

The youth did ride, and soon did meet
John coming back amain;¹
Whom in a trice he tried to stop,
By catching at his rein;

But not performing what he might
And gladly would have done,
The frightened steed he frightened more,
And made him faster run.

Away went Gilpin, and away
Went post-boy at his heels,
The post-boy's horse right glad to miss
The lumbering of the wheels.

Six gentlemen upon the road,
Thus seeing Gilpin fly,
With post-boy scampering in the rear,
They raised the hue and cry:—

“Stop thief! stop thief!—a highwayman!”
Not one of them was mute;
And all and each that passed that way
Did join in the pursuit!

And now the turnpike gates again
Flew open in short space;
The toll-men thinking, as before,
That Gilpin rode a race.

And so he did, and won it too,
For he got first to town;
Nor stopped till, where he had got up,
He did again get down.

Now let us sing, long live the king;
And Gilpin, long live he;
And when he next doth ride abroad,
May I be there to see!

COWPER

¹ *Amain* : in full force.