

MY OLD COAT

Mortimer Collins

a poem

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I

THIS old velvet coat has grown queer,
I admit, And changed is the colour and loose is the fit :
Though to beauty it certainly cannot aspire
'Tis a cosy old coat for a seat by the fire.

II

When I first put it on it was awfully swell :
I went to a pic-nic, met Lucy Lepel,
Made a hole in the heart of that sweet little girl,
And disjoined the nose of her lover, the Earl.

III

We rambled away o'er the moorland together :
My coat was bright purple, and so was the heather,
And so was the sunset that blazed in the west,
As Lucy's fair tresses were laid on my breast.

IV

We plighted our troth 'neath that sunset aflame,
But Lucy returned to her Earl all the same ;
She's a grandmamma now, and is going down hill,
But my old velvet coat is a friend to me still.

V

It was built by a tailor of mighty renown,
Whose art is no longer the talk of the town :
A magical picture my memory weaves
When I thrust my tired arms through its easy old sleeves.

VI

I see in my fire, through the smoke of my pipe,
Sweet maidens of old that are long over-ripe,
And a troop of old cronies, right gay cavaliers,
Whose guineas paid well for champagne at Watier's.

VII

A strong generation, who drank, fought, and kissed,
Whose hands never trembled, whose shots never missed,
Who lived a quick life, for their pulses beat high—
We remember them well, sir, my old coat and I.

VIII

Ah, gone is the age of wild doings at Court,
Rotten boroughs, knee-breeches, hair-triggers, and port ;
Still I've got a magnum to moisten my throat,
And I'll drink to the Past in my tattered old coat.



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