

**THE ADVENTURES**  
OF  
**FARMER JOHN BRAY**  
AT THE  
**WILTON FESTIVITIES**  
IN HONOUR OF THE  
**COMING OF AGE**  
OF THE  
**EARL OF PEMBROKE**

John Bray was a man of renown  
Who lived a short way from this town;  
A jolly old farmer was he,  
So generous, merry and free,  
He was upright, manly, and true,  
And was lov'd by all that he knew;  
He liv'd freely, he gave and he spent,  
And his home was all joy and content;  
On his men he look'd as a brother  
And as such they regarded each other,

From the boy to the chief on his farm  
He extended his friendship so warm.  
A downright blade of the old school,  
No new fangled notions his rule,  
No horse or chaise had he grand  
Save those which he used on his land;  
For, though he had plenty of cash,  
He never would cut a great dash.  
Dress'd out in his plain velveteen  
One a week he at market was seen,  
While the swells did laugh and did stare  
To see him astride his old mare.  
Though they laugh'd at his old fashioned face  
And mocked him with vile grimace,  
He had that which they never knew,  
A principle, honest and true.  
At dinner, they oft taunted him  
Concerning his old fashioned whim;  
He cared not a fig what they said  
But jokes would return on their head,  
His temper he never would show  
Tho' his eyes would glisten and glow,

If their chaff was witty and keen  
John's bluntness would silence them clean,  
For so long as clear was his head  
He cared not a fig what they said;  
But oft friend John would, alas,  
At market stay late o'er his glass,  
And when full, no man would surpass  
His skill in acting an ass.  
Oft thus he would market night  
Come home what he call'd "jolly tight,"  
And fill his fond dame with affright  
To see him in such a sad plight;  
Then loud the fond wife would declare  
That drink it was a cursed snare,  
For "if John would abstain from his glass  
Our happiness none could surpass."  
Her husband she oft would exalt,  
The dread glass is but his chief fault,  
But all men have failings they say  
And none to this truth can say nay.

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If ever a man in his life  
Was blessed with a dutiful wife?  
That man I am sure was John Bray  
For she was his right hand and stay;  
She milk'd, she made butter and cheese,  
She reared ducklings, chickens and geese.

In fact in all she was a charmer,  
Exactly the wife for a farmer.

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John's father, and fathers before  
For a hundred years back, rather more,  
From the Pembroke's rented their farm  
And his heart to the family was warm.  
He often, before his fireside,  
Would talk of the family with pride,  
Of the old Earl in his young days,  
And his son noble Sidney would praise;  
And he longed for the time to come  
When the young Lord he would be home  
To inherit his vast property  
And live in the old country.

\* \* \* \* \*

Now the day was drawing at hand  
Young Pembroke in England would land  
And the folk in yon little town  
With delight were turned upside down.  
They met then up in the Town Hall  
The rich, the poor, big and small,  
And with jolly good feelings did spout  
They would have a mighty set out,  
Heaps of money soon there was found,  
Subscriptions flowed fast in around,  
Most every man, woman and child,  
With joy seemed very near wild.  
A committee was chosen outright  
Who set about business that night;  
A programme then soon they made out  
Which every where was stuck about,  
It said that on July the first  
This mighty rejoicing should burst,  
'Twas the day his Lordship would come  
To claim his old ancestral home,  
By express he said he'd be down  
To his friends in this little town.

\* \* \* \* \*

Now an invite was sent to John Bray,  
Who liv'd but a few miles away,  
To attend the reception that day  
On horseback, the yeoman's array.  
Be-wilderment siezed his old frame  
With joy when the message it came,  
No sleep did he have on that night

Thinking of the grand coming sight.  
Soon came the auspicious day  
And John, see mounted so gay,  
Rides forth on his old fashioned mare  
Clad rustic, tho' noble his air;  
His fond wife came out of the gate  
To see her dear husband in state,  
And to give one word of advice  
To be proof 'gainst his failing vice,  
“Now my dear remember the drink,”  
But John, he replied with a wink,  
And said, “to night don't stay for me pray  
For I may not be home till next day.”  
Then her warning again she did say  
But John he had galloped away.

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Then soon he reached the little town  
Where the people seemed turned up and down,  
And thousands soon there he did meet  
They thickly did line all the streets;  
Flags and banners floated everywhere gay,  
Fine arches did span o'er the way,  
Devices and mottoes were seen  
'Mid bowers of fresh evergreens,  
Large banners the words did unfurl  
“Welcome home our noble young Earl,”  
The bells from the tower did ring  
The old folks did shout and boys sing,  
With open mouth, John stood amazed,  
To see how the people were crazed,  
Then with joy he nearly went mad  
His honest old heart was so glad.  
At three then they all did repair  
To form a long train in the square,  
The tenantry, mounted so gay,  
Four abreast did soon lead the way,  
And the people did shout and did say  
“The smartest old chap is John Bray.”  
For to all he did nod and did smile,  
Dressed out in the old fashioned style.  
Like a King, on his faithful old mare,  
In front he proudly rode there.  
Tho' perhaps not the highest of breed,  
'Twas his own, and a useful old steed.

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Such horses there was there that day,  
You'll scarcely believe what I say;  
There was black, there was brown, there was grey,

There was white, and piebald, and bay,  
There were hunters, and racers, and cobs,  
And hacks there scarce worth a bob,  
There was ponies, and mules, and asses,  
Such four legged things of all classes;  
There was those that were owned, those hired,  
And those that were fresh, and those tired,  
In truth I should think ne'er before  
Was the like ere seen or will more.  
The riders! my stars! what a sight!  
Some of them looked rare pretty frights,  
For scores, it plainly was seen,  
On horseback before had ne'er been.  
However, 'twas a jolly turn out  
To see them all canter about,  
To see what a splutter they made  
With their horses in that cavalcade.  
Next followed a gay pretty scene,  
Foresters with tunics of green,  
With all the emblems of fame  
That represent Robin Hood's name,  
With little John Scarlett and Tuck,  
Leading hounds to follow the buck;  
Their banner a sight was to please,  
As it ruffled so gay in the breeze;  
The name of the court, you may see,  
Is "Pembroke and Montgomery."  
Other clubs did follow behind  
With regalia of every kind,  
And banners and flags they did bring  
While the people did shout and did sing,  
The tradesmen, the craft of the town  
Marched along like men of renown,  
Men of every calling and trade  
From the highest to the humblest grade,  
And after them came arm in arm,  
The sturdy stout sons of the farm,  
Followed up by hundreds of boys  
Who, *as usual*, made most of the noise,  
Then came a roaring brass band  
A blowing so loud and so grand,  
They went it, poor chaps, so devout,  
I thought they would blow inside out,  
But time, their strains did beguile  
For they played a very long while.  
Everything now seem'd in good style,  
In the train that reached half-a-mile.  
They arrived at the station at four  
And soon the loud cannon did roar  
To signal the train was in sight,  
Then all faces did beam with delight,  
And amid the peoples loud din

The long-wished for train rumbled in.  
And Pembroke arrived, with his mother,  
And chatted to one, and to tother,  
Then up went a vociferous roar  
The like ne'er heard was before.  
And as the express she went by,  
"He is come! he is come!" all did cry.  
Then seated in his carriage, so tall,  
To be greeted by one and by all,  
He nodded and smiled as he sat  
And to the cheering lifted his hat.  
John Bray, when he passed along,  
Hurrah'd him so lusty and strong  
You might thought his throat it would split  
For in cheering he did all outwit.  
"God bless'ee young man," he did bawl,  
"I know'd yer feyther an uncle an all.  
My neam ya know is Jan Bray,  
Whose proud he've a lived to this day  
So here I'll gie a cheer moure  
And may'ee live till ya be vive score."  
The Earl, he laughed then outright,  
And said, "that's a jolly old wight."  
Then, as soon as all had marched round,  
A bugle on the air did sound,  
And twenty young fellers rushed in  
And took the horses out clean,  
And, amid the peoples hurrays,  
They dragged the young Earl away.  
Now thousands of people so gay  
Did line the road sides all the way,  
And thousands of voices did say  
"God bless young Pembroke" that day;  
And amid that dense happy throng  
Slowly the train moved along  
With bands playing and bells ringing,  
Folks cheering, and shouting and singing,  
As under arches of welcome they went  
Like a train to a grand tournament.

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Now arrived at the bounds of the town  
The Mayor came out in his gown,  
And the beadles used freely the mace  
To clear for his worship a place.  
With squeezing he did gain access  
To present to the Earl an address,  
The humble address of the town  
To a scion of a house of renown;  
Good wishes therein were expressed  
Hoping his life would be blessed

With peace and joy so profound  
And health and happiness sound  
Nobly to fill his high station  
And prove a worthy son of the nation,  
I speak freely when to you I say  
Every one welcomes you here this day.  
Then up went a thundering hurray  
But none louder cheered than John Bray.  
Then uprose his lordship so tall  
And said "Ladies and gentlemen all,  
I thank you indeed, from my heart,  
For those feelings you to me impart,  
I scarce think this greeting is due  
To one who'se a stranger to you.  
But this welcome I ne'er shall forget,  
And I trust this you'll never regret,  
But, just let me speak of another,  
I mean her, my kind hearted mother.  
I ask your good wishes for her  
For you all know her high character."  
Then at once the people gave vent  
And such a loud cheering outwent,  
Indeed the whole air was rent  
With cheers they did foam and ferment.  
Soon his lordship arrived in great state  
At his father's ancestral gate,  
And the crowd then soon broke away  
To mingle in pleasures that day.  
Sports and pastimes enlivened the scene  
And dancing out on the soft green,  
The whole afternoon it was spent  
In feasting and glad merriment.  
At night brilliant fireworks too  
Outside the Park gates were on view,  
And illuminations so grand  
In the town shone on every hand.  
But amid all these scenes bright and gay,  
Now what was become of John Bray?

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With cheering his throat was so rough  
He felt he had cheered long enough,  
So he said to his mare "come along,"--  
Then soon made his way through the throng -  
To mine host, he soon did repair,  
And stabled all right his old mare,  
In the Bar then joined a snug party,  
Jolly Farmers, all ancient and hearty.  
There glasses went freely around  
And jokes and fine tales did abound,  
Each in turn sung his favourite song

And merrily the time flew along,  
In bumpers they drank Pembroke's health,  
Hoped he'd live to enjoy all his wealth;  
O'er and o'er they drank freely the toast  
And then drank the health of mine host,  
Each other they pledged in their grog,  
Each one poured out his prologue.  
At last they knew not what they said  
For grog was indeed on the head,  
The hours flew by with such speed  
But none there the time did much heed  
'Till the host, who' time could not shelve,  
Said, "Gents, it is very near twelve,  
I trust soon, therefore, you'll go,  
For tomorrow is Sunday, you know."  
Then John Bray he rose up and said  
While his brains did swim in his head,  
In a stamm'ring voice did expound  
He would just stand glasses around.  
"Too late," the Landlord replied,  
But John would not be denied,  
So, quick, fetch in glasses a score  
Just one each round and no more.  
Mine host he found 'twas no good,  
He knew he'd a troublesome brood,  
So glasses at once he brought in  
While the guests did chuckle and grin;  
So they sat o'er their glasses that night  
Till the hands of the clock were upright.  
When it struck they, all jolly and mellow,  
Sung "Pembroke's a jolly good fellow!"  
And they finished their glass with the strain  
Swore next week to drink it again.  
Then each did embrace one another  
Just like a party of brothers,  
And each his own way did repair  
And John got astride his old mare,  
Then off in a gallop he went  
Down the street and up the ascent,  
And swift as poor Polly did go  
Like a pendulum he swung to and fro,  
For 'twas plain John Bray was that night  
What gentlemen call "jolly tight."  
Poor Poll kept straight on the road,  
She knew she'd a troublesome load,  
And not the first time the old mare  
Had her master under her care.  
For the faithful old mare had a knack  
Of knowing when he clung to her back,  
She knew then 'twas left to her quite  
To take home her master all right.  
When she came to Bishopstone hill



All at once she pulled up quite still,  
For there John oft would dismount  
And Poll stopped there on account.  
There she stood looking up the long steep  
While her master did snore in his sleep.  
Full an hour thus stood the old hack  
With her master asleep on her back;  
So still stood the faithful old steed  
Like a statue she looked there indeed  
In the middle of that dreary road  
Bearing up her cumbrous load.  
At last thro' the shade of the night  
A rabbit crossed over, all white,  
Poll pricked up her ears at the sight,  
And gallop'd straight off with affright.  
This sudden affright of the mare's  
Soon changed the tide of affairs,  
For John, who was sleeping quite sound,  
Fell heavily from her to the ground.  
Frightened more by the fall of her load  
She renewed her speed up the road  
And the race she ne'er did give o'er  
Till she came to her own stable door.  
In the road the Farmer he lay  
And dreamed the few hours away;  
Strange dreams he had there that night  
And strange indeed was the sight,  
It would fill your mind with affright  
If those dreams I attempt to recite.  
Suffice it to know they were terrible,  
Gloomy visions, so dreary and horrible,  
Which appeared there before him so plain  
Imaginations of his crazed brain.

\* \* \* \* \*

Ah, foolish man! when o'er thy glass  
All ill forebodings from thee pass,  
How madly then thou dost carouse  
No future thoughts thy mind can rouse.  
Seated there in all your glory  
Issuing your joke and story,  
The Landlord's tale, the glowing fire,  
Raises at once the cherished ire,  
The company, the pipe, the glass,  
None can such pleasures ere surpass,  
Do as you like, say what you please,  
All for your comfort and your ease,  
Nothing to upset or annoy  
Revelling in a flash of joy,  
Drowning care, defying sorrow,  
Yet brewing pain to drink tomorrow.

Thus, thro' the speedy hours of night,  
Ye revel in assumed delights;  
At last with dim and giddy head  
Ye grope the way to your snug bed  
And on the morn with weary eyes  
Ye last night's pleasures fain surmise,  
And, as ye turn your weary head  
From side to side upon the bed,  
With parched tongue and nauseous mouth,  
Ye feel an inward gnawing drought,  
And bitter pains ye must endure  
When drinking bouts doth you allure;  
But, yet no heed ye give to pain,  
As eve comes round ye booze again.  
So thus it was with Farmer Bray  
On this auspicious festive day,  
He caroused deep in jollity  
Nor thought of after misery.

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But to my tale, there in the road  
He lay with drink a heavy load.  
And not till bright Sol broke the day  
Did he once rise from where he lay.  
Then, rising from that wretched plight,  
His eyes beheld the morning light,  
He looked about with weary eyes  
And his position did surmise,  
He called, he whistled for his mare,  
But, 'twas in vain, she was not there,  
Then gently up the hill he sped  
While racking pains rushed thro' his head;  
“How dry, how parched, I feel” said he;  
“What would I give for a cup of tea!  
But none, I s'pose, till I get home  
And some miles I have got to roam.  
I seriously think my poor wife  
Will think I am bereft of life;  
What feelings now praps cross her mind  
To know that me she cannot find,  
In haste for home I now will steer  
To ease my darling's mind so dear.”

But scarce a mile he had gone  
When lo a trap came rattling on  
And mightily John Bray did stare  
Just to behold his own old mare,  
His fond dame driving, with his man,  
He thro' the morning mist did scan.  
John guessed their errand and he cried  
“What makes you out so early ride?”

What are you after? Aye? my dear?  
Something the matter now I fear.”  
She cried “good gracious, bless my heart,”  
Then sprang to meet him from the cart,  
“Thank God” out earnestly she said  
“That thou, my husband, art not dead,  
Oh John! indeed, if thou didst know  
The anguish I have felt, the woe,  
Thy old fond heart would overflow  
To think thy wife doth love thee so.”  
For truly, said she, in a breath,  
“I thought thou hadst met thy death.  
This morning until two I stayed  
And for thy safety oft I prayed,  
Till, wearied out with waiting so,  
To bed I did prepare to go,  
Thinking thou wouldst stay out all night  
And on that score I felt all right.  
But just as I went up to bed,  
When all was quiet as the dead,  
Before I reached half up the stairs  
I heard the neighing of thy mare;  
Out of the window then I gazed  
And to see poor Poll I was amazed,  
For there she stood with back all bare,  
Not thee or even saddle there;  
And then, a shudder thro' me came,  
That so shook my poor old frame,  
For the thought rushed to my head  
On the road thou must be lying dead.  
Oh! how my heart with joy abounds  
To know I see thee safe and sound.”

\* \* \* \* \*

Then John he kissed his wife and smiled,  
And said, “my dear, the drink beguiled,  
But I'll amend, now from this day,  
And from too much I'll keep away.”  
But Mrs Bray, she looked and sighed,  
“I trust ye will,” at last replied  
“But ye'd best make no rash vow at all  
Especially at this festival,  
For when you with his Lordship dine  
You'll not be proof against his wine.”  
“Ah! yes I shall,” said Farmer Bray  
“I'll keep sober now from this day  
And you my dear will see I shall  
For you'll go with me to the Ball.”

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## PART II

Then the auspicious day soon came,  
July the sixth, a day of fame,  
And happy thoughts minds did engage  
That day young Pembroke came of age.  
But none rose happier on that day  
Than did old John and Mrs Bray,  
“God bless un!” he did often say  
As he put on his best array,  
“May he be blessed w'ee perfect health  
To enjoy and do good with his wealth.”  
The morn broke forth serene and gay  
As forth went John and Mrs Bray,  
The birds sang sweet on every tree,  
All nature seemed so glad and free,  
And glad indeed were these two hearts  
As they rode on in their old cart  
And, as they neared the little town,  
And down the streets came rattling down  
The booming cannon roared aloud  
Like thunder in a murky cloud;  
Peal after peal louder did sound  
It seemed to shake the very ground.  
Poor Mrs Bray with fright did shake,  
“Good gracious! what a noise they make.”  
But John he only cried “hurray,”  
That's right, me boys, quick, fire away.  
Then, as they came all down the street,  
Such festive scenes their eyes did meet,  
Festoons and wreaths of flowers so gay  
At every street did span the way,  
And trees all down the streets there grew  
And hung with lamps of every hue.  
The bells too, rang with renewed power,  
Their joyous tune from the tall tower,  
And bands of music, sweet and gay,  
Played in the streets throughout the day,  
Thousands of people too were seen  
Mingling in the festive scene;  
Gay booths and stalls of every grade  
Did ply that day a busy trade,  
Just like a fair, they lined the green  
Enlivening the joyous scene.  
And there, throughout the festive day,  
The people danced the time away.  
Poor Mrs Bray, soon tired out,

With staring at the sights about,  
Said, "John, my dear, I think it best  
We now should take a little rest,  
Tis now past two o'clock, and more,  
You with the Earl dine at four."  
John smiled and then nodded assent  
And to their quarters off they went.  
Refreshed a while, he did prepare,  
To enjoy the Earl's sumptuous fare,  
So, giving his fond dame a kiss,  
He said "my dear, remember this,  
As soon as ever dinner's o'er,  
Which praps may take two hours and more,  
I shall be here with coach and pair  
So when I'm gone you can prepare  
For I'm determined that you shall  
Go in a carriage to the Ball."  
"Oh John! such foolish stuff don't talk,  
You know I very well can walk,  
I do detest to be thought grand  
So let us walk both hand-in-hand."  
No, that I wont! outspoke John Bray  
We'm as good as most voke any day.  
What care I if the voke do stare  
I owes 'em nothin, I declare,  
Praps 'tis the last time in our life  
We so may ride together, wife,  
So, goodbye, and be ready dear,  
For with a coach I shall be here."  
"Good bye" said she "mind you confine  
And limit yourself to the wine."  
John started off so light and gay,  
Attired in his best array,  
"If ever a man was blessed, said he,  
With a good wife, I think I be.  
The wine (said she) of that beware,  
And for her sake I will take care."  
At the mansion soon he did arrive  
Where everything was all alive,  
Folks tearing every where about  
And waiters popping in and out.  
Then very soon he made his way  
To the Earl and his mother gay,  
And said, "God bless ee, young man, now  
May happiness shine on yer brow  
May God gie'ee good strength and health  
To enjy and do good wie yer wealth."  
The Earl took the Farmer's hand,  
His feelings he could understand,  
And said, "I thank you heartily  
For the wishes you extend to me."  
The Lady, she laughed sweet and gay,

And to the Farmer she did say  
“Not one's more welcome here to-day  
Than good old honest Farmer Bray,  
I trust too that this night we shall  
Greet your good lady at the ball,”  
“Ees, ees, ya'll see her, I'll be bound,  
If she in health be seaf an sound,  
For she has a hearty inclination  
To accept your invitation.”

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Now all the guests were come and then  
The biggest farmers, jolly men,  
To the dinner table ladies led  
Tho' some of them looked rather red.  
Farmer R\_\_\_\_\_ in Lady Herbert brought  
And her kind face each eye soon caught,  
For always her sweet look and smile,  
Casteth a charm on all a while,  
Lady A\_\_\_\_\_ Farmer F\_\_\_\_\_ brought in  
Whose pleasing look all eyes did win,  
And Farmer H\_\_\_\_\_ lady D\_\_\_\_\_,  
And so on til there came a score.  
Then all at once a loud hurray  
Arose, and then came Farmer Bray  
Bearing on his arm all the way  
A beautiful young lady gay.  
The cheers that then did fill the air  
When all beheld this matchless pair,  
John's colour rushed into his face  
For every eye most in that place  
Was fixed on him, he seemed a king,  
For with his name the air did ring.  
His lady smiled as well she may  
Then sat herself beside John Bray.  
He looked full of astonishment  
As he gazed down that brilliant tent  
For such a scene he ne'er before  
Had seen or ever would he more.  
The decorations of that tent  
It filled him with bewilderment,  
The tables too laid out so grand  
With every delicacy of the land,  
Flesh it was there of every sort  
From the knuckle to the heart,  
And fish there too of every kind  
Which in the ocean one can find,  
Birds, from a sparrow to a pheasant,  
Done up in ways so very pleasant;  
Chicken, duck, turkey and goose,  
Drowning in dishes of rich juice;

Rabbits and hares, with venison fine  
And sauces made of spice and wine;  
Soups too, of every sort you'd wish,  
Was there to tempt you in a dish,  
Jellies there were so sweetly made  
Of every sort known to the trade,  
Pastry of every shape and form  
Dressed out in diver's uniform,  
Fruit there was too of every clime  
So ripe and fresh all in such prime  
The sight it was indeed a treat  
It really seemed too good to eat,  
Wines of the richest vintage, pure,  
That nought but money could procure  
Stood opposite each guest that day  
To make him feel merry and gay.  
But half the riches of that table  
To mention here I am not able,  
A hundred waiters too were there  
Who waited on you with such care,  
Who brought you anything you wanted,  
So that you may not feel daunted.  
No fear of there being any grunTERS  
When waited on by Messrs GunTERS.  
Then, soon as ever grace was said,  
Each one let in to this fine spread  
The knives and forks did clatter fast  
At that splendid rich repast.  
John's heart at all this did much glow  
And much he was at a loss to know  
“Whatever shall I have to ate  
For here I sits wie empty plate,”  
But soon friend John he felt relief  
When a waiter asked if he'd take beef?  
“Ah! that I will, now bring me some,”  
And shyness then was overcome.  
“What a splendid bit of beef, says he,  
It really suits I to a tee  
I never teast zich beef avore  
Here waiter do bring a piece moure,  
I'm plain meself and likes plain fare  
And much for dainties I dont care,  
For I says, and tis my belief,  
There's nothin better than good beef.”  
So John he was content to dine  
Alone on beef so prime and fine.  
Two hours nearly there they spent  
Eating and drinking in that tent.  
The Earl he sat in the chair  
And seemed the happiest fellow there,  
And, after dinner, up he got  
And made a speech just like a shot,

And in it he went on to say  
What had happened since he went away,  
“He was sorry he must there declare it  
To see rise a republican spirit  
Growing among some Englishmen  
Which was not good they may depend.  
I've been in foreign countries where  
Republicans did rule all there,  
And this much I can say to you  
The many's rule is worse than few.  
Gentlemen, ye may rely on me  
There's no land like England so free  
You all I'm sure this truth have seen  
So drink the health of England's Queen.”  
Then up all rose without delay  
And drank her health in loud hurrahs.  
The Farmers then he did propose  
And up most everyone there rose  
And John Bray he began to bellow  
For they be all such jolly fellows.  
So when the toasts had passed their rounds  
The guests they sought the beauteous grounds  
For deep the wine cup some did drain  
And longer there could not remain.  
Some toddled home, as best they could,  
Some sought the shelter of the wood  
And fell asleep upon the grass  
Overpowered by the social glass;  
But John kept sober all the time  
And scarcely tasted there the wine,  
He knew what he'd engaged to do  
And he would keep his promise true.  
He left the tent, fresh as a lark,  
And took a stroll out in the park,  
Then to his quarters did repair  
Where his fond wife was waiting there,  
And her warm heart with joy beat light  
When she saw John was sober quite.  
And then this couple did prepare  
For the ball to deck themselves so fair.  
At nine o'clock a coach and pair  
Before the door was waiting there,  
And John out handed Mrs Bray  
Decked out in her ball room array.  
“My stars! said he, how nice ye look  
I should ee vor a Countess took  
Ta nite ye'll be belle of the ball  
Vor I'm dang if you wunt beat em all.”  
Poor Mrs Bray, she bit her lip  
To hear her husband talk so flip,  
“Oh John,” says she “if you so talk  
I really will get out and walk.



*Belle* of the ball, me, indeed,  
An old woman gone all to seed,  
Who sixty summers now hath seen,  
Why, John, whatever do you mean?  
Ah, you may joke, there was a time  
When I, a young gal in my prime,  
With blooming cheeks ruddy and fair  
Could vie with any of them there,  
With any I could dance a reel  
With any come the toe and heel,  
Yes, many a time when young and gay,  
Have I been crowned Queen of the May,  
And many a brave youth in the vale  
Hath poured to me his loving tale;  
No girl was so blithe and gay  
As I, when first you knew me Bray,  
But, lack a day! those times are fled,  
And old age is creeping on my head,  
And from such scenes I must refrain  
For I shall never dance again.”

“Not dance again, nonsense my dear,  
In the dance tonight you must appear,  
Folks would say we oughten to be there  
If we don't dance, they will, I swear;  
I vow, dear, by my father's wig,  
To-night you shall have just one jig.”

\* \* \* \* \*

They now had reached the mansion door  
Where carriages stood by the score,  
And soon their coach drew up all right  
And out they got with hearts so light,  
To the coachman John did bellow out  
“At two, mind you are here about.”  
John took her arm and on they went  
Their congratulations to present  
Unto the Earl and his mother  
Who stood to welcome one another.  
The lady said “Mrs Bray! oh dear,  
How glad I am to see you here!  
I trust tonight you will enjoy  
The Ball in honour of my boy.”  
The Earl took John Bray's rough hand  
While his warm heart did much expand,  
Tears came into his eyes for joy  
As he stood talking to the boy.  
“God bless'ee, ever, all your life,  
And may'ee soon get a good wife.  
If ye vinds as good un as I've got,  
Happy, I'm sure, will be yer lot.”  
Then on they passed into a hall

Where Mrs Bray did leave her shawl,  
Again he on did lead his bride  
Into a room so large and wide,  
At whose grand door a man did stand  
And a little book put in your hand.  
“Programme of what they'm gwang to dance”  
Said John as in un he did glance.  
“But wat vine neams they've got vor'm now  
I can't dance any o'm I vow,  
Quadrilles, and gallops, valeses, and lancers  
Who ever's gwang to be the dancers?  
I never yeard of they bevore  
And shant attempt 'em to be sure.”  
Then to the room they did repair  
And 'twas a mass of brilliants there  
A thousand candles threw their light  
Which made the scene so dazzling bright,  
Huge paintings on the walls did glow  
Whose like old England cannot show,  
Those splendid pictures, by *Vandyke*,  
With wonderment the gazer strike.  
John looked at them with all his eyes  
And what these cost he did surmise,  
He seemed wrapt up in wondrous gloom  
As he surveyed that splendid room,  
And then the joyous company  
Was indeed a glorious sight to see  
Enough to make any mouth water  
Beholding the gay wives and daughters  
Decked out in silks so fine and fair  
With wreaths of flowers in their hair.  
Ah! 'twas indeed a matchless sight  
That ball room on that festive night.

\* \* \* \* \*

Then all at once the booming sounds  
Of cannon came across the grounds,  
And as the night wore on to dark  
Bright coloured fires lit up the Park,  
And then the company did repair  
To view the brilliant fireworks there,  
And John and Mrs. did look through  
The windows at that dazzling view.  
Great shells did burst high in the air,  
Thousand of stars did issue there,  
Of every colour they were seen  
Illuminating all the green.  
Huge wheels did whirl round and round  
Throwing their trail upon the ground  
Of every shape and form they were  
As they sped on with fiery glare;

Hundreds of rockets too were sent  
Hissing into the element;  
There too, hung on a massive frame,  
Was the ancient crest of Pembrok's name,  
And soon 'twas in a mass of fire  
So perfect, all did much admire  
The wyvern and the coronet  
Glowing brightly as in jewels set,  
And the motto "*ung je serviray*,"  
Shone out in colours bright and gay;  
And on the hills, the coloured fires,  
With awe John's mind did much inspire,  
For 'twas indeed a matchless sight  
Beholding there those brilliant lights  
Illuminating the grand old trees  
All decked there in their verdant leaves.  
"My stars!" said John, "oh what a sight  
Have I now zeed this verry night."

\* \* \* \* \*

Then, taking the arm of Mrs Bray,  
He to the ball room led the way  
Where the fine band strains did diffuse  
While dancers did their partners choose.  
"A country dance" the Earl cries,  
"Let's have," said he to John's surprise,  
"That's het, said he, just let 'em play,  
Come, Mrs., now we'll dance away."  
The Earl he led off the dance  
So merrily with Mrs R\_\_\_\_\_ce,  
And for a half an hour they,  
In a country dance, did lead the way.  
And John kept on, with his good wife,  
And danced, as tho' he danced for life,  
Nor once did he the dance suspend  
Until the band came to an end.  
Then said he to his wife, quite bluff,  
"My dear I thinks we've had enough,  
Come, let us fetch a glass of port  
Then take a walk around the court."  
To the library then they did repair  
Where everything was laid out there.  
Refreshed, they took a walk around  
The cloisters, decked with flowers profound,  
Choice plants and shrubs of every clime,  
Grew there in beauty so sublime;  
Cool fountains, too, threw out their spray  
Upon the flowers and plants so gay.  
"It seems quite an enchanted place"  
Said John Bray with astonished face,  
"It awakens scenes of Arabian nights

Which oft I've read much delight.”  
And round and round these two did go  
'Mid fainting lassed to and fro;  
Some worn out with fatigue repining,  
Some on the soft couches reclining,  
Some leaning on their lover's arms,  
With countenance so flushed and warm,  
And odorous fragrance did disclose  
Sprinkled o'er with lavender and rose,  
And many a fond youth you could scan  
O'er many a fair face ply the fan  
As they reclined, enchanting creatures,  
Glowing in their lovely features,  
Assuming oft to take a nap  
While lounging on their lover's lap,  
Yet very conscious all the while  
He worshipped their sweet charms and smiles.  
For what passions fill a lover's breast  
As in his arms his love seeks rest?  
How madly then he doth caress  
The author of his happiness;  
How he looks o'er, with longing eyes,  
Fain then would claim the beauteous prize;  
How his charmed soul is filled with bliss  
As unobserved he steals a kiss,  
None but those who hath known the pleasure  
Can with joy these transports treasure.  
Ye batchelors, ye are not human,  
If disdainful ye behold a woman,  
Bereft ye are of feelings fine  
Exquisite passions so divine,  
Ye never can have known true bliss  
Without true woman's loveliness.

\* \* \* \* \*

“Well, well!” said John Bray, with a smile,  
“This is a sight enough to beguile,  
To see these damsels I would fain  
Once more be a young man again.”  
Ah, little thought his dame, so kind,  
Just what was passing in his mind.  
But when a fine lass passed him bye,  
He'd say, with a twinkle in his eye,  
“That's a fine gal, is she not, dear?”  
Then Mrs Bray would look severe,  
“John, really do not talk such stuff  
A man like you, got old and gruff;  
To pass such opinions on these folk  
You will my anger soon provoke.”  
But John, he laughed and said “me dear  
You are the loveliest to me here,

Tho' now you are neither young or gay  
You hold the heart of me, John Bray,  
But, love, nothing to me can surpass  
The look of a smiling pretty lass,  
A handsome woman is a sight  
That really fills me with delight;  
You may call me a silly elf  
Because I thus express myself,  
Yet, dearest wife, I you assure  
My admiration's very pure,  
So, don't feel jealous, dearest wife,  
You know I love you more than life,  
For in your day none could surpass  
Thy beauty, my own faithful lass.”

\* \* \* \* \*

Just then a neighbour passed that way  
And sat herself by Mrs Bray,  
And then these two began to talk  
And John he very soon did walk -  
“Stop where you are, I'll soon be back,”  
And off he went just in a crack.  
The fact was John was getting dry,  
So to the library he did hie,  
There fell in with a neighbour too  
And cozy friends now were these two  
And then the wine went freely round,  
For wine, rare wine, did there abound.  
Many glasses there these two did drain  
Port, sherry, claret, and champagne,  
No stinting here, have what you please,  
All for enjoyment and your ease.  
Drinking and chatting they went on  
The tempting wine, they went it strong.  
Alas friend John, thou'rt on the way.  
Would some friendly hand thy drinking stay,  
Thou know'st not what thou'rt about  
Thou wilt be tight tonight no doubt.  
Among the guests they oft did pass  
And oft replenished they their glass  
Till soon they knew not what they said  
For their brains swam round their head,  
Linked arm in arm, they walked about  
And every now and then did shout  
“Here's health to Pembroke all his life  
And may he soon bring home a wife,  
So that again we may meet here  
And drink her health with jolly cheer.”  
Then another bumper down would go  
With wine they ne'er did overflow.  
John felt he couldn't stand much more

So hastily he sought the door  
And wishing his old friend good night  
He left the gay and festive sight.  
Now amongst the joyous busy scene  
He was not missed or scarce was seen,  
Unnoticed then he reached the door  
For he would fain take a short snore  
After which "I will be back again  
Or my wife will seek for me in vain,  
I am, I feel, very near tight,  
But a short snooze will set me right."  
Then thro' the thick shrubs and the trees  
He groped his way thro' dewy leaves,  
From side to side in the thick wood  
He made his way as best he could,  
The stars in heaven shone so bright  
Dispelling darkness on that night.  
The bright lights from the mansion shone  
A splendid sight to look upon,  
The early morning's freshning breeze  
Moaned gently in the tall elm trees,  
The blind bat twitted to and fro  
The glowworm on the grass did glow,  
The ring dove by its nest did coo  
The owl about the mansion flew,  
The gentle Nadder sped along  
Among the reeds and rushes strong.  
All else was quiet as the dead  
Save our hero's most unsteady tread,  
Or save the faint sounds of the ball  
As the music echoed thro' the hall.  
John hurried on, he knew not where,  
And wildly about him did stare,  
Oft stumbling up against some tree  
Whose stout old form he could not see,  
Till back from it he would rebound  
Unconsciously upon the ground.  
At last he broke into a road  
And off he went with his dread load,  
From side to side he fell along  
Nor knew if he was right or wrong,  
Then of a sudden he did fall  
Unconsciously against a wall.  
The blow it nearly stunned poor John  
Good gracious, what had he hit upon?  
He groped about, he found a door,  
And in he stumbled on the floor,  
And in a stupor there he lay  
Stretched at full length, did Farmer Bray,  
Dreaming, though quiet as a mouse  
That night in Master Shakespear's house.

## HIS DREAM

He dreamt he was a Lord himself,  
Rolling in honour, fame, and wealth;  
Just entered on his rich domain  
For ages held by his ancient name,  
The auspicious day he made a vow  
If health did but shine on his brow,  
His life it should be spent in ways  
That should merit the people's praise.  
And when the festive scenes were o'er  
His wide domains he did explore,  
With high and low he oft was found  
Encouraging all good works around,  
And rural beauty graced his land  
With sweet contentment on each hand.  
He encouraged every art and trade  
From the highest to the lowest grade;  
He did subscribe to every cause  
His name was greeted with applause,  
Never were the deserving poor  
Turned with scorn from his own door.  
Vile sycophants that fawning came  
Soon shrunk away from him in shame,  
With eye discerning, straight to view,  
With noble bearing, just and true,  
Virtue and uprightness was seen  
Imprinted on his noble mien.  
He wedded soon a virtuous wife,  
The dearest joy of all his life,  
And she presented him, anon,  
With an heir, an infant son,  
And sweet away their days did glide,  
None happier in this world wide,  
E'en far and near the folk did say  
How happy Lord and Lady Bray.

\* \* \* \* \*

But ah, alas there came a day  
He fell in dread temptations way,  
And at his club he oft would stay  
Gambling and drinking all the day,  
Sporting and pleasures was his theme  
And these he carried to extreme,  
His splendid equipage so grand  
Appeared at all races in the land,  
The turf men cheered him loud and strong,  
They knew he had a pocket long,  
Wherever he went these men would say  
“Come let us cheer the young Lord Bray.”

Thousands at first to him flew,  
For these turf men knew what to do,  
“Hold hard, said they, just let him win  
We soon our little game can spin.”  
And so it was, from bad to worse,  
From thousands unto empty purse,  
Nothing could turn his mind away  
'Twas racing, gambling day by day.  
His Lady downcast soon became  
In truth she looked not now the same,  
She knew her Lord was now a slave,  
To those gamblers, dreadful knaves,  
And oft did flow the silent tear  
For she loved him very dear,  
She knew he ruined soon would be  
For he went on so recklessly,  
She jewels sold to meet demands  
Made upon those racing stands,  
With grief her heart did overflow  
When contemplating all her woe.  
Things from the house went every day  
To meet the debts of my Lord Bray,  
Oh! how it pained her heart to know,  
To pay such debts these things did go,  
But she her Lord would not rebuke  
Nor give an unkind word or look,  
She well could see his state of mind,  
And she then would not prove unkind,  
She knew that he now day by day  
Was swiftly wasting all away.

\* \* \* \* \*

One night he left his sitting room  
And walked his Park wrapped up in gloom,  
Like a maniac he walked about  
Sometimes would mutter, sometimes shout,  
A fearful vision did him haunt  
A Lord brought to poverty and want,  
“Oh! Life is misery to me now  
Had I but kept unto my vow.  
What shall I do now to regain  
My former happiness again?  
But ah! alas! I feel 'tis o'er  
And happy I shall ne'er be more,  
For friends who kindly used to look  
Have now my company forsook,  
They know my splendid fortune's gone  
And me with scorn they look upon,  
When fortune smiled they thick did muster  
And round about my door did cluster,  
While the honey filled the flower



Then they sucked it every hour,  
Drained and drained it from its cell  
Till the flower then drooping fell.  
Oh! the false and flattering drones,  
Sucked the marrow from my bones,  
Wretches, they then away did fly  
And left me in poverty to die.  
Ah! such is life, and so 'twill be  
For ever till eternity.  
Vile self seems all this world's aims,  
Gold, gold, men cry with one acclaim  
Virtuous honour, illustrious fame,  
Oh! seems now but a passing name.

\* \* \* \* \*

Oh what remorse and bitter pain  
Is racking thro' my burning brain,  
The Devil tempts me strong to throw  
Myself away in yonder flow,  
To sacrifice a worthless life  
To close mine eyes from this dread strife.”

\* \* \* \* \*

Thus up and down the river's side  
He like a demon walked astride,  
He cast his eyes up to a tree  
And wished a halter he might see,  
Then madly raving run he would run  
To search for pistol or for gun,  
Then loudly call out for a knife  
To deprive himself of life.  
All sorts of things he did surmise,  
Misery and horror filled his eyes,  
A sudden impulse o'er him came  
And a tremor siezed his frame;  
No longer self he could control  
The Devil had upon him stole,  
Again he stopped short by the stream  
And his wild eyes fearful did gleam,  
Then yelling out a hideous scream  
He rushed headlong into the stream.

\* \* \* \* \*

The dreadful crash the silence broke  
The dreamer heard and he awoke.

\* \* \* \* \*

The sun was shining bright and gay

When from this dream awoke John Bray,  
He looked about with much surprise  
Then from his hard bed he did rise,  
Around he wildly did stare  
And wondered much how he got there.  
There straight before him 'gainst the wall  
A statue stood of Shakespear tall,  
His finger pointing to a scroll  
Wherein two lines was written whole,  
The well-known couplet of that sage  
Whose lofty thoughts fill many a page.

*“Life's a shadow, a player poor,  
Who the vicissitudes of life endure,  
Who struts and frets it on the stage  
Then sinks below, and not a page  
To tell of his, praps, wide spread fame,  
Nor pass a tear in memory of his name.”*

John read it with much admiration  
Then out he cried with exultation,  
“Will, Shakespear, Oh, thou merry wight,  
Hast been my bedfellow to-night?  
Thy ghost hath haunted me, I'm sure  
For what other spirit could allure  
And put such visions in my head  
While here I lay on this hard bed?  
For such a dream this night I've had  
The visions nearly drove me mad.  
But 'twas a dream, Ah, well the day!  
No Lord am I, but plain John Bray;  
Though not at home, I'm safe and sound  
Not, as I dreamt, in water drowned.  
And thus it so doth come to pass  
When ere I take an extra glass,  
Just when I feel merry and mellow  
And folks call me a jolly fellow,  
I am sure to run into a fog  
And find myself tight in a bog,  
But I'll amend, and will forbear,  
To taste too much the tempting snare,  
Or else perchance some evil may  
Upon me come when tight I lay,  
Then oh! great bard, when full of wine  
Worse company I may have than thine.”

\* \* \* \* \*

His chamber then he soon did quit,  
Just having trimmed himself a bit,  
And left the park quite unpercieved  
Tho' much about his wife he grieved.

'Twas ten o'clock as he went out  
And for his wife he look'd about.  
He sought their quarters where she slept,  
But found she hours ago had left.  
Then much he wished himself at home,  
And for it straight began to roam.  
He plodded on the weary miles  
And oft and oft did rest awhile,  
Expecting his wife, kind old heart,  
Again would meet him with the cart.  
No cart appeared, and John went on  
And his dame's lecture, o'er did con.  
Lame and tired, pained and sore,  
At last he reached his farm house door.  
In his easy chair he soon sat down  
His wife spoke not but gave a frown,  
John shuddered with the expectation  
For soon he saw her indignation;  
She was brewing up a hurricane  
And silence long would not retain;  
Then all at once she did let loose  
And rated him tho' without abuse.  
Loudly she did chastise John Bray  
But he scarce heard what she did say  
For while she poured her wrathful lore  
Her John did loud and louder snore.  
Nothing would do that he'd to say  
Her temper it must have its sway.  
He must be something more than human  
That tries to argue with a woman!  
John knew it, and he in silence lay,  
And let his dear wife have her say,  
He knew it then would not last long  
So his feigned sleep he did prolong.  
Tho' soundly there poor John was rated  
An hour saw the storm abated.  
Ah! sorry then his wife did feel  
And fain her anger would conceal  
And softly to him she did creep  
And kiss him in his feigned sleep.  
Then soon he woke and told her all,  
His great adventures at the ball,  
He told her also of his dream  
And of his drowning in the stream,  
At which his wife laughed heartily  
And wished much she'd been there to see.  
It did him good for since that day  
Sober hath kept our friend John Bray,  
Though oft his wife in chaff will say  
"Dear, do you recollect the day?"  
And he'll ne'er forget it I'll engage  
The day Lord Pembroke came of age.

FINIS