

**THE PALFREY: A
LOVE-STORY
OF OLD TIMES**

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The Palfrey: A Love-story of Old Times by Leigh Hunt

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LEIGH HUNT

**THE PALFREY: A
LOVE-STORY
OF OLD TIMES**

Rose Pemberton

August 1842.

THE PALFREY;

A LOVE-STORY OF OLD TIMES.

Epitaph.

To M.C.R., who loves all peaceful glory,
Therefore laurell'd song and story;
Who, as blooming maiden should,
Married blest, with young and good;
And whose rare zeal for healthy duties
Set on horseback half our beauties;
Thee, little book, and say—
(Blushing for leave unbegg'd, away;
And yet how beg it for one flower
Cast in the path of Sovereign Power?)
Say that thy verse, though small it be,
Yet mov'd by ancient minstrelsy
To sing of youth escap'd from age,
Scenes pleasant, and a Passy sage,
And meditated, morn by morn,
Among the trees where she was born,
Waxes come, on grateful memory's part,
Not to Crown'd Head, but to Crown'd Heart.

Wexington, April the Fifth.

Leigh Hunt.

1870

1871

1872

1873

1874

1875

1876

1877

1878

1879

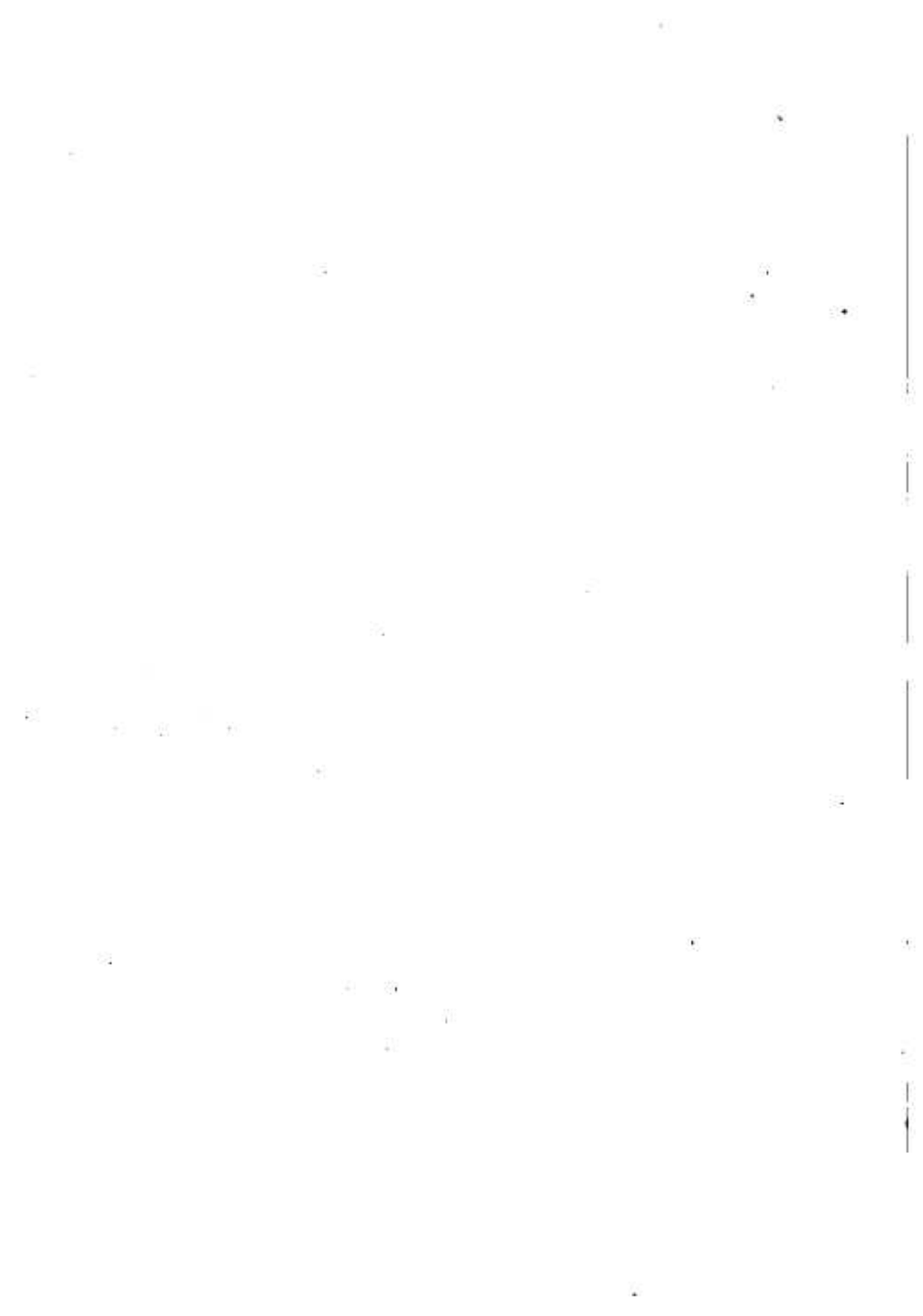
1880

1881

ILLUSTRATIONS.



	<i>Artist.</i>	<i>Engraver.</i>
THE LADY ON THE PALFREY	J. FRANKLIN.	MISS WILLIAMS.
THE MANSION OF THE LADY'S FATHER .	J. FRANKLIN.	J. WILLIAMS.
THE LADY, HER FATHER, AND HER OLD LOVER	E. MEADOWS.	W. J. LINTON.
THE JOURNEY OF THE LADY AND THE GREYBEARD GUESTS BY MOONLIGHT .	J. FRANKLIN.	J. WALMSLEY.
THE LADY BENIGHTED AT THE BRIDGE BETWEEN HENDON AND GOLDERS-GREEN	W. E. SCOTT.	O. SMITH.
THE LOVERS IN THE GREEN LANE . .	A. CLINT.	MISS CLINT.



P R E F A C E.

THE following story is a variation of one of the most amusing of the old French narrative poems that preceded the time of Chaucer, with additions of the writer's invention. The original, which he did not see till it was completed, is to be found in the collection of Messrs. Barbazan and Méon, (*Fabliaux et Contes des Poètes François des 11, 12, 13, 14, et 15^e Siècles, &c.* Edition 1808.) His own originals were the prose abridgment of M. le Grand, (*Fabliaux, &c.*, third edition, volume the fourth,) and its imitation in verse by Messrs. Way and Ellis, inserted in the notes to the select translations from Le Grand by the former of those gentlemen.

The scene of the old story,—the only known production of a poet named Huon le Roi, (possibly one of the "Kings of the Minstrels," often spoken of at that period,) is laid in the province of Champagne; but as almost all the narrative poems under the title of *Lays* (of which this is one) are with good reason supposed to

have had their source in the Greater or Lesser Britain,—that is to say, either among the Welsh of this island, or their cousins of French Brittany,—and as the only other local allusions in the poem itself are to places in England, the author has availed himself of the common property in these effusions claimed for the Anglo-Norman Muse,

“ Begirt with British and Armorick knights,”

to indulge himself in a licence universal with the old minstrels, and lay the scene of his version where and when he pleased; to wit, during the reign of Edward the First, and in Kensington, Hendon, and their neighbourhoods,—old names, however new they sound. There is reason to believe, that the woody portions of Kensington, still existing as the Gardens and in the neighbourhood of Holland House, are part of the ancient forest of Middlesex, which extended from this quarter to the skirts of Hertfordshire: and it is out of regard for these remnants of the old woods, and associations with them still more grateful, that I have placed the scene of my heroine's abode on the site of the existing Palace, and the closing scene of the poem in the hall of the De Veres, Earls of Oxford, who had a mansion at that period in the grounds of the present Holland House, near the part called the Moats.

The circumstance of the Palfrey's being ridden into