

**ORIGINAL
READINGS IN
PROSE AND VERSE**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649663996

Original Readings in Prose and Verse by Re. Henry

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Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.
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RE. HENRY

**ORIGINAL
READINGS IN
PROSE AND VERSE**

ORIGINAL READINGS

IN

PROSE AND VERSE.

Read in public by Mrs. Stirling, Miss Cousen, Marianda Clarke, and others.

BY

RE. HENRY.

AUTHOR OF "DICKYBIRD," "ETHEL'S NEW PAPA," &c.



London:
NEWMAN & CO.,
43, HART STREET, OXFORD STREET.

1879.

270. g. 835.

If it be true that "good wine needs no bush," I feel that these "readings" need no word of mine to recommend them to those who "read" or "recite." "Yet to good wine they do use good bushes," and so perhaps a word from a "reader," saying that she has "read" many of these published "readings" and found them most effective, may perhaps induce others to look at them with a view to public reading. If the writer of these lines does not specify those that she has "read" in public, it is because she knows with what different eyes and minds people look upon both prose and poetry, and that what is found most effective by the treatment of one person may prove ineffective in the hands or by the treatment of another, and it is well that it should be so, or our audiences would be robbed of much that is good. I shall be away while these are passing through the press, and much new matter will, no doubt, be added to what I have already seen, and "read," but I have much pleasure in bearing my testimony to the excellence of those writings, both in prose and poetry, that have been read by

FANNY STIRLING.

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ORIGINAL READINGS

IN PROSE AND VERSE.

POLLY.

And so you are gone, little Polly,
From this wretched, dreary place ;
Altho' I am sitting beside you,
And looking upon your face.
But the woman who came in here just now
Said, " Poor little thing, she's gone ;"
And she offered to stay with me a bit,
But I'd rather be alone.
She knelt a moment beside you,
And I think her eyes were wet,
It's more than mother's are, Polly,
I haven't cried for you yet.
For feeling what I am, dear,
And knowing what I know,
I think you were right to go, Polly,
I think you were right to go.

For what would your life have been, dear,
With such sights and sounds about ;
It's terribly hard to keep pure within
When all is so foul without ;
And it isn't a pleasant thing to see
A baby's life begin
In the midst of drunkenness and dirt
And every kind of sin.
But I was born in the country,
Where the trees and the flowers grow,
So there's not even that excuse for me
That I have fallen so low ;
For I can remember a pleasant home,
And an honest mother's kiss,
But yet I've come to this, oh, heaven,
And yet I have come to this.

You'll see my mother, Polly,
In the land to which you're gone ;
Perhaps she'll think it's me, dear,
And forget how the years have flown.
You'll be sure to know her dim, grey eyes,
And her handsome, snow-white hair,—
Oh ! I forgot, God's angels
Are always young and fair.

I used to think her stern and cross,
But I promised her when she died,
I'd try to be careful and steady,
As if she were still by my side.
And when you meet her in heaven
She'll ask how I've kept my vow,
Oh! *don't* tell her the truth, Polly,
Don't tell her what I am, now.

And don't tell her about father,
I wouldn't have her know
How oft to a cruel, bitter word
There follows a crueller blow.
I know she'd say if I left him,
And began my life anew,
There'd be a hope of my meeting
Some day with her and you.
But that can never happen,
I don't know how it is,
That a nature such as mine can cling
To a lower one like his,
But as things are they'll have to be,
And it seems my only plan,
To go on leading the life I lead,
And forget—as much as I can.