

To Bernard Barton

His friend C. L. sends, Greeting;

When last you left your Woodbridge pretty,
To stare at sights, and see the City,
If I your meaning understood,
You wish'd a Picture, cheap, but good.
The colouring? decent; clear, not muddy;
To suit a Poet's quiet Study;
Where Books, and Prints, for delectation
Hang, rather than vain ostentation.
The subject? what I pleased - if comely -
But something scriptural & homely;
A sober piece - not gay or wanton -
For winter fire-sides to descant on;
The theme so scrupulously handled,
A Quaker might look on unscandal'd;
Such as might satisfy Ann Knight,
And classic Metford just not fright.
Just such a one I've found, and send it;
If liked, I give - if not, but lend it.
The moral? nothing can be sounder.
The fable? 'tis its own expounder:
A Mother teaching to her chit
Some Good Book, and explaining it.
He, silly urchin, tired of lesson,
His learning lays no mighty stress on;
But seems to hear not what he hears;
Thrusting his fingers in his ears,
Like Obstinate, that perverse funny one,
In honest Parable of Bunyan.

His

His working Sister, more sedate
Listens; but in a sort of state,
The painter meant for steadiness,
But has a tinge of sullenness;
and at first sight she seems to brook
As ill her Needle, as his Book.

This is the Picture. For the Frame, -
'Tis not ill-suited to the same:
Oak-carved - not gilt, for fears of falling;
Old-fashioned; plain, yet not appalling.

Sent to B. B.

June 11th 1827

Canfield, The Chase