

**THE SCHOOL BOY:
A POEM. PART
FIRST AND SECOND**

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The school boy: a poem. Part first and second by Thomas Maude

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THOMAS MAUDE

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A POEM.



BY

THOMAS MAUDE, M.A.

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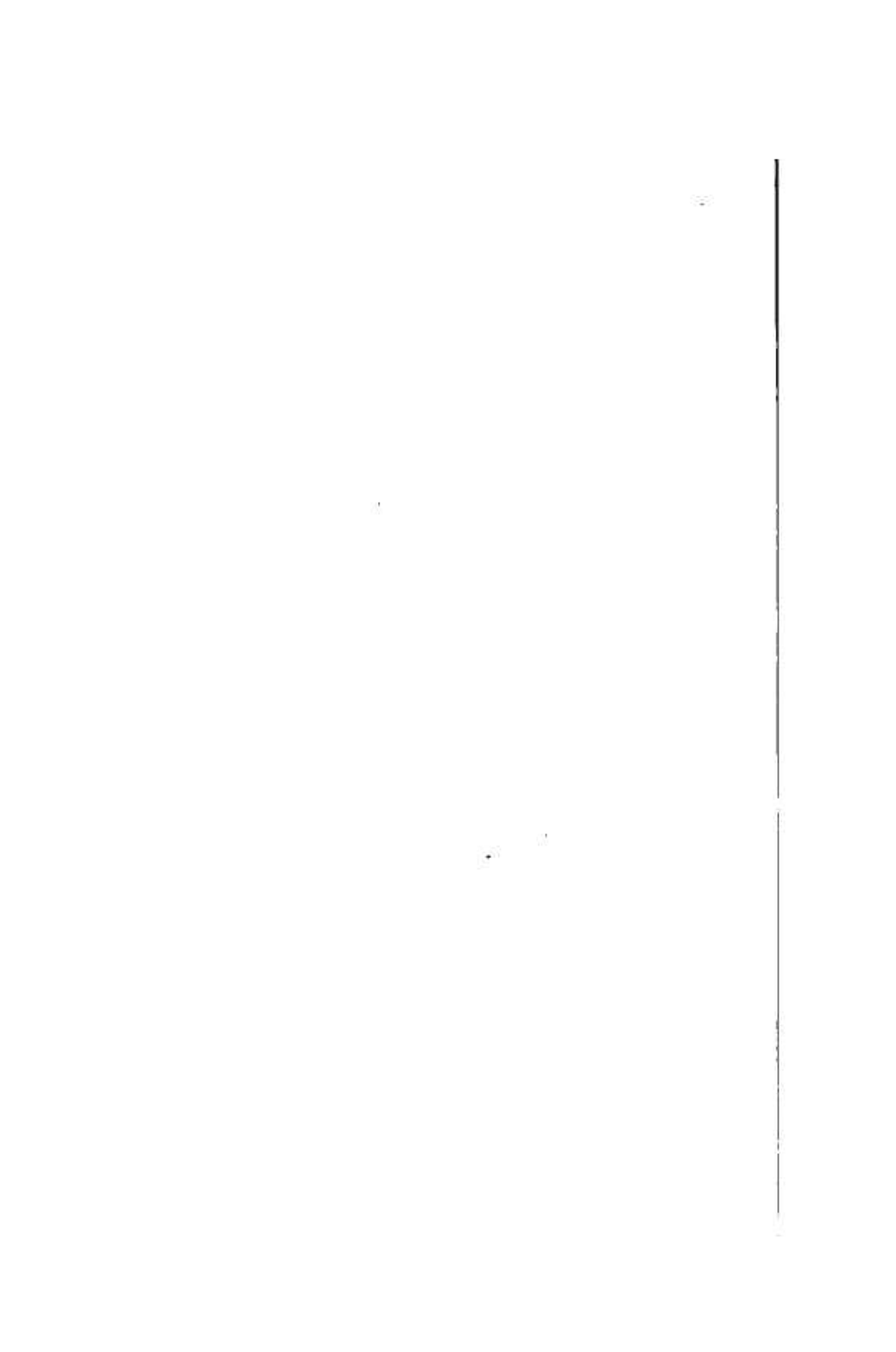
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TO
ELIZABETH STEWART MAUDE

THE FOLLOWING
Sketches of School-day Scenes
ARE INSCRIBED

BY
HER HUSBAND.

December, 1835.



P R E F A C E.

WHEN, in the first part of the following Poem, I exhibit my mind recurring with delight to those earlier years of my boyhood which were passed at *Ovingham*, on the banks of the Tyne, I wish it to be remembered that I am speaking of a remote *village* grammar-school, where the restrictions are less distressing than they necessarily are—to a very young boy—in town schools; where all surrounding objects of natural scenery are more cheerful and delightfully exhilarating; and where, particularly to a childish heart, the external incidents are more touchingly impressive—certainly more simple.

At *Ovingham* we lived in almost rustic simplicity amongst rustics, many of whom we were taught to respect, and whose language (not unlike the Lowland Scotch) became in a manner familiar to us. To this I attribute, not only the perfect facility with which I

now read and understand the Northern Wizard's most Scottish and vernacular productions, as well as the rude reliques of ancient popular poetry preserved on the Borders, but also the tone of mental feeling—something like “the remembered tone of a mute lyre”—which enables me to enter into the spirit of Scottish romance, and which to my ear throws a charm over the language of Robert Burns.

I had not, indeed, passed a few years of my childhood in that happy retreat without advantages of a peculiar and enduring character. I had viewed rural life and manners intimately in their most pleasing aspect of picturesque seclusion; and the occupations and abodes of a virtuous peasantry have thus acquired an immortal interest in my regard. To me, the “huts where poor men lie” suggest no *uniform* ideas of squalid misery, similar to those which darken the “Village” of Crabbe and the early eclogues of Southey. Every subject, undoubtedly, has two aspects: the life of man, in every grade, is full of contrasts; in strict reality, perhaps, the *shadows* predominate over the *lights*;—but, for my own part, in reference to subjects of humble life, I prefer keeping the idea of independent poverty distinct from that of pauperism, and notions of the

condition of an industrious country cottager distinct from those of the condition of a poor town-alley lodger.

Let me add, however, that the smoke arising from the chimney of a humble cottage presents (under certain associations) to my fancy something more than a mere pleasing rural image. From circumstances which speak for themselves, I am prepared in some degree, I hope, to appreciate the poetical philosophy of the poet of Rydal Mount, and to set my seal to the *fidelity* of the "manners-painting strains" of *him*, of whom it has been so sweetly said by an illustrious compatriot, that

———"rustic life and poverty
Grow beautiful beneath his touch."*

Yes! I, also—though merely as a looker-on—I, also, can bear witness to the moral worth, the simple intelligence, the peaceful happiness (things easily ascertained on the Borders), which brighten many a hearth, that sends its curling token through the lowliest chimney in the land.†

* See Campbell's verses to the memory of Burns.

† "I recollect once, he (Burns) told me," observes the late Professor Dugald Stewart, in a letter to Dr. Currie, "when I was admiring a distant prospect in one of our morning walks,