

**The palace martyr [Lady Flora Hastings]! A satire / By the Honourable \*.\*.\*.  
[i.e. Hon. D.G. Osborne].**

**Contributors**

Osborn, D. G.

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Wellcome Collection  
183 Euston Road  
London NW1 2BE UK  
T +44 (0)20 7611 8722  
E [library@wellcomecollection.org](mailto:library@wellcomecollection.org)  
<https://wellcomecollection.org>

THE  
PALACE MARTYR!

A Satire.

"Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour."

*IXth Commandment.*

"Who steals my purse, steals trash; 'tis something, nothing.

'Twas mine, 'tis his, and has been slave to thousands;

But he that filches from me my good name,

Robs me of that, which not enriches him,

And makes me poor indeed."—*Shakspeare.*

BY THE HONOURABLE \*. \*. \*.

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OSBORN, Hon.

## THE PALACE MARTYR.

A SATIRE.

IN days of yore, Britannia's cherished name  
Stood first and foremost in the ranks of Fame ;  
In war, her flag for justice was unfurled ;  
In peace, her arts shed lustre o'er the world.  
Home of the free, and country of the fair,  
The heart expanded, breathing English air.  
Genius and Industry their fruits combined  
To please the senses and instruct the mind ;  
And Fortune, smiling with auspicious mien,  
Watched o'er her fav'rite child, the Ocean Queen !  
Then too was gallantry in word and deed  
The leading feature in our nation's creed ;  
And the soft sex in Albion's happy isle,  
Vanquished ev'n heroes with a word or smile ;  
Woman was thought not then a trifling toy,  
A passive instrument of sensual joy,  
A humble plaything for man's idle hours,  
But all unworthy of his higher powers.



No ! she was loved, was honoured, and revered,  
 To ev'ry heart and sympathy endeared ;  
 Prized as a blessing, as a friend esteemed,  
 And from her very weakness precious deemed !  
 No foul-mouthed craven ventured *then* to slight  
 Her maiden purity with Slander's blight ;  
 No dark conspiracy, " without a name,"  
 Dared to traduce her fair and spotless fame.

Not such Britannia *now*, in modern times,  
 Her fame is but co-equal with her crimes ;  
 No deeds of glory are her portion now,  
 No crown of laurel wreathes her haughty brow ;  
 Scorned by each petty state, her banner waves  
 The jest of despots, and the mock of slaves !  
 And beardless striplings can unpunished brag  
 Of insults offered to old England's flag.  
 All, all in Albion bears the stamp of shame,  
 Where is our gallantry ? 'tis but a name !  
 Woman no longer in *all* bosoms holds  
 The heart imprisoned in devotion's folds ;  
 No longer reigns our idol and our pride,  
 Her shrine is broken, and her faith deny'd !  
 The peasant plodding o'er his weary toil,  
 Forgets his labours in his wife's fond smile ;  
 Ev'n his poor hovel by her presence cheered,  
 Becomes a home delightful and endeared ;

Valued by him all palaces above,  
 Because it holds the treasure of her love.  
 He gives no diamonds to his lowly bride,  
 She does not lie on ermine at his side ;  
 But of his humble couch she has her part,  
 And needs no jewel but her husband's heart !  
 Contented still with that secluded spot  
 Where she can share his mean but tranquil lot.  
 Nightly through life upon her faithful breast  
 His weary head can find a peaceful rest ;  
 And when Death's languor o'er his limbs doth creep,  
 His eyes she closes in their dreamless sleep.  
 Then would she pray, but for *his* children's sake,  
 That the same moment might *her* life's thread break ;  
 That she might journey to the self-same sky,  
 And share above her husband's company,  
 Where toils exist not, where all things are gay,  
 And angels keep perpetual holiday !

And oh ! if Calumny presumed to raise  
 The tale of falsehood in that wife's dispraise ;  
 If Malice forged, and Envy shot the dart,  
 Which through her fame was levelled at her heart ;  
 Think you that husband, peasant though he be,  
 Would weep and whimper o'er the infamy ?  
 Think you *his* manly heart would stoop to pray ?  
 Think you *his* hand would hesitate to slay ?



No, let the sland'rer be however high,  
 He must retract, or suffer for the lie.  
 He might be sheltered ev'n behind the throne,  
 Still would the husband hurl the reptile down !  
*His* honest soul to compromise would blush,  
 He'd drag the scoundrel to the ground and crush !  
 The *peasant* would not brook one cloud of shame  
 To rest upon a wife's or *sister's* fame !

In Courts where different feelings rule the day,  
 Where nobles bask in queenly favour's ray ;  
 Where arts and luxury are most refined,  
 And all is fair and polished—but the mind—  
 There unforbidden, free, and unrepressed,  
 The viper Calumny uprears its crest,  
 And darts its venom's black and slimy flood  
 O'er all that 's virtuous, and all that 's good.  
 There lurks a dark and hell-engendered crew,  
 Rotten at core, though comely to the view ;  
 Who 'neath the splendour of their outward guise,  
 Hide the most vile of sin's deformities.  
 The worst assassins—though they use no knife,  
 Wretches who stab the *honour*, not the life !  
 There the foul plot, the treacherous intrigue,  
 The crafty compact, and the fiendish league,  
 Bind in a chain of villainy the race  
 Who live and fatten on a friend's disgrace.

Thrice moral England, and thrice moral Court,  
 Where virtue 's slandered, chastity 's a sport ;  
 Where Court physicians lend a lying tongue, *Sir J. Clark M.D.*  
 And rouged old women swell the perjured throng ; *Lady Portman*  
 Where the base falsehood and the monstrous tale  
 Need but a sneaking coiner, to prevail.  
 Thrice moral Court ! oh ! pure and happy scene,  
 And fit abode for England's maiden Queen !  
 Strange destiny that Britain's mighty isle  
 Should hang dependant on a school girl's smile ;  
 Strange that a vain old dandy's " glozing " prate *Lord Melbourne*  
 Should sway the interests of a freeborn state !  
 Who does not turn with loathing and disgust  
 From the foul records of a premier's lust ? *(with the Hon. Mrs. Norton)*  
 Wooer antique of demireps of *ton*,  
 An " admirable Crichton " in " crim. con. "  
 Effete Don Juan, whose seductive art  
 Should rule no kingdom but a harlot's heart !  
 Not he, the hero of a " hundred fights,"  
 But of a hundred sweet adult'rous nights.  
 Oh ! manly pastime for a statesman's hours,  
 To spend the live-long day in ladies' bowers,  
 And beg, like parasite, that thing abhorred, *(The Court Circular said*  
 His daily dinner at a royal board ! *recorded the fact of Lord Melbourne*  
 Thus are we ruled by (destiny most wild,) *dining with the Queen)*  
 A hungry premier and a froward child.



Yet there was one within that courtly scene,  
 As pure in soul, as dignified in mien ;  
 One, whose illustrious race and noble blood,  
 Decked her the more because her heart was good.  
 Beauty and intellect in her combined,  
 And every gift was lavished on her mind.  
 And not more pure the dazzling virgin snow,  
 Ere it hath fallen to the ground below,  
 Than was the virtue by that maid possessed—  
 Than was each thought she harboured in her breast ;  
 Candour and innocence went hand in hand,  
 And all the virtues graced her, in a band.  
 'Midst the corruptions of a reckless court,  
 She kept the precepts which religion taught ;  
 And though in contact with those impure things,  
 Whose presence haunts the domicile of kings,  
 Yet single-minded as a guileless child,  
 She stood among them fair and undefiled ;  
 Others might fall, the passions' prey, but she  
 Remained unsullied in her purity.

Yes ! there was one like this, where is she now ?  
 The grave's cold damp is on her noble brow !  
 No palace revel for her presence calls,  
 She is a guest in Death's uncourtly halls.  
 Life with its splendour, pleasure with its glare,  
 The world with all its bitterness and care,

Hold her not now ; men shudder at her doom,  
 And Vengeance watches o'er her virgin tomb !  
 Let the wild round of gaiety run on,  
*She* sleeps unconscious 'neath the vaulted stone ;  
 Let the vain pageant in its pomp proceed,  
*She* slumbers far too tranquilly to heed ;  
 Malice may point its weapon, but in vain,  
*She* cannot suffer, as she has, again ;  
 Slander may lift the chalice to the lip,  
 But cannot make the dead to rise and sip.  
 Yes ! she is dead : the beauteous and the good,  
 Slain by foul Calumny's infernal brood.  
 Tied, like a martyr, to Detraction's stake,  
 While rival demons strove her heart to break ;  
 Crushed by a mass of base and brutal lies,  
 Blazoned in Perjury's most glaring dyes ;  
 On rushed the yelling troop—the slanderous crew  
 Hunted their victim with a fiend's halloo ;  
 The Court physician, with his cringing back  
 And coward sneer, the leader of the pack ;  
 While titled beldames their assistance brought, *Loddy Portman*  
 And the young Queen smiled blithely on the sport !  
 No hand was stretched to succour or to save ;  
 Poor maid ! she found no refuge but the grave.  
*There* her pursuers stopped at length for breath,  
 Sated with blood, rejoicing “ at the death ! ”



Oh ! bright reward, and noble recompense,  
 By Royalty conferred on Innocence.  
 And when the aged mother's wounded heart,  
 Ventured to take her stricken daughter's part,  
 There was the "glozing" courtier to reprove  
 The warm outpourings of maternal love ;  
 To hint she might have told her child's disgrace,  
 In more respectful and more courtly phrase ;  
 Expressing wonder that a theme so dear,  
 Should thus be forced upon a "Royal" ear  
 But we are told, that Majesty at length,  
 To show its kindness and its sorrow's strength,  
 When round the Palace Martyr's dying bed  
 The friends were gathered, and all hope was fled—  
 Ev'n in that hour of misery and gloom,  
 Ordered "*refreshments*" in the dining-room !  
 What ! did she think that, when the feeble breath  
 Of the beloved was fluttering in death,  
 The mourning relatives would drink and eat,  
 Like the base creatures of her courtly suite ?  
 Did she suppose that, like her Premier, they  
 Would spend in feast and gluttony the day ?  
 What though thou gavest the viands and the wine,  
 The cost was England's, girl, it was not thine !

What nobler gift by heav'n was e'er bestowed  
 Than that which lightens suffering Nature's load ?



In the physician gratitude may trace  
 The benefactor of the human race.  
 While med'cine's healing skill its balm imparts  
 To crush disease and soothe the body's smarts.  
 Blessed is he whose kindly art can teach  
 To mend the shattered constitution's breach ;  
 Can cheat the King of Terrors of his prey,  
 And raise the frame triumphant o'er decay !  
 But words are powerless to paint the hate  
 Which *he* in honest bosoms does create,  
 Who, in the blackness of his coward heart,  
 To court intrigues perverts that noble art ;  
 To palace sland'ers a subservient tool, *Sir J. Black M.D. 'a*  
 In words, a liar ; in his trade, a fool ! *boving Scot."*  
 Mark you the supple creature how he bends,  
 And licks the dust before his *noble* friends ?  
 Is there a victim whom *they* doom to die ?  
 The court Hippocrates provides a lie :  
 Swears to each symptom with unblushing face,  
 Exhausts invention to confirm the case :  
 And gladly lends, foul craven-hearted knave,  
 The healing science to prepare a grave !  
 Is then this thing, whom infamy doth brand,  
 Is he still suffered to pollute the land ?  
 He, with his base and falsehood blister'd tongue,  
 Who dared a woman's purity to wrong ?

Is he among us yet, nor banished by  
 Indignant England's horror pregnant cry?  
 Yes! he still moves an actor on the scene,  
 The pet physician of our virgin queen!  
 Summoned to finger Britain's squander'd gold  
 Whene'er the "Lord's anointed" has a cold,  
 Compelled to watch with deferential bow  
 Each variation of her sacred brow;  
 And when the pampered child feels cross or ill,  
 To give a potion or prescribe a pill!  
 See with what skill she checks that prancing steed,  
 While trains of courtiers to her ear succeed,  
 Think you *she* sorrows o'er the slandered dead?  
 No, she is callous as yon coffin's lead!  
 The gay cortège, the ball-room's brilliant glare,  
 The dulcet sound of some *Italian* air,  
 These are the objects of our lady's thought,  
 These by the peasant's sweat and labour bought;  
 Gay is her heart, when at the festive board,  
 Some foreign booby, or some "glozing" lord,  
 Skilled in all adulation's softest strains,  
 Her childish soul with flattery enchains.  
 But oh! (if justice is no empty sound,)

E'en as the revel joyously goes round,  
 Their victim's shade shall noiselessly arise  
 In its pale shroud before their shrinking eyes,



Shall mock their feastings with its death-lit glance,  
Shall hush the song, and stay the witching dance !

What chosen fav'rite does attend our Queen ?  
On whose experienced friendship does she lean ?  
Who shares the secrets of her youthful mind ?  
To whose instructions is her ear inclined ?  
Is it some high-born and illustrious dame  
Of British birth, and of unblemished fame ?  
Some noble matron, fitted to preside  
O'er such a task, and royal thoughts to guide !  
One, in whom virtue tempers loyal zeal ;  
Who knows as well to *counsel* as to *feel* ?  
No ! 'tis no confidante like this who sways  
The Sov'reign's bosom in its secret ways :  
Not from our English earth that reptile sprung,  
Who fawns and flatters with her serpent tongue,  
Base-born adventuress, whose German blood  
Runs in a vulgar and ignoble flood,  
Her rank, a menial's, in her native soil ;  
Her nature coarse and fitted for the toil.  
Low and illiterate, in speech and mind,  
Behold this daughter of a German hind ;  
By cunning raised from penury and dirt,  
To be the shadow of our Royal flirt !  
Her nod the fiat, and her will the rule  
Which guides the actions of her sceptred tool.

The "Lord's anointed," in her hands is made,  
 A soulless instrument by weakness swayed ;  
 A royal puppet, whose dependant strings  
 The "Baroness" pulls easily and wrings ;  
 And ever still the influence she exerts,  
 Hated prerogative ! destroys and hurts—  
 The ready herald of each daring lie—  
 The standard bearer of vile calumny,  
 Wherever tread her sly and stealthy feet,  
 She moves an incarnation of deceit !  
 What filthy spots the courtly circle stain !  
 An old licentious Premier's satyr train,  
 Mixed with the scum of some dull foreign land,  
 The throne of England with dishonour brand.  
 Of such bright ornaments our palace brags,  
 English adulterers and German hags !

Where should each gentle feeling of the heart  
 Claim the most wide and comprehensive part ?  
 Where should affection's smile its brightest glow  
 Put on to soothe a fellow creature's woe ?  
 In woman's breast that gentleness should live,  
 Woman's affection should that fond smile give :  
 Her sweet devotion to man's ruder grief,  
 Its balm affords and tenders its relief ;  
 Then far more dear her task should be to dry  
 The tear which dims her sister woman's eye !



Pshaw ! such fine feelings may indeed exist  
 In humble life, and swell the pauper's list ;  
 But palace dames are cast in harder mould,  
 Encased in pride, and fashionably cold.  
 Medusa-like, the idol on the throne  
 Freezes its gazers into kindred stone ;  
 Destroys the blossoms on affection's tree,  
 And stamps on all its own obduracy !  
 Thus have we seen of peeresses a brace  
 Run neck and neck in slander's courtly race ;  
 And strive—base harridans ! which first could win  
 The glorious trophy of triumphant sin.  
 While in the public prints, their hen-pecked lords  
 String a vile jargon of unmeaning words ;  
 And (coroneted Greenacres) in sooth,  
 Murder both Lindley Murray and—the truth !  
 No blush o'erspreads the English noble's cheek  
 When thus he acts his consort's Jerry Sneak ;  
 Hugging disgrace and pilloried for e'er,  
 Convicted liar, yet a British Peer !

Peace to the ashes of the blameless dead,  
 Light rest the green turf o'er the victim's bed ;  
 May the bright flowers spring up yet brighter there,  
 And zephyrs load with fragrant sweets the air ;  
 May the winged tribes of Nature's progeny,  
 Warble her dirge beneath the Scottish sky ;

May the lone dove, deploring its lost mate,  
 And gently mourning o'er its widowed fate,  
 Tell near that spot her melancholy tale,  
 And utter plaintively her funeral wail.  
 But far from all the turmoils of the earth,  
 That noble spirit lives with kindred worth ;  
 In the fair regions of eternal light,  
 Where God's own presence maketh all things bright ;  
 Where Slander comes not, Malice is unknown,  
 And cherubs hymn their praises round His throne.  
 Yes! there she finds a refuge and a rest,  
 Pillowed for ever upon Mercy's breast ;  
 Tenant eternal of that blest abode,  
 And the accepted servant of her God !  
 Peace to her ashes in old Scotia laid,  
 Peace to the ashes of that martyr'd maid,  
 Who with no sin herself to be forgiv'n,  
 Pardoned the slanderers who gave her heav'n.

THE END.