

**THE FARMER'S  
BOY; PP. 9-68**

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The Farmer's Boy; pp. 9-68 by Robert Bloomfield

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**ROBERT BLOOMFIELD**

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THE  
FARMER'S BOY.

BY  
ROBERT BLOOMFIELD.

*Illustrated with Thirty Engravings,  
From Drawings by Birket Foster, Harrison Weir,  
and G. F. Hicks.*



LONDON:  
SAMPSON LOW, SON & CO. 47, LUDGATE HILL.  
MDCCLVIII.

And sitting hens, for constant war prepared ;  
A concert strange to that which late he heard.  
Straight to the meadow then he whistling goes ;  
With well-known halloo calls his lazy cows :  
Down the rich pasture heedlessly they graze,  
Or hear the summons with an idle gaze ;

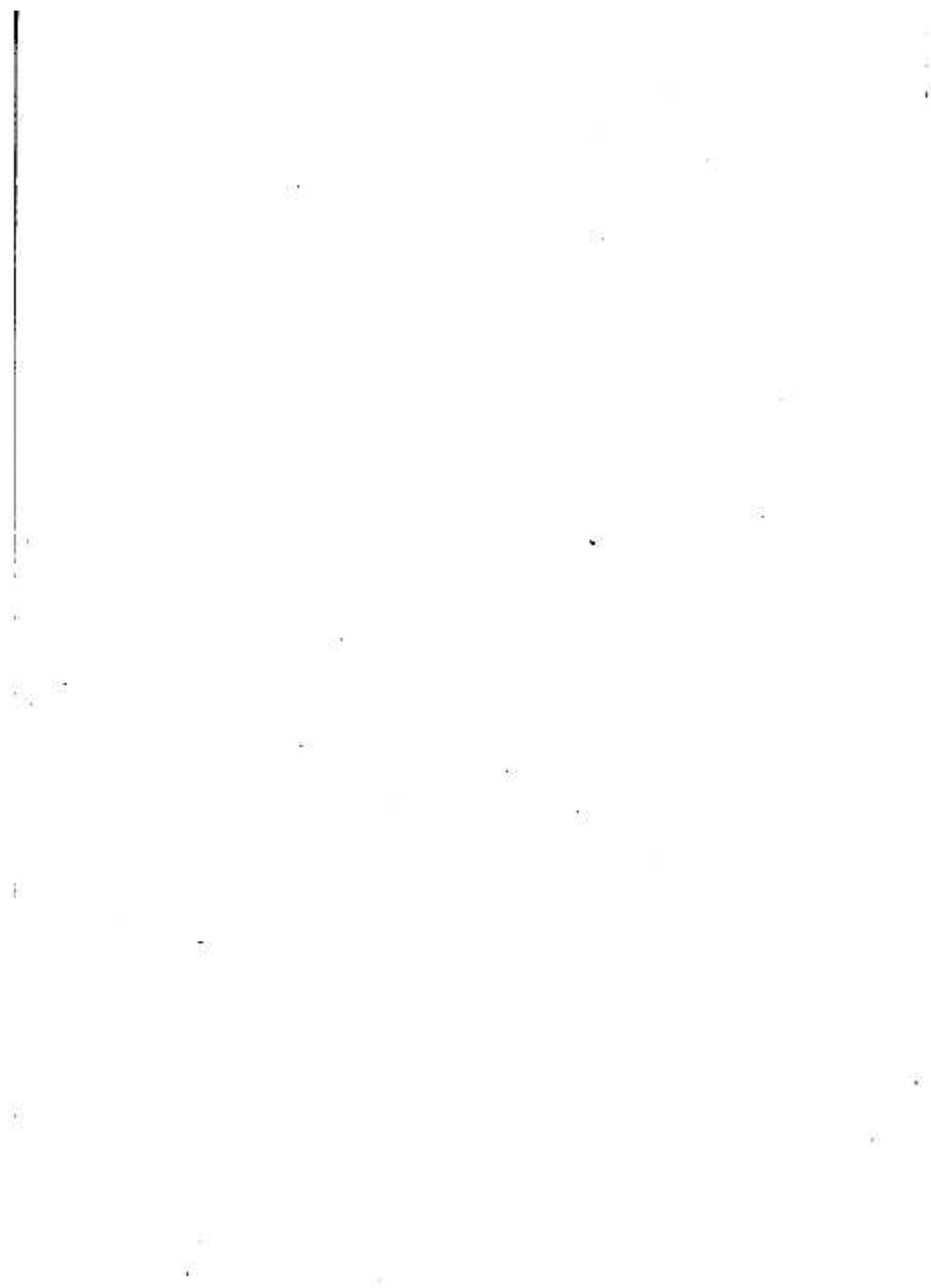


For well they know the cow-yard yields no more  
Its tempting fragrance, nor its wintry store.  
Reluctance marks their steps, sedate and slow ;  
The right of conquest all the law they know ;  
The strong press on, the weak by turns succeed,  
And one superior always takes the lead ;

Is ever foremost, wheresoe'er they stray ;  
Allow'd precedence, undisputed sway ;  
With jealous pride her station is maintain'd,  
For many a broil that post of honour gain'd.  
At home, the yard affords a grateful scene ;  
For Spring makes e'en a miry cow-yard clean.  
Thence from its chalky bed behold convey'd  
The rich manure that drenching Winter made,  
Which piled near home, grows green with many a weed,  
A promised nutriment for Autumn's seed.  
Forth comes the Maid, and like the morning smiles ;  
The Mistress too, and follow'd close by Giles.  
A friendly tripod forms their humble seat,  
With pales bright scour'd, and delicately sweet.  
Where shadowing elms obstruct the morning ray,  
Begins the work, begins the simple lay ;  
The full-charged udder yields its willing streams,  
While Mary sings some lover's amorous dreams ;  
And crouching Giles beneath a neighbouring tree  
Tugs o'er his pail, and chants with equal glee ;  
Whose hat with tatter'd brim, of nap so bare,  
From the cow's side purloins a coat of hair,  
A mottled ensign of his harmless trade,  
An unambitious, peaceable cockade.  
As unambitious too that cheerful aid  
The Mistress yields beside her rosy Maid ;  
With joy she views her plenteous reeking store,  
And bears a brimmer to the dairy door ;  
Her cows dismiss'd, the luscious mead to roam,  
Till eve again recal them loaded home.  
And now the Dairy claims her choicest care,  
And half her household find employment there :  
Slow rolls the churn, its load of clogging cream  
At once foregoes its quality and name :  
From knotty particles first floating wide,  
Congealing butter's dash'd from side to side ;







Streams of new milk through flowing coolers stray,  
And snow-white curd abounds, and wholesome whey.  
Due north th' unglazed windows, cold and clear,



For warming sunbeams are unwelcome here.  
Brisk goes the work beneath each busy hand,  
And Giles must trudge, whoever gives command ;

A Gibeonite that serves them all by turns :  
 He drains the pump, from him the fagot burns ;  
 From him the noisy hogs demand their food ;  
 While at his heels run many a chirping brood,  
 Or down his path in expectation stand,  
 With equal claims upon his strewing hand.  
 Thus wastes the morn, till each with pleasure sees  
 The bustle o'er, and press'd the new-made cheese.

Unrivall'd stands thy country Cheese, O Giles !  
 Whose very name alone engenders smiles ;  
 Whose fame abroad by every tongue is spoke,  
 The well-known butt of many a flinty joke,  
 That pass like current coin the nation through ;  
 And, ah ! experience proves the satire true.  
 Provision's grave, thou ever-craving mart,  
 Dependent, huge Metropolis ! where Art  
 Her poring thousands stows in breathless rooms,  
 'Midst pois'nous smokes, and steams, and rattling looms :  
 Where Grandeur revels in unbounded stores ;  
 Restraint, a slighted stranger at their doors !  
 Thou, like a whirlpool, drain'st the countries round,  
 Till London market, London price, resound  
 Through every town, round every passing load,  
 And dairy produce throngs the eastern road :  
 Delicious veal and butter, every hour,  
 From Essex lowlands, and the banks of Stour ;  
 And further far, where numerous herds repose,  
 From Orwell's brink, from Waveny, or Ouse.  
 Hence Suffolk dairy-wives run mad for cream,  
 And leave their milk with nothing but its name ;  
 Its name derision and reproach pursue,  
 And strangers tell of "three times skimm'd sky-blue."  
 To cheese converted, what can be its boast ?  
 What, but the common virtues of a post !  
 If drought o'ertake it faster than the knife,