breath of tropic skies, and winds that blow
Health to the panting lungs; and prayed that he might go.

III.

For o'er his youthful frame a languor crept;
His blood was thin, his once strong arm was weak,
His voice was low; unsteadily he stept,
And a red spot burned on his pallid cheek;
Sure signs that, ev'n to casual eyes, bespeak
Consumption's ravage. Fierce excess had wrought
This havoc in him. Dissipations wreak
Unerring vengeance; and his youth had sought
Pleasures of every kind, inventable by thought.

IV.

Pleasures?—Ay, called so—sweetness breeding gall;
Bright cup with poisonous essence—Dead-Sea fruit.
Deep had he drunk and eaten of them all
With passions wild of prematurest shoot;

Of had he suffered agonies acute,
Old in his teens, and verging to decay.
Alas! poor sapling, blighted at the root!
Fair though the morn, the darkness dimmed its ray—
And long before the noon the night o'ershadowed day.

V.

No foreign skies were destined o'er his head
To pour their healing. Strength had failed him quite;
The lamp of light but flickering radiance shed—
Its oil was wasted in too fierce a light;
Burned ere its time—unnaturally bright.
The watchful Surgeon marked him as he went,
And knew the victim of the Human Blight—
Knew the disease beyond medicament,
And ordered rest and care, and kindness provident.

VI.

Few days sufficed. On board the prison ship
Helpless he lay—too weak to suffer pain;
And aye he muttered, with a quivering lip,
Praise of the sunshine, which, not all in vain,
Streamed through the grating on his thankful brain.
And daily at his bed the Chaplain knelt,
And breathed his Gospel words in fervent strain;
And taught the dying boy the peace he felt,
And how, for deepest sin, forgiveness might be dealt.

VII.

So lived—so died he, ere his early prime—
So vicious father shaped the life he gave;
So folly led to vice, and vice to crime;
So crime to sorrow, sorrow to the grave.
Let no man think, if he himself deprave,
That with himself the evil shall expire.
Unhappy Adam Roy! thou couldst not save
Thy wretched children from Destruction's fire.
One doom engulfed ye all—son, daughter, mother, sire!

THE DRUNKARD'S CHILDREN.

Part the Eighth.

I.

At their last parting Emma knew not why
Such deep foreboding entered in her mind ;
She saw no tempest threatening in the sky,
But felt a darkening gloom—a freezing wind.
She argued with her sense, but sense was blind ;
She banished thought, but thought returned again—
'Twas true foreboding, not to be defined,
Not to be justified by present pain,
Presentiment of grief—alas! but sent in vain.

II.

But wherefore ope the record of her guilt?
Why from her shame and folly lift the veil?
Why tell her transient joys on miseries built,
Or trace her progress downwards in the scale?—
Let silence bury the unhappy tale!
Fast falls the heart when Self-Respect has fled;
Fast withers Hope when Virtue's promptings fail;
And fast grim Ruin, with relentless tread,
Follows the hapless wretch that drinks for lack of bread.

III.

Enough, that folly deepened into sin;
And that, when Conscience raised the warning cry,
She strove to quench its utterance in gin;—
Enough, that steeped in hopeless poverty,
Her charms, once pleasing to the passer's eye,
Faded before their time;—that when she sought
To read the future, only one reply
Shaped itself clearly to her desperate thought,
Familiar to her brain whenc'er the frenzy wrought.

IV.

One who had known her in a happier day
Bestowed at times his alms upon her want;—
He failed her in her need, and drove away,
With coarse cold words, the wretched suppliant.

She could not brook the bitter-spoken taunt;—
She felt the madness stiffening her hair—
She fell upon her knees,—“Ob, grant me—grant
“Eternal Heaven!” she cried, “the strength to bear
“The intolerable weight of this extreme despair!”

V.

He laughed to scorn her. She was mad with woe;
Madder with liquor. Rushing from his sight,
She sought the streets, and wandered to and fro,
Gasping for breath. It was a placid night,
The fair, round moon poured forth her mellow light
Upon the quiet roofs, and causeways brown,
And the tall belfries, glimmering clear and white,
As with quick pace, and flashing eyes cast down,
She passed towards the bridge, threading the careless town.

VI.

Silent and calm the black full river roll'd—
The awful river. By the coping-stone
She stood one moment, in the damp and cold,
And thought of Death: 'twas but one moment flown,
But in that moment Memory from her throne
Brought all her life before her at a glance:
Infant, and playful girl, and woman grown—
All her sad history in one feverish trance,
With all its incidents, in quick conflicting dance.

VII.

She breathed a rapid prayer—“*Forgive me, Lord!*”
She clomb the parapet—she checked her sighs;
Silent and calm, the fatal river poured
Its flood, last refuge of her miseries;
She looked but once—then pressed her burning eyes
With her hot hands, and leaped into the tide.
Forgive her, Lord! Great were her agonies—
Great her despair; in sorrow she was tried.
Forgive her, pitying Heaven! Forgive her that she died!



PLATE VIII.—THE MANIAC FATHER AND THE CONVICT BROTHER ARE GONE.—THE POOR GIRL, HOMELESS, FRIENDLESS, DESERTED, DESTITUTE, AND GIN MAD, COMMITS SELF MURDER.

