



THE THREE WARNINGS: A TALE,

BY MRS. THRALE.

THE tree of deepest root is found
Least willing still to quit the ground;
'Twas therefore said by antient sages,
That love of life increas'd with years
So much, that in our latter stages,
When pains grow sharp, and sickness rages,
The greatest love of life appears.

This great affection to believe,
Which all confess, but few perceive,
If old assertions can't prevail,
Be pleas'd to hear a modern tale.

When sports went round, and all were gay
On neighbour Dobson's wedding-day,
Death call'd aside the jocund groom
With him into another room:
And looking grave, " You must, says he,
" Quit your sweet bride, and come with me."
" With you, and quit my Susan's side !
" With you ! the hapless husband cry'd :
" Young as I am ! 'tis monstrous hard !
" Besides, in truth, I'm not prepar'd : " My

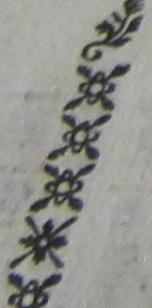
" My thoughts on other matters go,
 " This is my wedding-night, you know."
 What more he urg'd I have not heard,
 His reasons could not well be stronger ;
 So Death the poor delinquent spar'd,
 And left to live a little longer.
 Yet calling up a serious look,
 His hour-glass trembled while he spoke,
 " Neighbour, he said, farewell : No more
 " Shall Death disturb your mirthful hour ;
 " And further, to avoid all blame
 " Of cruelty upon my name,
 " To give you time for preparation,
 " And fit you for your future station,
 " Three several Warnings you shall have,
 " Before you're summon'd to the grave :
 " Willing for once I'll quit my prey,
 " And grant a kind reprieve ;
 " In hopes you'll have no more to say,
 " But when I call again this way,
 " Well-pleas'd the world will leave."

To these conditions both consented,
And parted perfectly contented.

What next the hero of our tale befell,
How long he liv'd, how wise, how well,
How roundly he pursu'd his course,
And smok'd his pipe, and strok'd his horse,
The willing Muse shall tell :

He

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He chaffer'd then, he bought, he sold,
 Nor once perceiv'd his growing old,
 Nor thought of Death as near ;
 His friends not false, his wife no shrew,
 Many his gains, his children few,
 He pass'd his hours in peace ;
 But while he view'd his wealth increase,
 While thus along Life's dusty road
 The beaten track content he trod,
 Old Time, whose haste no mortal spares,
 Uncall'd, unheeded, unawares,
 Brought on his eightieth year.

And now one night in musing mood,
 As all alone he sat,
 Th' unwelcome messenger of Fate
 Once more before him stood.

Half kill'd with anger and surprise,
 " So soon return'd ! old Dobson cries."
 " So soon, d'ye call it ! Death replies :
 " Surely, my friend, you're but in jest.
 " Since I was here before,
 " 'Tis six-and-thirty years at least,
 " And you are now fourscore."
 " So much the worse, the Clown rejoin'd :
 " To spare the aged would be kind :
 " However, see your search be legal ;
 " And your authority — Is't regal ?
 " Else you are come on a fool's errand,
 " With but a secretary's warrant,

" Besides,

" Besides, you promis'd me Three Warnings,
 " Which I have look'd for nights and mornings.
 " But for that loss of time and ease,
 " I can recover damages."

" I know, cries Death, that at the best,
 " I seldom am a welcome guest;

" But don't be captious, friend, at least ;
 " I little thought you'd still be able

" To flump about your farm and stable ;
 " Your years have run to a great length,

" I wish you joy tho' of your strength."
 " Hold, says the Farmer, not so fast,

" I have been lame these four years past."
 " And no great wonder, Death replies,

" However, you still keep your eyes ;
 " And sure to see one's loves and friends,

" For legs and arms would make amends."
 " Perhaps, says Dobson, so it might,

" But latterly I've lost my sight."

" This is a shocking story, faith,

" Yet there's some comfort still, says Death ;
 " Each strives your sadness to amuse ;

" I warrant you hear all the news."

" There's none, cries he ; and if there were,

" I'm grown so deaf I could not hear."

" Nay then, the spectre stern rejoin'd,

" These are unjustifiable earnings ;

" If you are lame, and deaf, and blind,

" You've had your three sufficient Warnings.

" So

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" So come along, no more we'll part ;"
 He said, and touch'd him with his dart ;
 And now old Dobson turning pale,
 Yields to his fate——so ends my tale.

T H E E X C U R S I O N,

HAPPY thrice the harmless swain,
 Tenant of the peaceful plain,
 Far from business, noise and strife,
 Blest with every sweet of life ;
 Far from all the toil of state,
 All oppressions of the great ;
 Dancing blythe his Nymph he leads
 O'er the carpet of the meads ;
 While his neighbour's pipe or horn
 Lulls the night or cheers the morn :
 Healthy joy from labour springs,
 Healthy joy the wish of kings.
 Here Providence in bounty flows,
 And joys on every senile belflow's ;
 Here Earth affords her kind increase,
 With virtue gain'd, enjoy'd in peace ;
 The harvest rich, the fruitage fair,
 Repay the cultivator's care.
 Hills where sportive lambskins stray,
 Flocks that fleecy tribute pay ;

Crystal