

A Lamentable Ballad of the LADY's Fall.

To the Tune of, *In Peascod Time.*



MARK but my heavy doleful Tale,
 You loyal lovers all,
 And heedfully bear in your breast
 A gallant lady's fall.
 Long was she woo'd ere she was won
 To lead a wedded life;
 But folly wrought her overthrow
 Ere she became a wife.
 Too soon, alas! she gave consent
 To yield unto his will,
 Tho he protested to be true
 And faithful to her still.
 She felt her body alter'd quite,
 Her bright hue waxed pale;
 Her fair red cheeks turn'd colour white;
 Her strength began to fail.
 So that with many a sorrowful sigh,
 This beauteous maiden mild,
 With grievous heart perceiv'd herself
 To be conceiv'd with child.
 She kept it from her father's sight,
 As close as close might be,
 And so put on her silken gown,
 None might her swelling see.
 Unto her lover secretly
 She did herself bewray;
 And walking with him hand-in-hand,
 These words to him did say:

Behold, said she, a maid's distress,
 My love, brought to thy bow;
 Behold I go with-child by thee,
 But none thereof do know.
 The little babe springs in my womb,
 To hear the father's voice;
 Let it not be a bastard call'd,
 Since I made thee my choice.
 Come, come, my love, perform thy vow,
 And wed me out of hand.
 Oh! wed me not in this extrem,
 In grief always to stand.
 Think on thy former promise made,
 Thy vows and oaths each one.
 Remember with what bitter tears
 To me thou mad'st thy moan:
 Convey me to some secret place,
 And marry me with speed,
 Or with thy rapier end my life,
 Ere further shame proceed.
 Alas! my dearest love, quoth he,
 My greatest joy on earth:
 Which way can I convey thee hence,
 Without a sudden death.
 Thy friends they be of high degree,
 And I of mean estate;
 Full hard it is for to get forth
 Out of thy father's gate.

Dread not thyself to save my fame ;
 And if thou taken be,
 Myself will step between the swords
 And take the harm on me.
 So shall I 'scape dishonour quite,
 If so I should be slain :
 What can they say, but that true love
 Did work a lady's bane.
 And fear not any further harm,
 Myself will so devise,
 That I may go away with thee,
 Unseen of mortal eyes.
 Disguised like some pretty page,
 I'll meet thee in the dark,
 And all alone I'll come to thee,
 Hard by my father's park.
 And there, quoth he, I'll meet,
 If God doth lend me life;
 And this day month without all fail,
 I will make thee my wife.
 Then with a sweet and loving kiss
 They parted presently ;
 And at their parting brinish tears
 Stood in each other's eye.
 At length the wish'd-for day did come,
 Whereon this lovely maid,
 With lovely eyes, and strange attire,
 For her true lover stay'd.
 When any person she espy'd
 Come riding o'er the plain,
 She thought it was her own true love,
 But all her hopes were vain.
 Then did she weep, and sore bewail
 Her most unhappy state.
 Then did she speak these mournful woes,
 While succourless she fate :
 Oh, false, forsworn, and faithless wretch !
 Disloyal to thy love ;
 Hah thou forgot thy promise made ?
 And wilt thou perjur'd prove ?
 And hast thou now forsaken me,
 In this my great distress ?
 To end my days in open shame,
 Which thou might'st well redress ;
 Woe was the day I did believe
 That flattering tongue of thine ;
 Would God that I had never seen
 The tears of thy false eyne.

And thus with many a bitter sigh,
 Homeward she went again.
 No rest came in her watery eyes,
 She felt such bitter pain.
 In travail strong she felt that night,
 With many a bitter throw :
 What woeful pangs she felt that night
 Doth each good woman know.
 She called up her waiting-maid,
 That lay at her bed's feet ;
 Who musing at her mistress' woe
 Did strait begin to weep.
 Weep not, she said, but shut the doors,
 And windows round about :
 Let none bewail my wretched case,
 But keep all persons out.
 Oh, mistress ! call your mother dear,
 Of women you have need ;
 And of some skilful midwife's help,
 The better you may speed.
 Call not my mother for thy life,
 The Nor call no woman here ;
 The midwife's help comes now too late ;
 My death I do do not fear.
 With that the babe sprung in her womb,
 No creature being nigh ;
 And with a sigh that broke her heart
 This gallant dame did die.
 This little living infant then,
 The mother being dead,
 Refig'd his new-received breath,
 To him that had him made.
 Next morning came her lover true,
 Affrighted at this news,
 And he for sorrow slew himself,
 Whom each one did accuse.
 The mother, with the new-born babe
 Were both laid in one grave :
 Their parents over-come with woe
 No joy of life could have.
 Take heed, ye dainty damsels all,
 Of flattering words beware ;
 And of the honour of your names
 Have you especial care.
 Too true, alas ! this story is,
 As many a one can tell.
 By others harms learn to be ware,
 And ye shall do full well.