

How any man, it staggered one, could trust hisself to slumber,
 With sich a damning caterlogue o' *doings* without number ;
 Dishonesty, and meanness worse, distorted every leaf,
 " If this," says I, " be lauful trade, let trader stand for thief :
 Nothing as I had done, throughout, wur entered at a rate
 As agreed upon atwixt us, or in order as to dato ;
 And scores o' things, as I sold he, wur posted at a price
 As p'inted to a memory, for sartain, not too nice.
 In vain did I dismonstrate, my temper scarce retained,
 The book alone knowed anything, the book alone explained ;
 A word against it's 'thority seemed tantamount to libel,
 " We've nothing but the *book*, Giles," as if un meant the Bible !
 —A second 'spicious lookin' thing lay close aside o' t'other,
 It puzzled I to note how this so, somehow, backed its brother ;
 And aal'ays on the one board,—no need to mention which,
 T' have caught it upon t'other tack had passed for summat rich.
 " And now, my man, you'll see " says he, " precisely how we stand,"
 And then a paper, folded twice, he slips into my hand,
 " Just fifteen dollars coming us, some few cents more or less,
 Short, Giles, by five, just five, of what I'd put it, at a guess ;
 I'm glad, indeed, I'm very glad you've given us a call,
 We do—so want—these little things—all—settled up this fall ;
 It struck me—your account,—but—let it—let it stand,—
 There always will be something, Giles, that slips the head or hand ;
 You'll not, Giles, kick at that, eh ? "—and here the generous man
 Giv' one o' them especial smiles as only sich folks can :
 I waun't say whether showed my face what then was in my mind,
 The looks o' injured honest men bean't aften far behind ;
 I done my best to hide it, but my brain was on the burst,
 And terrible I struggled to speak civilly at first ;
 " Pray when " says I, " Sir, 'specks you this diff'rence to be paid,
 I've nothing now in hand, Sir, and for some time, I'm afraid***—
 " I'm sorry I'm obliged," said he, " to seem a little hard,
 But things—with us—of late,—in fact—a good deal off our guard ;
 But still—we're never pressing, Giles,—if cash—is scarce with you,
 The *cow*—we're not *particular*,—the cow, perhaps, might do ;—
 A tolerable milker, Giles ?—though—as to that—of course,
 A pig, Giles, in a poke, for better or for worse ;—
 I'm thinking too—I'm thinking—of a party—p'rhaps—who might ;—