

**LOVE'S LABYRINTH:
A PLAY**

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Love's Labyrinth: A Play by John Henry Brown

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BY

JOHN HENRY BROWN.

LONDON: CATTY & DOBSON, 1, IVY LANE
NOTTINGHAM: THOMAS FORMAN AND SONS
1876.

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DEDICATION.

TO MY MOTHER.

Take this first sheaf long shorn from fancy's plain,
First fruits of love, aught less would not suffice ;
To thee all owing, haply thou'lt complain
My offering scant, or murmur at my choice.
But worthier grain unreaped may still remain,
Waiting the yellowing sun, the master's voice ;
And when again I'm bidden to the field,
The ample harvest to thy hand I'll yield.

ERRATUM.

For VALENTINE read CRAVEN.

PERSONS REPRESENTED.

KING CHARLES THE FIRST.
RUPERT, nephew of the King.
WILLOUGHBY, a Royalist Gentleman and Soldier.
STANHOPE, Colonel in the Royal Army.
ASPLEY, Chaplain to Willoughby.
IRETON, General of the Parliamentary Forces.
THORNHAGH, Colonel in the Parliamentary Army.
HUTCHINSON, Colonel in the Parliamentary Army, Governor of
Nottingham Castle.
TILLARD, a Soldier of the Parliament.
GIBBORNE, a broken down Gentleman.
VALENTINE, a Freerbooter.
FOOT, a Pedlar, afterwards Footpad.

AGNES, daughter of Willoughby.
LUCY HUTCHINSON, wife of Colonel Hutchinson.
QUEEN HENRIETTA MARIA.
ALICE, maid to Agnes (betrothed to Tillard).

Men at Arms, Guards, &c.

TROTH.

ACT I.—SCENE I.

GARDEN OF BROXTOWE HOUSE.—EVENING. ALICE and
Servants *passing to and fro.*

Youth. Well met indeed; 'tis hummed about the hall
This eve would find us many a mile apart,
On a wild errand.

Second Youth. Aye, 'tis noised abroad
War will come surely, and our master vows
He'll have us follow him to serve the king.

Old Man. Good service truly; an' were I but young,
I'd trail a matchlock, as beyond the seas
I served our youthful master and Mountjoy.
Ah! those were times indeed. Who served the queen
Served her who had the right, and to our Charles
Hath come her right and might. Therefore I say
Let's cheer the king, and also our good lord.

Omnes—Hurrah!

First Girl. Tong says good Master Thornhagh bade
his men
With him to prayers, and after gave the word
He might demand their service in the wars,
Against the king and his vile ministers.

First Youth. 'Tis pitiful that men with such good
hearts
As Master Thornhagh and our good Sir Hugh,
So high in all men's praise; who have lived long

In loving neighbourhood, should, on a point
Beyond my reckoning, bustle into war,
And make us of their quarrel.

Alice. Tillard says,
And some loose knave hath set it in his mouth,
Who fights against the king fights for himself,
Who dares not fight for self is but a slave;
And by such turns and oddities of speech
Whereof I know but little, makes me fear
He hath no liking for the master's cause.

Second Youth. Will he forsake you, too?

Alice. Nay, 'tis his love
Moves him to such a madness; but I'll try
Ere he be pressed to make a vow upon it,
To win him to our side. [Exit Alice.]

First Youth. As yet this strife
Is all to come, and we were wanting sense
To lose a moment of our tuneful play.

First Girl. Aye, let us back to our old pleasantry.

Youth. Short is our time; Kit hath her cheese to
turn,
Nell skim the whey, and Thistle scald her churn;
I to the homestead presently must haste,
To tell the ewes, and save a wether cast.
This night therefore together we will sing,
A sober round, as fits with evening.

ROUND.

When daylight dies on mead and thorn,
The thankful mavis chaunts his lay;
Night ended, he salutes the dawn,
And hymns his gladness for the day.

Should man than he less grateful prove,
His ampler blessings all despise;
Forget to celebrate heaven's love
When morning breaks or daylight dies?

Ah! no. When weary sinks the sun,
And in the crimson west expires;
When hard though needful toil be done,
Let man outpour his soul's desires.

Nor leave the wingèd warbling choir
Sole tribute to Heaven's light to pay ;
Since greater hopes man's bosom fire
His matins shall excel their lay.

[*Exeunt omnes.*]

Enter SIR HUGH and AGNES.

Willoughby. Child, now must I leave thee.

Agnes. Father, so soon ?

Willoughby. But not too soon for honour :
My sole companion tenant of my heart,
How great my grief to break these gentle bonds,
Let passed attendance on thy lightest wish
Attest. Behoves I go, since our meek king,
The gracious fount of law and liberty,
By bloody levellers from his seat is pressed.

Agnes. And leave me here alone ?

Willoughby. Nay, not alone :
A merry company from bough to bough
Shall pipe a welcome when thou footest the wood ;
While Rockwood, Lofty, and old Manciple,
Companions of the hearth, shall bell their fears
Even at a rattling gust ; and round thy chair
Shall challenge even the rain-drops in the court.

Agnes. This mockery doth only haunt thy lip.

Willoughby. Alice, thy maid and sister in good sort,
Since ye were nourished at the selfsame breast,
Shall do thy bidding, and if love can smooth
For thee the way of life, thine shall be fair,
As this trim terrace that we stroll upon.

Agnes. Oh ! father, why dost try me in this kind.

Willoughby. Our faithful Aspley, whose truth-stirring
voice
Knit the short rapture of my wedded days ;
Who held thee helpless at the christening font,
And held thee up to thy pronounced vows ;
Will take new labours on his able hands,
And rule thee in my stead.