

**ABSENTEEISM; OR, THE LADIES'
SOIRÉE AT BRANDIPORT,
WITH A FULL AND PARTICULAR
ACCOUNT OF THE PROCEEDINGS**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649493234

Absenteeism; Or, the Ladies' Soirée at Brandiport, with a Full and Particular Account of the Proceedings by Anonymous

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ANONYMOUS

**ABSENTEEISM; OR, THE LADIES'
SOIRÉE AT BRANDIPOINT,
WITH A FULL AND PARTICULAR
ACCOUNT OF THE PROCEEDINGS**

The Ladies' Choice.

ABSENTEEISM:

OR,

THE LADIES' SOIRÉE

AT

BRANDIPORT,

WITH A FULL AND PARTICULAR ACCOUNT OF THE
PROCEEDINGS.

REPORTED BY A LOVER OF HOME.

"In the multitude of counsellors there is safety."—SOLOMON.

YORK:

W. PICKWELL, 22, PETERGATE.

1849.

Advertisement.

THE British press teems so plentifully with literary productions upon every department of utility, that an apology seems due to the public for obtruding another little work upon its attention. The present humble performance, which is only one among a multitude of contributions directly or indirectly promotive of the same grand purpose, has for its object the removal of an acknowledged evil, and the advancement of an unquestioned good.

The subject is so deeply important that it can scarcely be too much nor too frequently agitated. Waters will corrupt if allowed to stagnate. The following imaginary speeches may therefore aid in keeping the subject alive in the public mind if they do nothing more.

It is well known that every new advocate of any cause, generally invests it with fresh interest. The human intellect is as diversified as the human countenance.

There are no two writers nor speakers who will handle a given topic exactly and in all respects in the same way. It is this variety that causes so many volumes, differing very little in matter, to be read with so much eagerness. This peculiarity in the mind of man affords another hope that the present publication will be honored with an attentive perusal.

It occurred to the Author that the ideas sought to be conveyed might be as readable in the novel shape of speeches as in any other dress in which they could have been couched. Whether this form of imparting didactic suggestions be legitimate and satisfactory, must be left to the judgment of the reader. Many useful hints on household reform and domestic comfort are, it is presumed, embodied in the orations that the ladies are represented as delivering. And whether the little work obtain popular approval or otherwise, it is at any rate hoped that the good and the intelligent will put a charitable construction on the Author's motives, the whole having been begun and executed from a sincere desire to aid in removing an insuperable barrier to the happiness of English Homes.

A LOVER OF HOME.

November, 1849.

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Introduction.

PERSONS who have been accustomed to travel in the United Kingdom, and especially in the rural districts of England, will have observed that many of the towns bear to each other a very striking resemblance. They seem to be of a genus. Were it not for a few peculiarities they would scarcely be distinguishable from each other. BRANDIPORT, the fictitious name of the town with which we have more immediately to do, is one of the class. Its population, the manners and customs of its inhabitants, its public buildings, its streets, and its internal government, are just what we would expect to see on visiting a country town in England. To describe its situation or point out its exact locality would only be pandering to a needless curiosity. The perusal of the following pages may throw some light—as far as the reader's abode is concerned—upon its contiguity or remoteness.

The population of Brandiport is divided into four distinct grades. The *aristocracy* and *independent gentry*, of which there is a tolerably fair proportion; the *middle classes*, or persons engaged in trade, for Brandiport does not form an exception to the general rule that "England is a nation of shopkeepers;" the industrial poor,