

And mention of these garments cuts me short
From prefatory chatter at my ease—
So fatal in things legal, where one ought
To boldly plunge at once *in medias res*—
For trowsers now I sing, and, if it please
My readers that a moral gain admittance,
'Twill be my aim to show how ill agrees
The law with laches, how youths on a pittance
Whene'er they pay a bill should keep its full acquittance.

Young Marriott was a dude, this I must own,
What time the goddess *Ton*, exiled from France,
Erected her gay shrine in London town
And led John Bull a very giddy dance.
Ye gallant's waistcoat's pied extravagance
Divided honours with his storied hat,
The *sansculottes* had set a style in pants
That sent knee-breeches to the owl and bat ;
Faith, many a man with shrunken shank waxed glad thereat !

In the forefront of fashion Marriott hied
Him to his tailor—Hampton in the Strand—
And purchased trows whose lurid hues outvied
The dyeing triumphs of the Tyrian hand ;
And, having ducats then at his command,
Paid for his trowsers like a little man,—
Full proud from the stunned tradesman to demand
Receipt therefor, a most prudential plan,—
Alack ! he did not end what he so well began !

Flushed with high hopes of capturing the mail
By this new splendour of his nether man
Back doth he haste unto his lodgings small
And there his toilet makes in shortest span—
Pleased as a maid with beauty-patch and fan !
Then, careless wight, among his *billets-doux*
And piles of litter of a kindred clan,
The tailor's full receipted bill he threw—
'Twere meet that such a deed should reap a woeful rue !

Time passes on, and in the shocks of chance
Sartorial Hampton, meeting Fortune's frown,
Flies to his books and scans their drear expanse
Of debts full hoary and eke outlawed grown.
His saddened eye casts the long columns down,
And many a sigh the while his bosom racks,
Till Marriott's name in debit side is shown,
For trows late bought, and credit entry lacks !
Ah, now that tailor's mien of woe for Marriott smacks !