

**WHIMS AND ODDITIES, IN
PROSE AND
VERSE: WITH FORTY
ORIGINAL DESIGNS**

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Whims and Oddities, in Prose and Verse: With Forty Original Designs by Thomas Hood

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THOMAS HOOD

**WHIMS AND ODDITIES, IN
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TO SIR WALTER SCOTT, BART.

THIS VOLUME

IS RESPECTFULLY INSCRIBED

BY THE

AUTHOR.



IN the absence of better fiddles, I have ventured to come forward again with my little kit of fancies. I trust it will not be found an unworthy sequel to my first performance; indeed, I have done my best, in the New Series, innocently to imitate a practise that prevails abroad in duelling—I mean, that of the Seconds giving Satisfaction.

The kind indulgence that welcomed my Volume heretofore, prevents me from reiterating the same apologies. The Public have learned, by this time, from my rude designs, that I am no great artist, and from my text, that I am no great author, but

humbly equivocating, bat-like, between the two kinds;—though proud to partake in any characteristic of either. As for the first particular, my hope persuades me that my illustrations cannot have degenerated, so ably as I have been seconded by Mr. Edward Willis, who, like the humane Walter, has befriended my offspring in the Wood.

In the literary part I have to plead guilty, as usual, to some verbal misdemeanours; for which, I must leave my defence to Dean Swift, and the other great European and Oriental Pundits. Let me suggest, however, that a pun is somewhat like a cherry: though there may be a slight outward indication of partition—of duplicity of meaning—yet no gentleman need make two bites at it against his own pleasure. To accommodate certain readers, notwithstanding, I have refrained from putting the majority in italics. It is not every one, I am aware, that can Toler-ate a pun like my Lord Norbury.

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WHIMS AND ODDITIES.

BIANCA'S DREAM.

A VENETIAN STORY.

BIANCA!—fair Bianca!—who could dwell
With safety on her dark and hazel gaze,
Nor find there lurk'd in it a witching spell,
Fatal to balmy nights and blessed days!
The peaceful breath that made the bosom swell,
She turn'd to gas, and set it in a blaze;
Each eye of her's had Love's Ephyron in it,
That he could light his link at in a minute.

So that, wherever in her charms she shone,
A thousand breasts were kindled into flame;
Maidens who curs'd her looks forgot their own,
And beaux were turn'd to flambeaux where she came;
All hearts indeed were conquer'd but her own,
Which none could ever temper down or tame:
In short, to take our haberdasher's hints,
She might have written over it,—“from Flint's.”

She was, in truth, the wonder of her sex,
At least in Venice—where with eyes of brown
Tenderly languid, ladies seldom vex
An amorous gentle with a needless frown;
Where gondolas convey guitars by pecks,
And Love at casements climbeth up and down,
Whom for his tricks and custom in that kind,
Some have considered a Venetian blind.

Howbeit, this difference was quickly taught,
Amongst more youths who had this cruel jailor,
To hapless Julio—all in vain he sought
With each new moon his hatter and his tailor;
In vain the richest paduasoy he bought,
And went in bran new beaver to assail her—
As if to show that Love had made him smart
All over—and not merely round his heart.

In vain he laboured thro' the sylvan park
Bianca haunted in—that where she came,
Her learned eyes in wandering might mark
The twisted cypher of her maiden name,
Wholesomely going thro' a course of bark:
No one was touched or troubled by his flame,
Except the dryads, those old maids that grow
In trees,—like wooden dolls in embryo.