

# Speak Evil of No Man.

WRITTEN BY *The Lost Poems*  
GEORGE 'RUSTICUS' HICKLING



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*The Lost Poems*

This book is a collection of six previously lost poems  
Remastered and Restored by Dan Barker.

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## INTRODUCTION

This ebook is one which excites me very much. I am beyond delighted to be able to recover and share these poems with you. This is a collection of six previously lost poems, originally published in the *Nottinghamshire Guardian* between February 1862 and February of 1865. All poems were written by the late, great George 'Rusticus' Hickling, without exception. The work of Rusticus means the world to me and I am extremely passionate about restoring, recovering and saving his poetry from the often-unforgiving hands of time.

*Echoes from Nature* (1863) and *Sectarianism Versus Christianity* (1881), two out of five books published by Rusticus between 1865 and 1892, are *still* missing. I am unsure if *Sectarianism Versus Christianity* is a volume of poetry, so if it isn't, it's likely that four of these recently uncovered gems were never published in a book at all.

A few of these poems were already in pretty bad shape, so transcribing them was difficult at times, though I am certain and confident that those which were degraded in places, remain accurate to the original. I hope that you enjoy these poems or in the words of Rusticus himself...

*"Reader, if in my writing you find anything to gratify, amuse and instruct, I shall be satisfied."*

Love, Always

- *Dan Barker*  
July 4<sup>th</sup> 2021  
Hucknall, Notts.

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## SPEAK EVIL OF NO MAN

Haste not to say an evil thing  
About thy fellow man;  
Nor think that thou a model art  
Upon a perfect plan.  
And when the breath of slander flies  
Around the social board,  
Add not unto the poison there,  
But speak a healing word.

Concessions should be ever made,  
And little faults forgiven,  
With mutual interchange of love,  
"Till seventy times and seven."  
There's a light and good in every heart,  
As well as darkening ill;-  
T'increase the good it oft depends  
Upon another's will.

Think well before the fiery wrath  
You on your neighbour vent;  
That neighbour in his secret soul  
May even now repent.  
There's pleasure when the heart forgives,

And clouds are made to fly;  
A lustrous halo spans the soul  
Like rainbow tints on high.

There's pleasure in the great designs  
Which labour in the heart  
To live for others, and to act  
A manly, noble part.  
There's a pleasure in when a kind word falls  
Like dew upon the ground;  
When blades of tender feeling spring  
In clusters all around.

Originally published in the *Nottinghamshire Guardian*  
Friday, February 21<sup>st</sup> 1862.



## THE FAMINE WAS SORE IN THE LAND

“We are met to consider the best means of palliating – would God I could say removing – a great national calamity, the like whereof in modern times has never been witnessed in this favoured land” – *Vide the Earl of Derby's Speech at Manchester.*

Hark! On the gale is borne a bitter cry!  
A lamentation surges through land,  
In swelling waves of melancholy sound,  
And strikes ere king upon the tender strings  
Of Pitying hearts which bleed with sympathy.  
The storms of winter howl about the doors  
Of darke'ned homes, plunged deep into th' abyss  
Of black distress, and doleful misery,  
Unsought and unforeseen. With bony hands,  
Whose grip destroys the vitals, and burns deep  
Into the gushings of the inner soul,  
Like gnawing worms arriving from the grave,  
See Famine throws her gaunt and ghastly form  
Upon the ground which erst was blooming fruitful.  
See, how her sickly shadow darkens all  
The fairer and the sweeter rays of joy.  
The smiles of plenty and prosperity,  
And all the rosy tints of cheerful life,



Are sicklied o'er with gloom. And in her wake,  
Where thickest shades describe her hideous trail,  
See Pestilence is crouching on the earth.  
In waiting attitude to bind the shroud  
About victims doomed.

A mighty wail

With anguish pregnant, and with horror fraught,  
Wrung from the hearts of hunger-stricken crowds  
Re-echoes like a death-knell through the air,  
And shocks humanity. A fearful cloud  
Arising from the seething pot of war,  
And floating on with gathering blackness still,  
Alights, o'rewhelms, and like a dread eclipse  
Obscures the light and scares the fleeting day.

Old England's toiling thousands, innocent,  
And blameless of cause, are crushed and bruised  
By such a weighty, dire calamity,  
Such sad disastrous chance and consequence,  
Which flow from deeds of horror in a land  
Where fools and madmen stive in deadly fight,  
That all the world looks on with pitying eye.  
The gates of labour close and all is still;  
The whirring wheels of commerce now repose;  
The throbbing pulses of the engine heart  
No longer gush with fast producing power;  
The funnel smokes not, the deserted mill  
Illumes no more the gloomy mighty scene;  
The fount is dry, no work, no food is there!  
All, all is dreary, savouring of the grave  
Of bleak starvation. See thar mother's eye,  
Delirious gazing on th' expiring babe  
Which hangs upon her famine-stricken breast:  
See where the father's thin and meagre form  
Is gliding ghost-like round his cheerless home  
In sullen sorrow parting his last bread

Among his famished children clamorous,  
With blue-skinned visage sharp.

Ah, what a sight!

The homes that once in pleasant smiles rejoiced;  
Where danced the firelight, and where smoked the urn,  
Where happy faces gathered round the lamp  
At eventide, and comfort glowed about  
Each gladden'd heart; where childhood's memory songs  
And blithesome laughter echoed through each room  
At morning's dawn, and twilight's witching hour,  
Are desolate and wrapped in sombre woe.  
At the repeated calls of sad necessity  
The comforts and conveniences, all  
The cherished treasures of the dear fireside  
Went one by one, procuring scanty food  
Which labour now denies. There huddled close  
About embers of the cheerless grate,  
The last resource exhausted, and the last  
Fond rat home expiring in the gloom,  
In pictured groups of abject destitution,  
With naked rooms and hallow cupboards bare,  
Where dance with mocking attitude and mien.  
The famine spectres – hideous, quaint, and thin,  
Without barrier to resist the breath  
Of bitter frost or stormy wintery wind,  
The suffering wretches ready for the tomb  
Are seen on every side. And thus they fall  
Without a shadow of deserving fault  
Upon their broken hearts.

And this, alas!

Upon the bosom of our island home.  
This, this in England, where the golden bloom  
Of richest plenty and prosperity  
Shines far above the feeble rays of light  
Which 'lumine other lands! And does she then  
With apathy behold her suffering children?  
Her sons and daughters dutiful and brave,

Who with a patience and fortitude  
Which only sternest heroes can command,  
Have borne the pangs of direst misery;  
Who from a cause which they could ne'er avert,  
Have felt the iron rankle in their souls,  
Have seen their children starve, their homes become  
Dark, chill, and dreary as the abode of death,  
And ere they deign to ask for charity  
Will roll themselves in Famine's winding-sheet?  
And on the hearthstone die!

And will it be?

Will England see her children perish thus?  
That God forbid! Though the heavy is the blow,  
She hastes to save the falling in her arms,  
She pours the balm into the festering wound,  
And heals the bleeding part by famine pierced.  
Her noble souls and loving hearts respond  
To pity's call, and in a flowing stream  
The ready aid and sympathy impart.  
See how her wealthy aristocracy,  
Her merchant princes, and her Christian sons,  
Unto the rescue fly. See what a flood  
Of golden charity and yearning love,  
Like glorious sunshine in the morn,  
Through every dwelling and through every heart,  
Pours forth abundant. England does her duty!  
And like herself she does it well and nobly.  
Philanthropy and broad benevolence,  
The cherished offspring of her Christian creed,  
Shine sunlike on her great illustrious brow,  
And to the darker souls of the other lands  
A bright example of resplendent deeds  
She beams refulgent.

Honour to thy name!

Long live thy greatness, O my father land!  
Long live thy germs of purity and truth,  
Thy manly hearts and noble institutions;

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And star of thy nobility  
Ne'er lose its sheen. Be silenced ev'ry tongue  
That would traduce thee. Clouds shall pass away,  
And from the shades of this calamity  
Though shalt emerge more glorious and sublime.

Originally published in the *Nottinghamshire Guardian*  
Friday, December 19<sup>th</sup> 1862.



## SING WHILE YOU WORK, BOYS

Sing while you work, boys, sing while you work,  
Though the sweat may be beading down your brow;  
And suffer no darkness within you to lurk,  
Or sorrow your spirits to bow.

Sing while you work, though hard be the task,  
The burden 'twill seem to make light;  
When the duty's perform'd in the sun you shall bask,  
And your home shall be filled with delight.

Sing while you work, boys, never be sad,  
For that will unnerve the strong arm;  
Look forward for ever with feelings all glad,  
And a heart your fellows all warm.

Sing while you work, boys, never stand still  
When an obstacle comes in your way;  
But face it, surmount it, and that with a will  
Which nothing can or dismay.

Think while you work, boys; to labour is good,  
And it need not entrammel your mind;  
Bend not to the earth o'er your burden to brood,  
But rise with a feeling refined.

Think while you work, boys; labour is wealth,  
And it wins for you honour's bright name:  
Think while you work, have a mind full of health,  
While your hands may be earning fame.

Think, while you work – no fetters confine  
The wings of the fluttering thought;  
Let it soar where the beams of intelligence shine,  
Where the glimpses of wisdom are caught.

Think while you work, boys; intellect towers  
O'er all that's against it arrayed:  
Think high and deeply, and out your own powers,  
Which labour need never degrade.

Originally published in the *Nottinghamshire Guardian*  
Friday, October 28<sup>th</sup> 1864.



## THE FOLLIES OF AGE

A song respectfully inscribed (without the slightest permission) to everybody in general, and to nobody in particular. TUNE - "There's Nae Luck About the House."

I'll sing you now a little stave,  
It shan't be very long;  
But pray excuse me if I draw  
The picture rather strong.  
We live in such a glorious age,  
Our pace it is so fast,  
We need a little check sometimes  
Or we should never last.

Our lives are full of oddities,  
And follies too, I fear;  
And many a false disguise there is  
Which men are apt to wear.  
Though little of *reality*,  
There's much of pomp and *show*;  
And tinsel glitters in your eye  
Wherever you may go.

O what a foolish habit 'tis  
That staying out at night,  
And coming home at such an hour

In such an awful plight.  
A folly 'tis to drink too much,  
To smoke ourselves away;  
To turn a rank Teetotal is  
A folly too I say.

Some men have got to such pitch,  
They are so very wise,  
No mortal man can touch them, or  
Throw dust into their eyes.  
O they are quite infallible,  
They never can be taught!  
But when a sharper casts his net,  
They're just the first that's caught!

To go and by a horse and think  
You've got a bargain cheap,  
To think if you'd a little *farm*  
A fortune you should reap;  
To call yourself a gentleman  
When you are but a "snob,"  
To boast about your money when  
You are not worth a - "bob."

To think that you are always right,  
And everybody wrong;

To strut about ill borrowed plumes,  
Your betters all among,  
To go to law and think to win,  
To try to borrow money;  
To think that ever scheme in life  
is all white bread and honey.

To get a lot of property  
And call it all your own,  
When you now the "sleeping partner" live  
Not very far "up town".  
To keep up those "appearances"  
With other people's cash,



T'inflate yourself with dangerous pride,  
Till all at once you – smash!

To do a lot of silly things  
Because it is the fashion;  
And if a friend just tells you on't  
To fly into passion.  
To lie in bed till ten o'clock,  
To breakfast just at noon;  
To go out and wake a morning call  
At four in the afternoon!

To ape the manners of the great,  
When you're not *very* small;  
To build a little house and name it  
Spunkum-Spunkum Hall!  
To enter into business,  
And debut the profits o'er;  
And had the "chickens" ere they're hatched,  
Poor things, they are no more!

To hold yourself responsible  
for other people's debt;  
And blind unto your own affairs  
Till you're in the *Gazette*.  
To give a reckless credit to  
A man you do not know;  
To try to "praise the wind" that way,  
Contrary winds will blow.

To try to make the world believe  
That you are mighty clever:  
To call yourself at seventy-six  
As good a man as ever.  
To think at eighteen years of age  
You are a full-grown man;  
To sworn your father's good advice,  
And call him "our old man."

To think yourself so handsome, when  
You're so very plain;  
To find yourself at sixty-two  
A whining love-sick swain.  
To think that every girl you meet  
Would like you for a beau,-  
But only ask them what they think,  
They turn the nose up so.

The ladies are of nature's gems  
The brightest of bright;  
But O the "gems" sometimes they wear  
They do look "*such a fright.*"  
They spoil, their figure, mar their looks,  
With such ridiculous trash on;  
It matters not, it must be so,  
Because it is "the fashion."

I don't wish to offend you, dear;  
Pray think the matter o'er -  
*Bedecked* a little *less* you'd look  
Adorned a great deal more.  
When "sailing" forth into the street,  
Observed by every eye,  
Full feathered in the "latest mode,"  
You do look "such a Guy."

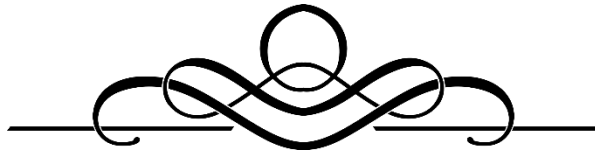
Of course you'll say, those "horrid" men  
Are but unseemly fops -  
All hair and chair, and glittering rings,  
Tobacco and "peg-top."  
They walk about in pompous show,  
The rase, the *roue*, the dandy,  
For nothing good but just to "do£  
Cigars and wine and brandy.

Then what a fool man sometimes is  
When he falls in love,  
The folly that he's guilty of  
I won't attempt to prove:

He'll run for miles and back again,  
He scarcely goes to bed:  
He knows not whether he's on his legs  
Or standing on his head.

Now bachelors, one word to you,  
And then my task is done:  
You thought you had escaped the lash,  
But oh no, no such fun.  
'Tis the great folly of the age  
To lead a life unwed,  
And a single man, at thirty-two  
(especially if he's "*well to do*"),  
Wants whipping off to bed!

Originally published in the *Nottinghamshire Guardian*  
Friday, November 4<sup>th</sup> 1864.



## HEXAMETERS FOR THE SEASON

Thick lie the autumn leaves about the muddy pathway,  
Loud roar the surging storms across the troubled heavens,  
Cold fly the feathery snow-flakes from the northern boarders,  
Fierce comes the mighty frost-king from his icy fastness;  
Bitter and keen the wind howls through the silent woodland,  
Sullen and dense the mist hangs on the dreary moorland;  
Murky and black the air with pattering rain drops teeming,  
Leafless, the sorrowing trees bow to the raging tempest,  
Tearful and sad the sun glints through the sombre cloudland,  
Barren and bleak the hill-tops, valleys silent weeping;  
Nature laments and mourns the quickly closing daylight;  
Gloomy the little meadow with its cattle crouching,  
Huddled in groups the sheep lie 'neath the hedgerow shadows;  
Copses and shady groves in death-like silence languish;  
Flits now from branch to branch the solitary birdie;  
Hushed is the cheerful warbling, gone the pretty flowers.  
Slowly the dripping team moves o'er the sodden fallows;  
Weary and wet the ploughboy seeks his cottage dwelling.  
Straight to the wood the rooks their solemn flight are taking.  
Starlings in moving clouds about the air are wavering:

Linnets and finches gather to the farm-yard shelter,  
Chattering the boding north birds see the scarlet hedge-fruit.

Moans now the fitful night breeze with a dirge-like  
cadence,  
Wailings and mystic shriekings fill the leaden concave;  
Wolf-like about the closely-shattered windows prowling,  
Boreas the bold comes with his motley train ferocious;  
Close round the cottage hearth the children quickly cluster;  
Shrivelled and rustling comes upon the floor a leaflet;  
Louder, still louder, now biting winds to bluster,;  
Closer, still closer, how the little ones are creeping!

Winter relentless winter, at the door is knocking;  
Hard-hearted cruel winter, fearful in his coming,  
Bethink you once again of England's poor and needy:  
Bread-winning powers now are lost unto her thousands,  
Closed are the gates of labour to the hungry numbers,  
Sorrow and sadness meeting on the frozen doorstep.  
Silent and sad she sits, that mother pale and weary;  
Bread, bread, the children cry, her heart is rent asunder;  
Gaunt Poverty! Thy cup to her is overflowing;  
Shuddering afresh at each loud, hollow gust repeated,  
Winter, stern winter, to her chilly fireside creepeth.

Hear sinking down and down, the father looks around him,  
Cheerless and cold his home, the sigh is in his bosom;  
Prospective darkness closes on his narrow vision,  
Words come not to his lips, but tears bedew his eyelids;  
Slowly the sable night drags on its lengthened shadow,  
Sluggish and cold the morning creeps across the moorland,  
Doleful and sad the sound still on his slumbers breaking, –  
Winter, stern winder, now is at the door!

Originally published in the *Nottinghamshire Guardian*  
Friday, November 25<sup>th</sup> 1864.



## IDEAS ABOUT NAMES

Respectfully dedicated to "The Girls."

Mary is a noble girl,  
With highly polished mind;  
And Polly is a laughing girl,  
As playful as the wind.

Annie is a charming girl,  
With quick wit;  
And Lucy, like a fairy, will  
About your pathway flit.

Elizabeth is stately,  
Tall, lady-like, and proud;  
While Lizzie is a sunbeam,  
Without a trace of cloud.

Bets is a pretty maid,  
Sweet, innocent, and pure;  
And Bessy is confiding,  
Her love is ever sure.

Betty has some rosy arms,  
On which to twirl the mop;

And Bess was never known to rise  
Above the scullery slop.

Caroline has such a mass  
Of curly golden tresses;  
And Lively Fanny smothers you  
With, O, such sweet caresses.

Ann has a charming figure,  
But her temper's rather short;  
And Nancy like a lark will sing,  
And like a lambkin sport.

Alice is sweet temper'd and  
She loves her darling mother;  
While Sally with the laughing eyes,  
Will "stick up" for her brother.

Sarah is a modest girl,  
And always stays at home;  
While Jenny's always looking out  
For frolics as they come.

Catherine has a rosy face,  
With sweet pouting lips;  
And Kitty is a dairymaid,  
With hands upon her hips.

Kate likes the boys, but breaks their hearts,  
She is a sad coquette;  
And Katty is amongst her friend  
The dear, darling "pet".

Emily and Emma are  
A pair of lovely creatures,  
Such glossy hair, such pearly teeth,  
Such finely chiselled features.

Charlotte is a pleasant girl,  
Most sensible and true;  
While Hanna, O, I grieve to say,  
Is something of a shrew.

Ellen loves the pretty flowers,  
And wears a bonny hat;  
While Nelly, full of mischief,  
Will do she knows not what.

Margaret is a little prude,  
Though winning and refined;  
And Rachel and Rebecca are  
Of staid sober mind.

Sophia, Bell, and Julia,  
In drawing-rooms are met,  
They wear their hair in ringlets,  
And bow to etiquette.

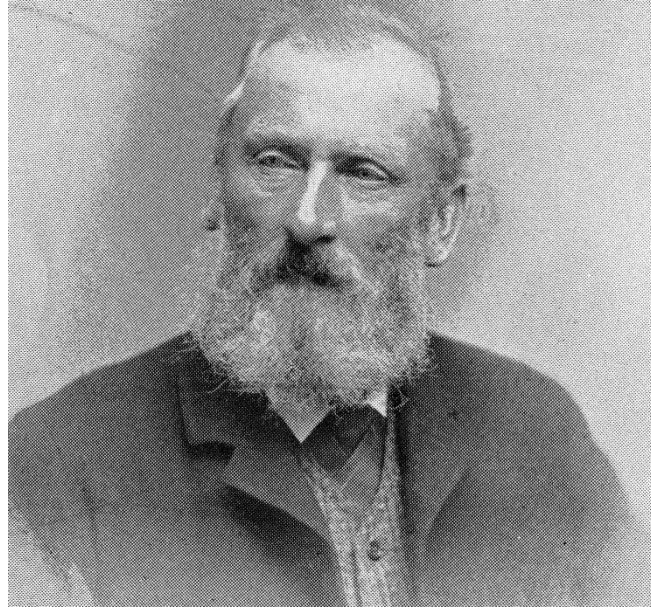
Clara, Dora, Rose and Floss,  
Are perfect beauties all –  
While Zillah is a blue-eyed sylph;  
Selina's dark and tall.

O Deborah! O Dorothy!  
O Dinah and Ophelia!  
O Juliana! O Susannah!  
O Milly and O Leah!  
O Judy! O Jemima!  
O Bridget! O Priscilla!  
My muse, for you, *will* hang her harp,  
Upon the weeping *wil-la!*

Originally published in the *Nottinghamshire Guardian*  
Friday, February 10<sup>th</sup> 1865.



## ABOUT THE AUTHOR



George 'Rusticus' Hickling, born in 1827 in Cotgrave, Nottinghamshire, was a prolific poet and author who published five books between 1856 to 1892, publishing his first book, *The Mystic Land and Other Poems*, when he was twenty-nine years old. He worked as framework knitter from the age of thirteen until his retirement around 1900. His father, Thomas also worked as a framework knitter. He was married to Ann Smart from circa 1850 until her sad passing at the age of 56 in 1880. George never married again. He passed away on July 8th 1909 at the age of 82.

## S O C I A L M E D I A

### **GEORGE HICKLING**

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