

**ENGLISH ALICE, A
POEM IN
FIVE CANTOS**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649337422

English Alice, a poem in Five cantos by Alexander John Evelyn

Except for use in any review, the reproduction or utilisation of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the permission of the publisher, Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd, PO Box 1576 Collingwood, Victoria 3066 Australia.

All rights reserved.

Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.
Cover @ 2017

This book is sold subject to the condition that it shall not, by way of trade or otherwise, be lent, re-sold, hired out, or otherwise circulated without the publisher's prior consent in any form or binding or cover other than that in which it is published and without a similar condition including this condition being imposed on the subsequent purchaser.

www.triestepublishing.com

ALEXANDER JOHN EVELYN

**ENGLISH ALICE, A
POEM IN
FIVE CANTOS**

ENGLISH ALICE,

A POEM IN FIVE CANTOS,

BY

ALEXANDER JOHN EVELYN, ESQ.



LONDON:
WILLIAM PICKERING.

1852.

280. n. 218.

7



ENGLISH ALICE.

CANTO I.

HOW sweet the hour, how fragrant, and
how still,
When morning rises over gay Seville!
How rich the perfume from the
orange-bower!

Soft lie the tears of night upon each flower!
Soon will those tears upon the rose be dry,
For swiftly mounts the sun the eastern sky;
Soon will the tender influence of morn
Succumb beneath his angry glance of scorn.
Lo! at yon casement, open to the ground,
That woos the fresh air, and the silvery sound
Of water that, in column'd gush upthrown,
Returns in spray, and tinkles on the stone,
A maiden stands, and drinks in all the scene—
The murm'ring fount, the flowers, each arbour
green—

To seize the freshness of the early day,

Ere wither'd yet by noontide's scorching ray.
A flower, not born beneath the sultry sky
That o'er Iberia spreads its azure dye,
She seems; but, in her fresh and blooming prime,
Transplanted from a mild and temperate clime.
No large black eyes with languid fierceness shine,
And show a soul more sensual than divine;
No raven tresses, deck'd with careless taste,
Prolong their graceful sweep below the waist;
No olive hues, imprest upon the cheek,
The burning pencil of a hot sun speak.
Fair is the maiden's cheek, where gently glows
The soften'd colour of the blushing rose;
In clust'ring curls her radiant ringlets spread,
And throw a golden glory round her head;
While from her eyes, so softly, deeply blue,
Beams forth a spirit loving, tender, true—
Pure as a holy angel's pitying prayer
For a lost sinner in his dark despair.
But not the charm of loveliness alone,
Bright though it be, is round the maiden thrown:
In the clear lineaments of that fair face
No timid mind, no feeble will we trace;
No girlish fears, no pretty nervousness
Their boldly chisell'd characters express.
Upon that ample forehead's white expanse
Sits a high dignity enthroned; the glance
Of that blue eye, not always mildly bright,
Kindles at times, and flashes with strange light,
As though the great thought of some high emprise,

Of courage true, of selfless sacrifice,
Had stirr'd the calm depths of the maiden's soul,
And made their gentle waves tumultuously roll.
Doth that small mouth, though lovely, but suggest
The contact of lip amorously prest
To lip of lover? doth it not too tell
Of purpose bold, of will invincible,
Of mind to plan, of daring to perform,
Of fearless firmness 'mid the surging storm?
Such Alice was,—in every motion grace,
Mind, beauty-set, all lustrous in her face,—
Now to the dewy garden she descends,
And up the gravel'd pathway slowly wends;
Admires a tree, stoops to a fragrant flower,
And twines the drooping woodbine round its bowers.
Why starts she as the path abruptly wheels?
What form is that its sudden turn reveals?
On her soft cheek the rosy colour burns,
Dyes her white neck, and comes and goes by turns—
So have I seen the high-piled mountain snow
At early morn in the red sun-beams glow;
So have I seen that snow, when morning's brightness
Was clouded fitfully, resume its pallid whiteness.
"Alice, my love!—sweet Alice!" thus he cried,
And, quickly bounding, panted at her side;
Round her slight form his arm is fondly thrown,—
Her fluttering heart is throbbing 'gainst his own.
She draws her gently from that pure embrace,
And looks with anxious fondness in his face.
"How pale thou art, Alphonse! how wan and worn!

Still dost thou keep thy vigils till the morn !
Still art thou deaf to Alice' earnest prayer,
Still dost thou mock her tenderness and care !
Thou knowest I prize knowledge, and am proud
That thou that subtle spirit so hast bow'd
To thy strong yoke, that all the golden keys,
That open Nature's hidden mysteries,
It hath to thee in forced submission given,
And shown thee all the wonders of the heaven.
But all the lore that sages ever taught
Too dearly at the price of life is bought."
" Nay, Alice dear—in sooth, thy fears are vain ;
I do not wrongfully o'ertask my brain.
But with what passion, from my dawning youth,
I've loved, and worshipp'd at the shrine of Truth—
How I have toil'd, the impenetrable cloud,
That wraps her features from the vulgar crowd
In awful majesty, backwards to roll,
And see unveil'd this goddess of my soul—
Feeble are words to tell ! Oh, I had thought—
Ere, Alice, thou hadst other feelings brought—
That woman in my love should ne'er have part,
But Truth alone reign mistress of my heart !
But as small drops innumerable make,
When fused and harmonized, the mighty lake
We call the ocean, so is Truth abstract
Of countless self-like minor truths compact,
Which—all unlike the globules of the sea—
Are fixed for ever in their place, are free
From ebb and flow, and fickleness of tide,

Nor suffer increase, and decay deride.
 The All-seeing One alone at will can lance
 His concentrated, yet expansive, glance
 Through the infinite whole; laboriously to scan
 Part after part—this is the task of man.
 About Religion what might be the true—
 Ere thee, my sweetest Alice, yet I knew—
 I doubted not,—one fitting doubt were sin—
 So was I taught,—and heeded not the din
 Of Reason clashing in my mind with Faith.
 Oh! the wretch, hunted on the sea by Death,
 Roaring behind and foaming on his track,
 Grasps not some spray-drench'd rock's rough rug-
 ged back

With more convulsive clutch, than what did twine
 Me to communion with this creed of mine!
 Herein force-satisfied, I next began
 Nature's vast book with eager eye to scan;
 Striving to trace effects up to their cause,
 And to investigate the general laws
 That sway material things—which laws may be }
 Subject, like these, to mutability, }
 If so, not real truths, that never flee—
 And then of this dark hieroglyphic scroll
 To seize the abstruse meaning,—to control
 Each type's deep symbol-teaching, till I saw
 A truth itself stand forth, whole, without flaw.
 If with such zeal unflagging I pursued
 These lesser truths, in what energetic mood
 Should I—since thou hast shaken all I felt