

**MIRTH AND MORALITY: A  
COLLECTION OF  
ORIGINAL TALES, PP. 2-  
226**

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Mirth and Morality: A Collection of Original Tales, pp. 2-226 by Carlton Bruce

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**CARLTON BRUCE**

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A COLLECTION  
OF  
ORIGINAL TALES.

BY  
CARLTON BRUCE.



THE HAMPER, p. 217.

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**MIRTH AND MORALITY:**

**A COLLECTION OF**

**ORIGINAL, ENTERTAINING, AND INSTRUCTIVE**

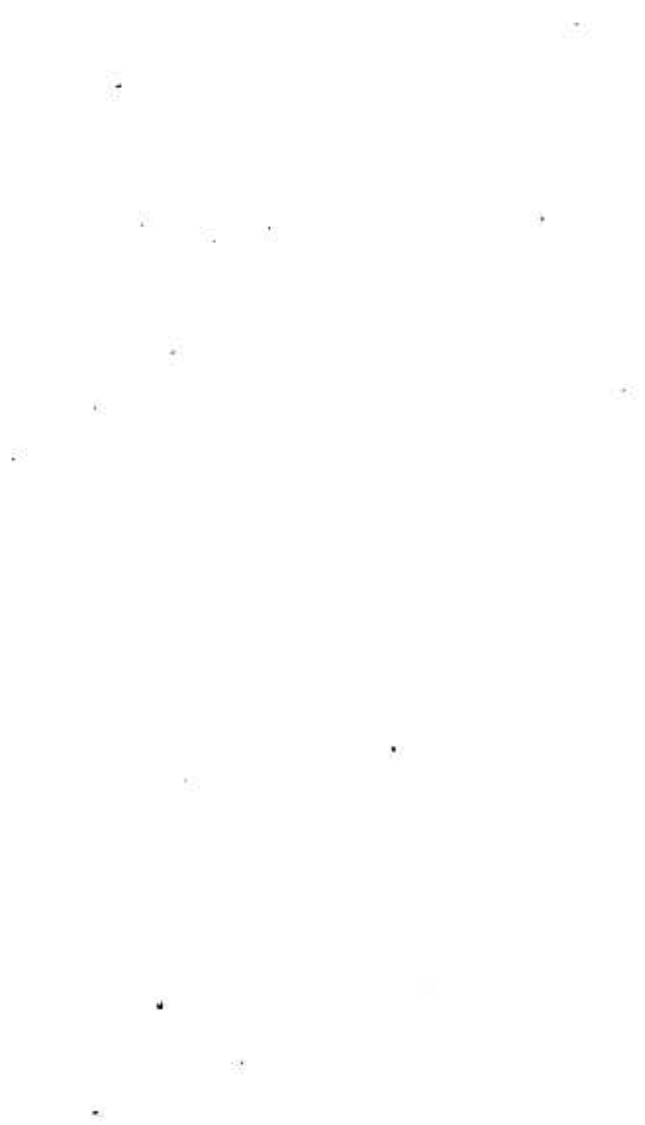
**TALES.**

**EMBELLISHED WITH**

**TWENTY BEAUTIFUL CUTS,**

**FROM**

**DRAWINGS BY GEORGE CRUIKSHANKS.**



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property was about to be divided among his relations. For this purpose the old house, the grounds round about it, and the furniture within, were disposed of, with the exception of a few trumpery articles, which were, really, too bad to be sold. The auctioneer agreed to give a trifle for this old lumber himself, determined, in his own mind, that he would contrive, by hook or by crook, to make his money of it.

No sooner was the sale over, than the auctioneer removed his lot of trumpery to a village, at a considerable distance from the place, and had a number of handbills printed to invite the attention of the ladies and gentlemen, farmers, and respectable people of the neighbourhood, to inspect an assortment of choice, valuable, and useful articles, well worth their attention, which he had to dispose of. The day for the auction was fixed, and the lumber of the auctioneer was placed in the great room at the Fighting Cocks, where it was to be sold.

How any man could have the impudence to offer such a heap of rubbish for sale, it is difficult to imagine; but the auctioneer was accustomed to such matters, and he had made up his mind to make a good bargain of his odds and ends. It was not possible to do this without telling many untruths, and deceiving his customers, but this he did not care a fig for. The day of the auction arrived, and as a sale was rather an unusual thing in the village, it produced quite a bustle in the neighbourhood, and drew together a great many people. Even the squire and his lady were there, but more out of curiosity, than because they wanted to buy. The lieutenant, on half pay, who lived in the white cottage, the farmers with their wives and daughters, and not a few of their labourers attended, as well as a score or more of the cottagers around.

When the large room at the Fighting Cocks was opened, and the company arrived, one after another, there was strange sneering

and joking at the odd lot of things placed all together. It is true there were a few articles of some value, which the auctioneer had sent in among the rest, but the principal things were hardly worth carrying away. Old tables, broken chairs, a chest of drawers, and a frying pan, two dish covers and a pepper box, a saddle and bridle, a large bunch of keys, and a set of cracked china, a copper teakettle, three books, a tobaccobox, a set of harness, a bootjack, and an old carpet, a painting, an ivory toothbrush, and a brass finger ring, brass fireirons, a straw hat, and a pair of lace ruffles; these things, and a hundred others, were placed together, but no man in his proper senses would have given twenty shillings for the lot.

A table at the other end of the room was well supplied with jugs of ale, glasses, and drinking cups, and the auctioneer made his appearance as the church clock struck twelve.

Perhaps there was not a man in the king-