

TALES OF THE MOOR

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Tales of the moor by Josias Homely

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JOSIAS HOMELY

**TALES OF
THE MOOR**

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BY JOSIAS HOMELY.

CONTAINING

REGINALD ARNOLE,
TOM STIRLINGTON,

ETC.

LONDON: SIMPKIN, MARSHALL, & CO.
CREWS, NEWTON-ABBOT.
MDCCLXI.

TO

MRS. TEMPLER, OF SANDFORD ORLEIGH,

THIS VOLUME IS
MOST RESPECTFULLY INSCRIBED, WITH A FEELING OF THE
DEEPEST GRATITUDE.

It is indeed a very slight token of such a feeling, but it is the only one which circumstances enable the Author to offer. The chief object of these TALES is to inculcate principles of Christian charity and general benevolence. However feeble the effort, he therefore hopes that they will not inappropriately appear under the protection of the name of one so well known to practice the virtues which he has humbly endeavoured, by fictitious illustration, to render amiable in the estimation of that numerous body of the community who prefer receiving moral truth in an amusing form.

PREFACE.

In submitting this volume to the attention of the public, I beg most respectfully to offer my grateful acknowledgments to that numerous body of Patrons and Subscribers whose valued support has encouraged me to publication. I feel that to them an apology is due, because the contents of this volume will be found to differ considerably from what was at first proposed. The fact is, that in re-writing them for the press, tempting opportunities occurred of making the two stories of Reginald Arnolf and Tom Stirlington much longer than they were first intended to be: I yielded to the temptation, under the impresssion that the additions were improvements, and that the stories would be rendered thereby more acceptable to my readers. This compels me to exclude from the present volume numerous Detached Pieces named in my first prospectus: these, however, it is my intention (with some other Tales) to prepare for publication in a Second Volume, which will appear as soon as circumstances will admit.

JOHN BRADFORD.

Pavilion Place, Newton-Abbot,
August 21st, 1841.

“ I would not have the reader, upon the perusal of a single paper, pronounce me incorrigible ; he may try a second, which, as there is a studied difference in subject and style, may be more suited to his taste : if this also fails, I must refer him to a third, or even a fourth in case of extremity. If he should still continue refractory, and find me dull to the last, I must inform him, with Bayes in the ‘ Rehearsal,’ that I think him a very odd kind of fellow, and desire no more of his acquaintance.”

OLIVER GOLDSMITH.

TALES OF THE MOOR.

INTRODUCTION.

THE CEMETERY.

“Lead me to yonder craggy steep. The murmur of
“the falling streams ; the whistling winds rushing through
“the woods of my hills ; the welcome rays of the bon-
“teous sun—will soon awake the voice of song in my
“breast. The thoughts of former years glide over my
“soul like swift-shooting meteors o’er Arden’s gloomy
“vales.”

EVIR-ALLAN.

AMONG the hills of central Devonshire,
There is a lonely forest burial-ground,
Where, resting in their solitude, the dead
Of many ages have returned to dust.
In days long number’d with the past, ’tis thought
There, in the centre of their hunting-grounds,
The chasers of the red Deer fell asleep,
And moulder’d into nothing, side by side ;
And the Moor-Shepherds gather’d to the fold
Prepar’d for all our kindred of the earth,
Ceas’d from their labours, and forgot their cares.
This solitary city of the dead

Is plac'd upon the summit of a hill.
 There, when bland spring is master of the vale,
 Fierce winter holds his icy citadel,
 And when the flow'rs are on the southern plains,
 Seeking the uplands with the earliest dawn,
 The plough-boy checks his song, surpris'd to find
 The snow-flake lingering yet among the graves ;
 And on the rude old Church, a place of prayer
 For men of ancient days and ruder times,
 How ancient or how rude is now unknown.
 In sullen loneliness the fabric stands,
 The storm sighs round it with a dirge like wail
 When the fierce north-wind wanders in his might,
 Forth from the caverns of his frozen home.
 But e'en the sun-light of a summer dawn,
 Shedding on all around a new-born joy,
 Seems to invest it with a deeper gloom.
 Its dark sepulchral sadness nought can cheer.
 The men who rear'd the pile have long been dust.
 No other work of human hands around ;
 It stands their lonely monument, and seems
 The solitary remnant of their works ;
 The mouldering weir'd memorial of their faith.
 The patient hands of those who work in stone
 With persevering toil, from solid rocks
 Have chisel'd all the frame-work into shapes
 Of rustic symmetry and mouldings rude,
 But so unlike whate'er for pomp or use,
 Or purposes devout, men *now* construct,