

**SUCH IS LIFE! OR THE
EXPERIENCES OF A WEST
COUNTRY PAINTER**

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Such Is Life! Or the Experiences of a West Country Painter by George Scown

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GEORGE SCOWN

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EXPERIENCES OF A WEST
COUNTRY PAINTER**

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OR

THE EXPERIENCES

OF

A WEST COUNTRY PAINTER,

BY

GEORGE SCOWN.

CONTAINING

MANY INTERESTING EVENTS AND INCIDENTS CONNECTED WITH HIS OWN
HISTORY, IN EXETER, LONDON, WINDSOR, AND OXFORD,
FROM 1836 TO 1876.

It's quite a retrospective view
Of ups and downs he has passed through,
'Mid peace and plenty, pain and strife,
That's why he names it "Such is Life."

PRICE ONE SHILLING.

Oxford:

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"MESSENGER" OFFICE, GEORGE STREET.

MDCCCLXXVI.

DEDICATED TO
THE LIVE AND LET LIVE FRATERNITY
OF GREAT BRITAIN.

1914

PREFACE.

“SUCH IS LIFE,”

So they say in this world of uncertainties, and I am anxious to write for the amusement of friends and readers, some of the buffetings about I have had in it. But before I proceed further, I beg to express my regret of my want of education, and to hope thereby to escape the severity of criticism that my many blunders may otherwise call forth. What little education I received was at Cocky Stevens's School, St. Mary Arches Street, Exeter, which consisted of reading, spelling, and arithmetic as high as simple multiplication, and for a charity boy like me, it was considered enough too, fifty years ago. From my childhood I always had a notion of rhyming; and amusing myself one day in school with a specimen, was rewarded by Cocky Stevens with a severe birching, for which I had to thank my leather-breeched teacher, who would have winked at my crime could I

PREFACE.

but have closed his mouth with an apple or a lolly pop which alas, I had not got. The birch was Cocky Stevens's chief amusement; from him, his birch, and leather-breeches, I managed to escape at the age of eleven, when I went out to work from six in the morning till nine at night at the tune of two shillings per week, going to and fro at meal times with my father's apron on, with an air of as much importance as though I was the main stay of the family; and so I shifted for nearly seven years, from chemistry to grocery, drapery to hop trade, and so on, until I finally decided to be a tradesman of some sort, preferring ten hours a day to fourteen, —went through a mock form of apprenticeship for three years, declared my independence at the end of eleven months, came out in my native city as a full-made journeyman painter, the success of which I have endeavoured to lay before my readers, and by their accepting the will for the deed, I shall feel grateful.

GEO. SCOWN.

Gloucester Green, Oxford,
November, 1876.

CONTENTS.

	PAGE
CARELESS DAYS	7
ON TRAMP	13
THE QUEEN	21
LONDON	23
LOVE	25
HARD UP	41
KIND RELATIONS	54
THE MEAT COVER	66
ANN, OF GRAY'S INN LANE	70
RUBBING DOWN	91
WINDSOR CASTLE	108
VIRGINIA WATER	119
WINDSOR TOWN	122
ODDFELLOWSHIP	125
JUDGE AND JURY	129
A CHANGE	133
LONDON PUBLIC	135
FRIENDS FROM DEVON	137
OXFORD	147
"BELL AND CROWN"	149
REFLECTIONS	157
THE "RANDOLPH"	160
CONCLUSION	163

SUCH IS LIFE!

CHAPTER I.

CARELESS DAYS.

My friends will ask, without a doubt,
What all these verses are about ;
The writer, then, will try to shew,
Perhaps, what the readers wish to know.

It is a retrospective view
Of ups and downs I have passed through,
'Mid peace and plenty, pain and strife,
Which makes me name it "Such is Life!"

I, five and twenty years have been,
As by the rate-books may be seen,
In Oxford, and much business done,
And when well doing, favour won.

But Time, which works a mighty change
On all things moving in its range,
Has many raised to power and wealth,
Laid others low, and ill in health.