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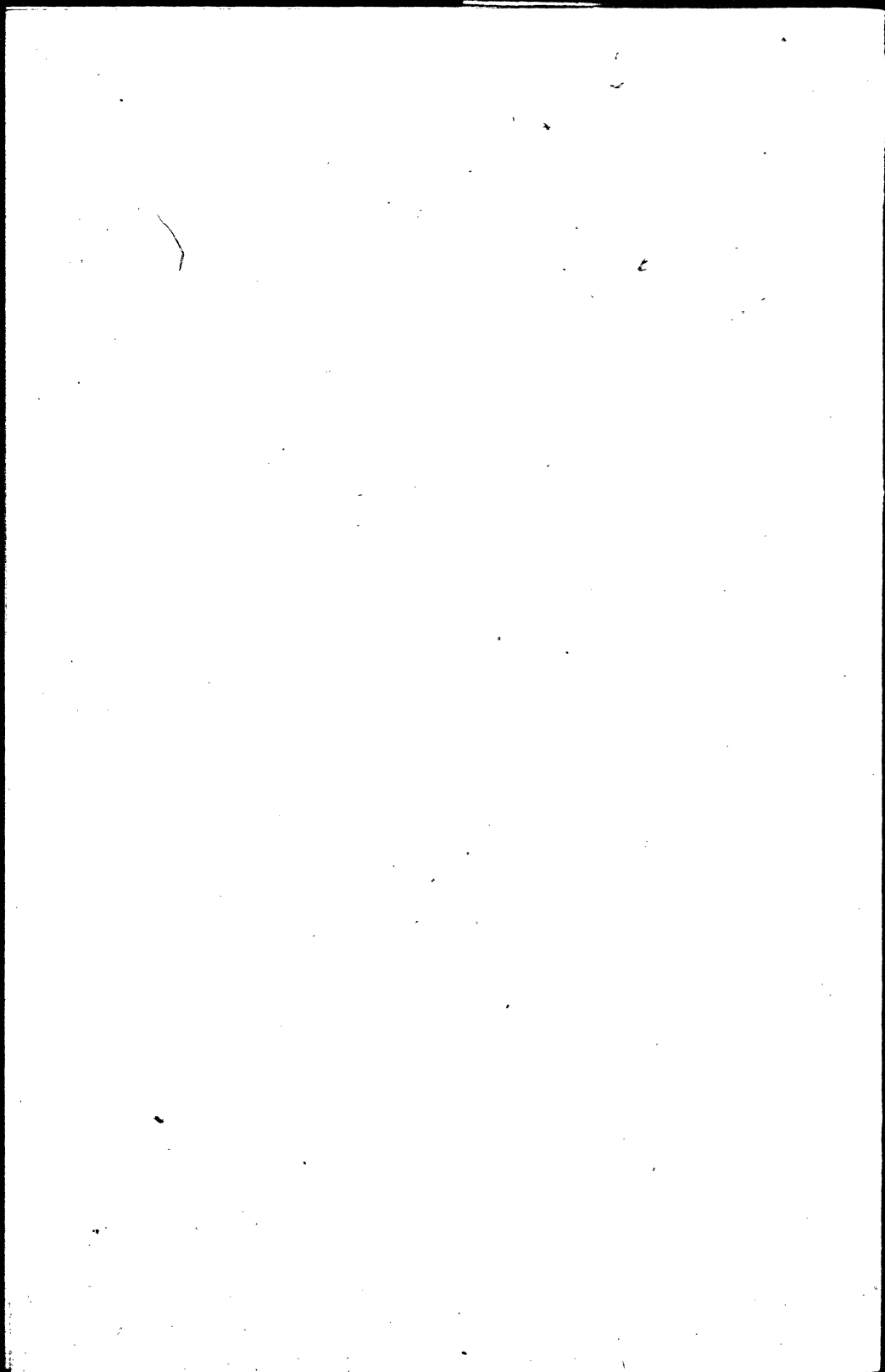
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GILES AND JANEY;

OR

THE KINDLY GENTLEMAN:

A CANADIAN TALE.

BY

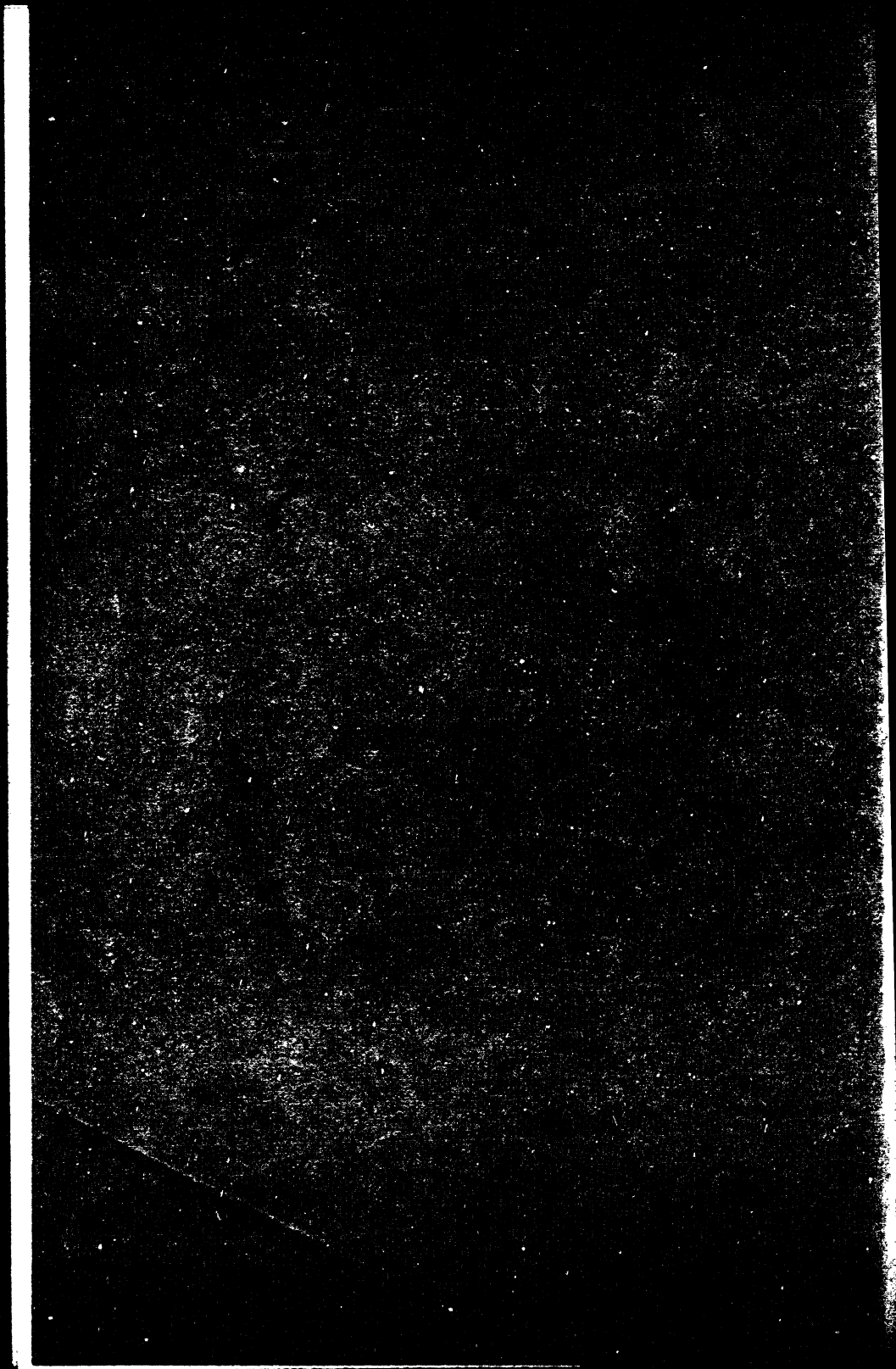
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*Of Edinburgh University.*

Montreal:

JOHN LOVELL, PRINTER, ST. NICHOLAS STREET.

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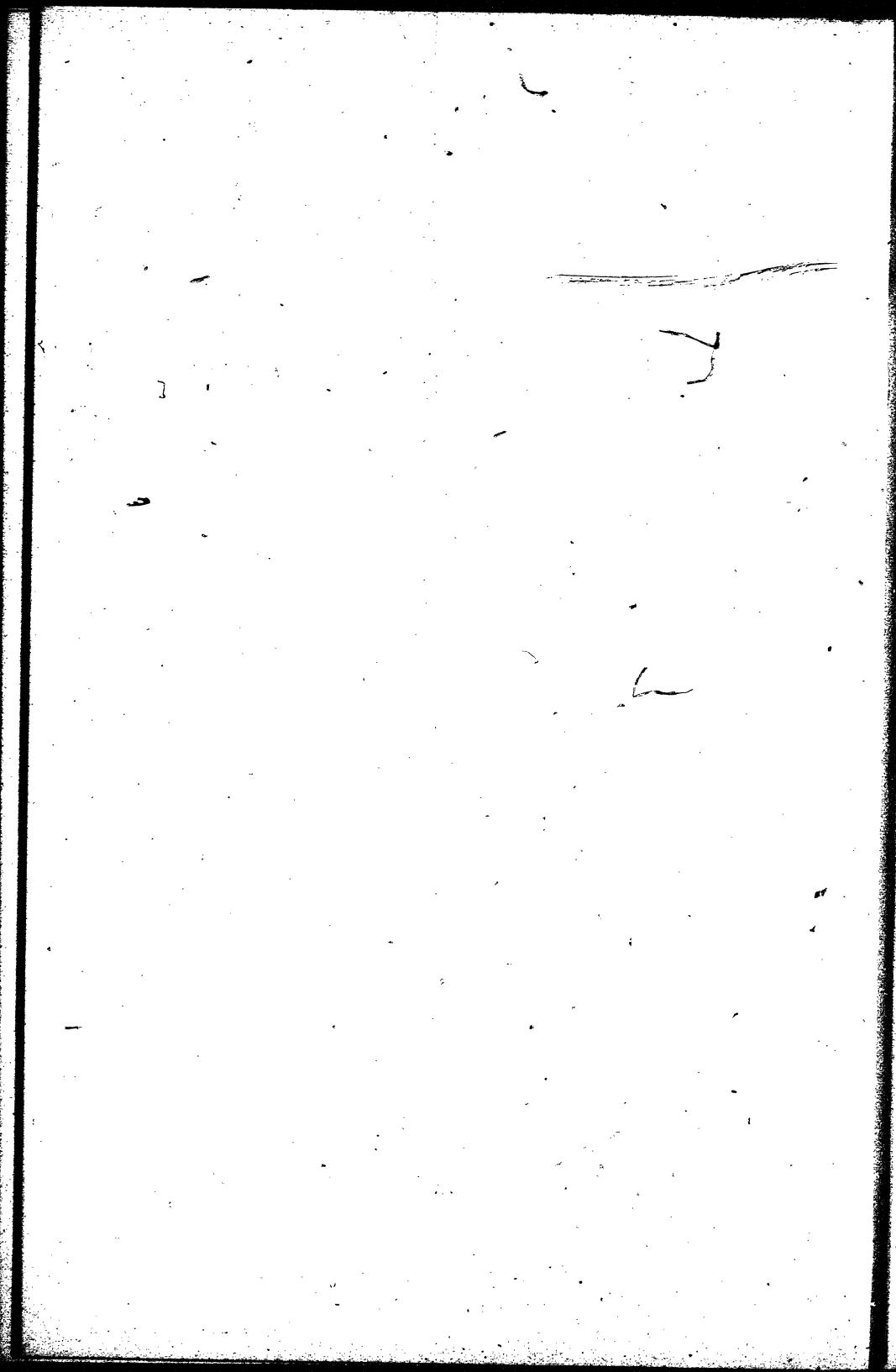
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## DEDICATION.

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To such of the Traders and Dealers of Canada as are too wise and too proud to take advantage of the greenness of a raw, an inexperienced Immigrant, the following poem is, with the sincerest respect, addressed by its author.

The author begs to add, that in the characters of Mr. Smoothley and Giles Homespun no particular parties are, either directly or remotely, aimed at. As to Smoothley, the cap is for one and for all whom it may fit: No honest man need be at the trouble of trying it on.

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# GILES AND JANNEY;

OR

## THE KINDLY GENTLEMAN:

A CANADIAN TALE.

By FRANK JOHNSON, of *Edinburgh University*.

---

I went into a store, a poor—a humble man :

“ Can you help me, sir,” I said—“ God’s blessing if you can ;

I’m very much in want, sir—if you have it in your power—

If only a few trifles, sir—in trust like for the hour.”

“ Well—r—wait awhile, my man,” the gentleman replied,

Mr. Smoothley of the store—a magistrate beside ;

“ I’m—r—busy—for the present, but—if—r—here again by one,

Or—r—earlier, perhaps, we’ll—r—see what can be done :

My partner, as it happens, being not in the way

Puts everything on *me*, somewhat pressingly to day :

Your name, though, by-the-bye ?” “ Giles Homespun, sir,” I said.

“ O—h, Homespun, by the bridge—your father lately dead ?”

“ The same, sir.”—And now it was beautiful to see,

When he knew I was Homespun, the odds it made to me ;

He owned, at once, to knowing me—he'd heard too of my wife,  
 And he'd never lost, he *would* say, by a Homespun, in his life;  
 He bade me to be seated—I understood that :

So I whistled, as I waited, till he'd done what he was at ;

And then the kindly gentleman, for such indeed he seemed,  
 More generous by far than ever I had dreamed,  
 Came, smilingly, assenting to all that I desired,  
 Nay, pressing my acceptance of things not then required,  
 Assuring me I needn't give a thought about the pay,  
 Till fortune, in a manner, flung some good chance in my way ;  
 He'd never been a loser by a Homespun, as he'd said,  
 And he couldn't think, in my case, there was anything to dread.  
 My present wants supplied, I thanked him for his aid,  
 And homeward to my wife a joyful journey made.

"How kindly is the man—how Christian like," I said ;

"What a gentleman will do, if only thorough bred !

Were fortune's fav'rites all but half as good as he,

How happy, Jane, throughout, this little world might be."

A thousand times we blessed him, and when the night time came  
 My Jane and I together knelt—together did the same ;  
 And never prayer from mortal heart sincerer went to heaven,  
 That if the man had still his faults, those faults might be forgiven.

And, ah, we yet had got to learn the kindnesses in store,  
 He wasn't one of those whose hearts warm once and never more.  
 Next day at noon a messenger from the goodly man arrived,  
 To speak about a little job he kindly had contrived,  
 And anything my wife or I were wanting at the store—  
 So thoughtful !—we were welcome to, as freely as before.  
 Too pleased was I to show, at once, that Giles was not the man  
 To readily forget the day when better times began ;  
 "If anything," said I to Jane, "our gratitude can show,

'Tis now occasion calls on us to do all we can do."

So I went to work, and worked as I never did before,  
 I toiled unto my utmost strength, perhaps a little more,  
 Nor unobserved my earnest aim, it heartened me to see,  
 In many a gracious sunny smile the good man flung on me ;  
 And rarely came the resting hour but I was kindly told,  
 " Whatever might be wanting I had only to make bold ;"  
 But having laid some special plans for time to bring about,  
 I drew for nothing on the store that care would do without,  
 Which wrought a balance, bit by bit, I fondly hoped would buy  
 A footing on a little farm that we were living nigh.  
 Nor anxious less were both, believe, t' increase our *stock* on hand,  
 That something might be ours to show when going on the land,  
 For Jane and I had nothing then to boast of as our own,  
 Save some few sheep, and one small cow, that kept the road grass down.

So time ran on, the kindly man and I from day to day  
 Exchanging help, till he, in turn, some pounds had got to pay,  
 When Janey more than gave a hint she thought it time to settle—  
 Perhaps I thought as Janey did, but hadn't got the mettle.  
 I couldn't bear to press the man 't had been so good and kind,  
 As even he I heard at times a little was behind ;  
 But still a something whispering that Janey was aright,  
 I mustered all my courage up, as folks do when they fight,  
 And somewhat, to the counting house, less cowardly, I stole :  
 " A little, sir, will do me now—I don't, sir, want the whole ?"  
 " The whole, my friend !—you strangely err—the whole's the other way :  
 I'm sadly out if you have not a pound or two to pay."  
 'Twas all in sorrow, not in shame, I gave a sudden start  
 When first I saw the kindly man was hollow in his heart.  
 " A pound or two to pay, sir ! that never can be true ;  
 If figures, sir, mean anything, the pay must lie with *you*."

"My simple sir," he smiling said, "you do not understand,  
 You're in the Eastern Townships now—not in your native land ;  
 All things are here quite different—with fruitless words dispense :  
 A pound is sixteen shillings here, a shilling fifteen pence ;  
 In some, indeed in many ways, black almost rules for white ;  
 It takes, I know, a year or two to see things in that light :  
 Be seated, Giles, time presses—still—a few mere moments wait,  
 I'll—r—look into the little thing—and—r—set the matter straight."  
 A bigly book, from leaf to leaf, with studious face he turned,  
 When clear I saw at every leaf how less and less I'd earned ;  
 There was int'rest in the first place, there was int'rest in the second,  
 And int'rest on the interest, Lord knows how often reckoned ;  
 A something hard in every way—a famine price for flour—  
 To settle up *all* the somethings took nearly up an hour ;  
 For I was sorely tasked t' unfold his figurifics,  
 One might as well at once keep counts in hieroglyphics.  
 Not that unschooled, he scribbled thus, more art than ignorance there,  
 Many a baffled brain, he judged, would back out in despair.  
 It saddened me to note the names, with mine, in such sharp quarters,  
 It made me think, and more than once, of Fox's Book of Martyrs,  
 How any man, it staggered me, could trust himself to slumber  
 With such a shaming record of dealings—without number.  
 Dishonesty and meanness disfigured every leaf ;  
 "If this," said I, "be lawful trade, let trader stand for thief."  
 Nothing that I had done throughout was entered at the rate  
 Agreed upon between us, or rightly as to date ;  
 And every thing delivered was posted at a price  
 That pointed to a memory anything but overnice.  
 In vain did I remonstrate, my temper scarce retained :  
 The *book* alone knew anything—the *book* alone explained.  
 A hint at its authority seemed tantamount to libel :

We *must* go by the *book*, Giles—as if he meant the Bible.  
 A second self-same looking thing lay close beside the other,  
 It puzzled me to note how this *so, somehow*, backed its brother,  
 And always on the one board—I needn't mention which :  
 T' have caught it on the other tack had passed for something rich.  
 “ And now, my man,” he said, “ you'll see precisely how we stand,”  
 And then a paper, folded twice, he put into my hand.  
 “ Just fifteen dollars, Giles to us—some few cents more or less ;  
 Short, by five dollars, Giles, 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—r—let it—let it—stand,  
 There always will be something that slips the head or hand ;  
 You'll—r—not, Giles, kick at that, eh ! ” and here the generous man  
 Gave one of those especial smiles that only such men can.  
 I know not whether on my face was what was in my mind—  
 The looks of injured honest men are seldom far behind ;  
 I did my best to hide it, but my brain was on the burst,  
 And terribly I struggled to speak civilly at first :  
 “ Pray, when do you expect,” I said, “ this balance to be paid ;  
 I've nothing now in hand, sir, and, for sometime, 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,—if cash—is scarce—with you  
 Perhaps—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 ;  
 At all events—we'll—r—take her—t' *oblige* you—by-the-bye,  
 Now, I recall,—our own—must be—I think,—yes,—nearly dry ;—  
 I'll look up in a day or so, and, Giles, should *you* be out,  
 Just whisper to your wife the business we're about.”

To this I made no answer, but simply hung my head,  
 It seemed as if a something had struck me almost dead.  
 "Come, come, my friend," said he, "an honest man need never  
 Be out of heart—the store's as free to you as ever ;  
 If any little thing—for yourself—or for your wife—  
 I never was—to say—*particular*—in my life."  
 No answer still ; he near'd me, put his hand upon my shoulder,  
 And talked—as if a father,—or something even older ;  
 But I could see beneath the guise that craft was putting on.  
 And I waited for a moment till the wicked man had done.  
 "I'm but a lowly man, sir, and little of a scholar,  
 And, possibly, I do not know the interest on a dollar ;  
 But take thou heed, that when to thee thy last account is given,  
 The interest *thou* wilt have to pay don't shut thee out of heaven."

Ah, why, when hieing homeward, on the roadway did I linger ?  
 Why loiter at my door with the latch still on my finger ?  
 Too well I knew the trouble I was bearing to my wife ;  
 Ah, then it was I tasted of the bitterness of life.  
 By the half tear in my eye, by the heaving of my breast,  
 That something *there* was wrong my Janey quickly guessed :  
 She took me in her arms, she looked me in the face—  
 "Full well I know, my Giles, thou art not in disgrace."  
 And when I told her all the gentleman had done,  
 She kissed me on the brow and looked an angel one :  
 "And will they come and take thee"—she could not say the word,  
 But in the look she gave me 't was plainly to be heard.  
 "Ah, no, my Janc," I said, "but much I fear the *cow*  
 Will go to pay a debt we never owed till now ;  
 There is a way of lawing him, but then the fees I grudge.  
 And I hear too that he is first cousin to the judge."  
 "First cousin, Giles, to *something else*," my angered wife replied,

When we sat down to our scanty meal, and bitterly we cried.  
 And ere the running moon was round the dreaded man appeared.  
 Oh, when I saw him coming how I trembled as he neared :  
 "Lord, help us, Jane," I said, "he's bent upon the cow."—  
 "What a gentleman can do, Giles—another picture now."—  
 "We'll have to let her go, Jane—there's nothing got by law ;  
 With our small means to face him might but distress us more."—  
 "Say something to him first, Giles—a word sometimes will do."—  
 I might as well have prated to the passing wind that-blew :  
 To nothing would he listen—not a moment would he wait ;  
 With a heavy, heavy brow I followed to the gate.  
 It was a trying moment—man is not made of clay,  
 But my heart was in my home, so—the dark thought went away.  
 I leaned upon the gate till the man was out of sight,  
 And glad was I when came the coming on of night ;  
 When, by the very bed where Jane and I had knelt  
 And blessed the kindly man, I spoke out as I felt ;  
 There may have been a c—e, or something in that way.  
 (May God forgive me if I knew not how to pray.)  
 My heart was full of anger : I couldn't bear to see  
 The misery about us, and the tear in Janey's e'e ;  
 But—the God of all is goodly :—upon that very night  
 I slept a sleep as sound as had everything been right ;  
 And when the morrow came, unconscious of sin,  
 A peace of mind came o'er me, like a comforter within ;  
 I went unto my Janey, who was sorrowing alone,  
 And I tried to make her bosom as tranquil as my own :  
 'I'll still do for thee, Jane, the very best I can,  
 And leave to tide and time that kindly gentleman."