

My Thomas, do you hold —
 A brain that's thick and heavy,
 A heart that's dull and cold.

“Too dull to feel depression, 175
 Too hard to heed distress,
 Too cold to yield to passion
 Or silly tenderness.
 March on — your road is open
 To wealth, Tom, and success. 180

“Ned sinneth in extravagance,
 And you in greedy lust.”
 (“T'faith,” says Ned, “our father
 Is less polite than just.”)
 “In you, son Tom, I've confidence, 185
 But Ned I cannot trust.

“Wherefore my lease and copyholds,
 My lands and tenements,
 My parks, my farms, and orchards,
 My houses and my rents, 190
 My Dutch stock and my Spanish stock,
 My five and three per cents,

“I leave to you, my Thomas” —
 (“What, all?” poor Edward said.
 “Well, well, I should have spent them, 195
 And Tom's a prudent head”) —
 “I leave to you, my Thomas, —
 To you IN TRUST for Ned.”

The wrath and consternation 200
 What poet e'er could trace
 That at this fatal passage
 Came o'er Prince Tom his face;
 The wonder of the company,
 And honest Ned's amaze?

“Tis surely some mistake,” 205
 Good-naturedly cries Ned;

The lawyer answered gravely,
 "’Tis even as I said;
'Twas thus his gracious Majesty
 Ordain'd on his death-bed. 210

"See, here the will is witness'd.
 And here's his autograph."
"In truth, our father's writing,"
 Says Edward, with a laugh;
"But thou shalt not be a loser, Tom; 215
 We'll share it half and half."

"Alas! my kind young gentleman,
 This sharing cannot be;
'Tis written in the testament
 That Brentford spoke to me, 220
I do forbid Prince Ned to give
 Prince Tom a halfpenny.

'He hath a store of money,
 But ne'er was known to lend it;
He never helped his brother; 225
 The poor he ne'er befriended;
He hath no need of property
 Who knows not how to spend it.

"Poor Edward knows but how to spend,
 And thrifty Tom to hoard; 230
Let Thomas be the steward then,
 And Edward be the lord;
And as the honest labourer
 Is worthy his reward,

"I pray Prince Ned, my second son, 235
 And my successor dear,
To pay to his intendant
 Five hundred pounds a year;
And to think of his old father,
 And live and make good cheer." 240

Such was old Brentford's honest testament,

He did devise his moneys for the best,
And lies in Brentford church in peaceful rest.
Prince Edward lived, and money made and spent;
But his good sire was wrong, it is confess'd, 245
To say his son, young Thomas, never lent.
He did. Young Thomas lent at interest,
And nobly took his twenty-five per cent.

Long time the famous reign of Ned endured
O'er Chiswick, Fulham, Brentford, Putney, Kew, 250
But of extravagance he ne'er was cured.
And when both died, as mortal men will do,
'Twas commonly reported that the steward
Was very much the richer of the two.

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