

VERSES to a FRIEND.

HAVE you not seen, my gentle squire,
The humours of our kitchin fire?

Says *Ned* to *Sal*—I lead a spade;

Why don't ye play?—the girl's afraid —

Play something—any thing—but play —

'Tis but to pass the time away.

Pho! how she stands—biting her nails —

As tho' she play'd for half her vails —

Sorting her cards, haggling and picking —

We play for nothing, do us, chicken?

That card will do—blood!—never doubt it —

'Tis not worth while to *think*, about it.

Sal thought and thought, and miss'd her aim;

And *Ned*, ne'er studying, won the game.

Methinks, old friend, 'tis wond'rous true,

That verse is but a game at *Loo*.

While many a bard, that shews so clearly

He writes for his amusement merely,

Is known to study, fret, and toil,

And play for nothing all the while;

Or praise at most (for wreaths of yore

Ne'er signify a farthing more:)

Till having vainly toil'd to gain it,

He sees your flying pen obtain it.

Thro' fragrant scenes the trifler roves,

And hallow'd haunts that Phœbus loves;

Where with strange heats his bosom glows,
 And mystic flames the God bestows.
 You, who none other flame require
 Than a good blazing parlour fire,
 Write verses—to defy the scorners,
 In cake houses, and chimney corners.

Sal found her deep-laid schemes were vain;
 The cards are cut—come deal again —
 No good comes on it when one lingers —
 I'll play the card comes next my fingers —
 Fortune could never let *Ned* loo her,
 When she had left it wholly to her.

Well, now, who wins?—Why, still the same —
 For *Sal* has lost another game.

I've done, she mutter'd—I was saying,
 It did not *argufy* my playing.

Some folks will win they cannot chuse;
 But think or not think—some must lose.

I may have won a game, or so —

But then it was an age ago —

It ne'er will be my lot again —

I won it of a baby then —

Give me an ace of trumps, and see,

Our *Ned* will beat me with a three.

'Tis all by luck that things are carry'd —

He'll suffer for it when he's marry'd.

Thus *Sal*, with tears in either eye,

While victor *Ned* sat tittering by.

Thus I, long envying your success,

And bent to write, and study less,

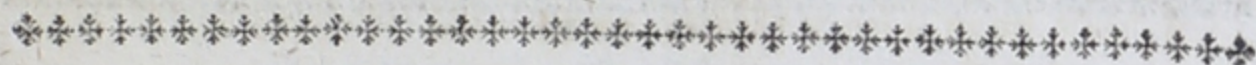
Sate down and scribbled in a trice,
Just what you see—and you despise.

You who can frame a tuneful song,
And hum it as you ride along ;
And, trotting on the king's high-way,
Snatch from the hedge a sprig of bay ;
Accept the verse, howe'er it flows,
From one, who is your friend in prose.

What is this wreath, so green ! so fair !
Which many wish, and few must wear ?
Which one man's indolence can gain,
Another's vigils ne'er obtain ?

For what must *Sal* or *Poet* sue,
Ere they engage with *Ned* or you ?
For luck in verse ? for luck at Loo ?
Ah no ! 'tis Genius gives *you* fame,
And *Ned* thro' skill secures the game.

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Written at an INN on a particular Occasion.

TO thee, fair Freedom! I retire,
From flattery, feasting, dice, and din ;
Nor art thou found in domes much higher
Than the low cot, or humble *inn*.

'Tis here with boundless power I reign,
And every health which I begin,
Converts dull port to bright champain ;
For Freedom crowns it at an *inn*.