

**THE OWLET OF  
OWLSTONE EDGE: HIS  
TRAVELS, HIS EXPERIENCE,  
AND HIS LUCUBRATIONS**

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The Owllet of Owlstone Edge: His Travels, His Experience, and His Lucubrations by Francis Edward Paget

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**FRANCIS EDWARD PAGET**

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AND HIS LUCUBRATIONS**





The  
Owlet of Owlstone Edge :

His Travels,  
His Experience,  
and  
His Lucubrations.

" On Brignall cliffs, and Scargill braes  
The Owlet's howlings shake." Scott.

By the Author of " S. Antholin's," &c.

FOURTH EDITION.

London: Published by Joseph Masters.  
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" When all aloud the wind doth blow,  
And coughing drowns the parson's saw,  
\* \* \* \* \*  
Then nightly sings the staring Owl,  
Tu-whoo!  
Tu-whit! Tu-whoo, a merry note!"

SHAKSPERE.



The  
Owlet of Owlstone Edge.

---

Root Preliminary.

"Wisdom, in sable garb array'd,  
Immersed in rapturous thought profound."

GRAY.

TU-WHIT! Tu-whoo! I am an owl. And owls are birds of wisdom. And being an owl, and therefore full of wisdom, I am about to indulge mankind with some portions of my auto-biography; in which, following the ways of the wise, I mean to tell as much as possible about my neighbours, and as little as possible about myself.

Tu-whit! Tu-whoo! I am an owl, or rather an owlet; for I am but young as yet, and modest, and inexperienced in the ways of this queer, topsy-turvy world, and not seldom puzzled at what I see done by the creatures that call themselves the reasoning part of creation,—men and women, I mean. But, though only an owlet,

and in my first year's plumage, I do you to wit that I am an owlet of the nineteenth century; and let me tell you that the chick of a puffin of this age has more philosophy about it than a full-fledged schoolman of mediæval times; and as for fowls of my own race, the dullest and most neglected agricultural owlet of three months old is more than a match, any day, for that high functionary of State, whose personal appearance is made to resemble our own so closely, and to whom, indeed, we are under considerable obligations, (seeing that through his instrumentality, the finest properties in the kingdom are wont to be delivered over to the keeping of the owls and the bats)—of course I mean my Lord Chancellor.

Having premised this, (which must be within the personal knowledge of every reader of the smallest experience and discrimination,) I beg I may hear nothing as to the antecedent improbability of the connection between owls and authorship; (as if half the books in existence have not been either written or read by owls!) no *à priori* arguments upon the difficulties which owls would experience in committing their thoughts to paper; no anatomical inferences, that owing to the structure of our claws, we either could not write at all, or that if we did, the result would be so cramped a production that nobody could read it (as if those who can read Lord Brougham's

handwriting could not read mine!) no insinuations that birds of the air cannot be competent judges of the sayings and doings of men.

I do trust that for their own credit's sake, those chilly and unfortunate two-legged creatures whom nature has sent into the world without so much as a single feather upon their backs to cover their nakedness, and who, calling themselves lords of the creation, make up in arrogance for what they want in plumage, and who, with all their boastings, have actually been obliged to plunder birds of their quills, before they could write at all,—I say, I do trust that the coat-and-hat-wearing animals will have so much consideration for their own reputation as not to question either the genuineness or authenticity of the present volume. I trust that no reader will be so injudicious as to infer that I can know nothing about the matters concerning which I am about to speak, or that it would be out of my power to ascertain the facts, or overhear the conversations which I am about to record. What I know, I know. What I have seen, I write. What I write is well worthy of the consideration of my featherless friends. For I am the bird of wisdom. And therefore, were a man or a woman to say that because they could not have done what I have done, it was *not* done, is simply to expose their own presumption and incapacity. Had you, good