

Champagne, Sherry, and Water Gruel.

" TWO aged men, but of what sort,
 'Tis not material to report:
 Suffice it, as the story's told,
 They both were very, very old,
 And had attain'd to full fourscore,
 Though I have heard, 'twas somewhat more.
 Their cheeks with ruddy colour glow'd,
 Their hoary locks in ringlets flow'd,
 And such their strength and sprightly air,
 That strangers who had view'd the pair,
 Would have suppos'd they could not boast
 Of more than sixty years at most.
 —On being ask'd what means they took
 To cheat age of its wither'd look,
 THE ONE, in grave and solemn pride
 To the Enquirer thus replied."



Have patience Death, nor be so cruel
To spoil the Sick man's Watergruel.

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“ Through the long course that I have run,
This maxim I’ve pursu’d,—to shun
Intemperance, and all its brood
Of vices that inflame the blood ;
Or check its current through the veins,
Engend’ring endless aches and pains.
I never, like an hungry beast,
O’ercharg’d my stomach at a feast ;
Nor, by a glutton maw misled,
With season’d meats the juices fed,
Forming gross humours which, by stealth,
Prey on the vital source of Health.
I never pass’d the feverish nights
With Bacchus, and his madd’ning rites ;
Ne’er lost my Reason, gift divine,
In bowls of riot-stirring wine ;
Nay, I can boast, I ne’er was found
Drunken, and senseless on the ground :
Ne’er did I sober hours pollute,
By turning man into a brute.
My Beverage, let the Drunkard sneer,—
Was sought from rill and fountain clear.

Hence equal spirits cheer'd the day,
With calm, but yet, enliv'ning ray ;
Nor do wild Fancy's dreams affright
The tranquil slumbers of the night.
Ne'er sought I sensual Pleasure's bower,
To waste and dissipate the hour :
Nor did I in those scenes engage,
Which shorten youth and hasten age.
Hence I see, and who will doubt me,
My children all grow old about me ;
Who, having liv'd by my sage rule,
Do credit to their Father's school.
Thus, fearless of the world to come,
Time will conduct me to the Tomb ;
And for the years that yet remain,
If sorrow they should bring, and pain,
I still shall bless th' Almighty power,
Whose goodness rules Life's every hour,
To his decrees submissive bend,
And patient wait my Journey's end."

He ceas'd, and having told his tale,
Approving smiles around prevail.

—THE OTHER then was ask'd to tell
What HE had done, to look so well:
To bear his age with such a grace,
And scarce a wrinkle on his face.
He, with a smile sarcastic spoke,
As half in earnest—half in joke.
“ Through the long course that I have run,
My maxim always was to shun,
Whate'er I thought a foe to fun.
I was a young, unlucky Dog,
But honest, and ne'er play'd the rogue:
All kinds of Gambols I preferr'd,
But then I never broke my word;
And I can say, in looking o'er
My life, from twenty to fourscore,
It was the burden of my song,
Never to do my neighbour wrong;
And, 'twas my practice and delight,
Always to do my neighbour right.
So far, so good; and for the rest,
Why—I did that which pleas'd me best.

—I never did my thirst controul
When I beheld the flowing bowl;
Nor was it known that Thomas Hearty
When join'd with any jovial party:
E'er felt a melancholy shock
To hear the cry "past four o'clock,"
Unless he felt it as a warning
Of the dull period of the morning,
When Phœbus, in his gilded cart,
Would shortly bid them all depart.
I, through my Life, a jolly fellow,
Scarce went to bed but I was mellow;
And I'd a head, a gift divine,
That never felt an ache from wine:
Nor did my stomach play the trick,
However fill'd, of being sick:
Nor was my reason ever lost
So as to run against a post;
Nor could my Cups my senses smother,
That I took one door for another.
Besides my wife, if she were here,
But she has reach'd a better sphere,

Would say that, though her TOM might roam,
He always brought good humour home :—
For though I sometimes chang'd the feast,
I always lov'd my DOLLY best :
New Beauties might a flame impart,
But she alone possest my heart.
—I ne'er to wine was a Defaulter,
And therefore never call'd for water,
That meager, mawkish, tasteless thing,
From running rill and chrystal spring.
O 'tis a beverage, I must think
Fit but for Fish and Beasts to drink.
—Nay, when my dearest Partner died,
And I sat sadly down and cried,
I almost turn'd my sobs to laughter
To think my tears were made of water.
Besides, I have my children four,
Who now are verging to threescore :
They all partake their father's joys ;
I crack my bottle with my boys.
—My daughter has reach'd fifty-five,
The very best Old Maid alive :

Who, though a beauty, ne'er could find
 A Husband suited to her mind.
 O how I like my MOLL to see
 Dropping the good thing in her tea;
 Nay, I could hug and kiss the Lass,
 When she says "Sir, another glass."
 I think I should with pleasure throttle
 To hear her say, "another bottle."
 Whatever time I'm doom'd to last,
 O may it all be like the past,
 And till I reach my latter end,
 Enjoy my bottle and my friend,
 As it has been my constant song,
 Never to do my neighbour wrong;
 As it has been my fond delight,
 Ever to do my neighbour right,
 I need not surely be afraid,
 When Death shall call me to the shade.
 But if, at length, before I go,
 The Powers above will have it so,
 That I should feel the twinging gout,
 Bacchus shall try to drive it out:

Though if the Foe's resolv'd to stay,
 I'll calmly let him have his way ;
 And if the Doctors breed a riot
 With draught and pill—I'll scorn their diet ;
 I'll take my glass,—and die in quiet.”

Such was Tom Champagne's pleasant tale,
 Nor did the boozing mortal fail
 To toast the man who loves his friend,
 And fills his bumpers to the end ;
 Nor e'er will quit the running spout,
 Till his Life's ruby cask is out :
 Then, turning to his comely Dame,
 He bid the Lady do the same—
 “ Here by my side is neighbour SHERRY,
 Who never sorry is, or merry ;
 Who on a chicken wing can dine,
 Content with thimble-fulls of wine.
 He talks, and chuckles as he speaks
 Of mad Intemp'rance and its freaks :
 But faith, I laugh at all his prosing
 A Life like his is only dosing :

He only can be said to wake
Who freely does his bumper take.
Ned hints a smile, but if he'd quaff
The jovial bowl, he'd learn to laugh:
Did he regale on ham and chine,
He'd have a shape as round as mine:—
His fatten'd cheeks like mine would glow,
Where wrinkles are not seen to grow;
But he pursues his mawkish dream,
And looks for fat in curds and cream.
—Nay, there's Sir Jemmy in the corner,
But not like sing-song Jacky Horner,
Feeding on beef and Christmas pie,
But lapping up his Firmity:
He's one of those, as I've heard tell,
Who think it vulgar to be well,
And deem it elegance to sit,
Vap'ring in melancholy fit.
He suffers life to run to waste
In what your fine-bred folks call taste;
So smooth, so polish'd, so refin'd,
That the firm energy of mind,

Which ought to be our mortal boast,
Is in the soft embroid'ry lost ;
And then each gawdy whim is seen
Through the transparent Fillagreen ;
While his pure, sentimental flame
Relaxes the whole nervous frame,
And shows him to the passing eye,
A poor, weak, flutt'ring butterfly.
Sago, Panada, and the doses
Which the Physician's pen composes,
Is the Chevalier's daily theme ;
And, I presume, his nightly dream.
All this is bad, but, what is worse,
He turns his Cook into a Nurse ;
And watches her the morning long
Lest she should make the broth too strong.
'Tis true, I sometimes steer this way
To give his sinking spirits play :
To cheer his heart with friendly Joke,
And make his wintry chimnies smoke ;
To set his wond'ring pots a boiling,
And keep his brisk Champagne from spoiling.

—I've not, my friend, forgot the time,
When you and I were in our prime :
'Twas when we both had just left college,
Though you, I own, had all the knowledge ;
But then you let loose your caprices,
And with your Sisters and your Nieces
Humdrumm'd away your fine-spun Life,
For you ne'er stumbled on a wife ;
And though you were so good, 'tis certain,
You could play tricks behind the curtain.
Come then, throw off your cap and gown,
And let some maiden rub you down.
Restore, I pray, each woe-worn feature,
And be again a human creature.
Change to good fare your starving diet :
Kick up a dust and breed a riot.
Be not so sad, nor shake your head ;
And keep those looks till you are dead."

“ Thou jovial, noisy, pleasant wight,”
Replied th' exhilarated Knight,
“ You never will your fancy balk,
Whenever you've the itch to talk ;

Nor ever were you known to pass
 In silence, your too frequent glass :
 But well I know thy friendly heart,
 How gen'rous, how devoid of art !
 And though you rather stun my ears,
 Your humour still my spirits cheers.
 While you the plenteous goblets quaff,
 And at my whims and fancies laugh,
 I know full well you cannot steel
 Your breast, against the pains I feel :
 And much I wish your Life my Friend,
 May not to draughts and doses tend :
 For many a one may laugh to see
 Tom melted down as thin as me.
 E'er a few fleeting years are past,
 He may to slip-slops come at last.
 That you have laugh'd at me is true ;
 'Tis what you've long been us'd to do ;
 But younger folks may laugh at you." }

" You may believe, my good SIR JAMES,
 I'll sooner plunge me in the Thames,

Than be like you *Mortis Imago*,
And think it life to live on Sago.
When Nature burns out all my fuel
And pins me down to water-gruel,
I'll call on Death to intervene,
And close at once the Milksop scene.

Thus in sarcastic tone he spoke,
And as he schem'd another Joke,
The Spectre from the corner creeps,
And o'er the sick man's shoulder peeps.
Tom felt surpris'd, then gap'd and star'd,
But his stout spirits were not scar'd:
Nor did he e'er for mercy crave,
When two full bottles made him brave.

Thus in his view the Figure stood
That cannot boast of flesh and blood.
"I see," says Tom, "you've got a glass,
But I'll not let the bottle pass:
Turn out the sand, and let me fill in,
A Nectar that is worth the swilling."

—Death grinn'd a smile, and shook his head,
And stretch'd his fleshless arm and said:—
“ Know, that I'm now dispos'd to feel
A longing for a meagre meal;
And He on whom I've laid my paw,
Is the next morsel for my maw:
But I shall surely leave you quiet,
Till I'm in search of fatter diet.
'Tis true, you Topers sometimes stay,
When sober folks are caught away;
But Temp'rance is, as you should know,
To Health a Friend, to Pain a Foe;
That Virtue forms a fav'rite rule
Which Wisdom teaches in her School;
And Master SHERRY, who sits there,
Nor smiles with joy, nor frowns with care,
Will dance with me, in easy pace,
Long after you have run your race.
—SIR JAMES was well, but not content,
To ev'ry learned Doctor went
To make him better; and you see
His picture of Mortality.

—As life is ever running fast,
 And I must have you all at last,
 I'll tell you, and I'll tell you true,
 What 'tis you mortals ought to do.
 If you to Life's remotest date,
 Would keep my visit from your gate ;
 —Extremes endeavour to forego—
 Nor feed too high,—nor feed too low :
 A MEDIUM I would recommend
 'Tween TOM and his DEPARTED FRIEND."

But Temperance is, as you should know
 To Health a Friend, to Pain a foe ;
 That Virtue forms a favorite rule
 Which Wisdom teaches in her School ;
 And Master SURGERY, who sits there
 Nor smiles with joy nor frowns with care,
 Will dance with me in easy pace,
 Long after you have run your race.
 —Sir JAMES was well, but not content,
 To ev'ry learned Doctor went
 To make him better, and you see
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