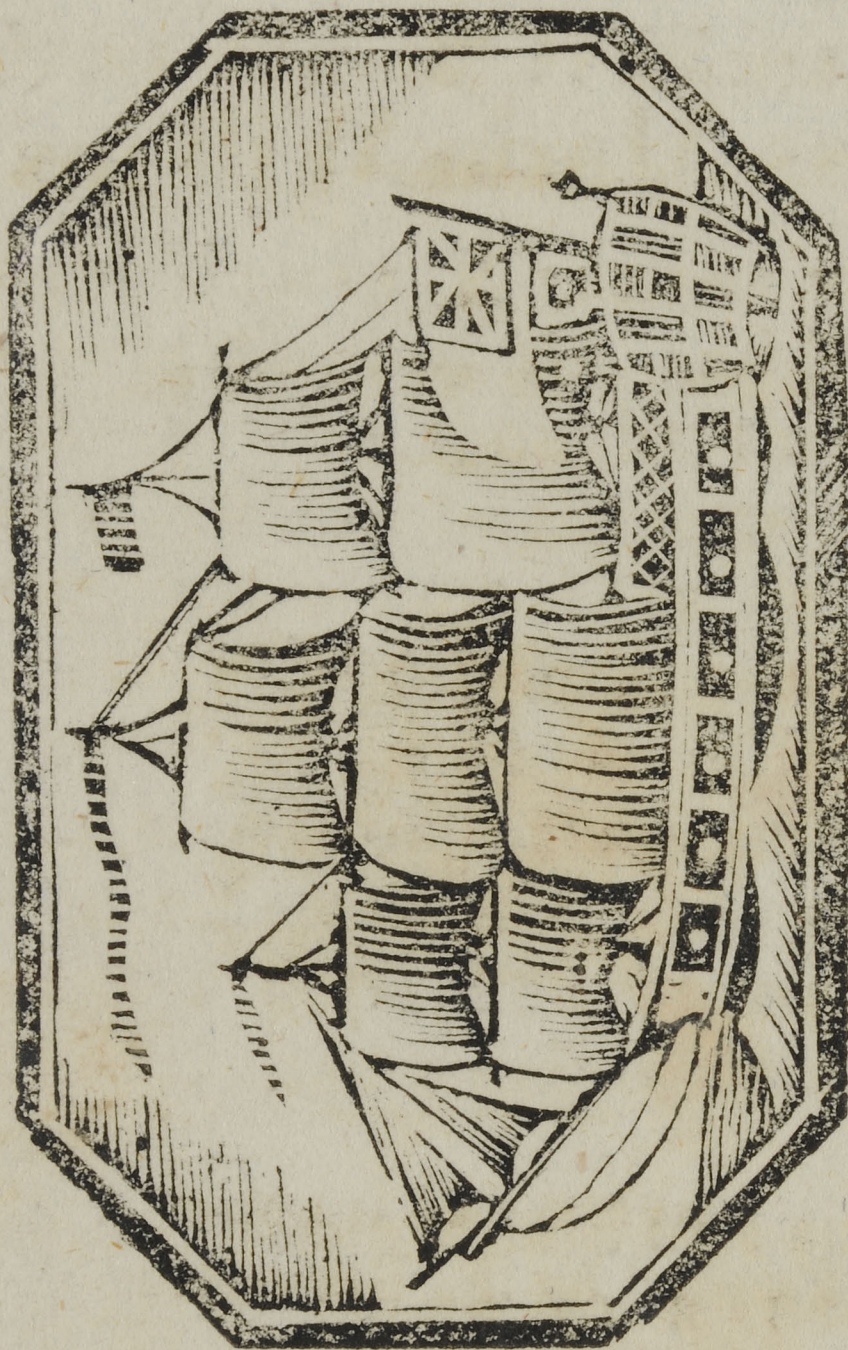


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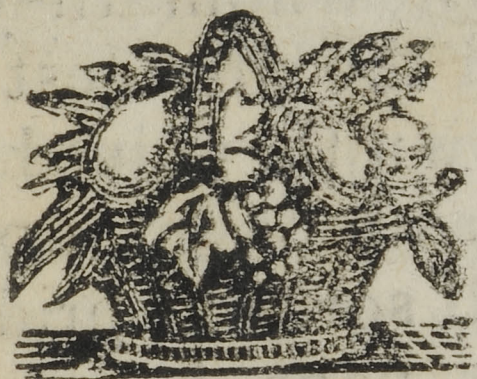


BIRD



THE
HISTORY
OF
Miss Maria Wilkins :

ADORNED WITH CUTS.



BIRMINGHAM :
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THE HISTORY
OF
Miss Maria Wilkins.



MISS MARIA WILKINS was the only child of Mr. and Mrs Wilkins who thought themselves superior to their neighbours, by whom they were reckoned the proudest people in the town they lived in. Miss Maria was brought up indulged in all sorts of pride: nay even her papa bought some lambs and had a dog to amuse her.

Her mamma would not suffer her to speak to a poor child on any account, nor even to any of the misses she went to school with, unless they



were dressed well ; and if Miss Maria told her mamma such a miss had a new slip on, she would go immediately and buy Miss Maria a new silk one, that she might be above the other miss with her linen one. As she always was herself the head of the company, she would have her daughter be so too.

Miss Maria was despised by

all the scholars, and as she would not speak to those she thought beneath her, so the others would not speak to her. This was a great mortification to Miss Maria; and she begged of her mamma no to let her go to school any more, for says she, I had rather be called a dunce than to go there.

Well says her mamma, as you do not like it you shall not go. So Miss Maria went no more, though she could hardly tell her letters or thread her needle.

Miss Maria had nothing to do but to play with her doll, and look over her trinkets; she would sometimes sit hours together at her mammas toilet



and powder her hair, paint her face and stick patches on it; her mamma never corrected her for it, but told her that she looked very handsome, which made her so proud that nobody liked her.

One day as she was standing at the door a poor blind Fidler led by his dog, came up to her begging her to give him some broken bread; for dear Miss said he, for I am hungry

With that she shuts the door, and went into the parlour to her mamma. Oh, madam! says she, there is a nasty old man has been asking me for some bread; he has made me ill to look at him—Why don't he go to the workhouse? For my part, I would not go near him to give him a bit if he was to drop down for the want of it.

Here was pride to excess.

But a young woman who waited on Miss Maria was dressing herself up-stairs, saw the poor man going along with tears running down his cheeks crept softly down, and went after him unperceived, slipped sixpence into his hand and run in again; for if she had



been seen, she would have lost her place.

Mrs Wilkins always made Miss Maria wear a steel shape so make her genteel ; but instead of that, not having room she grew crooked ; and when she was twelve years old, she had a great hump on her shoulder. Notwithstanding Miss was so proud, yet she was

mean enough to listen to what the servants talked about.

One day as she was standing on the kitchen stairs, she heard the cook say to the housemaid how proud Miss Maria is, and yet she is very ugly and vastly crooked; for my part, I had rather be as I am, a poor servant, and be straight and proper, than be such a lump of misery with all her pride and fortune. Very true, answered the other, I cannot help laughing whenever I see her, she tosses her head with such an air of scorn, and turns up her nose at me. I cannot abide her. it is a very true saying, Listeners never hear any good of themselves. As

soon as they had done talking she ran to her mamma and told her all that they had said.

Mrs Wilkins instantly rang the bell in a great rage, and gave orders for every one of them to go away, which they did.

Betty went home to her mother till she could get a place, but she had no occasion to go to service any more; for an uncle, who had lived in Jamaica a great many years, was just arrived in England.

On his arrival he took a handsome house, and had all his wealth brought home to it. He then enquired after his sister, who was Betty's mother, and found them together at

work. He took them home to his house, bought them rich clothes, and gave them money, Then he set up a coach, kept a number of servants, for he was very rich.

Betty was a pretty genteel girl, and when dressed, looked charmingly. Besides this, she was of a sweet temper.

Her uncle was very fond of her; and one day she begged the favor of him to let her go and invite a young lady to come and see her; he consented directly, and desired her to go in the coach, and bring her with her. But who do you think this lady was?

Why Miss Maria Wilkins.

Miss Betsey though she had

not the least vanity, yet she wanted Mrs. Wilkins and Miss Maria to see the alteration in her circumstances, for being turned out of her house for nothing; so she dressed herself as grand as possible, and getting into the coach, ordered the servant to drive to Mrs. Wilkins's.

The coach stopped at the door, and Miss Betsey sent in her name, and after some time waiting, Mrs. Wilkins' servant returned with this answer, that the ladies were engaged, and desired she would not trouble herself to come any more.

Miss Betsey returned home and told her uncle where she

had been, and the reception she met with- I hope you will never go there any more, my dear, said he; and if I had known, you should not have gone at all. No, sir, said Miss Betsy, I don't intend it.

When Mistress and Miss Wilkins saw through the window who it was in the coach, before she sent in her name; they were greatly astonished; but though she was drest well, and rode in her coach, Mrs. Wilkins said, yet she had been her servant, and you shall never keep company with such a mean slut as she, Miss Maria. No madam, says she, I have too much pride in me, and would sooner die.

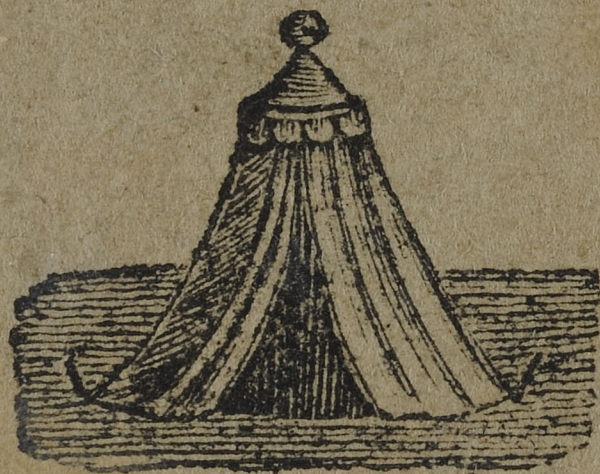
In the midst of their conversation, Mr. Wilkins came home with a dejected countenance, told his wife he was ruined; and that their high manner of living had been the cause of their destruction!

Accordingly next day every thing was seized on, and they turned out of doors.

They had nobody to relieve them, so Mr. and Mrs. Wilkins were forced to go to the workhouse, and Maria was humbled enough to go to Miss Betsey, and beg of her to take her as a servant. Betsey pitied her and admitted her, but rather as companion than servant.



SHIP



TENT