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A PLEADER TO THE READER NOT A HEEDER!

AS all, my Friend, through wily knaves full often suffer wrongs,
Forget not, pray, when it you've read, to whom this Book belongs.
Than one CHARLES CLARK, of TOTHAM, none to it a right hath better,—
A *wight*, that same, more *read* than some in the lore of old *black-letter*!
And as C. C. in *Essex* dwells—a shire at which all laugh—
This Book must, sure, less fit seem drest if 'tis not bound in *calf*!—
Though of this sightly *volume's* worth the owner would not “croak,”
Where's he who can with truth assert it seems but one of smoke!
Oh! if so 'twere deem'd I'd not de-fer to *deal* a fate most meet,
I'd have the carper at these *quires* do penance in a *sheet*!—
This Book, too, Friend, take care you ne'er with grease or dirt besmear it;
While none but awkward *puppies* will continue to “dog's-ear” it!
And o'er my books when book-worms “grub,” I'd have them understand,
No marks the margins must de-face from any busy “hand!”
Marks, as re-marks, in books of CLARK's, when'er some critic sp̄y leaves,
It always him so *wasp-ish* makes, though they're but on the *fly-leaves*!
—The *Ettrick Hogg*—ne'er deem'd a *bore*,—his candid mind revealing,
Declares to beg “a *copy*” now's a mere *pre-text* for stealing!
So as some knave to grant the loan of this my Book may wish me,
I thus my book-plate here display lest some such “fry” should “dish” me!—
But hold,—though I must just declare WITH-holding I'll ne'er *brook*,
And “a *sea* of trouble” still shall take to bring book-worms “to *book*!”

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