# TALES IN PROSE: FOR THE YOUNG

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Tales in Prose: For the Young by Mary Howitt

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# MARY HOWITT

# TALES IN PROSE: FOR THE YOUNG

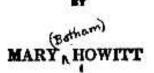
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## TALES IN PROSE:

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## FOR THE YOUNG.





#### NEW YORK:

BABPER & BROTHERS, PUBLISHERS, 33 CLIFF STREET.

1847.

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### PREFACE

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to:

VERY little need be said by way of Preface to this volume of "Tales in Prose," except what is in grateful courtesy due to my friendly critics, who have so cordially and handsomely received its predecessor, "The Tales in Verse;" and through whom it has at once obtained so extensive a circulation. To my reviewers, therefore, I am extremely obliged; and, while I tender my thanks, I will take this opportunity of explaining an omission in my last Preface, of which some of them have reminded me. I had no desire to conceal the fact of several of the pieces contained in these volumes having been published before; and it was my intention to have stated the circumstance.

#### PREFACE.

It will, however, be enough to say, that that Preface was written in great haste, on the very last day of my residence at Nottingham, and in the hurry of the time was omitted. I myself was very sorry for the omission when I first saw the Preface in its printed form.

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West-end Cottage.

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### CONTENTS.

	here.
FIGHT SCRAE IN A POOR MAN'S HOUSE	9
MRS. BRIDGET AND HER WARD	19
CHAPTER OF ARECDOTES	35
NATTHEW NORMES'S LETTER TO HIS COURS	53
THE TREE WISHES	58
BAREILLAI BURKER AND THE THIEF	69
THE GRANDHOTHER	74
THE TWO FRIENDS	78
FIRE-SIDE PRILOSOPRY	86
THE TWO BOTS OF FLORENCE	89
CONSTANTINE AND GIOVARMI	108
MARTHA AND MARY	129
• •	

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8

#### A NIGHT-SCENE IN A POOR MAN'S HOUSE.

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IT was in the middle of winter, on the night of the twenty-third of January, when the weather was miserably cold ; it neither decidedly froze, nor yet did it thaw; but between the two it was cold and damp, and penetrated to the very bone, even of those who sat in carpeted rooms before large fires, and were warmly clad. It was on this evening that the seven little children of David Baird, the weaver, stood huddled together in their small room, beside a small fire, which was burning comfortlessly. The baby lay in a wooden cradle on one corner of the hearth. The fire, to be sure, gave some warmth, because it had boiled an iron pot full of potatoes, but it gave very little cheeriness to the room. The mother had portioned out the evening meal, - a few potatoes to each, - and she now sate down by the round table, lighted the farthing candle, and was preparing to do some little piece of housewifery.

"May I stir the fire?" asked David, the eldest boy.

"No, no," replied the mother; "it burns away too fast if it is stirred."

#### A NIGHT-SCRNE

"I wish we had a good fire!" sighed Judith, the second girl.

"Bless me!" said the mother, "it is a good fire! Why, there's Dame Grundy and her grandchild gone to bed because they have no fire at all!"

"I should like some more salt to my potatoes," said little Beasy; "may I have some, mother ?"

"There is none, child," she replied ; "I put the last in the pot."

"O dear !" cried out little Joey, "my feet are so bad ! They get no better, mother, though I did beat them with bolly."

" Poor thing !" sighed the mother, " I wish you had better shoes."

"There's a pair," said Joey, briskly, " at Timmy Nixon's, for fourteen pence."

"Fourteen pence !" repeated the mother; "it would take a long time to get fourteen pence."

"Mat. Willis begged a pair of nice warm boots," replied Joey, experimentally.

"We will not beg," said the mother, " if we can help it — but let me see the shoes;" and Joey put up one of his miscrably frost-bitten feet on his mother's knee. "Bless thee! my poor led," said the mother; "thou shalt not go to work again till it is warmer."

"Mother," intervepted little Susan, " may I have some more ?"

"There is no more," said she, " but I have a whole loaf yet."

10