

1795
CHEAP REPOSITORY.

THE
HAMPSHIRE TRAGEDY:

Shewing how a Servant Maid first robbed her Master, and
was afterwards struck dead for telling a Lie.

A TRUE STORY.



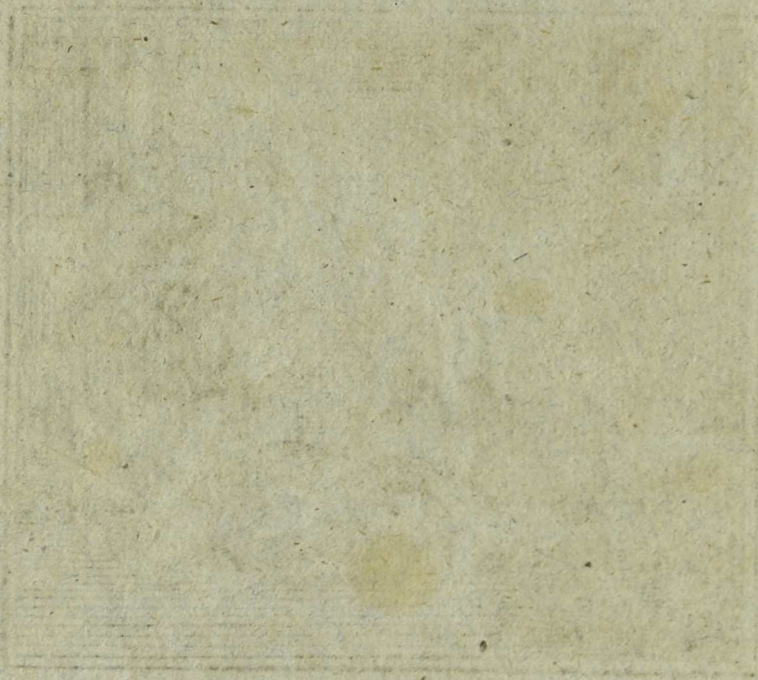
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THE
HAMPSHIRE TRAGEDY:
A TRUE STORY.

COME all ye maidens and draw near;
A doleful Song I sing,
A Song that proves, as you shall hear,
A Lie's a fearful thing.

In Hampshire once there chanc'd to dwell,
Near Meonstoke's little town,
A farming man, who prosper'd well;
An honest country clown,

It was but little he possess'd,

But then he was content ;

He knew no want, could treat a guest,

And paid his slender rent.

By honest industry and thrift

He sav'd a little store ;

And thanking God for every gift,

He made that little more.

And now, so lofty was his state,

He hir'd a servant maid ;

Who learning well on him to wait,

In truth was duly paid.

One hundred pounds, a mighty sum,

He now had sav'd in all ;

And hid it, lest some thief should come,

Safe in his kitchen wall.

At length, advancing far in years,

He calmly view'd his end;

For he need never shrink with fears

Whose Maker is his friend.

Long time a prey to dire disease,

Stretch'd on his bed he lay;

His servant saw him ill at ease,

And nurs'd him night and day.

Then Satan, who like beast of prey,

“ Seeks whom he may devour,”

Did tempt this servant maid so gay,

All in an evil hour.

He led her first to see the spot

Where lay this hidden pelf;

Then bid her form the wicked plot

To take it for herself.

He whisper'd in her willing ear,

“Go make it all your own;

For since your master's death is near,

It never can be known.”

At once the wicked girl obey'd,

And fear'd no future ill;

Oh, stupid, sinful, silly maid!

She dreamt not of a Will.

But had she thought of Him, whose eye

Sees all the deeds of man;

In vain the Tempter had drawn nigh,

And urg'd his wicked plan.

The love of gain had warp'd her soul,

And drawn her quite away;

To Satan thus, that Tempter foul,

She fell an easy prey.

Her master dies; but first he leaves

By will this hundred pound;

Tells where 'twas hid, for fear of thieves,

And 'twould be surely found.

Then went his friends and search'd the chink,

With close and cunning eye;

'Twas gone—but nobody could think

Which way the pelf could fly.

At length the neighbours turn'd a thought

To this unhappy maid;

They search'd her box, the thief was caught,

For there the wealth was laid.

Then, then alas! she vow'd and swore,

Appealing oft to Heav'n,

That by her Master long before

This sum was freely giv'n.

Dire curses oft, with forehead bold,

She call'd down on her head;

And pray'd, if any lie she told,

That God would strike her dead.

She spoke—and strait the sentence pass'd,

A sentence strange and rare;

At once the Liar breath'd her last,

For Heav'n did hear her prayer.

The friends around beheld with fear

The wretched sinner fall;

Forc'd in God's presence to appear

At his most awful call.

And now let us, who still are left,

Take warning, old and young!

O, let us hate the sin of theft,

And dread a lying tongue.

T H E E N D.