

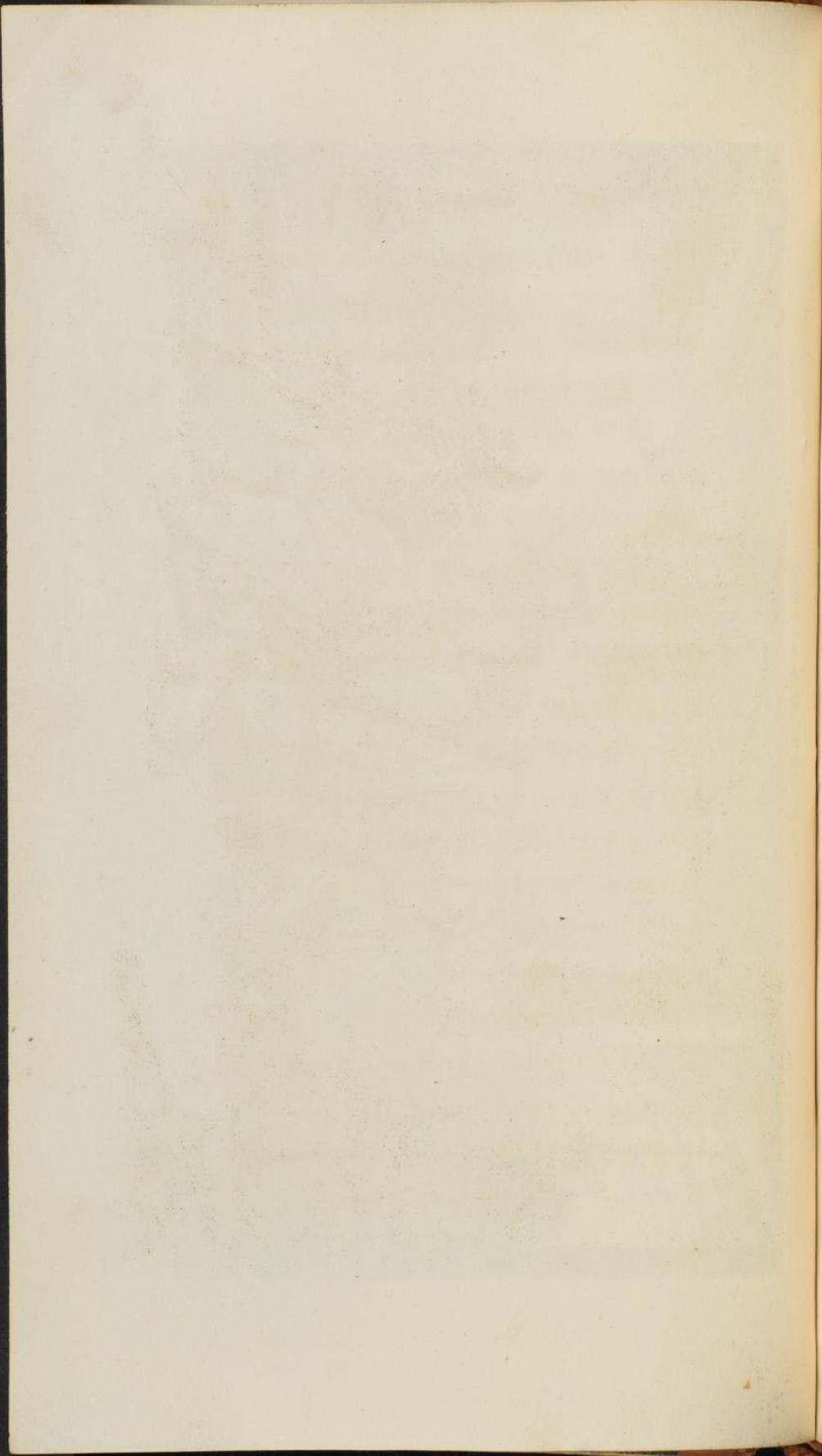
Saffer Goodman.

LIFE is oft liken'd to the Stage,
 That equal Glass of ev'ry age,
 Where its true characters are shown
 To each attentive Looker-on:
 Where gay and grave, and old and young,
 Their story tell in prose or song.
 There varying passion plays its part,
 And ev'ry tell-tale of the Heart
 Does, to the list'ning ear, expose
 The warm delights, the chilling woes,
 That in the human bosom reign,
 And form the source of Joy and Pain.
 —But be it known, we do not mean
 To enter on the Tragic scene,
 Where Warriors or where Kings rehearse
 In solemn strains and pompous verse,



Another Whiff and all is o'er,
And Gaffer Goodman is no more.

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The Battle's glory or the fate
That marks the contest of the great;
Or where advent'rous Champions prove
The ardour of Heroic Love.
Nor do we look to that strange creature,
Which has no Prototype in Nature;
That feeds on Fashion, and appears
To live by nailing down the Ears:
A flimsy, gay, fantastic show
Deck'd out in gawdy Furbelow
Yclep'd an Opera :—No, we sport
Where Nature and her train resort,
And the gay Comic Muse pourtrays
The common scenes of common days;
Where we the mirthful bev'rage quaff,
And still grow better while we laugh.
Here nat'ral failings are disclos'd,
And bold infirmities exposed;
While Virtue, steer'd by Reason's Card,
Attains its merited reward.
Humour's broad Phrase, its poignant stroke,
The moral point, the homely joke,

By strong and happy contrast tend
The mind to cheer, the heart to mend:
While in the progress of the scene
Th' unlook'd for projects intervene ;
And should all other Fancies fail,
Hymen or Death may close the tale.
Nay, sometimes, as I have seen, forsooth,
The well-drawn story ends in both.

Old Gaffer Goodman, who had spent
His days among the wealds of Kent,
A Yeoman hearty, bold and free
Had gain'd the age of seventy-three ;
And, as some other fools have done.
Married a Girl of twenty-one.
A Nurse he wanted, and he chose
A Maid whose cheeks were like the rose.
And with an azure sleepy eye
That mark the tender Sympathy,
Which could not find a counterpart
In Gaffer Goodman's shrivell'd heart.
He felt the Sacrifice she made,
Which, to his utmost he repaid.

Fair Sally's Family were poor,
But now they shar'd her Husband's store,
On ev'ry Sunday, in a Pew,
Sally dress'd out appear'd to view ;
And as she smiling pass'd along
Was honour'd by the rustic Throng :
For in the Parish it was said
That the Old Man his will had made,
And left her, as it would appear,
At least three hundred pounds a year ;
With all his cattle and his flocks,
And store of Gold in Iron Box,
Which he most strictly watch'd and kept
Beneath the Bed whereon he slept.
Besides, at Village-fair on May-day,
She gave a Prize and play'd the Lady,
While the Old Man was pleas'd to share
The honour which was shewn her there.

But though Dame Nature daily told
That she was young, and he was old,

And bid her in the mirror true
Her own enchanting image view ;
Yet howe'er conscious of her beauty,
She acted each domestic duty ;
Nor ever wish'd abroad to roam,
But nurs'd her Hub, and staid at home.
With her fair hand so smooth and sleek,
She'd stroke his brow and pat his cheek ;
And, when the household cares were done,
Would read some story full of Fun,
Make his fat sides with laughter shake,
And keep his drowsy eyes awake ;
Or, while she spun, his heart would cheer,
With any song he wish'd to hear.

But still, with all her sense and truth,
Spite of herself, the tender Youth,
Whose humble virtues had possest
The wishes of her youthful breast,
E'er wealth or an awaken'd pride,
Had made her Gaffer Goodman's bride,
Would sometimes on her fancy steal,
And what she wish'd to hide—reveal.

Nay, at the window as she sat,
 He would propose his friendly chat;
 And, as the whirring wheel went round,
 Old Gaffer only heard the sound,
 Whose noise the tender converse drown'd.
 She heard fond Strephon with delight,
 But still she did not think it right;
 And when he tun'd a Shepherd's song,
 She listen'd, but she thought it wrong.
 He brought her ribbons from the Fair,
 She took them, but she would not wear
 The blushing gift. At length, she said,
 "No, Strephon, though you may upbraid,
 And think I was a faithless Maid,
 Let Reason sway and Passion cool,
 You'll think I must have been a fool,
 Had I preferr'd to live with thee
 In Labour, Love, and Poverty:
 In Love that might so soon be past,
 And Labour that through Life would last.
 I've done the best, though somewhat loth,
 If you are prudent, for us both."

While Gaffer Goodman lives, I'll be
A Pattern of Fidelity ;
So dare no more the tale to tell,
Which once, perhaps, I lik'd too well.
—My parents now in comfort live,
I give them all I wish to give :
My Mother, she is near threescore ;
My Father, he is somewhat more :—
That they from want, and toil are free,
I owe to Gaffer's Love for me.
—I've heard too much, I'll hear no more :—
So give this talk and sing-song o'er ;
Nor ever offer to my ear
What my Old Man ought not to hear :
—Be prudent, with due patience wait,
And trust me for your future fate.
'Tis more than I ought to impart,
But 'tis to ease your honest heart,
When I declare that I'll be true
To Gaffer Goodman, and to you :
And when he does his breath resign,
Be wise—and, Strephon, I'll be thine."

—“ Then take her, Strephon,” Death replied,
Who smoking sat by Goodman’s side :
“ Her Husband’s gone, as you may see,
“ For his last Pipe he smok’d with me.”

Though a rich Widow and a Beauty,
Sally perform’d the usual duty.
Though many a wealthy Yeoman su’d
And a brisk, Country Justice woo’d,
Twelve months she pass’d in grateful pride,
E’er she her mourning laid aside :
But when at length the time was come
That she could take a Husband home,
Sally her early choice preferr’d,
And with her Strephon kept her word.