

*A Modest  
Proposal*

& other short pieces  
including  
*A Tale of a Tub*

by

Jonathan Swift

A PENN STATE  
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Jonathan Swift (November 30, 1667 – October 19, 1745) was an Anglo-Irish cleric, Dean of St. Patrick's, Dublin, satirist, essayist, political pamphleteer (first for Whigs then for Tories), and poet.

—Courtesy Wikipedia.org

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# A Modest Proposal

BY

JOHNATHAN SWIFT

FOR PREVENTING THE CHILDREN OF POOR PEOPLE IN IRELAND  
FROM BEING A BURDEN TO THEIR PARENTS OR COUNTRY,  
AND FOR MAKING THEM BENEFICIAL TO THE PUBLIC

IT IS A MELANCHOLY OBJECT to those who walk through this great town or travel in the country, when they see the streets, the roads, and cabin doors, crowded with beggars of the female sex, followed by three, four, or six children, all in rags and importuning every passenger for an alms. These mothers, instead of being able to work for their honest livelihood, are forced to employ all their time in strolling to beg sustenance for their helpless infants, who, as they grow up, either turn thieves for want of work, or leave their dear native country to fight for the Pretender in Spain, or sell themselves to the Barbadoes.

I think it is agreed by all parties that this prodigious number of children in the arms, or on the backs, or at the heels of their mothers, and frequently of their fathers, is in the present deplorable state of the kingdom a very great additional grievance; and therefore whoever could find out a fair, cheap, and easy method of making these children sound, useful members of the commonwealth would deserve so well of the public as to have his statue set up for a preserver of the nation.

But my intention is very far from being confined to provide only for the children of professed beggars; it is of a much greater extent, and shall take in the whole number of infants at a certain age who are born of parents in

effect as little able to support them as those who demand our charity in the streets.

As to my own part, having turned my thoughts for many years upon this important subject, and maturely weighed the several schemes of other projectors, I have always found them grossly mistaken in their computation. It is true, a child just dropped from its dam may be supported by her milk for a solar year, with little other nourishment; at most not above the value of two shillings, which the mother may certainly get, or the value in scraps, by her lawful occupation of begging; and it is exactly at one year old that I propose to provide for them in such a manner as instead of being a charge upon their parents or the parish, or wanting food and raiment for the rest of their lives, they shall on the contrary contribute to the feeding, and partly to the clothing, of many thousands.

There is likewise another great advantage in my scheme, that it will prevent those voluntary abortions, and that horrid practice of women murdering their bastard children, alas, too frequent among us, sacrificing the poor innocent babes, I doubt, more to avoid the expense than the shame, which would move tears and pity in the most savage and inhuman breast.

The number of souls in this kingdom\* being usually reckoned one million and a half, of these I calculate there may be about two hundred thousand couple whose wives are breeders; from which number I subtract thirty thousand couples who are able to maintain their own children, although I apprehend there cannot be so many under the present distress of the kingdom; but this being granted, there will remain an hundred seventy thousand breeders. I again subtract fifty thousand for those women who miscarry, or whose children die by accident or disease within the year. There only remain an hundred and twenty thousand children of poor parents annually born. The question therefore is, how this number shall be reared and provided for, which, as I have already said, under the present situation of affairs, is utterly impossible by all the methods hitherto proposed. For we can neither employ them in handicraft or agriculture; we neither build houses (I mean in the country) nor cultivate land. They can very seldom pick up a livelihood by stealing till they arrive at six years old, except where they are of towardly parts; although I confess they learn the rudiments much earlier, during which time they can however be looked upon only as probationers, as I have been informed by a principal gentleman in the county of Cavan, who protested to me that he never knew

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\* Ireland

above one or two instances under the age of six, even in a part of the kingdom so renowned for the quickest proficiency in that art.

I am assured by our merchants that a boy or a girl before twelve years old is no salable commodity; and even when they come to this age they will not yield above three pounds, or three pounds and half a crown at most on the Exchange; which cannot turn to account either to the parents or the kingdom, the charge of nutriment and rags having been at least four times that value.

I shall now therefore humbly propose my own thoughts, which I hope will not be liable to the least objection.

I have been assured by a very knowing American of my acquaintance in London, that a young healthy child well nursed is at a year old a most delicious, nourishing, and wholesome food, whether stewed, roasted, baked, or boiled; and I make no doubt that it will equally serve in a fricassee or a ragout\*.

I do therefore humbly offer it to public consideration that of the hundred and twenty thousand children, already computed, twenty thousand may be reserved for breed, whereof only one fourth part to be males, which is more than we allow to sheep, black cattle, or swine; and my reason is that these children are seldom the fruits of marriage, a circumstance not much regarded by our savages, therefore one male will be sufficient to serve four females. That the remaining hundred thousand may at a year old be offered in sale to the persons of quality and fortune through the kingdom, always advising the mother to let them suck plentifully in the last month, so as to render them plump and fat for a good table. A child will make two dishes at an entertainment for friends; and when the family dines alone, the fore or hind quarter will make a reasonable dish, and seasoned with a little pepper or salt will be very good boiled on the fourth day, especially in winter.

I have reckoned upon a medium that a child just born will weigh twelve pounds, and a solar year if tolerably nursed increaseth to twenty-eight pounds.

I grant this food will be somewhat dear, and therefore very proper for landlords, who, as they have already devoured most of the parents, seem to have the best title to the children.

Infant's flesh will be in season throughout the year, but more plentiful in March, and a little before and after. For we are told by a grave author, an eminent French physician [François Rabelais], that fish being a prolific

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\* highly seasoned meat stew

diet, there are more children born in Roman Catholic countries about nine months after Lent than at any other season; therefore, reckoning a year after Lent, the markets will be more glutted than usual, because the number of popish infants is at least three to one in this kingdom; and therefore it will have one other collateral advantage, by lessening the number of Papists among us.

I have already computed the charge of nursing a beggar's child (in which list I reckon all cottagers, laborers, and four fifths of the farmers) to be about two shillings per annum, rags included; and I believe no gentleman would repine to give ten shillings for the carcass of a good fat child, which, as I have said, will make four dishes of excellent nutritive meat, when he hath only some particular friend or his own family to dine with him. Thus the squire will learn to be a good landlord, and grow popular among the tenants; the mother will have eight shillings net profit, and be fit for work till she produces another child.

Those who are more thrifty (as I must confess the times require) may flay the carcass; the skin of which artificially dressed\* will make admirable gloves for ladies, and summer boots for fine gentlemen.

As to our city of Dublin, shanbles\*\* may be appointed for this purpose in the most convenient parts of it, and butchers we may be assured will not be wanting; although I rather recommend buying the children alive, and dressing them hot from the knife as we do roasting pigs.

A very worthy person, a true lover of his country, and whose virtues I highly esteem, was lately pleased in discoursing on this matter to offer a refinement upon my scheme. He said that many gentlemen of this kingdom, having of late destroyed their deer, he conceived that the want of venison might be well supplied by the bodies of young lads and maidens, not exceeding fourteen years of age nor under twelve, so great a number of both sexes in every county being now ready to starve for want of work and service; and these to be disposed of by their parents, if alive, or otherwise by their nearest relations. But with due deference to so excellent a friend and so deserving a patriot, I cannot be altogether in his sentiments; for as to the males, my American acquaintance assured me from frequent experience that their flesh was generally tough and lean, like that of our school-boys, by continual exercise, and their taste disagreeable; and to fatten them would not answer the charge. Then as to the females, it would, I think with humble submission, be a loss to the public, because they soon

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\* well made.

\*\* slaughterhouses.



would become breeders themselves: and besides, it is not improbable that some scrupulous people might be apt to censure such a practice (although indeed very unjustly) as a little bordering upon cruelty; which, I confess, hath always been with me the strongest objection against any project, how well soever intended.

But in order to justify my friend, he confessed that this expedient was put into his head by the famous Psalmanazar\*, a native of the island Formosa, who came from thence to London above twenty years ago, and in conversation told my friend that in his country when any young person happened to be put to death, the executioner sold the carcass to persons of quality as a prime dainty; and that in his time the body of a plump girl of fifteen, who was crucified for an attempt to poison the emperor, was sold to his Imperial Majesty's prime minister of state, and other great mandarins of the court, in joints from the gibbet, at four hundred crowns. Neither indeed can I deny that if the same use were made of several plump young girls in this town, who without a chair, and appear at the playhouse and assemblies in foreign fineries which they never will pay for, the kingdom would not be worse.

Some persons of a desponding spirit are in great concern about that vast number of poor people who are aged, diseased, or maimed, and I have been desired to employ my thoughts what course may be taken to ease the nation of so grievous an encumbrance. But I am not in the least pain upon that matter, because it is very well known that they are every day dying and rotting by cold and famine, and filth and vermin, as fast as can be reasonably expected. And as to the younger laborers, they are now in almost as hopeful a condition. They cannot get work, and consequently pine away for want of nourishment to a degree that if at any time they are accidentally hired to common labor, they have not strength to perform it; and thus the country and themselves are happily delivered from the evils to come.

I have too long digressed, and therefore shall return to my subject. I think the advantages by the proposal which I have made are obvious and many, as well as of the highest importance.

For first, as I have already observed, it would greatly lessen the number of Papists, with whom we are yearly overrun, being the principal breeders of the nation as well as our most dangerous enemies; and who stay at

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\* famous imposter, who convinced a number of church leaders, noblemen and scientist that he was from Formosa; wrote a fictitious account of Formosa describing human sacrifice and cannibalism.

home on purpose to deliver the kingdom to the Pretender\*, hoping to take their advantage by the absence of so many good Protestants, who have chosen rather to leave their country than stay at home and pay tithes against their conscience to an Episcopal curate.

Secondly, the poorer tenants will have something valuable of their own, which by law may be made liable to distress [legal action taken by seizing property for debts], and help to pay their landlord's rent, their corn and cattle being already seized and money a thing unknown.

Thirdly, whereas the maintenance of an hundred thousand children, from two years old and upwards, cannot be computed at less than ten shillings a piece per annum, the nation's stock will be thereby increased fifty thousand pounds per annum, besides the profit of a new dish introduced to the tables of all gentlemen of fortune in the kingdom who have any refinement in taste. And the money will circulate among ourselves, the goods being entirely of our own growth and manufacture.

Fourthly, the constant breeders, besides the gain of eight shillings sterling per annum by the sale of their children, will be rid of the charge of maintaining them after the first year.

Fifthly, this food would likewise bring great custom to taverns, where the vintners will certainly be so prudent as to procure the best receipts for dressing it to perfection, and consequently have their houses frequented by all the fine gentlemen, who justly value themselves upon their knowledge in good eating; and a skillful cook, who understands how to oblige his guests, will contrive to make it as expensive as they please.

Sixthly, this would be a great inducement to marriage, which all wise nations have either encouraged by rewards or enforced by laws and penalties. It would increase the care and tenderness of mothers toward their children, when they were sure of a settlement for life to the poor babes, provided in some sort by the public, to their annual profit instead of expense. We should see an honest emulation among the married women, which of them could bring the fattest child to the market. Men would become as fond of their wives during the time of their pregnancy as they are now of their mares in foal, their cows in calf, or sows when they are ready to farrow; nor offer to beat or kick them (as is too frequent a practice) for fear of a miscarriage.

Many other advantages might be enumerated. For instance, the addition of some thousand carcasses in our exportation of barreled beef, the propagation of swine's flesh, and improvement in the art of making good

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\* James II's son.

bacon, so much wanted among us by the great destruction of pigs, too frequent at our tables, which are no way comparable in taste or magnificence to a well-grown, fat, yearling child, which roasted whole will make a considerable figure at a lord mayor's feast or any other public entertainment. But this and many others I omit, being studious of brevity.

Supposing that one thousand families in this city would be constant customers for infants' flesh, besides others who might have it at merry meetings, particularly weddings and christenings, I compute that Dublin would take off annually about twenty thousand carcasses, and the rest of the kingdom (where probably they will be sold somewhat cheaper) the remaining eighty thousand.

I can think of no one objection that will possibly be raised against this proposal, unless it should be urged that the number of people will be thereby much lessened in the kingdom. This I freely own, and it was indeed one principal design in offering it to the world. I desire the reader will observe, that I calculate my remedy for this one individual kingdom of Ireland and for no other that ever was, is, or I think ever can be upon earth. Therefore let no man talk to me of other expedients: of taxing our absentees at five shillings a pound: of using neither clothes nor household furniture except what is of our own growth and manufacture: of utterly rejecting the materials and instruments that promote foreign luxury: of curing the expensiveness of pride, vanity, idleness, and gaming in our women: of introducing a vein of parsimony, prudence, and temperance: of learning to love our country, in the want of which we differ even from Laplanders and the inhabitants of Topinamboo: of quitting our animosities and factions, nor acting any longer like the Jews, who were murdering one another at the very moment their city was taken\*: of being a little cautious not to sell our country and conscience for nothing: of teaching landlords to have at least one degree of mercy toward their teneants: lastly, of putting a spirit of honesty, industry, and skill into our shopkeepers; who, if a resolution could now be taken to buy only our native goods, would immediately unite to cheat and exact upon us in the price, the measure, and the goodness, nor could ever yet be brought to make one fair proposal of just dealing, though often and earnestly invited to it.\*\*

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\* reference to the Roman seige of Jerusalem in 70 A.D., during which time the city was torn between factions fighting for control; reflects the general antiSemitism in Europe during Swift's time.

\*\* Swift made all of these proposals in serious pamphlets during his lifetime.

Therefore I repeat, let no man talk to me of these and the like expedients, till he hath at least some glimpse of hope that there will ever be some hearty and sincere attempt to put them in practice.

But as to myself, having been wearied out for many years with offering vain, idle, visionary thoughts, and at length utterly despairing of success, I fortunately fell upon this proposal, which, as it is wholly new, so it hath something solid and real, of no expense and little trouble, full in our own power, and whereby we can incur no danger in disobliging England. For this kind of commodity will not bear exportation, the flesh being of too tender a consistence in salt, although perhaps I could name a country which would be glad to eat up our whole nation without it.

After all, i am not so violently bent upon my own opinion as to reject any offer proposed by wise men, which shall be found equally innocent, cheap, easy, and effectual. But before somehting of that kind shall be advanced in contradiction to my scheme, and offering a better, I desire the author or authors will be pleased maturely to consider two points. First, as things now stand, how they will be able to find food and raiment for an hundred thousand useless mouths and backs. And secondly, there being a round million of creatures in human figure throughout this kingdom, whose sole subsistence put into a common stock would leave them in debt two millions of pounds sterling, adding those who are beggars by profession to the bulk of farmers, cottagers, and laborers, with their wives and children who are beggars in effect; I desire those politicians who dislike my overture, and may perhaps be so bold to attempt an answer, that they will first ask the parents of these mortals whether they would not at this day think it a great happiness to have been sold for food at a year old in the manner I prescribe, and thereby have avoided such a perpetual scene of misfortunes as they have since gone through by the oppression of landlords, the common sustenance, with neither house nor clothes to cover them from the inclemencies of the weather, and the most inevitable prospect of entailing the like or greater miseries upon their breed forever.

I profess, in the sincerity of my heart, that I have not the least personal interest in endeavoring to promote this necessary work, having no other motive than the public good of my country, by giving some pleasure to the rich. I have no children by which I can propose to get a single penny; the youngest being nine years old, and my wife past childbearing.

# The Bickerstaff- Partridge Papers

by

Jonathan Swift

Jonathan Swift, et al.  
The Bickerstaff-Partridge  
Papers, etc.  
*Annus Mirabilis*

PREDICTIONS FOR THE YEAR 1708

Wherein the month, and day of the month are set down, the persons named, and the great actions and events of next year particularly related, as will come to pass.

Written to prevent the people of England from being farther imposed on by vulgar almanack-makers.

By Isaac Bickerstaff, Esq.

I HAVE LONG consider'd the gross abuse of astrology in this kingdom, and upon debating the matter with myself, I could not possibly lay the fault upon the art, but upon those gross impostors, who set up to be the artists. I know several learned men have contended that the whole is a cheat; that it is absurd and ridiculous to imagine, the stars can have any influence at all upon human actions, thoughts, or inclinations: And whoever has not

bent his studies that way, may be excused for thinking so, when he sees in how wretched a manner that noble art is treated by a few mean illiterate traders between us and the stars; who import a yearly stock of nonsense, lyes, folly, and impertinence, which they offer to the world as genuine from the planets, tho' they descend from no greater a height than their own brains.

I intend in a short time to publish a large and rational defence of this art, and therefore shall say no more in its justification at present, than that it hath been in all ages defended by many learned men, and among the rest by Socrates himself, whom I look upon as undoubtedly the wisest of uninspir'd mortals: To which if we add, that those who have condemned this art, though otherwise learned, having been such as either did not apply their studies this way, or at least did not succeed in their applications; their testimony will not be of much weight to its disadvantage, since they are liable to the common objection of condemning what they did not understand.

Nor am I at all offended, or think it an injury to the art, when I see the common dealers in it, the students in astrology, the philomaths, and the rest of that tribe, treated by wise men with the utmost scorn and contempt; but rather wonder, when I observe gentlemen in the country, rich enough to serve the nation in parliament, poring in Partridge's almanack, to find out the events of the year at home and abroad; not daring to propose a hunting-match, till Gadbury or he have fixed the weather.

I will allow either of the two I have mentioned, or any other of the fraternity, to be not only astrologers, but conjurers too, if I do not produce a hundred instances in all their almanacks, to convince any reasonable man, that they do not so much as understand common grammar and syntax; that they are not able to spell any word out of the usual road, nor even in their prefaces write common sense or intelligible English. Then for their observations and predictions, they are such as will equally suit any age or country in the world. "This month a certain great person will be threatened with death or sickness." This the news-papers will tell them; for there we find at the end of the year, that no month passes without the death of some person of note; and it would be hard if it should be otherwise, when there are at least two thousand persons of not in this kingdom, many of them old, and the almanack-maker has the liberty of chusing the sickliest season of the year where he may fix his prediction.

Again, "This month an eminent clergyman will be preferr'd;" of which there may be some hundreds half of them with one foot in the grave. Then "such a planet in such a house shews great machinations, plots and conspiracies, that may in time be brought to light:" After which, if we

hear of any discovery, the astrologer gets the honour; if not, his prediction still stands good. And at last, "God preserve King William from all his open and secret enemies, Amen." When if the King should happen to have died, the astrologer plainly foretold it; otherwise it passes but for the pious ejaculation of a loyal subject: Though it unluckily happen'd in some of their almanacks, that poor King William was pray'd for many months after he was dead, because it fell out that he died about the beginning of the year.

To mention no more of their impertinent predictions: What have we to do with their advertisements about pills and drink for the venereal disease? Or their mutual quarrels in verse and prose of Whig and Tory, where-with the stars have little to do?

Having long observed and lamented these, and a hundred other abuses of this art, too tedious to repeat, I resolved to proceed in a new way, which I doubt not will be to the general satisfaction of the kingdom: I can this year produce but a specimen of what I design for the future; having employ'd most part of my time in adjusting and correcting the calculations I made some years past, because I would offer nothing to the world of which I am not as fully satisfied, as that I am now alive. For these two last years I have not failed in above one or two particulars, and those of no very great moment. I exactly foretold the miscarriage at Toulon, with all its particulars; and the loss of Admiral Shovel, tho' I was mistaken as to the day, placing that accident about thirty-six hours sooner than it happen'd; but upon reviewing my schemes, I quickly found the cause of that error. I likewise foretold the Battle of Almanza to the very day and hour, with the loss on both sides, and the consequences thereof. All which I shewed to some friends many months before they happened, that is, I gave them papers sealed up, to open at such a time, after which they were at liberty to read them; and there they found my predictions true in every article, except one or two, very minute.

As for the few following predictions I now offer the world, I forbore to publish them till I had perused the several almanacks for the year we are now enter'd on. I find them in all the usual strain, and I beg the reader will compare their manner with mine: And here I make bold to tell the world, that I lay the whole credit of my art upon the truth of these predictions; and I will be content, that Partridge, and the rest of his clan, may hoot me for a cheat and impostor, if I fail in any singular particular of moment. I believe, any man who reads this paper, will look upon me to be at least a person of as much honesty and understanding, as a common maker of almanacks. I do not lurk in the dark; I am not wholly unknown in the

world; I have set my name at length, to be a mark of infamy to mankind, if they shall find I deceive them.

In one thing I must desire to be forgiven, that I talk more sparingly of home-affairs: As it will be imprudence to discover secrets of state, so it would be dangerous to my person; but in smaller matters, and that are not of publick consequence, I shall be very free; and the truth of my conjectures will as much appear from those as the other. As for the most signal events abroad in France, Flanders, Italy and Spain, I shall make no scruple to predict them in plain terms: Some of them are of importance, and I hope I shall seldom mistake the day they will happen; therefore, I think good to inform the reader, that I all along make use of the Old Style observed in England, which I desire he will compare with that of the news-papers, at the time they relate the actions I mention.

I must add one word more: I know it hath been the opinion of several of the learned, who think well enough of the true art of astrology, That the stars do only incline, and not force the actions or wills of men: And therefore, however I may proceed by right rules, yet I cannot in prudence so confidently assure the events will follow exactly as I predict them.

I hope I have maturely considered this objection, which in some cases is of no little weight. For example: A man may, by the influence of an over-ruling planet, be disposed or inclined to lust, rage, or avarice, and yet by the force of reason overcome that bad influence; and this was the case of Socrates: But as the great events of the world usually depend upon numbers of men, it cannot be expected they should all unite to cross their inclinations, from pursuing a general design, wherein they unanimously agree. Besides the influence of the stars reaches to many actions and events which are not any way in the power of reason; as sickness, death, and what we commonly call accidents, with many more, needless to repeat.

But now it is time to proceed to my predictions, which I have begun to calculate from the time that the Sun enters into Aries. And this I take to be properly the beginning of the natural year. I pursue them to the time that he enters Libra, or somewhat more, which is the busy period of the year. The remainder I have not yet adjusted, upon account of several impediments needless here to mention: Besides, I must remind the reader again, that this is but a specimen of what I design in succeeding years to treat more at large, if I may have liberty and encouragement.

My first prediction is but a trifle, yet I will mention it, to show how ignorant those sottish pretenders to astrology are in their own concerns: It relates to Partridge the almanack-maker; I have consulted the stars of his nativity by my own rules, and find he will infallibly die upon the 29th of



March next, about eleven at night, of a raging fever; therefore I advise him to consider of it, and settle his affairs in time.

The month of April will be observable for the death of many great persons. On the 4th will die the Cardinal de Noailles, Archbishop of Paris: On the 11th the young Prince of Asturias, son to the Duke of Anjou: On the 14th a great peer of this realm will die at his country-house: On the 19th an old layman of great fame for learning; and on the 23rd an eminent goldsmith in Lombard-Street. I could mention others, both at home and abroad, if I did not consider it is of very little use or instruction to the reader, or to the world.

As to publick affairs: On the 7th of this month there will be an insurrection in Dauphine, occasion'd by the oppressions of the people, which will not be quieted in some months.

On the 15th will be a violent storm on the south-east coast of France, which will destroy many of their ships, and some in the very harbour.

The 19th will be famous for the revolt of a whole province or kingdom, excepting one city, by which the affairs of a certain prince in the alliance will take a better face.

May, against common conjectures, will be no very busy month in Europe, but very signal for the death of the Dauphin, which will happen on the 7th, after a short fit of sickness, and grievous torments with the strangury. He dies less lamented by the court than the kingdom.

On the 9th a Mareschal of France will break his leg by a fall from his horse. I have not been able to discover whether he will then die or not.

On the 11th will begin a most important siege, which the eyes of all Europe will be upon: I cannot be more particular: for in relating affairs that so nearly concern the Confederates, and consequently this Kingdom, I am forced to confine myself, for several reasons very obvious to the reader.

On the 15th news will arrive of a very surprizing event, than which nothing could be more unexpected.

On the 19th three noble ladies of this Kingdom will, against all expectation, prove with child, to the great joy of their husbands.

On the 23rd a famous buffoon of the play-house will die a ridiculous death, suitable to his vocation.

June. This month will be distinguish'd at home, by the utter dispersing of those ridiculous deluded enthusiasts, commonly call'd the Prophets; occasion'd chiefly by seeing the time come that many of their prophecies should be fulfill'd, and then finding themselves deceiv'd by contrary events. It is indeed to be admir'd how any deceiver can be so weak, to foretel things near at hand, when a very few months must of necessity discover

the impostor to all the world; in this point less prudent than common almanack-makers, who are so wise to wonder in generals, and talk dubiously, and leave to the reader the business of interpreting.

On the 1st of this month a French general will be killed by a random shot of a cannon-ball.

On the 6th a fire will break out in the suburbs of Paris, which will destroy above a thousand houses; and seems to be the foreboding of what will happen, to the surprize of all Europe, about the end of the following month.

On the 10th a great battle will be fought, which will begin at four of the clock in the afternoon; and last till nine at night with great obstinacy, but no very decisive event. I shall not name the place, for the reasons aforesaid; but the commanders on each left wing will be killed. – I see bonfires, and hear the noise of guns for a victory.

On the 14th there will be a false report of the French king's death.

On the 20th Cardinal Portocarero will die of a dysentery, with great suspicion of poison; but the report of his intention to revolt to King Charles, will prove false.

July. The 6th of this month a certain general will, by a glorious action, recover the reputation he lost by former misfortunes.

On the 12th a great commander will die a prisoner in the hands of his enemies.

On the 14th a shameful discovery will be made of a French Jesuit, giving poison to a great foreign general; and when he is put to the torture, will make wonderful discoveries.

In short this will prove a month of great action, if I might have liberty to relate the particulars.

At home, the death of an old famous senator will happen on the 15th at his country-house, worn with age and diseases.

But that which will make this month memorable to all posterity, is the death of the French King, Lewis the fourteenth, after a week's sickness at Marli, which will happen on the 29th, about six o'clock in the evening. It seems to be an effect of the gout in his stomach, followed by a flux. And in three days after Monsieur Chamillard will follow his master, dying suddenly of an appoplexy.

In this month likewise an ambassador will die in London; but I cannot assign the day.

August. The affairs of France will seem to suffer no change for a while under the Duke of Burgundy's administration; but the genius that animated the whole machine being gone, will be the cause of mighty turns

and revolutions in the following year. The new King makes yet little change either in the army or the ministry; but the libels against his grandfather, that fly about his very court, give him uneasiness.

I see an express in mighty haste, with joy and wonder in his looks, arriving by break of day on the 26th of this month, having travell'd in three days a prodigious journey by land and sea. In the evening I hear bells and guns, and see the blazing of a thousand bonfires.

A young admiral of noble birth, does likewise this month gain immortal honour by a great achievement.

The affairs of Poland are this month entirely settled: Augustus resigns his pretensions which he had again taken up for some time: Stanislaus is peaceably possess'd of the throne; and the King of Sweden declares for the Emperor.

I cannot omit one particular accident here at home; that near the end of this month much mischief will be done at Bartholomew Fair, by the fall of a booth.

September. This month begins with a very surprizing fit of frosty weather, which will last near twelve days.

The Pope having long languish'd last month, the swellings in his legs breaking, and the flesh mortifying, will die on the 11th instant; and in three weeks time, after a mighty contest, be succeeded by a cardinal of the imperial faction, but native of Tuscany, who is now about sixty-one years old.

The French army acts now wholly on the defensive, strongly fortify'd in their trenches; and the young French King sends overtures for a treaty of peace by the Duke of Mantua; which, because it is a matter of state that concerns us here at home, I shall speak no farther of it.

I shall add but one prediction more, and that in mystical terms, which shall be included in a verse out of Virgil,

*Alter erit jam Tethys, & altera quae vehat Argo. Delectos heroas.*

Upon the 25th day of this month, the fulfilling of this prediction will be manifest to every body.

This is the farthest I have proceeded in my calculations for the present year. I do not pretend, that these are all the great events which will happen in this period, but that those I have set down will infallibly come to pass. It will perhaps still be objected, why I have not spoke more particularly of affairs at home, or of the success of our armies abroad, which I might, and could very largely have done; but those in power have wisely discouraged men from meddling in publick concerns, and I was resolv'd by no means to give the least offence. This I will venture to say, That it will be a glorious

campaign for the allies, wherein the English forces, both by sea and land, will have their full share of honour: That her Majesty Queen Anne will continue in health and prosperity: And that no ill accident will arrive to any of the chief ministry.

As to the particular events I have mention'd, the readers may judge by the fulfilling of 'em, whether I am on the level with common astrologers; who, with an old paultry cant, and a few pothook for planets, to amuse the vulgar, have, in my opinion, too long been suffer'd to abuse the world: But an honest physician ought not to be despis'd, because there are such things as mountebanks. I hope I have some share of reputation, which I would not willingly forfeit for a frolick or humour: And I believe no gentleman, who reads this paper, will look upon it to be of the same cast or mould with the common scribblers that are every day hawk'd about. My fortune has placed me above the little regard of scribbling for a few pence, which I neither value or want: Therefore let no wise men too hastily condemn this essay, intended for a good design, to cultivate and improve an ancient art, long in disgrace, by having fallen into mean and unskilful hands. A little time will determine whether I have deceived others or myself: and I think it is no very unreasonable request, that men would please to suspend their judgments till then. I was once of the opinion with those who despise all predictions from the stars, till the year 1686, a man of quality shew'd me, written in his album, That the most learned astronomer, Captain H. assured him, he would never believe any thing of the stars' influence, if there were not a great revolution in England in the year 1688. Since that time I began to have other thoughts, and after eighteen years diligent study and application, I think I have no reason to repent of my pains. I shall detain the reader no longer, than to let him know, that the account I design to give of next year's events, shall take in the principal affairs that happen in Europe; and if I be denied the liberty of offering it to my own country, I shall appeal to the learned world, by publishing it in Latin, and giving order to have it printed in Holland.

The Accomplishment of the First of Mr Bickerstaff's Predictions; being an account of the death of Mr Partridge, the almanack-maker, upon the 29th instant.

In a letter to a person of honour Written in the year 1708

MY LORD,

In obedience to your Lordship's commands, as well as to satisfy my own curiosity, I have for some days past enquired constantly after Partridge the almanack-maker, of whom it was foretold in Mr. Bickerstaff's predictions, publish'd about a month ago, that he should die on the 29th instant about eleven at night of a raging fever. I had some sort of knowledge of him when I was employ'd in the Revenue, because he used every year to present me with his almanack, as he did other gentlemen, upon the score of some little gratuity we gave him. I saw him accidentally once or twice about ten days before he died, and observed he began very much to droop and languish, tho' I hear his friends did not seem to apprehend him in any danger. About two or three days ago he grew ill, and was confin'd first to his chamber, and in a few hours after to his bed, where Dr. Case and Mrs. Kirleus were sent for to visit, and to prescribe to him. Upon this intelligence I sent thrice every day one servant or other to enquire after his health; and yesterday, about four in the afternoon, word was brought me that he was past hopes: Upon which, I prevail'd with myself to go and see him, partly out of commiseration, and I confess, partly out of curiosity. He knew me very well, seem'd surpriz'd at my condescension, and made me compliments upon it as well as he could, in the condition he was. The people about him said, he had been for some time delirious; but when I saw him, he had his understanding as well as ever I knew, and spake strong and hearty, without any seeming uneasiness or constraint. After I told him how sorry I was to see him in those melancholy circumstances, and said some other civilities, suitable to the occasion, I desired him to tell me freely and ingeniously, whether the predictions Mr. Bickerstaff had publish'd relating to his death, had not too much affected and worked on his imagination. He confess'd he had often had it in his head, but never with much

apprehension, till about a fortnight before; since which time it had the perpetual possession of his mind and thoughts, and he did verily believe was the true natural cause of his present distemper: For, said he, I am thoroughly persuaded, and I think I have very good reasons, that Mr. Bickerstaff spoke altogether by guess, and knew no more what will happen this year than I did myself. I told him his discourse surprized me; and I would be glad he were in a state of health to be able to tell me what reason he had to be convinc'd of Mr. Bickerstaff's ignorance. He reply'd, I am a poor ignorant fellow, bred to a mean trade, yet I have sense enough to know that all pretences of foretelling by astrology are deceits, for this manifest reason, because the wise and the learned, who can only know whether there be any truth in this science, do all unanimously agree to laugh at and despise it; and none but the poor ignorant vulgar give it any credit, and that only upon the word of such silly wretches as I and my fellows, who can hardly write or read. I then asked him why he had not calculated his own nativity, to see whether it agreed with Bickerstaff's prediction? at which he shook his head, and said, Oh! sir, this is no time for jesting, but for repenting those fooleries, as I do now from the very bottom of my heart. By what I can gather from you, said I, the observations and predictions you printed, with your almanacks, were mere impositions on the people. He reply'd, if it were otherwise I should have the less to answer for. We have a common form for all those things, as to foretelling the weather, we never meddle with that, but leave it to the printer, who takes it out of any old almanack, as he thinks fit; the rest was my own invention, to make my almanack sell, having a wife to maintain, and no other way to get my bread; for mending old shoes is a poor livelihood; and, (added he, sighing) I wish I may not have done more mischief by my physick than my astrology; tho' I had some good receipts from my grandmother, and my own compositions were such as I thought could at least do no hurt.

I had some other discourse with him, which now I cannot call to mind; and I fear I have already tired your Lordship. I shall only add one circumstance, That on his death-bed he declared himself a Nonconformist, and had a fanatick preacher to be his spiritual guide. After half an hour's conversation I took my leave, being half stifled by the closeness of the room. I imagine he could not hold out long, and therefore withdrew to a little coffee-house hard by, leaving a servant at the house with orders to come immediately, and tell me, as near as he could, the minute when Partridge should expire, which was not above two hours after; when, looking upon my watch, I found it to be above five minutes after seven; by which it is clear that Mr. Bickerstaff was mistaken almost four hours in his calcula-

tion. In the other circumstances he was exact enough. But whether he has not been the cause of this poor man's death, as well as the predictor, may be very reasonably disputed. However, it must be confess'd the matter is odd enough, whether we should endeavour to account for it by chance, or the effect of imagination: For my own part, tho' I believe no man has less faith in these matters, yet I shall wait with some impatience, and not without some expectation, the fulfilling of Mr. Bickerstaff's second prediction, that the Cardinal de Noailles is to die upon the fourth of April, and if that should be verified as exactly as this of poor Partridge, I must own I should be wholly surprized, and at a loss, and should infallibly expect the accomplishment of all the rest.

An Elegy on the supposed Death of Partridge,  
the Almanack-Maker.

Well, 'tis as Bickerstaff has guess'd,  
Tho' we all took it for a jest;  
Partridge is dead, nay more, he dy'd  
E're he could prove the good 'Squire ly'd.  
Strange, an Astrologer shou'd die,  
Without one Wonder in the Sky!  
Not one of all his Crony Stars  
To pay their Duty at his Herse?  
No Meteor, no Eclipse appear'd?  
No Comet with a flaming Beard?  
The Sun has rose, and gone to Bed,  
Just as if partridge were not dead:  
Nor hid himself behind the Moon,  
To make a dreadful Night at Noon.  
He at fit Periods walks through Aries,  
Howe'er our earthly Motion varies;  
And twice a Year he'll cut th' Equator,  
As if there had been no such Matter.

\* \* \*

Some Wits have wonder'd what Analogy  
There is 'twixt Cobbling\* and Astrology:  
How Partridge made his Optics rise,  
From a Shoe-Sole, to reach the Skies.

A List of Coblers Temples Ties,  
To keep the Hair out of their Eyes;  
From whence 'tis plain the Diadem  
That Princes wear, derives from them.

---

\*Partridge was a Cobler.



And therefore Crowns are now-a-days  
Adorn'd with Golden Stars and Rays,  
Which plainly shews the near Alliance  
'Twixt cobling and the Planets Science.

Besides, that slow-pac'd Sign Bootes,  
As 'tis miscall'd, we know not who 'tis?  
But Partridge ended all Disputes,  
He knew his Trade, and call'd it\* Boots.

The Horned Moon, which heretofore  
Upon their Shoes the Romans wore,  
Whose Wideness kept their Toes from Corns,  
And whence we claim our Shooing-Horns;  
Shows how the Art of Cobling bears  
A near Resemblance to the Spheres.

A Scrap of Parchment hung by Geometry  
(A great Refinement in Barometry)  
Can, like the Stars, foretel the Weather;  
And what is Parchment else but Leather?  
Which an Astrologer might use,  
Either for Almanacks or Shoes.

Thus Partridge, by his Wit and Parts,  
At once did practise both these Arts;  
And as the boading Owl (or rather  
The Bat, because her Wings are Leather)  
Steals from her private Cell by Night,  
And flies about the Candle-Light;

So learned Partridge could as well  
Creep in the Dark from Leathern Cell,  
And, in his Fancy, fly as fair,  
To peep upon a twinkling Star.

Besides, he could confound the Spheres,  
And set the Planets by the Ears;

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\* See his Almanack

To shew his Skill, he Mars could join  
To Venus in Aspect Mali'n;  
Then call in Mercury for Aid,  
And cure the Wounds that Venus made.

Great Scholars have in Lucian read,  
When Philip, King of Greece was dead,  
His Soul and Spirit did divide,  
And each Part took a diff'rent Side;  
One rose a Star, the other fell  
Beneath, and mended Shoes in Hell.

Thus Partridge still shines in each Art,  
The Cobling and Star-gazing Part,  
And is install'd as good a Star  
As any of the Caesars are.

Triumphant Star! some Pity shew  
On Coblers militant below,  
Whom roguish Boys in stormy Nights  
Torment, by pissing out their Lights;  
Or thro' a Chink convey their Smoke;  
Inclos'd Artificers to choke.

Thou, high exalted in thy Sphere,  
May'st follow still thy Calling there.  
To thee the Bull will lend his hide,  
By Phoebus newly tann'd and dry'd.  
For thee they Argo's Hulk will tax,  
And scrape her pitchy Sides for Wax.  
Then Ariadne kindly lends  
Her braided Hair to make thee Ends.  
The Point of Sagittarius' Dart  
Turns to an awl, by heav'nly Art;

And Vulcan, wheedled by his Wife,  
Will forge for thee a Paring-Knife.  
For want of Room, by Virgo's Side,  
She'll strain a Point, and sit astride\*,

---

\**Tibi brachia contrahet ingens Scorpius, etc.*

To take thee kindly in between,  
And then the Signs will be Thirteen.

An Epitaph on Partridge.

Here, five Foot deep, lies on his Back,  
A Cobler, Starmonger, and Quack;  
Who to the Stars in pure Good-will,  
Does to his best look upward still.  
Weep all you Customers that use  
His Pills, his Almanacks, or Shoes;  
And you that did your Fortunes seek,  
Step to his Grave but once a Week:  
This Earth which bears his Body's Print,  
You'll find has so much Vertue in't,  
That I durst pawn my Ears 'twill tell  
Whate'er concerns you full as well,  
In Physick, Stolen Goods, or Love,  
As he himself could, when above.

## Partridge's reply

'Squire Bickerstaff detected; or, the astrological impostor convicted; by John Partridge, student in physick and astrology.

It is hard, my dear countrymen of these united nations, it is very hard that a Briton born, a Protestant astrologer, a man of revolution principles, an assertor of the liberty and property of the people, should cry out, in vain, for justice against a Frenchman, a Papist, an illiterate pretender to science; that would blast my reputation, most inhumanly bury me alive, and defraud my native country of those services, that, in my double capacity, I daily offer to the publick.

What great provocations I have receiv'd, let the impartial reader judge, and how unwillingly, even in my own defence, I now enter the lists against falsehood, ignorance and envy: But I am exasperated, at length, to drag out this cacus from the den of obscurity where he lurks, detect him by the light of those stars he has so impudently traduced, and shew there's not a monster in the skies so pernicious and malevolent to mankind, as an ignorant pretender to physick and astrology. I shall not directly fall on the many gross errors, nor expose the notorious absurdities of this prostituted libeller, till I have let the learned world fairly into the controversy depending, and then leave the unprejudiced to judge of the merits and justice of the cause.

It was towards the conclusion of the year 1707, when an impudent pamphlet crept into the world, intituled, 'Predictions, etc.' by Isaac Bickerstaff, Esq;—Amongst the many arrogant assertions laid down by that lying spirit of divination, he was pleas'd to pitch on the Cardinal de Noailles and myself, among many other eminent and illustrious persons, that were to die within the compass of the ensuing year; and peremptorily fixes the month, day, and hour of our deaths: This, I think, is sporting with great men, and publick spirits, to the scandal of religion, and reproach of power; and if sovereign princes and astrologers must make diversion for the vulgar — why then farewell, say I, to all governments, ecclesiastical and civil. But, I thank my better stars, I am alive to confront this false and audacious predictor, and to make him rue the hour he ever

affronted a man of science and resentment. The Cardinal may take what measures he pleases with him; as his excellency is a foreigner, and a papist, he has no reason to rely on me for his justification; I shall only assure the world he is alive – but as he was bred to letters, and is master of a pen, let him use it in his own defence. In the mean time I shall present the publick with a faithful narrative of the ungenerous treatment and hard usage I have received from the virulent papers and malicious practices of this pretended astrologer.

A true and impartial account of the proceedings of Isaac Bickerstaff, Esq; against me—

The 28th of March, Anno Dom. 1708, being the night this sham-prophet had so impudently fix'd for my last, which made little impression on myself; but I cannot answer for my whole family; for my wife, with a concern more than usual, prevailed on me to take somewhat to sweat for a cold; and, between the hours of eight and nine, to go to bed: The maid, as she was warming my bed, with a curiosity natural to young wenches, runs to the window, and asks of one passing the street, who the bell toll'd for? Dr. Partridge, says he, that famous almanack-maker, who died suddenly this evening: The poor girl provok'd, told him he ly'd like a rascal; the other very sedately reply'd, the sexton had so inform'd him, and if false, he was to blame for imposing upon a stranger. She asked a second, and a third, as they passed, and every one was in the same tone. Now I don't say these are accomplices to a certain astrological 'squire, and that one Bickerstaff might be sauntering thereabouts; because I will assert nothing here but what I dare attest, and plain matter of fact. My wife at this fell into a violent disorder; and I must own I was a little discompos'd at the oddness of the accident. In the mean time one knocks at my door, Betty runs down, and opening, finds a sober grave person, who modestly enquires if this was Dr. Partridge's? She taking him for some cautious city-patient, that came at that time for privacy, shews him into the dining room. As soon as I could compose myself, I went to him, and was surpriz'd to find my gentleman mounted on a table with a two-foot rule in his hand, measuring my walls, and taking the dimensions of the room. Pray sir, says I, not to interrupt you, have you any business with me? Only, sir, replies he, order the girl to bring me a better light, for this is but a very dim one. Sir, says I, my name is Partridge: Oh! the Doctor's brother, belike, cries he; the stair-case, I believe, and these two apartments hung in close mourning, will be sufficient, and only a strip of bays round the other rooms. The Doctor must needs die rich, he had great dealings in his way for many years; if he had no family coat, you had as good use the escutch-

eons of the company, they are as showish, and will look as magnificent as if he was descended from the blood royal. With that I assumed a great air of authority, and demanded who employ'd him, or how he came there? Why, I was sent, sir, by the Company of Undertakers, says he, and they were employed by the honest gentleman, who is executor to the good Doctor departed; and our rascally porter, I believe, is fallen fast asleep with the black cloth and sconces, or he had been here, and we might have been tacking up by this time. Sir, says I, pray be advis'd by a friend, and make the best of your speed out of my doors, for I hear my wife's voice, (which by the by, is pretty distinguishable) and in that corner of the room stands a good cudgel, which somebody has felt e're now; if that light in her hands, and she know the business you come about, without consulting the stars, I can assure you it will be employed very much to the detriment of your person. Sir, cries he, bowing with great civility, I perceive extreme grief for the loss of the Doctor disorders you a little at present, but early in the morning I'll wait on you with all necessary materials. Now I mention no Mr. Bickerstaff, nor do I say, that a certain star-gazing 'squire has been playing my executor before his time; but I leave the world to judge, and if he puts things and things fairly together, it won't be much wide of the mark.

Well, once more I got my doors clos'd, and prepar'd for bed, in hopes of a little repose after so many ruffling adventures; just as I was putting out my light in order to it, another bounces as hard as he can knock; I open the window, and ask who's there, and what he wants? I am Ned the sexton, replies he, and come to know whether the Doctor left any orders for a funeral sermon, and where he is to be laid, and whether his grave is to be plain or bricked? Why, sirrah, says I, you know me well enough; you know I am not dead, and how dare you affront me in this manner? Alack-a-day, replies the fellow, why 'tis in print, and the whole town knows you are dead; why, there's Mr. White the joiner is but fitting screws to your coffin, he'll be here with it in an instant: he was afraid you would have wanted it before this time. Sirrah, Sirrah, says I, you shall know tomorrow to your cost, that I am alive, and alive like to be. Why, 'tis strange, sir, says he, you should make such a secret of your death to us that are your neighbours; it looks as if you had a design to defraud the church of its dues; and let me tell you, for one that has lived so long by the heavens, that's unhandsomely done. Hist, Hist, says another rogue that stood by him, away Doctor, in your flannel gear as fast as you can, for here's a whole pack of dismals coming to you with their black equipage, and how indecent will it look for you to stand fright'ning folks at your window,

when you should have been in your coffin this three hours? In short, what with undertakers, imbalmers, joiners, sextons, and your damn'd elegy hawkers, upon a late practitioner in physick and astrology, I got not one wink of sleep that night, nor scarce a moment's rest ever since. Now I doubt not but this villainous 'squire has the impudence to assert, that these are entirely strangers to him; he, good man, knows nothing of the matter, and honest Isaac Bickerstaff, I warrant you, is more a man of honour, than to be an accomplice with a pack of rascals, that walk the streets on nights, and disturb good people in their beds; but he is out, if he thinks the whole world is blind; for there is one John Partridge can smell a knave as far as Grubstreet, – tho' he lies in the most exalted garret, and writes himself 'Squire: – But I'll keep my temper, and proceed in the narration.

I could not stir out of doors for the space of three months after this, but presently one comes up to me in the street; Mr Partridge, that coffin you was last buried in I have not been yet paid for: Doctor, cries another dog, How d'ye think people can live by making of graves for nothing? Next time you die, you may e'en toll out the bell yourself for Ned. A third rogue tips me by the elbow, and wonders how I have the conscience to sneak abroad without paying my funeral expences. Lord, says one, I durst have swore that was honest Dr. Partridge, my old friend; but poor man, he is gone. I beg your pardon, says another, you look so like my old acquaintance that I used to consult on some private occasions; but, alack, he's gone the way of all flesh – Look, look, look, cries a third, after a competent space of staring at me, would not one think our neighbour the almanack-maker, was crept out of his grave to take t'other peep at the stars in this world, and shew how much he is improv'd in fortune-telling by having taken a journey to the other?

Nay, the very reader, of our parish, a good sober, discreet person, has sent two or three times for me to come and be buried decently, or send him sufficient reasons to the contrary, if I have been interr'd in any other parish, to produce my certificate, as the act requires. My poor wife is almost run distracted with being called Widow Partridge, when she knows its false; and once a term she is cited into the court, to take out letters of administration. But the greatest grievance is, a paultry quack, that takes up my calling just under my nose, and in his printed directions with N.B. says, He lives in the house of the late ingenious Mr. John Partridge, an eminent practitioner in leather, physick and astrology.

But to show how far the wicked spirit of envy, malice and resentment can hurry some men, my nameless old persecutor had provided me a monument at the stone-cutter's and would have erected it in the parish-



church; and this piece of notorious and expensive villany had actually succeeded, had I not used my utmost interest with the vestry, where it was carried at last but by two voices, that I am still alive. That stratagem failing, out comes a long sable elegy, bedeck'd with hour-glasses, mattocks, sculls, spades, and skeletons, with an epitaph as confidently written to abuse me, and my profession, as if I had been under ground these twenty years.

And, after such barbarous treatment as this, can the world blame me, when I ask, What is become of the freedom of an Englishman? And where is the liberty and property that my old glorious friend came over to assert? We have drove popery out of the nation, and sent slavery to foreign climes. The arts only remain in bondage, when a man of science and character shall be openly insulted in the midst of the many useful services he is daily paying to the publick. Was it ever heard, even in Turkey or Algiers, that a state-astrologer was banter'd out of his life by an ignorant impostor, or bawl'd out of the world by a pack of villanous, deep-mouth'd hawkers? Though I print almanacks, and publish advertisements; though I produce certificates under the ministers and church-wardens hands I am alive, and attest the same on oath at quarter-sessions, out comes a full and true relation of the death and interment of John Partridge; Truth is bore down, attestations neglected, the testimony of sober persons despised, and a man is looked upon by his neighbours as if he had been seven years dead, and is buried alive in the midst of his friends and acquaintance.

Now can any man of common sense think it consistent with the honour of my profession, and not much beneath the dignity of a philosopher, to stand bawling before his own door? – Alive! Alive ho! The famous Dr. Partridge! No counterfeit, but all alive! – As if I had the twelve celestial monsters of the zodiac to shew within, or was forced for a livelihood to turn retailer to May and Bartholomew Fairs. Therefore, if Her Majesty would but graciously be pleased to think a hardship of this nature worthy her royal consideration, and the next parliament, in their great wisdom cast but an eye towards the deplorable case of their old philomath, that annually bestows his poetical good wishes on them, I am sure there is one Isaac Bickerstaff, Esq; would soon be truss'd up for his bloody predictions, and putting good subjects in terror of their lives: And that henceforward to murder a man by way of prophecy, and bury him in a printed letter, either to a lord or commoner, shall as legally entitle him to the present possession of Tyburn, as if he robb'd on the highway, or cut your throat in bed.

I shall demonstrate to the judicious, that France and Rome are at the

bottom of this horrid conspiracy against me; and that culprit aforesaid is a popish emissary, has paid his visits to St. Germain, and is now in the measures of Lewis XIV. That in attempting my reputation, there is a general massacre of learning designed in these realms; and through my sides there is a wound given to all the Protestant almanack-makers in the universe.

*Vivat Regina.*

A vindication of Isaac Bickerstaff, Esq; against what is objected to him by Mr. Partridge in his almanack for the present year 1709.

By the said Isaac Bickerstaff, Esq;

Written in the year 1709.

Mr. Partridge hath been lately pleased to treat me after a very rough manner, in that which is called, his almanack for the present year: Such usage is very undecent from one gentleman to another, and does not at all contribute to the discovery of truth, which ought to be the great end in all disputes of the learned. To call a man fool and villain, and impudent fellow, only for differing from him in a point meer speculative, is, in my humble opinion, a very improper style for a person of his education. I appeal to the learned world, whether in my last year's predictions I gave him the least provocation for such unworthy treatment. Philosophers have differed in all ages; but the discreetest among them have always differed as became philosophers. Scurrility and passion, in a controversy among scholars, is just so much of nothing to the purpose, and at best, a tacit confession of a weak cause: My concern is not so much for my own reputation, as that of the Republick of Letters, which Mr. Partridge hath endeavoured to wound through my sides. If men of publick spirit must be superciliously treated for their ingenious attempts, how will true useful knowledge be ever advanced? I wish Mr. Partridge knew the thoughts which foreign universities have conceived of his ungenerous proceedings with me; but I am too tender of his reputation to publish them to the world. That spirit of envy and pride, which blasts so many rising genius's in our nation, is yet unknown among professors abroad: The necessity of justifying myself will excuse my vanity, when I tell the reader that I have near a hundred honorary letters from several parts of Europe (some as far as Muscovy) in praise of my performance. Besides several others, which, as I have been credibly informed, were open'd in the post-office and never sent me. 'Tis true the Inquisition in Portugal was pleased to burn my predictions, and condem the author and readers of them; but I hope at the same time, it will be consider'd in how deplorable a state learning lies at present

in that kingdom: And with the profoundest veneration for crown'd heads, I will presume to add, that it a little concerned His Majesty of Portugal, to interpose his authority in behalf of a scholar and a gentleman, the subject of a nation with which he is now in so strict an alliance. But the other kingdoms and states of Europe have treated me with more candor and generosity. If I had leave to print the Latin letters transmitted to me from foreign parts, they would fill a volume, and be a full defence against all that Mr. Partridge, or his accomplices of the Portugal Inquisition, will be able to object; who, by the way, are the only enemies my predictions have ever met with at home or abroad. But I hope I know better what is due to the honour of a learned correspondence in so tender a point. Yet some of those illustrious persons will perhaps excuse me from transcribing a passage or two in my own vindication. The most learned Monsieur Leibnitz thus addresses to me his third letter: *Illustrissimo Bickerstaffio Astrologiae instauratori*, etc. Monsieur le Clerc, quoting my predictions in a treatise he published last year, is pleased to say, *Ita nuperrime Bickerstaffius magnum illud Angliae fidus*. Another great professor writing of me, has these words: *Bickerstaffius, nobilis Anglus, Astrologorum hujusce Saeculi facile Princeps*. Signior Magliabecchi, the Great Duke's famous library-keeper, spends almost his whole letter in compliments and praises. 'Tis true, the renowned Professor of Astronomy at Utrecht, seems to differ from me in one article; but it is in a modest manner, that becomes a philosopher; as, *Pace tanti viri dixerim*. And pag.55, he seems to lay the error upon the printer (as indeed it ought) and says, *vel forsitan error typographi, cum alioquin Bickerstaffius ver doctissimus, etc.*

If Mr. Partridge had followed this example in the controversy between us, he might have spared me the trouble of justifying myself in so publick a manner. I believe few men are readier to own their errors than I, or more thankful to those who will please to inform me of them. But it seems this gentleman, instead of encouraging the progress of his own art, is pleased to look upon all attempts of that kind as an invasion of his province. He has been indeed so wise to make no objection against the truth of my predictions, except in one single point, relating to himself: And to demonstrate how much men are blinded by their own partiality, I do solemnly assure the reader, that he is the only person from whom I ever heard that objection offered; which consideration alone, I think, will take off all its weight.

With my utmost endeavours, I have not been able to trace above two objections ever made against the truth of my last year's prophecies: The first was of a French man, who was pleased to publish to the world, that

the Cardinal de Noailles was still alive, notwithstanding the pretended prophecy of Monsieur Biquerstaffe: But how far a Frenchman, a papist, and an enemy is to be believed in his own case against an English Protestant, who is true to his government, I shall leave to the candid and impartial reader.

The other objection is the unhappy occasion of this discourse, and relates to an article in my predictions, which foretold the death of Mr. Partridge, to happen on March 29, 1708. This he is pleased to contradict absolutely in the almanack he has published for the present year, and in that ungentlemanly manner (pardon the expression) as I have above related. In that work he very roundly asserts, That he is not only now alive, but was likewise alive upon that very 29th of March, when I had foretold he should die. This is the subject of the present controversy between us; which I design to handle with all brevity, perspicuity, and calmness: In this dispute, I am sensible the eyes not only of England, but of all Europe, will be upon us; and the learned in every country will, I doubt not, take part on that side, where they find most appearance of reason and truth.

Without entering into criticisms of chronology about the hour of his death, I shall only prove that Mr. Partridge is not alive. And my first argument is thus: Above a thousand gentlemen having bought his almanacks for this year, merely to find what he said against me; at every line they read, they would lift up their eyes, and cry out, betwixt rage and laughter, "They were sure no man alive ever writ such damn'd stuff as this." Neither did I ever hear that opinion disputed: So that Mr. Partridge lies under a dilemma, either of disowning his almanack, or allowing himself to be "no man alive". But now if an uninformed carcase walks still about, and is pleased to call itself Partridge, Mr. Bickerstaff does not think himself any way answerable for that. Neither had the said carcase any right to beat the poor boy who happen'd to pass by it in the street, crying, "A full and true account of Dr. Partridge's death, etc."

Secondly, Mr. Partridge pretends to tell fortunes, and recover stolen goods; which all the parish says he must do by conversing with the devil and other evil spirits: And no wise man will ever allow he could converse personally with either, till after he was dead.

Thirdly, I will plainly prove him to be dead out of his own almanack for this year, and from the very passage which he produces to make us think him alive. He there says, "He is not only now alive, but was also alive on the very 29th of March, which I foretold he should die on": By this, he declares his opinion, that a man may be alive now, who was not alive a twelvemonth ago. And indeed, there lies the sophistry of this argu-

ment. He dares not assert, he was alive ever since that 29th of March, but that he is now alive, and was so on that day: I grant the latter; for he did not die till night, as appears by the printed account of his death, in a letter to a lord; and whether he is since revived I leave the world to judge. This indeed is perfect cavilling, and I am ashamed to dwell any longer upon it.

Fourthly, I will appeal to Mr. Partridge himself, whether it be probable I could have been so indiscreet, to begin my predictions with the only falsehood that ever was pretended to be in them; and this in an affair at home, where I had so many opportunities to be exact; and must have given such advantages against me to a person of Mr. Partridge's wit and learning, who, if he could possibly have raised one single objection more against the truth of my prophecies, would hardly have spared me.

And here I must take occasion to reprove the above mention'd writer of the relation of Mr. Partridge's death, in a letter to a lord; who was pleased to tax me with a mistake of four whole hours in my calculation of that event. I must confess, this censure pronounced with an air of certainty, in a matter that so nearly concerned me, and by a grave judicious author, moved me not a little. But tho' I was at that time out of town, yet several of my friends, whose curiosity had led them to be exactly informed (for as to my own part, having no doubt at all in the matter, I never once thought of it) assured me, I computed to something under half an hour: which (I speak my private opinion) is an error of no very great magnitude, that men should raise a clamour about it. I shall only say, it would not be amiss, if that author would henceforth be more tender of other men's reputations as well as his own. It is well there were no more mistakes of that kind; if there had, I presume he would have told me of them with as little ceremony.

There is one objection against Mr. Partridge's death, which I have sometimes met with, though indeed very slightly offered, That he still continues to write almanacks. But this is no more than what is common to all that profession; Gadbury, Poor Robin, Dove, Wing, and several others, do yearly publish their almanacks, though several of them have been dead since before the Revolution. Now the natural reason of this I take to be, that whereas it is the privilege of other authors to live after their deaths; almanack-makers are alone excluded, because their dissertations treating only upon the minutes as they pass, become useless as those go off. In consideration of which, Time, whose registers they are, gives them a lease in reversion, to continue their works after their death.

I should not have given the publick or myself the trouble of this vindication, if my name had not been made use of by several persons, to whom

I never lent it; one of which, a few days ago, was pleased to father on me a new sett of predictions. But I think those are things too serious to be trifled with. It grieved me to the heart, when I saw my labours, which had cost me so much thought and watching, bawl'd about by common hawkers, which I only intended for the weighty consideration of the gravest persons. This prejudiced the world so much at first, that several of my friends had the assurance to ask me whether I were in jest? To which I only answered coldly, that the event would shew. But it is the talent of our age and nation, to turn things of the greatest importance into ridicule. When the end of the year had verified all my predictions, out comes Mr. Partridge's almanack, disputing the point of his death; so that I am employed, like the general who was forced to kill his enemies twice over, whom a necromancer had raised to life. If Mr. Partridge has practised the same experiment upon himself, and be again alive, long may he continue so; that does not in the least contradict my veracity: But I think I have clearly proved, by invincible demonstration, that he died at farthest within half an hour of the time I foretold, and not four hours sooner, as the above-mentioned author, in his letter to a lord, hath maliciously suggested, with design to blast my credit, by charging me with so gross a mistake.

## A famous prediction of Merlin, the British wizard.

Written above a thousand years ago, and relating to the year 1709, with explanatory notes.

Last year was publish'd a paper of predictions, pretended to be written by one Isaac Bickerstaff, Esq; but the true design of it was to ridicule the art of astrology, and expose its professors as ignorant or impostors. Against this imputation, Dr. Partridge hath vindicated himself in his almanack for that year.

For a farther vindication of this famous art, I have thought fit to present the world with the following prophecy. The original is said to be of the famous Merlin, who lived about a thousand years ago; and the following translation is two hundred years old, for it seems to be written near the end of Henry the Seventh's reign. I found it in an old edition of Merlin's Prophecies, imprinted at London by John Hawkins in the year 1530, page 39. I set it down word for word in the old orthography, and shall take leave to subjoin a few explanatory notes.

Seven and Ten addyd to Nyne,  
Of Fraunce her Woe this is the Sygne,  
Tamys Rivere twys y-frozen,  
Walke sans wetyng Shoes ne Hozen.  
Then comyth foorthe, ich understonde,  
From Town of Stoffe to farryn Londe,  
An herdye Chyftan, woe the Morne  
To Fraunce, that evere he was born.  
Than shall the fyshe beweyle his Bosse;  
Nor shall grin Berrys make up the Losse.  
Yonge Symnele shall again miscarrye:  
And Norways Pryd again shall marrye.  
And from the tree where Blosums feele,  
Ripe Fruit shall come, and all is wele,  
Reaums shall daunce Honde in Honde,  
And it shall be merrye in old Inglonde,



Then old Inglonde shall be no more,  
And no man shall be sorre therefore.  
Geryon shall have three Hedes agayne,  
Till Hapsburge makyth them but twayne.

Explanatory notes.

v*Seven and Ten*. This line describes the year when these events shall happen. Seven and ten makes seventeen, which I explain seventeen hundred, and this number added to nine, makes the year we are now in; for it must be understood of the natural year, which begins the first of January.

v*Tamys Rivere twys, etc.* The River Thames, frozen twice in one year, so as men to walk on it, is a very signal accident, which perhaps hath not fallen out for several hundred years before, and is the reason why some astrologers have thought that this prophecy could never be fulfilled, because they imagine such a thing would never happen in our climate.

v*From Town of Stoffe, etc.* This is a plain designation of the Duke of Marlborough: One kind of stuff used to fatten land is called marle, and every body knows that borough is a name for a town; and this way of expression is after the usual dark manner of old astrological predictions.

v*Then shall the Fyshe, etc.* By the fish, is understood the Dauphin of France, as their kings eldest sons are called: 'Tis here said, he shall lament the loss of the Duke of Burgundy, called the Bosse, which is an old English word for hump-shoulder, or crook-back, as that Duke is known to be; and the prophecy seems to mean, that he should be overcome or slain. By the green berries, in the next line, is meant the young Duke of Berry, the Dauphin's third son, who shall not have valour or fortune enough to supply the loss of his eldest brother.

v*Yonge Symnele, etc.* By Symnele is meant the pretended Prince of Wales, who, if he offers to attempt anything against England, shall miscarry as he did before. Lambert Symnele is the name of a young man, noted in our histories for personating the son (as I remember) of Edward the fourth.

v*And Norway's Pryd, etc.* I cannot guess who is meant by Norway's Pride, perhaps the reader may, as well as the sense of the two following lines.

*vReaums shall, etc.* Reums, or, as the word is now, realms, is the old name for kingdoms: And this is a very plain prediction of our happy Union, with the felicities that shall attend it. It is added that Old England shall be no more, and yet no man shall be sorry for it. And indeed, properly speaking, England is now no more, for the whole island is one Kingdom, under the name of Britain.

*vGeryon shall, etc.* This prediction, tho' somewhat obscure, is wonderfully adapt. Geryon is said to have been a king of Spain, whom Hercules slew. It was a fiction of the poets, that he had three heads, which the author says he shall have again: That is, Spain shall have three kings; which is now wonderfully verified; for besides the King of Portugal, which properly is part of Spain, there are now two rivals for Spain, Charles and Philip: But Charles being descended fro the Count of Hapsburgh, founder of the Austrian family, shall soon make those heads but two; by overturning Philip, and driving him out of Spain.

Some of these predictions are already fulfilled; and it is highly probable the rest may be in due time; and, I think, I have not forced the words, by my explication, into any other sense than what they will naturally bear. If this be granted, I am sure it must be also allow'd, that the author (whoever he were) was a person of extraordinary sagacity; and that astrology brought to such perfection as this, is by no means an art to be despised, whatever Mr. Bickerstaff, or other merry gentlemen are pleased to think. As to the tradition of these lines having been writ in the original by Merlin, I confess I lay not much weight upon it: But it is enough to justify their authority, that the book from whence I have transcrib'd them, was printed 170 years ago, as appears by the title-page. For the satisfaction of any gentleman, who may be either doubtful of the truth, or curious to be inform'd; I shall give order to have the very book sent to the printer of this paper, with directions to let anybody see it that pleases, because I believe it is pretty scarce.

Dr. John Arbuthnot and Alexander Pope

Annus Mirabilis: or,  
The wonderful effects of the approaching conjunction of the planets  
Jupiter, Mars, and Saturn.

By Mart. Scriblerus, Philomath.

*In nova fert animus mutatas dicere formas corpora.....*

I SUPPOSE every body is sufficiently appriz'd of, and duly prepar'd for, the famous conjunction to be celebrated the 29th of this instant December, 1722, foretold by all the sages of antiquity, under the name of the Annus Mirabilis, or the metamorphostical conjunction: a word which denotes the mutual transformation of sexes, (the effect of that configuration of the celestial bodies) the human males being turn'd into females, and the human females into males.

The Egyptians have represented this great transformation by several significant hieroglyphicks, particularly one very remarkable. There are carv'd upon an obelisk, a barber and a midwife; the barber delivers his razor to the midwife, and she her swadling-cloaths to the barber. Accordingly Thales Milesius (who like the rest of his countrymen, borrow'd his learning from the Egyptians) after having computed the time of this famous conjunction, "Then," says he, "shall men and women mutually exchange the pangs of shaving and child-bearing."

Anaximander modestly describes this metamorphosis in mathematical terms: "Then," says he, "shall the negative quantity of the women be turn'd into positive, their - into +;" (i.e.) their minus into plus.

Plato not only speaks of this great change, but describes all the preparations towards it. "Long before the bodily transformation, (says he) nature shall begin the most difficult part of her work, by changing the ideas and inclinations of the two sexes: Men shall turn effeminate, and women manly; wives shall domineer, and husbands obey; ladies shall ride a horseback, dress'd like cavaliers; princes and nobles appear in night-rails and petticoats; men shall squeak upon theatres with female voices, and women

corrupt virgins; lords shall knot and cut paper; and even the northern people....” A Greek phrase (which for modesty’s sake I forbear to translate) which denotes a vice too frequent amongst us.

That the Ministry foresaw this great change, is plain from the Callico-Act; whereby it is now become the occupation of women all over England, to convert their useless female habits into beds, window-curtains, chairs, and joint-stools; undressing themselves (as it were) before their transformation.

The philosophy of this transformation will not seem surprizing to people who search into the bottom of things. Madam Bourignon, a devout French lady, has shewn us, how man was at first created male and female in one individual, having the faculty of propagation within himself: A circumstance necessary to the state of innocence, wherein a man’s happiness was not to depend upon the caprice of another. It was not till after he had made a faux pas, that he had his female mate. Many such transformations of individuals have been well attested; particularly one by Montaigne, and another by the late Bishop of Salisbury. From all which it appears, that this system of male and female has already undergone and may hereafter suffer, several alterations. Every smatterer in anatomy knows, that a woman is but an introverted man; a new fusion and flatus will turn the hollow bottom of a

bottle into a convexity; but I forbear, (for the sake of my modest men-readers, who are in a few days to be virgins.)

In some subjects, the smallest alterations will do: some men are sufficiently spread about the hips, and contriv’d with female softness, that they want only the negative quantity to make them buxom wenches; and there are women who are, as it were, already the ebauche of a good sturdy man. If nature cou’d be puzzl’d, it will be how to bestow the redundant matter of the exuberant bobbies that now appear about town, or how to roll out the short dapper fellows into well-siz’d women.

This great conjunction will begin to operate on Saturday the 29th instant. Accordingly, about eight at night, as Senezino shall begin at the Opera, si videte, he shall be observ’d to make an unusual motion; upon which the audience will be affected with a red suffusion over their countenance: And because a strong succession of the muscles of the belly is necessary towards performing this great operation, both sexes will be thrown into a profuse involuntary laughter. Then (to use the modest terms of Anaximander) shall negative quantity be turn’d into positive, etc. Time never beheld, nor will it ever assemble, such a number of untouch’d virgins within those walls! but alas! such will be the impatience and curiosity

of people to act in their new capacity, that many of them will be compleated men and women that very night. To prevent the disorders that may happen upon this occasion, is the chief design of this paper.

Gentlemen have begun already to make use of this conjunction to compass their filthy purposes. They tell the ladies forsooth, that it is only parting with a perishable commodity, hardly of so much value as a callico under-petticoat; since, like its mistress, it will be useless in the form it is now in. If the ladies have no regard to the dishonour and immorality of the action, I desire they will consider, that nature who never destroys her own productions, will exempt big-belly'd women till the time of their lying-in; so that not to be transformed, will be the same as to be pregnant. If they don't think it worth while to defend a fortress that is to be demolish'd in a few days, let them reflect that it will be a melancholy thing nine months hence, to be brought to bed of a bastard; a posthumous bastard as it were, to which the quondam father can be no more than a dry nurse.

This wonderful transformation is the instrument of nature, to balance matters between the sexes. The cruelty of scornful mistresses shall be return'd; the slighted maid shall grow into an imperious gallant, and reward her undoer with a big belly, and a bastard.

It is hardly possible to imagine the revolutions that this wonderful phaenomenon will occasion over the face of the earth. I long impatiently to see the proceedings of the Parliament of Paris, as to the title of succession to the crown, this being a case not provided for by the salique law. There will be no preventing disorders amongst friars and monks; for certainly vows of chastity do not bind but under the sex in which they were made. The same will hold good with marriages, tho' I think it will be a scandal amongst Protestants for husbands and wives to part, since there remains still a possibility to perform the debitus conjugale, by the husband being femme couverte. I submit it to the judgment of the gentlemen of the long robe, whether this transformation does not discharge all suits of rapes?

The Pope must undergo a new groping; but the false prophet Mahomet has contriv'd matters well for his successors; for as the Grand Signior has now a great many fine women, he will then have as many young gentlemen, at his devotion.

These are surprizing scenes; but I beg leave to affirm, that the solemn operations of nature are subjects of contemplation, not of ridicule. Therefore I make it my earnest request to the merry fellows, and giggling girls about town, that they would not put themselves in a high twitter, when they go to visit a general lying-in of his first child; his officers serving as

midwives, nurses and rockers dispensing caudle; or if they behold the reverend prelates dressing the heads and airing the linnen at court, I beg they will remember that these offices must be fill'd with people of the greatest regularity, and best characters. For the same reason, I am sorry that a certain prelate, who notwithstanding his confinement (in December 1723), still preserves his healthy, chearful countenance, cannot come in time to be a nurse at court.

I likewise earnestly intreat the maids of honour, (then ensigns and captains of the guard) that, at their first setting out, they have some regard to their former station, and do not run wild through all the infamous houses about town: That the present grooms of the bed-chamber (then maids of honour) would not eat chalk and lime in their green-sickness: And in general, that the men would remember they are become retromingent, and not by inadvertency lift up against walls and posts.

Petticoats will not be burdensome to the clergy; but balls and assemblies will be indecent for some time.

As for you, coquettes, bawds, and chamber-maids, (the future ministers, plenipotentiaries, and cabinet-counsellors to the princes of the earth,) manage the great intrigues that will be committed to your charge, with your usual secrecy and conduct; and the affairs of your masters will go better than ever.

O ye exchange women! (our right worshipful representatives that are to be) be not so griping in the sale of your ware as your predecessors, but consider that the nation, like a spend-thrift heir, has run out: Be likewise a little more continent in your tongues than you are at present, else the length of debates will spoil your dinners.

You housewifely good women, who not preside over the confectionary, (henceforth commissioners of the Treasury) be so good as to dispense the sugar-plumbs of the Government with a more impartial and frugal hand.

Ye prudes and censorious old maids, (the hopes of the Bench) exert but your usual talent of finding faults, and the laws will be strictly executed; only I would not have you proceed upon such slender evidences as you have done hitherto.

It is from you, eloquent oyster-merchants of Billingsgate, (just ready to be called to the Bar, and quouif'd like your sister-serjants,) that we expect the shortening the time, and lessening the expences of law-suits: For I think you are observ'd to bring your debates to a short issue; and even custom will restrain you from taking the oyster, and leaving only the shell to your client.

O ye physicians, (who in the figure of old women are to clean the tripe

in the markets) scour it as effectually as you have done that of your patients, and the town will fare most deliciously on Saturdays.

I cannot but congratulate human nature, upon this happy transformation; the only expedient left to restore the liberties and tranquillity of mankind. This is so evident, that it is almost an affront to common sense to insist upon the proof: If there can be any such stupid creature as to doubt it, I desire he will make but the following obvious reflection. There are in Europe alone, at present, about a million of sturdy fellows, under the denomination of standing forces, with arms in their hands: That those are masters of the lives, liberties and fortunes of all the rest, I believe nobody will deny. It is no less true in fact, that reams of paper, and above a square mile of skins of vellum have been employ'd to no purpose, to settle peace among those sons of violence. Pray, who is he that will say unto them, Go and disband yourselves? But lo! by this transformation it is done at once, and the halcyon days of publick tranquillity return: For neither the military temper nor discipline can taint the soft sex for a whole age to come: *Bellaque matribus invisa*, War odious to mothers, will not grow immediately palatable in their paternal state.

Nor will the influence of this transformation be less in family tranquillity, than it is in national. Great faults will be amended, and frailties forgiven, on both sides. A wife who has been disturb'd with late hours, and choak'd with the hautgout of a sot, will remember her sufferings, and avoid the temptations; and will, for the same reason, indulge her mate in his female capacity in some passions, which she is sensible from experience are natural to the sex. Such as vanity of fine cloaths, being admir'd, etc. And how tenderly must she use her mate under the breeding qualms and labour-pains which she hath felt her self? In short, all unreasonable demands upon husbands must cease, because they are already satisfy'd from natural experience that they are impossible.

That the ladies may govern the affairs of the world, and the gentlemen those of their household, better than either of them have hitherto done, is the hearty desire of, Their most sincere well-wisher,

M.S.

# The Battle of the Books

## And Other Short Pieces

by Jonathan Swift

### THE PREFACE OF THE AUTHOR

SATIRE IS A SORT OF GLASS wherein beholders do generally discover everybody's face but their own; which is the chief reason for that kind reception it meets with in the world, and that so very few are offended with it. But, if it should happen otherwise, the danger is not great; and I have learned from long experience never to apprehend mischief from those understandings I have been able to provoke: for anger and fury, though they add strength to the sinews of the body, yet are found to relax those of the mind, and to render all its efforts feeble and impotent.

There is a brain that will endure but one scumming; let the owner gather it with discretion, and manage his little stock with husbandry; but, of all things, let him beware of bringing it under the lash of his betters, because that will make it all bubble up into impertinence, and he will find no new supply. Wit without knowledge being a sort of cream, which gathers in a night to the top, and by a skilful hand may be soon whipped into froth; but once scummed away, what appears underneath will be fit for nothing but to be thrown to the hogs.



# CHAPTER I

A FULL AND TRUE ACCOUNT  
OF THE  
BATTLE FOUGHT LAST FRIDAY  
BETWEEN THE  
ANCIENT AND THE MODERN BOOKS  
IN SAINT JAMES'S LIBRARY

WHOEVER EXAMINES, with due circumspection, into the annual records of time, will find it remarked that War is the child of Pride, and Pride the daughter of Riches:- the former of which assertions may be soon granted, but one cannot so easily subscribe to the latter; for Pride is nearly related to Beggary and Want, either by father or mother, and sometimes by both: and, to speak naturally, it very seldom happens among men to fall out when all have enough; invasions usually travelling from north to south, that is to say, from poverty to plenty. The most ancient and natural grounds of quarrels are lust and avarice; which, though we may allow to be brethren, or collateral branches of pride, are certainly the issues of want. For, to speak in the phrase of writers upon politics, we may observe in the republic of dogs, which in its original seems to be an institution of the many, that the whole state is ever in the profoundest peace after a full meal; and that civil broils arise among them when it happens for one great bone to be seized on by some leading dog, who either divides it among the few, and then it falls to an oligarchy, or keeps it to himself, and then it runs up to a tyranny. The same reasoning also holds place among them in those dissensions we behold upon a turgescency in any of their females. For the right of possession lying in common (it being impossible to establish a property in so delicate a case), jealousies and suspicions do so abound, that the whole commonwealth of that street is reduced to a manifest state of war, of every citizen against every citizen, till some one of more courage, conduct, or fortune than the rest seizes and enjoys the prize: upon

which naturally arises plenty of heart-burning, and envy, and snarling against the happy dog. Again, if we look upon any of these republics engaged in a foreign war, either of invasion or defence, we shall find the same reasoning will serve as to the grounds and occasions of each; and that poverty or want, in some degree or other (whether real or in opinion, which makes no alteration in the case), has a great share, as well as pride, on the part of the aggressor.

Now whoever will please to take this scheme, and either reduce or adapt it to an intellectual state or commonwealth of learning, will soon discover the first ground of disagreement between the two great parties at this time in arms, and may form just conclusions upon the merits of either cause. But the issue or events of this war are not so easy to conjecture at; for the present quarrel is so inflamed by the warm heads of either faction, and the pretensions somewhere or other so exorbitant, as not to admit the least overtures of accommodation. This quarrel first began, as I have heard it affirmed by an old dweller in the neighbourhood, about a small spot of ground, lying and being upon one of the two tops of the hill Parnassus; the highest and largest of which had, it seems, been time out of mind in quiet possession of certain tenants, called the Ancients; and the other was held by the Moderns. But these disliking their present station, sent certain ambassadors to the Ancients, complaining of a great nuisance; how the height of that part of Parnassus quite spoiled the prospect of theirs, especially towards the east; and therefore, to avoid a war, offered them the choice of this alternative, either that the Ancients would please to remove themselves and their effects down to the lower summit, which the Moderns would graciously surrender to them, and advance into their place; or else the said Ancients will give leave to the Moderns to come with shovels and mattocks, and level the said hill as low as they shall think it convenient. To which the Ancients made answer, how little they expected such a message as this from a colony whom they had admitted, out of their own free grace, to so near a neighbourhood. That, as to their own seat, they were aborigines of it, and therefore to talk with them of a removal or surrender was a language they did not understand. That if the height of the hill on their side shortened the prospect of the Moderns, it was a disadvantage they could not help; but desired them to consider whether that injury (if it be any) were not largely recompensed by the shade and shelter it afforded them. That as to the levelling or digging down, it was either folly or ignorance to propose it if they did or did not know how that side of the hill was an entire rock, which would break their tools and hearts, without any damage to itself. That they would therefore advise the Moderns rather

to raise their own side of the hill than dream of pulling down that of the Ancients; to the former of which they would not only give licence, but also largely contribute. All this was rejected by the Moderns with much indignation, who still insisted upon one of the two expedients; and so this difference broke out into a long and obstinate war, maintained on the one part by resolution, and by the courage of certain leaders and allies; but, on the other, by the greatness of their number, upon all defeats affording continual recruits. In this quarrel whole rivulets of ink have been exhausted, and the virulence of both parties enormously augmented. Now, it must be here understood, that ink is the great missive weapon in all battles of the learned, which, conveyed through a sort of engine called a quill, infinite numbers of these are darted at the enemy by the valiant on each side, with equal skill and violence, as if it were an engagement of porcupines. This malignant liquor was compounded, by the engineer who invented it, of two ingredients, which are, gall and copperas; by its bitterness and venom to suit, in some degree, as well as to foment, the genius of the combatants. And as the Grecians, after an engagement, when they could not agree about the victory, were wont to set up trophies on both sides, the beaten party being content to be at the same expense, to keep itself in countenance (a laudable and ancient custom, happily revived of late in the art of war), so the learned, after a sharp and bloody dispute, do, on both sides, hang out their trophies too, whichever comes by the worst. These trophies have largely inscribed on them the merits of the cause; a full impartial account of such a Battle, and how the victory fell clearly to the party that set them up. They are known to the world under several names; as disputes, arguments, rejoinders, brief considerations, answers, replies, remarks, reflections, objections, confutations. For a very few days they are fixed up all in public places, either by themselves or their representatives, for passengers to gaze at; whence the chiefest and largest are removed to certain magazines they call libraries, there to remain in a quarter purposely assigned them, and thenceforth begin to be called books of controversy.

In these books is wonderfully instilled and preserved the spirit of each warrior while he is alive; and after his death his soul transmigrates thither to inform them. This, at least, is the more common opinion; but I believe it is with libraries as with other cemeteries, where some philosophers affirm that a certain spirit, which they call *Brutum Hominis*, hovers over the monument, till the body is corrupted and turns to dust or to worms, but then vanishes or dissolves; so, we may say, a restless spirit haunts over every book, till dust or worms have seized upon it - which to some may happen in a few days, but to others later - and therefore, books of contro-

versy being, of all others, haunted by the most disorderly spirits, have always been confined in a separate lodge from the rest, and for fear of a mutual violence against each other, it was thought prudent by our ancestors to bind them to the peace with strong iron chains. Of which invention the original occasion was this: When the works of Scotus first came out, they were carried to a certain library, and had lodgings appointed them; but this author was no sooner settled than he went to visit his master Aristotle, and there both concerted together to seize Plato by main force, and turn him out from his ancient station among the divines, where he had peaceably dwelt near eight hundred years. The attempt succeeded, and the two usurpers have reigned ever since in his stead; but, to maintain quiet for the future, it was decreed that all polemics of the larger size should be hold fast with a chain.

By this expedient, the public peace of libraries might certainly have been preserved if a new species of controversial books had not arisen of late years, instinct with a more malignant spirit, from the war above mentioned between the learned about the higher summit of Parnassus.

When these books were first admitted into the public libraries, I remember to have said, upon occasion, to several persons concerned, how I was sure they would create broils wherever they came, unless a world of care were taken; and therefore I advised that the champions of each side should be coupled together, or otherwise mixed, that, like the blending of contrary poisons, their malignity might be employed among themselves. And it seems I was neither an ill prophet nor an ill counsellor; for it was nothing else but the neglect of this caution which gave occasion to the terrible fight that happened on Friday last between the Ancient and Modern Books in the King's library. Now, because the talk of this battle is so fresh in everybody's mouth, and the expectation of the town so great to be informed in the particulars, I, being possessed of all qualifications requisite in an historian, and retained by neither party, have resolved to comply with the urgent importunity of my friends, by writing down a full impartial account thereof.

The guardian of the regal library, a person of great valour, but chiefly renowned for his humanity, had been a fierce champion for the Moderns, and, in an engagement upon Parnassus, had vowed with his own hands to knock down two of the ancient chiefs who guarded a small pass on the superior rock, but, endeavouring to climb up, was cruelly obstructed by his own unhappy weight and tendency towards his centre, a quality to which those of the Modern party are extremely subject; for, being light-headed, they have, in speculation, a wonderful agility, and conceive noth-

ing too high for them to mount, but, in reducing to practice, discover a mighty pressure about their posteriors and their heels. Having thus failed in his design, the disappointed champion bore a cruel rancour to the Ancients, which he resolved to gratify by showing all marks of his favour to the books of their adversaries, and lodging them in the fairest apartments; when, at the same time, whatever book had the boldness to own itself for an advocate of the Ancients was buried alive in some obscure corner, and threatened, upon the least displeasure, to be turned out of doors. Besides, it so happened that about this time there was a strange confusion of place among all the books in the library, for which several reasons were assigned. Some imputed it to a great heap of learned dust, which a perverse wind blew off from a shelf of Moderns into the keeper's eyes. Others affirmed he had a humour to pick the worms out of the schoolmen, and swallow them fresh and fasting, whereof some fell upon his spleen, and some climbed up into his head, to the great perturbation of both. And lastly, others maintained that, by walking much in the dark about the library, he had quite lost the situation of it out of his head; and therefore, in replacing his books, he was apt to mistake and clap Descartes next to Aristotle, poor Plato had got between Hobbes and the Seven Wise Masters, and Virgil was hemmed in with Dryden on one side and Wither on the other.

Meanwhile, those books that were advocates for the Moderns, chose out one from among them to make a progress through the whole library, examine the number and strength of their party, and concert their affairs. This messenger performed all things very industriously, and brought back with him a list of their forces, in all, fifty thousand, consisting chiefly of light-horse, heavy-armed foot, and mercenaries; whereof the foot were in general but sorrily armed and worse clad; their horses large, but extremely out of case and heart; however, some few, by trading among the Ancients, had furnished themselves tolerably enough.

While things were in this ferment, discord grew extremely high; hot words passed on both sides, and ill blood was plentifully bred. Here a solitary Ancient, squeezed up among a whole shelf of Moderns, offered fairly to dispute the case, and to prove by manifest reason that the priority was due to them from long possession, and in regard of their prudence, antiquity, and, above all, their great merits toward the Moderns. But these denied the premises, and seemed very much to wonder how the Ancients could pretend to insist upon their antiquity, when it was so plain (if they went to that) that the Moderns were much the more ancient of the two. As for any obligations they owed to the Ancients, they renounced them all. "It is true," said they, "we are informed some few of our party have

been so mean as to borrow their subsistence from you, but the rest, infinitely the greater number (and especially we French and English), were so far from stooping to so base an example, that there never passed, till this very hour, six words between us. For our horses were of our own breeding, our arms of our own forging, and our clothes of our own cutting out and sewing." Plato was by chance up on the next shelf, and observing those that spoke to be in the ragged plight mentioned a while ago, their jades lean and foundered, their weapons of rotten wood, their armour rusty, and nothing but rags underneath, he laughed loud, and in his pleasant way swore, by —, he believed them.

Now, the Moderns had not proceeded in their late negotiation with secrecy enough to escape the notice of the enemy. For those advocates who had begun the quarrel, by setting first on foot the dispute of precedence, talked so loud of coming to a battle, that Sir William Temple happened to overhear them, and gave immediate intelligence to the Ancients, who thereupon drew up their scattered troops together, resolving to act upon the defensive; upon which, several of the Moderns fled over to their party, and among the rest Temple himself. This Temple, having been educated and long conversed among the Ancients, was, of all the Moderns, their greatest favourite, and became their greatest champion.

Things were at this crisis when a material accident fell out. For upon the highest corner of a large window, there dwelt a certain spider, swollen up to the first magnitude by the destruction of infinite numbers of flies, whose spoils lay scattered before the gates of his palace, like human bones before the cave of some giant. The avenues to his castle were guarded with turnpikes and palisadoes, all after the modern way of fortification. After you had passed several courts you came to the centre, wherein you might behold the constable himself in his own lodgings, which had windows fronting to each avenue, and ports to sally out upon all occasions of prey or defence. In this mansion he had for some time dwelt in peace and plenty, without danger to his person by swallows from above, or to his palace by brooms from below; when it was the pleasure of fortune to conduct thither a wandering bee, to whose curiosity a broken pane in the glass had discovered itself, and in he went, where, expatiating a while, he at last happened to alight upon one of the outward walls of the spider's citadel; which, yielding to the unequal weight, sunk down to the very foundation. Thrice he endeavoured to force his passage, and thrice the centre shook. The spider within, feeling the terrible convulsion, supposed at first that nature was approaching to her final dissolution, or else that Beelzebub, with all his legions, was come to revenge the death of many

thousands of his subjects whom his enemy had slain and devoured. However, he at length valiantly resolved to issue forth and meet his fate. Meanwhile the bee had acquitted himself of his toils, and, posted securely at some distance, was employed in cleansing his wings, and disengaging them from the ragged remnants of the cobweb. By this time the spider was adventured out, when, beholding the chasms, the ruins, and dilapidations of his fortress, he was very near at his wit's end; he stormed and swore like a madman, and swelled till he was ready to burst. At length, casting his eye upon the bee, and wisely gathering causes from events (for they know each other by sight), "A plague split you," said he; "is it you, with a vengeance, that have made this litter here; could not you look before you, and be d-d? Do you think I have nothing else to do (in the devil's name) but to mend and repair after you?" "Good words, friend," said the bee, having now pruned himself, and being disposed to droll; "I'll give you my hand and word to come near your kennel no more; I was never in such a confounded pickle since I was born." "Sirrah," replied the spider, "if it were not for breaking an old custom in our family, never to stir abroad against an enemy, I should come and teach you better manners." "I pray have patience," said the bee, "or you'll spend your substance, and, for aught I see, you may stand in need of it all, towards the repair of your house." "Rogue, rogue," replied the spider, "yet methinks you should have more respect to a person whom all the world allows to be so much your betters." "By my troth," said the bee, "the comparison will amount to a very good jest, and you will do me a favour to let me know the reasons that all the world is pleased to use in so hopeful a dispute." At this the spider, having swelled himself into the size and posture of a disputant, began his argument in the true spirit of controversy, with resolution to be heartily scurrilous and angry, to urge on his own reasons without the least regard to the answers or objections of his opposite, and fully predetermined in his mind against all conviction.

"Not to disparage myself," said he, "by the comparison with such a rascal, what art thou but a vagabond without house or home, without stock or inheritance? born to no possession of your own, but a pair of wings and a drone-pipe. Your livelihood is a universal plunder upon nature; a freebooter over fields and gardens; and, for the sake of stealing, will rob a nettle as easily as a violet. Whereas I am a domestic animal, furnished with a native stock within myself. This large castle (to show my improvements in the mathematics) is all built with my own hands, and the materials extracted altogether out of my own person."

"I am glad," answered the bee, "to hear you grant at least that I am

come honestly by my wings and my voice; for then, it seems, I am obliged to Heaven alone for my flights and my music; and Providence would never have bestowed on me two such gifts without designing them for the noblest ends. I visit, indeed, all the flowers and blossoms of the field and garden, but whatever I collect thence enriches myself without the least injury to their beauty, their smell, or their taste. Now, for you and your skill in architecture and other mathematics, I have little to say: in that building of yours there might, for aught I know, have been labour and method enough; but, by woeful experience for us both, it is too plain the materials are naught; and I hope you will henceforth take warning, and consider duration and matter, as well as method and art. You boast, indeed, of being obliged to no other creature, but of drawing and spinning out all from yourself; that is to say, if we may judge of the liquor in the vessel by what issues out, you possess a good plentiful store of dirt and poison in your breast; and, though I would by no means lessen or disparage your genuine stock of either, yet I doubt you are somewhat obliged, for an increase of both, to a little foreign assistance. Your inherent portion of dirt does not fall of acquisitions, by sweepings exhaled from below; and one insect furnishes you with a share of poison to destroy another. So that, in short, the question comes all to this: whether is the nobler being of the two, that which, by a lazy contemplation of four inches round, by an overweening pride, feeding, and engendering on itself, turns all into excrement and venom, producing nothing at all but flybane and a cobweb; or that which, by a universal range, with long search, much study, true judgment, and distinction of things, brings home honey and wax.”

This dispute was managed with such eagerness, clamour, and warmth, that the two parties of books, in arms below, stood silent a while, waiting in suspense what would be the issue; which was not long undetermined: for the bee, grown impatient at so much loss of time, fled straight away to a bed of roses, without looking for a reply, and left the spider, like an orator, collected in himself, and just prepared to burst out.

It happened upon this emergency that Æsop broke silence first. He had been of late most barbarously treated by a strange effect of the regent’s humanity, who had torn off his title-page, sorely defaced one half of his leaves, and chained him fast among a shelf of Moderns. Where, soon discovering how high the quarrel was likely to proceed, he tried all his arts, and turned himself to a thousand forms. At length, in the borrowed shape of an ass, the regent mistook him for a Modern; by which means he had time and opportunity to escape to the Ancients, just when the spider and the bee were entering into their contest; to which he gave his attention



with a world of pleasure, and, when it was ended, swore in the loudest key that in all his life he had never known two cases, so parallel and adapt to each other as that in the window and this upon the shelves. “The disputants,” said he, “have admirably managed the dispute between them, have taken in the full strength of all that is to be said on both sides, and exhausted the substance of every argument *pro* and *con*. It is but to adjust the reasonings of both to the present quarrel, then to compare and apply the labours and fruits of each, as the bee has learnedly deduced them, and we shall find the conclusion fall plain and close upon the Moderns and us. For pray, gentlemen, was ever anything so modern as the spider in his air, his turns, and his paradoxes? he argues in the behalf of you, his brethren, and himself, with many boastings of his native stock and great genius; that he spins and spits wholly from himself, and scorns to own any obligation or assistance from without. Then he displays to you his great skill in architecture and improvement in the mathematics. To all this the bee, as an advocate retained by us, the Ancients, thinks fit to answer, that, if one may judge of the great genius or inventions of the Moderns by what they have produced, you will hardly have countenance to bear you out in boasting of either. Erect your schemes with as much method and skill as you please; yet, if the materials be nothing but dirt, spun out of your own entrails (the guts of modern brains), the edifice will conclude at last in a cobweb; the duration of which, like that of other spiders’ webs, may be imputed to their being forgotten, or neglected, or hid in a corner. For anything else of genuine that the Moderns may pretend to, I cannot recollect; unless it be a large vein of wrangling and satire, much of a nature and substance with the spiders’ poison; which, however they pretend to spit wholly out of themselves, is improved by the same arts, by feeding upon the insects and vermin of the age. As for us, the Ancients, we are content with the bee, to pretend to nothing of our own beyond our wings and our voice: that is to say, our flights and our language. For the rest, whatever we have got has been by infinite labour and search, and ranging through every corner of nature; the difference is, that, instead of dirt and poison, we have rather chosen to till our hives with honey and wax; thus furnishing mankind with the two noblest of things, which are sweetness and light.”

It is wonderful to conceive the tumult arisen among the books upon the close of this long descant of Æsop: both parties took the hint, and heightened their animosities so on a sudden, that they resolved it should come to a battle. Immediately the two main bodies withdrew, under their several ensigns, to the farther parts of the library, and there entered into

cabals and consults upon the present emergency. The Moderns were in very warm debates upon the choice of their leaders; and nothing less than the fear impending from their enemies could have kept them from mutinies upon this occasion. The difference was greatest among the horse, where every private trooper pretended to the chief command, from Tasso and Milton to Dryden and Wither. The light-horse were commanded by Cowley and Despreaux. There came the bowmen under their valiant leaders, Descartes, Gassendi, and Hobbes; whose strength was such that they could shoot their arrows beyond the atmosphere, never to fall down again, but turn, like that of Evander, into meteors; or, like the cannon-ball, into stars. Paracelsus brought a squadron of stinkpot-flingers from the snowy mountains of Rhætia. There came a vast body of dragoons, of different nations, under the leading of Harvey, their great aga: part armed with scythes, the weapons of death; part with lances and long knives, all steeped in poison; part shot bullets of a most malignant nature, and used white powder, which infallibly killed without report. There came several bodies of heavy-armed foot, all mercenaries, under the ensigns of Guicciardini, Davila, Polydore Vergil, Buchanan, Mariana, Camden, and others. The engineers were commanded by Regiomontanus and Wilkins. The rest was a confused multitude, led by Scotus, Aquinas, and Bellarmine; of mighty bulk and stature, but without either arms, courage, or discipline. In the last place came infinite swarms of calones, a disorderly rout led by L'Estrange; rogues and ragamuffins, that follow the camp for nothing but the plunder, all without coats to cover them.

The army of the Ancients was much fewer in number; Homer led the horse, and Pindar the light-horse; Euclid was chief engineer; Plato and Aristotle commanded the bowmen; Herodotus and Livy the foot; Hippocrates, the dragoons; the allies, led by Vossius and Temple, brought up the rear.

All things violently tending to a decisive battle, Fame, who much frequented, and had a large apartment formerly assigned her in the regal library, fled up straight to Jupiter, to whom she delivered a faithful account of all that passed between the two parties below; for among the gods she always tells truth. Jove, in great concern, convokes a council in the Milky Way. The senate assembled, he declares the occasion of convening them; a bloody battle just impendent between two mighty armies of ancient and modern creatures, called books, wherein the celestial interest was but too deeply concerned. Momus, the patron of the Moderns, made an excellent speech in their favour, which was answered by Pallas, the protectress of the Ancients. The assembly was divided in their affections;

when Jupiter commanded the Book of Fate to be laid before him. Immediately were brought by Mercury three large volumes in folio, containing memoirs of all things past, present, and to come. The clasps were of silver double gilt, the covers of celestial turkey leather, and the paper such as here on earth might pass almost for vellum. Jupiter, having silently read the decree, would communicate the import to none, but presently shut up the book.

Without the doors of this assembly there attended a vast number of light, nimble gods, menial servants to Jupiter: those are his ministering instruments in all affairs below. They travel in a caravan, more or less together, and are fastened to each other like a link of galley-slaves, by a light chain, which passes from them to Jupiter's great toe: and yet, in receiving or delivering a message, they may never approach above the lowest step of his throne, where he and they whisper to each other through a large hollow trunk. These deities are called by mortal men accidents or events; but the gods call them second causes. Jupiter having delivered his message to a certain number of these divinities, they flew immediately down to the pinnacle of the regal library, and consulting a few minutes, entered unseen, and disposed the parties according to their orders.

Meanwhile Momus, fearing the worst, and calling to mind an ancient prophecy which bore no very good face to his children the Moderns, bent his flight to the region of a malignant deity called Criticism. She dwelt on the top of a snowy mountain in Nova Zembla; there Momus found her extended in her den, upon the spoils of numberless volumes, half devoured. At her right hand sat Ignorance, her father and husband, blind with age; at her left, Pride, her mother, dressing her up in the scraps of paper herself had torn. There was Opinion, her sister, light of foot, hood-winked, and head-strong, yet giddy and perpetually turning. About her played her children, Noise and Impudence, Dulness and Vanity, Positiveness, Pedantry, and Ill-manners. The goddess herself had claws like a cat; her head, and ears, and voice resembled those of an ass; her teeth fallen out before, her eyes turned inward, as if she looked only upon herself; her diet was the overflowing of her own gall; her spleen was so large as to stand prominent, like a dug of the first rate; nor wanted excrescences in form of teats, at which a crew of ugly monsters were greedily sucking; and, what is wonderful to conceive, the bulk of spleen increased faster than the sucking could diminish it. "Goddess," said Momus, "can you sit idly here while our devout worshippers, the Moderns, are this minute entering into a cruel battle, and perhaps now lying under the swords of their enemies? who then hereafter will ever sacrifice or build altars to our

divinities? Haste, therefore, to the British Isle, and, if possible, prevent their destruction; while I make factions among the gods, and gain them over to our party.”

Momus, having thus delivered himself, stayed not for an answer, but left the goddess to her own resentment. Up she rose in a rage, and, as it is the form on such occasions, began a soliloquy: “It is I” (said she) “who give wisdom to infants and idiots; by me children grow wiser than their parents, by me beaux become politicians, and schoolboys judges of philosophy; by me sophisters debate and conclude upon the depths of knowledge; and coffee-house wits, instinct by me, can correct an author’s style, and display his minutest errors, without understanding a syllable of his matter or his language; by me striplings spend their judgment, as they do their estate, before it comes into their hands. It is I who have deposed wit and knowledge from their empire over poetry, and advanced myself in their stead. And shall a few upstart Ancients dare to oppose me? But come, my aged parent, and you, my children dear, and thou, my beauteous sister; let us ascend my chariot, and haste to assist our devout Moderns, who are now sacrificing to us a hecatomb, as I perceive by that grateful smell which from thence reaches my nostrils.”

The goddess and her train, having mounted the chariot, which was drawn by tame geese, flew over infinite regions, shedding her influence in due places, till at length she arrived at her beloved island of Britain; but in hovering over its metropolis, what blessings did she not let fall upon her seminaries of Gresham and Covent-garden! And now she reached the fatal plain of St. James’s library, at what time the two armies were upon the point to engage; where, entering with all her caravan unseen, and landing upon a case of shelves, now desert, but once inhabited by a colony of virtuosos, she stayed awhile to observe the posture of both armies.

But here the tender cares of a mother began to fill her thoughts and move in her breast: for at the head of a troupe of Modern bowmen she cast her eyes upon her son Wotton, to whom the fates had assigned a very short thread. Wotton, a young hero, whom an unknown father of mortal race begot by stolen embraces with this goddess. He was the darling of his mother above all her children, and she resolved to go and comfort him. But first, according to the good old custom of deities, she cast about to change her shape, for fear the divinity of her countenance might dazzle his mortal sight and overcharge the rest of his senses. She therefore gathered up her person into an octavo compass: her body grow white and arid, and split in pieces with dryness; the thick turned into pasteboard, and the thin into paper; upon which her parents and children artfully strewed a black

juice, or decoction of gall and soot, in form of letters: her head, and voice, and spleen, kept their primitive form; and that which before was a cover of skin did still continue so. In this guise she marched on towards the Moderns, indistinguishable in shape and dress from the divine Bentley, Wotton's dearest friend. "Brave Wotton," said the goddess, "why do our troops stand idle here, to spend their present vigour and opportunity of the day? away, let us haste to the generals, and advise to give the onset immediately." Having spoke thus, she took the ugliest of her monsters, full glutted from her spleen, and flung it invisibly into his mouth, which, flying straight up into his head, squeezed out his eye-balls, gave him a distorted look, and half-overturnd his brain. Then she privately ordered two of her beloved children, Dulness and Ill-manners, closely to attend his person in all encounters. Having thus accoutred him, she vanished in a mist, and the hero perceived it was the goddess his mother.

The destined hour of fate being now arrived, the fight began; whereof, before I dare adventure to make a particular description, I must, after the example of other authors, petition for a hundred tongues, and mouths, and hands, and pens, which would all be too little to perform so immense a work. Say, goddess, that presidest over history, who it was that first advanced in the field of battle! Paracelsus, at the head of his dragoons, observing Galen in the adverse wing, darted his javelin with a mighty force, which the brave Ancient received upon his shield, the point breaking in the second fold ... *Hic pauca ... desunt.*

They bore the wounded aga on their shields to his chariot ... *desunt ... nonnulla. ...*

Then Aristotle, observing Bacon advance with a furious mien, drew his bow to the head, and let fly his arrow, which missed the valiant Modern and went whizzing over his head; but Descartes it hit; the steel point quickly found a defect in his head-piece; it pierced the leather and the pasteboard, and went in at his right eye. The torture of the pain whirled the valiant bow-man round till death, like a star of superior influence, drew him into his own vortex *ingens hiatus. . . hicin ms. . .* when Homer appeared at the head of the cavalry, mounted on a furious horse, with difficulty managed by the rider himself, but which no other mortal durst approach; he rode among the enemy's ranks, and bore down all before him. Say, goddess, whom he slew first and whom he slew last! First, Gondibert advanced against him, clad in heavy armour and mounted on a staid sober gelding, not so famed for his speed as his docility in kneeling whenever his rider would mount or alight. He had made a vow to Pallas that he would never leave the field till he had spoiled Homer of his armour: madman, who had

never once seen the wearer, nor understood his strength! Him Homer overthrew, horse and man, to the ground, there to be trampled and choked in the dirt. Then with a long spear he slew Denham, a stout Modern, who from his father's side derived his lineage from Apollo, but his mother was of mortal race. He fell, and bit the earth. The celestial part Apollo took, and made it a star; but the terrestrial lay wallowing upon the ground. Then Homer slew Sam Wesley with a kick of his horse's heel; he took Perrault by mighty force out of his saddle, then hurled him at Fontenelle, with the same blow dashing out both their brains.

On the left wing of the horse Virgil appeared, in shining armour, completely fitted to his body; he was mounted on a dapple-grey steed, the slowness of whose pace was an effect of the highest mettle and vigour. He cast his eye on the adverse wing, with a desire to find an object worthy of his valour, when behold upon a sorrel gelding of a monstrous size appeared a foe, issuing from among the thickest of the enemy's squadrons; but his speed was less than his noise; for his horse, old and lean, spent the dregs of his strength in a high trot, which, though it made slow advances, yet caused a loud clashing of his armour, terrible to hear. The two cavaliers had now approached within the throw of a lance, when the stranger desired a parley, and, lifting up the visor of his helmet, a face hardly appeared from within which, after a pause, was known for that of the renowned Dryden. The brave Ancient suddenly started, as one possessed with surprise and disappointment together; for the helmet was nine times too large for the head, which appeared situate far in the hinder part, even like the lady in a lobster, or like a mouse under a canopy of state, or like a shrivelled beau from within the penthouse of a modern periwig; and the voice was suited to the visage, sounding weak and remote. Dryden, in a long harangue, soothed up the good Ancient; called him father, and, by a large deduction of genealogies, made it plainly appear that they were nearly related. Then he humbly proposed an exchange of armour, as a lasting mark of hospitality between them. Virgil consented (for the goddess Diffidence came unseen, and cast a mist before his eyes), though his was of gold and cost a hundred beeves, the other's but of rusty iron. However, this glittering armour became the Modern yet worsen than his own. Then they agreed to exchange horses; but, when it came to the trial, Dryden was afraid and utterly unable to mount... *alter hiatus ... in ms.*

Lucan appeared upon a fiery horse of admirable shape, but headstrong, bearing the rider where he list over the field; he made a mighty slaughter among the enemy's horse; which destruction to stop, Blackmore, a famous Modern (but one of the mercenaries), strenuously opposed himself,

and darted his javelin with a strong hand, which, falling short of its mark, struck deep in the earth. Then Lucan threw a lance; but Æsculapius came unseen and turned off the point. “Brave Modern,” said Lucan, “I perceive some god protects you, for never did my arm so deceive me before: but what mortal can contend with a god? Therefore, let us fight no longer, but present gifts to each other.” Lucan then bestowed on the Modern a pair of spurs, and Blackmore gave Lucan a bridle...*pauca desunt*...

Creech: but the goddess Dulness took a cloud, formed into the shape of Horace, armed and mounted, and placed in a flying posture before him. Glad was the cavalier to begin a combat with a flying foe, and pursued the image, threatening aloud; till at last it led him to the peaceful bower of his father, Ogleby, by whom he was disarmed and assigned to his repose.

Then Pindar slew —, and— and Oldham, and—, and Afra the Amazon, light of foot; never advancing in a direct line, but wheeling with incredible agility and force, he made a terrible slaughter among the enemy’s light-horse. Him when Cowley observed, his generous heart burnt within him, and he advanced against the fierce Ancient, imitating his address, his pace, and career, as well as the vigour of his horse and his own skill would allow. When the two cavaliers had approached within the length of three javelins, first Cowley threw a lance, which missed Pindar, and, passing into the enemy’s ranks, fell ineffectual to the ground. Then Pindar darted a javelin so large and weighty, that scarce a dozen Cavaliers, as cavaliers are in our degenerate days, could raise it from the ground; yet he threw it with ease, and it went, by an unerring hand, singing through the air; nor could the Modern have avoided present death if he had not luckily opposed the shield that had been given him by Venus. And now both heroes drew their swords; but the Modern was so aghast and disordered that he knew not where he was; his shield dropped from his hands; thrice he fled, and thrice he could not escape. At last he turned, and lifting up his hand in the posture of a suppliant, “Godlike Pindar,” said he, “spare my life, and possess my horse, with these arms, beside the ransom which my friends will give when they hear I am alive and your prisoner.” “Dog!” said Pindar, “let your ransom stay with your friends; but your carcass shall be left for the fowls of the air and the beasts of the field.” With that he raised his sword, and, with a mighty stroke, cleft the wretched Modern in twain, the sword pursuing the blow; and one half lay panting on the ground, to be trod in pieces by the horses’ feet; the other half was borne by the frightened steed through the field. This Venus took, washed it seven times in ambrosia, then struck it thrice with a sprig of amaranth; upon which the leather grow round and soft, and the leaves turned into feathers, and, being gilded before, continued gilded

*The Battle of the Books*

still; so it became a dove, and she harnessed it to her chariot...*hiatus valde de—flendus in ms.*



## THE EPISODE OF BENTLEY AND WOTTON

DAY BEING FAR SPENT, and the numerous forces of the Moderns half inclining to a retreat, there issued forth, from a squadron of their heavy-armed foot, a captain whose name was Bentley, the most deformed of all the Moderns; tall, but without shape or comeliness; large, but without strength or proportion. His armour was patched up of a thousand incoherent pieces, and the sound of it, as he marched, was loud and dry, like that made by the fall of a sheet of lead, which an Etesian wind blows suddenly down from the roof of some steeple. His helmet was of old rusty iron, but the vizor was brass, which, tainted by his breath, corrupted into copperas, nor wanted gall from the same fountain, so that, whenever provoked by anger or labour, an atramentous quality, of most malignant nature, was seen to distil from his lips. In his right hand he grasped a flail, and (that he might never be unprovided of an offensive weapon) a vessel full of ordure in his left. Thus completely armed, he advanced with a slow and heavy pace where the Modern chiefs were holding a consult upon the sum of things, who, as he came onwards, laughed to behold his crooked leg and humped shoulder, which his boot and armour, vainly endeavouring to hide, were forced to comply with and expose. The generals made use of him for his talent of railing, which, kept within government, proved frequently of great service to their cause, but, at other times, did more mischief than good; for, at the least touch of offence, and often without any at all, he would, like a wounded elephant, convert it against his leaders. Such, at this juncture, was the disposition of Bentley, grieved to see the enemy prevail, and dissatisfied with everybody's conduct but his own. He humbly gave the Modern generals to understand that he conceived, with great submission, they were all a pack of rogues, and fools, and confounded logger-heads, and illiterate whelps, and nonsensical scoundrels; that, if himself had been constituted general, those presumptuous dogs, the Ancients, would long before this have been beaten out of the field. "You," said he, "sit here idle, but when I, or any other valiant Modern kill an enemy, you are sure to seize the spoil. But I will not march one foot against the foe till you all swear to me that whomever I take or kill, his arms I shall

quietly possess.” Bentley having spoken thus, Scaliger, bestowing him a sour look, “Miscreant prater!” said he, “eloquent only in thine own eyes, thou railest without wit, or truth, or discretion. The malignity of thy temper perverteth nature; thy learning makes thee more barbarous; thy study of humanity more inhuman; thy converse among poets more grovelling, miry, and dull. All arts of civilising others render thee rude and untractable; courts have taught thee ill manners, and polite conversation has finished thee a pedant. Besides, a greater coward burdeneth not the army. But never despond; I pass my word, whatever spoil thou takest shall certainly be thy own; though I hope that vile carcase will first become a prey to kites and worms.”

Bentley durst not reply, but, half choked with spleen and rage, withdrew, in full resolution of performing some great achievement. With him, for his aid and companion, he took his beloved Wotton, resolving by policy or surprise to attempt some neglected quarter of the Ancients’ army. They began their march over carcasses of their slaughtered friends; then to the right of their own forces; then wheeled northward, till they came to Aldrovandus’s tomb, which they passed on the side of the declining sun. And now they arrived, with fear, toward the enemy’s out-guards, looking about, if haply they might spy the quarters of the wounded, or some straggling sleepers, unarmed and remote from the rest. As when two mongrel curs, whom native greediness and domestic want provoke and join in partnership, though fearful, nightly to invade the folds of some rich grazier, they, with tails depressed and lolling tongues, creep soft and slow. Meanwhile the conscious moon, now in her zenith, on their guilty heads darts perpendicular rays; nor dare they bark, though much provoked at her refulgent visage, whether seen in puddle by reflection or in sphere direct; but one surveys the region round, while the other scouts the plain, if haply to discover, at distance from the flock, some carcase half devoured, the refuse of gorged wolves or ominous ravens. So marched this lovely, loving pair of friends, nor with less fear and circumspection, when at a distance they might perceive two shining suits of armour hanging upon an oak, and the owners not far off in a profound sleep. The two friends drew lots, and the pursuing of this adventure fell to Bentley; on he went, and in his van Confusion and Amaze, while Horror and Affright brought up the rear. As he came near, behold two heroes of the Ancient army, Phalaris and Æsop, lay fast asleep. Bentley would fain have despatched them both, and, stealing close, aimed his flail at Phalaris’s breast; but then the goddess Affright, interposing, caught the Modern in her icy arms, and dragged him from the danger she foresaw; both the dormant heroes hap-

pened to turn at the same instant, though soundly sleeping, and busy in a dream. For Phalaris was just that minute dreaming how a most vile poetaster had lampooned him, and how he had got him roaring in his bull. And Æsop dreamed that as he and the Ancient were lying on the ground, a wild ass broke loose, ran about, trampling and kicking in their faces. Bentley, leaving the two heroes asleep, seized on both their armours, and withdrew in quest of his darling Wotton.

He, in the meantime, had wandered long in search of some enterprise, till at length he arrived at a small rivulet that issued from a fountain hard by, called, in the language of mortal men, Helicon. Here he stopped, and, parched with thirst, resolved to allay it in this limpid stream. Thrice with profane hands he essayed to raise the water to his lips, and thrice it slipped all through his fingers. Then he stopped prone on his breast, but, ere his mouth had kissed the liquid crystal, Apollo came, and in the channel held his shield betwixt the Modern and the fountain, so that he drew up nothing but mud. For, although no fountain on earth can compare with the clearness of Helicon, yet there lies at bottom a thick sediment of slime and mud; for so Apollo begged of Jupiter, as a punishment to those who durst attempt to taste it with unhallowed lips, and for a lesson to all not to draw too deep or far from the spring.

At the fountain-head Wotton discerned two heroes; the one he could not distinguish, but the other was soon known for Temple, general of the allies to the Ancients. His back was turned, and he was employed in drinking large draughts in his helmet from the fountain, where he had withdrawn himself to rest from the toils of the war. Wotton, observing him, with quaking knees and trembling hands, spoke thus to himself: O that I could kill this destroyer of our army, what renown should I purchase among the chiefs! but to issue out against him, man against man, shield against shield, and lance against lance, what Modern of us dare? for he fights like a god, and Pallas or Apollo are ever at his elbow. But, O mother! if what Fame reports be true, that I am the son of so great a goddess, grant me to hit Temple with this lance, that the stroke may send him to hell, and that I may return in safety and triumph, laden with his spoils. The first part of this prayer the gods granted at the intercession of his mother and of Momus; but the rest, by a perverse wind sent from Fate, was scattered in the air. Then Wotton grasped his lance, and, brandishing it thrice over his head, darted it with all his might; the goddess, his mother, at the same time adding strength to his arm. Away the lance went hizzing, and reached even to the belt of the averted Ancient, upon which, lightly grazing, it fell to the ground. Temple neither felt the weapon touch him nor heard it fall:

and Wotton might have escaped to his army, with the honour of having remitted his lance against so great a leader unrevenge'd; but Apollo, enraged that a javelin flung by the assistance of so foul a goddess should pollute his fountain, put on the shape of—, and softly came to young Boyle, who then accompanied Temple: he pointed first to the lance, then to the distant Modern that flung it, and commanded the young hero to take immediate revenge. Boyle, clad in a suit of armour which had been given him by all the gods, immediately advanced against the trembling foe, who now fled before him. As a young lion in the Libyan plains, or Araby desert, sent by his aged sire to hunt for prey, or health, or exercise, he scours along, wishing to meet some tiger from the mountains, or a furious boar; if chance a wild ass, with brayings importune, affronts his ear, the generous beast, though loathing to distain his claws with blood so vile, yet, much provoked at the offensive noise, which Echo, foolish nymph, like her ill-judging sex, repeats much louder, and with more delight than Philomela's song, he vindicates the honour of the forest, and hunts the noisy long-eared animal. So Wotton fled, so Boyle pursued. But Wotton, heavy-armed, and slow of foot, began to slack his course, when his lover Bentley appeared, returning laden with the spoils of the two sleeping Ancients. Boyle observed him well, and soon discovering the helmet and shield of Phalaris his friend, both which he had lately with his own hands new polished and gilt, rage sparkled in his eyes, and, leaving his pursuit after Wotton, he furiously rushed on against this new approacher. Fain would he be revenge'd on both; but both now fled different ways: and, as a woman in a little house that gets a painful livelihood by spinning, if chance her geese be scattered o'er the common, she courses round the plain from side to side, compelling here and there the stragglers to the flock; they cackle loud, and flutter o'er the champaign; so Boyle pursued, so fled this pair of friends: finding at length their flight was vain, they bravely joined, and drew themselves in phalanx. First Bentley threw a spear with all his force, hoping to pierce the enemy's breast; but Pallas came unseen, and in the air took off the point, and clapped on one of lead, which, after a dead bang against the enemy's shield, fell blunted to the ground. Then Boyle, observing well his time, took up a lance of wondrous length and sharpness; and, as this pair of friends compacted, stood close side by side, he wheeled him to the right, and, with unusual force, darted the weapon. Bentley saw his fate approach, and flanking down his arms close to his ribs, hoping to save his body, in went the point, passing through arm and side, nor stopped or spent its force till it had also pierced the valiant Wotton, who, going to sustain his dying friend, shared his fate.

As when a skilful cook has trussed a brace of woodcocks, he with iron skewer pierces the tender sides of both, their legs and wings close pinioned to the rib; so was this pair of friends transfixed, till down they fell, joined in their lives, joined in their deaths; so closely joined that Charon would mistake them both for one, and waft them over Styx for half his fare. Farewell, beloved, loving pair; few equals have you left behind: and happy and immortal shall you be, if all my wit and eloquence can make you.

And now....

*Desunt Coetera.*

## CHAPTER II

### A MEDITATION UPON A BROOMSTICK.

#### ACCORDING TO THE STYLE AND MANNER OF THE HON. ROBERT BOYLE'S MEDITATIONS.

THIS SINGLE STICK, which you now behold ingloriously lying in that neglected corner, I once knew in a flourishing state in a forest. It was full of sap, full of leaves, and full of boughs; but now in vain does the busy art of man pretend to vie with nature, by tying that withered bundle of twigs to its sapless trunk; it is now at best but the reverse of what it was, a tree turned upside-down, the branches on the earth, and the root in the air; it is now handled by every dirty wench, condemned to do her drudgery, and, by a capricious kind of fate, destined to make other things clean, and be nasty itself; at length, worn to the stumps in the service of the maids, it is either thrown out of doors or condemned to the last use—of kindling a fire. When I behold this I sighed, and said within myself, “Surely mortal man is a broomstick!” Nature sent him into the world strong and lusty, in a thriving condition, wearing his own hair on his head, the proper branches of this reasoning vegetable, till the axe of intemperance has lopped off his green boughs, and left him a withered trunk; he then flies to art, and puts on a periwig, valuing himself upon an unnatural bundle of hairs, all covered with powder, that never grew on his head; but now should this our broomstick pretend to enter the scene, proud of those birchen spoils it never bore, and all covered with dust, through the sweepings of the finest lady's chamber, we should be apt to ridicule and despise its vanity. Partial judges that we are of our own excellencies, and other men's defaults!

But a broomstick, perhaps you will say, is an emblem of a tree standing on its head; and pray what is a man but a topsy-turvy creature, his animal faculties perpetually mounted on his rational, his head where his heels should be, grovelling on the earth? And yet, with all his faults, he sets up to be a universal reformer and corrector of abuses, a remover of griev-

ances, rakes into every slut's corner of nature, bringing hidden corruptions to the light, and raises a mighty dust where there was none before, sharing deeply all the while in the very same pollutions he pretends to sweep away. His last days are spent in slavery to women, and generally the least deserving; till, worn to the stumps, like his brother besom, he is either kicked out of doors, or made use of to kindle flames for others to warm themselves by.

## CHAPTER III

PREDICTIONS FOR THE YEAR 1708.

WHEREIN THE MONTH, AND DAY OF THE MONTH ARE SET DOWN, THE PERSONS NAMED, AND THE GREAT ACTIONS AND EVENTS OF NEXT YEAR PARTICULARLY RELATED AS WILL COME TO PASS.

WRITTEN TO PREVENT THE PEOPLE OF ENGLAND FROM BEING FARTHER IMPOSED ON BY VULGAR ALMANACK-MAKERS.

BY ISAAC BICKERSTAFF, ESQ.

I HAVE LONG CONSIDERED the gross abuse of astrology in this kingdom, and upon debating the matter with myself, I could not possibly lay the fault upon the art, but upon those gross impostors who set up to be the artists. I know several learned men have contended that the whole is a cheat; that it is absurd and ridiculous to imagine the stars can have any influence at all upon human actions, thoughts, or inclinations; and whoever has not bent his studies that way may be excused for thinking so, when he sees in how wretched a manner that noble art is treated by a few mean illiterate traders between us and the stars, who import a yearly stock of nonsense, lies, folly, and impertinence, which they offer to the world as genuine from the planets, though they descend from no greater a height than their own brains.

I intend in a short time to publish a large and rational defence of this art, and therefore shall say no more in its justification at present than that it hath been in all ages defended by many learned men, and among the



rest by Socrates himself, whom I look upon as undoubtedly the wisest of uninspired mortals: to which if we add that those who have condemned this art, though otherwise learned, having been such as either did not apply their studies this way, or at least did not succeed in their applications, their testimony will not be of much weight to its disadvantage, since they are liable to the common objection of condemning what they did not understand.

Nor am I at all offended, or think it an injury to the art, when I see the common dealers in it, the students in astrology, the Philomaths, and the rest of that tribe, treated by wise men with the utmost scorn and contempt; but rather wonder, when I observe gentlemen in the country, rich enough to serve the nation in Parliament, poring in Partridge's Almanack to find out the events of the year at home and abroad, not daring to propose a hunting-match till Gadbury or he have fixed the weather.

I will allow either of the two I have mentioned, or any other of the fraternity, to be not only astrologers, but conjurers too, if I do not produce a hundred instances in all their almanacks to convince any reasonable man that they do not so much as understand common grammar and syntax; that they are not able to spell any word out of the usual road, nor even in their prefaces write common sense or intelligible English. Then for their observations and predictions, they are such as will equally suit any age or country in the world. "This month a certain great person. will be threatened with death or sickness." This the newspapers will tell them; for there we find at the end of the year that no month passes without the death of some person of note; and it would be hard if it should be otherwise, when there are at least two thousand persons of note in this kingdom, many of them old, and the almanack-maker has the liberty of choosing the sickliest season of the year where lie may fix his prediction. Again, "This month an eminent clergyman will be preferred;" of which there may be some hundreds, half of them with one foot in the grave. Then "such a planet in such a house shows great machinations, plots, and conspiracies, that may in time be brought to light:" after which, if we hear of any discovery, the astrologer gets the honour; if not, his prediction still stands good. And at last, "God preserve King William from all his open and secret enemies, Amen." When if the King should happen to have died, the astrologer plainly foretold it; otherwise it passes but for the pious ejaculation of a loyal subject; though it unluckily happened in some of their almanacks that poor King William was prayed for many months after he was dead, because it fell out that he died about the beginning of the year.

To mention no more of their impertinent predictions: what have we to do with their advertisements about pills and drink for disease? or their mutual quarrels in verse and prose of Whig and Tory, wherewith the stars have little to do?

Having long observed and lamented these, and a hundred other abuses of this art, too tedious to repeat, I resolved to proceed in a new way, which I doubt not will be to the general satisfaction of the kingdom. I can this year produce but a specimen of what I design for the future, having employed most part of my time in adjusting and correcting the calculations I made some years past, because I would offer nothing to the world of which I am not as fully satisfied as that I am now alive. For these two last years I have not failed in above one or two particulars, and those of no very great moment. I exactly foretold the miscarriage at Toulon, with all its particulars, and the loss of Admiral Shovel, though I was mistaken as to the day, placing that accident about thirty-six hours sooner than it happened; but upon reviewing my schemes, I quickly found the cause of that error. I likewise foretold the Battle of Almanza to the very day and hour, with the lose on both sides, and the consequences thereof. All which I showed to some friends many months before they happened - that is, I gave them papers sealed up, to open at such a time, after which they were at liberty to read them; and there they found my predictions true in every article, except one or two very minute.

As for the few following predictions I now offer the world, I forbore to publish them till I had perused the several almanacks for the year we are now entered on. I find them all in the usual strain, and I beg the reader will compare their manner with mine. And here I make bold to tell the world that I lay the whole credit of my art upon the truth of these predictions; and I will be content that Partridge, and the rest of his clan, may hoot me for a cheat and impostor if I fail in any single particular of moment. I believe any man who reads this paper will look upon me to be at least a person of as much honesty and understanding as a common maker of almanacks. I do not lurk in the dark; I am not wholly unknown in the world; I have set my name at length, to be a mark of infamy to mankind, if they shall find I deceive them.

In one thing I must desire to be forgiven, that I talk more sparingly of home affairs. As it will be imprudence to discover secrets of State, so it would be dangerous to my person; but in smaller matters, and that are not of public consequence, I shall be very free; and the truth of my conjectures will as much appear from those as the others. As for the most signal events abroad, in France, Flanders, Italy, and Spain, I shall make no scruple

to predict them in plain terms. Some of them are of importance, and I hope I shall seldom mistake the day they will happen; therefore I think good to inform the reader that I all along make use of the Old Style observed in England, which I desire he will compare with that of the newspapers at the time they relate the actions I mention.

I must add one word more. I know it hath been the opinion of several of the learned, who think well enough of the true art of astrology, that the stars do only incline, and not force the actions or wills of men, and therefore, however I may proceed by right rules, yet I cannot in prudence so confidently assure the events will follow exactly as I predict them.

I hope I have maturely considered this objection, which in some cases is of no little weight. For example: a man may, by the influence of an overruling planet, be disposed or inclined to lust, rage, or avarice, and yet by the force of reason overcome that bad influence; and this was the case of Socrates. But as the great events of the world usually depend upon numbers of men, it cannot be expected they should all unite to cross their inclinations from pursuing a general design wherein they unanimously agree. Besides, the influence of the stars reaches to many actions and events which are not any way in the power of reason, as sickness, death, and what we commonly call accidents, with many more, needless to repeat.

But now it is time to proceed to my predictions, which I have begun to calculate from the time that the sun enters into Aries. And this I take to be properly the beginning of the natural year. I pursue them to the time that he enters Libra, or somewhat more, which is the busy period of the year. The remainder I have not yet adjusted, upon account of several impediments needless here to mention. Besides, I must remind the reader again that this is but a specimen of what I design in succeeding years to treat more at large, if I may have liberty and encouragement.

My first prediction is but a trifle, yet I will mention it, to show how ignorant those sottish pretenders to astrology are in their own concerns. It relates to Partridge, the almanack-maker. I have consulted the stars of his nativity by my own rules, and find he will infallibly die upon the 29th of March next, about eleven at night, of a raging fever; therefore I advise him to consider of it, and settle his affairs in time.

The month of *April* will be observable for the death of many great persons. On the 4th will die the Cardinal de Noailles, Archbishop of Paris; on the 11th, the young Prince of Asturias, son to the Duke of Anjou; on the 14th, a great peer of this realm will die at his country house; on the 19th, an old layman of great fame for learning, and on the 23rd, an eminent goldsmith in Lombard Street. I could mention others, both at home and abroad,

if I did not consider it is of very little use or instruction to the reader, or to the world.

As to public affairs: On the 7th of this month there will be an insurrection in Dauphiny, occasioned by the oppressions of the people, which will not be quieted in some months.

On the 15th will be a violent storm on the south-east coast of France, which will destroy many of their ships, and some in the very harbour.

The 11th will be famous for the revolt of a whole province or kingdom, excepting one city, by which the affairs of a certain prince in the Alliance will take a better face.

*May*, against common conjectures, will be no very busy month in Europe, but very signal for the death of the Dauphin, which will happen on the 7th, after a short fit of sickness, and grievous torments with the strangury. He dies less lamented by the Court than the kingdom.

On the 9th a Marshal of France will break his leg by a fall from his horse. I have not been able to discover whether he will then die or not.

On the 11th will begin a most important siege, which the eyes of all Europe will be upon: I cannot be more particular, for in relating affairs that so nearly concern the Confederates, and consequently this kingdom, I am forced to confine myself for several reasons very obvious to the reader.

On the 15th news will arrive of a very surprising event, than which nothing could be more unexpected.

On the 19th three noble ladies of this kingdom will, against all expectation, prove with child, to the great joy of their husbands.

On the 23rd a famous buffoon of the playhouse will die a ridiculous death, suitable to his vocation.

*June*. This month will be distinguished at home by the utter dispersing of those ridiculous deluded enthusiasts commonly called the Prophets, occasioned chiefly by seeing the time come that many of their prophecies should be fulfilled, and then finding themselves deceived by contrary events. It is indeed to be admired how any deceiver can be so weak to foretell things near at hand, when a very few months must of necessity discover the impostor to all the world; in this point less prudent than common almanack-makers, who are so wise to wonder in generals, and talk dubiously, and leave to the reader the business of interpreting.

On the 1st of this month a French general will be killed by a random shot of a cannon-ball.

On the 6th a fire will break out in the suburbs of Paris, which will destroy above a thousand houses, and seems to be the foreboding of what will happen, to the surprise of all Europe, about the end of the following month.

On the 10th a great battle will be fought, which will begin at four of the clock in the afternoon, and last till nine at night with great obstinacy, but no very decisive event. I shall not name the place, for the reasons aforesaid, but the commanders on each left wing will be killed. I see bonfires and hear the noise of guns for a victory.

On the 14th there will be a false report of the French king's death.

On the 20th Cardinal Portocarero will die of a dysentery, with great suspicion of poison, but the report of his intention to revolt to King Charles will prove false.

*July.* The 6th of this month a certain general will, by a glorious action, recover the reputation he lost by former misfortunes.

On the 12th a great commander will die a prisoner in the hands of his enemies.

On the 14th a shameful discovery will be made of a French Jesuit giving poison to a great foreign general; and when he is put to the torture, will make wonderful discoveries.

In short, this will prove a month of great action, if I might have liberty to relate the particulars.

At home, the death of an old famous senator will happen on the 15th at his country house, worn with age and diseases.

But that which will make this month memorable to all posterity is the death of the French king, Louis the Fourteenth, after a week's sickness at Marli, which will happen on the 29th, about six o'clock in the evening. It seems to be an effect of the gout in his stomach, followed by a flux. And in three days after Monsieur Chamillard will follow his master, dying suddenly of an apoplexy.

In this month likewise an ambassador will die in London, but I cannot assign the day.

*August.* The affairs of France will seem to suffer no change for a while under the Duke of Burgundy's administration; but the genius that animated the whole machine being gone, will be the cause of mighty turns and revolutions in the following year. The new king makes yet little change either in the army or the Ministry, but the libels against his grandfather, that fly about his very Court, give him uneasiness.

I see an express in mighty haste, with joy and wonder in his looks, arriving by break of day on the 26th of this month, having travelled in three days a prodigious journey by land and sea. In the evening I hear bells and guns, and see the blazing of a thousand bonfires.

A young admiral of noble birth does likewise this month gain immortal honour by a great achievement.

The affairs of Poland are this month entirely settled; Augustus resigns his pretensions which he had again taken up for some time: Stanislaus is peaceably possessed of the throne, and the King of Sweden declares for the emperor.

I cannot omit one particular accident here at home: that near the end of this month much mischief will be done at Bartholomew Fair by the fall of a booth.

*September.* This month begins with a very surprising fit of frosty weather, which will last near twelve days.

The Pope, having long languished last month, the swellings in his legs breaking, and the flesh mortifying, will die on the 11th instant; and in three weeks' time, after a mighty contest, be succeeded by a cardinal of the Imperial faction, but native of Tuscany, who is now about sixty-one years old.

The French army acts now wholly on the defensive, strongly fortified in their trenches, and the young French king sends overtures for a treaty of peace by the Duke of Mantua; which, because it is a matter of State that concerns us here at home, I shall speak no farther of it.

I shall add but one prediction more, and that in mystical terms, which shall be included in a verse out of Virgil -

*Alter erit jam tethys, et altera que vehat  
argo delectos heroas.*

Upon the 25th day of this month, the fulfilling of this prediction will be manifest to everybody.

This is the farthest I have proceeded in my calculations for the present year. I do not pretend that these are all the great events which will happen in this period, but that those I have set down will infallibly come to pass. It will perhaps still be objected why I have not spoken more particularly of affairs at home, or of the success of our armies abroad, which I might, and could very largely have done; but those in power have wisely discouraged men from meddling in public concerns, and I was resolved by no means to give the least offence. This I will venture to say, that it will be a glorious campaign for the Allies, wherein the English forces, both by sea and land, will have their full share of honour; that Her Majesty Queen Anne will continue in health and prosperity; and that no ill accident will arrive to any in the chief Ministry.

As to the particular events I have mentioned, the readers may judge by the fulfilling of them, whether I am on the level with common astrologers, who, with an old paltry cant, and a few pothooks for planets, to

amuse the vulgar, have, in my opinion, too long been suffered to abuse the world. But an honest physician ought not to be despised because there are such things as mountebanks. I hope I have some share of reputation, which I would not willingly forfeit for a frolic or humour; and I believe no gentleman who reads this paper will look upon it to be of the same cast or mould with the common scribblers that are every day hawked about. My fortune has placed me above the little regard of scribbling for a few pence, which I neither value nor want; therefore, let no wise man too hastily condemn this essay, intended for a good design, to cultivate and improve an ancient art long in disgrace, by having fallen into mean and unskilful hands. A little time will determine whether I have deceived others or myself; and I think it is no very unreasonable request that men would please to suspend their judgments till then. I was once of the opinion with those who despise all predictions from the stars, till in the year 1686 a man of quality showed me, written in his album, that the most learned astronomer, Captain H-, assured him, he would never believe anything of the stars' influence if there were not a great revolution in England in the year 1688. Since that time I began to have other thoughts, and after eighteen years' diligent study and application, I think I have no reason to repent of my pains. I shall detain the reader no longer than to let him know that the account I design to give of next year's events shall take in the principal affairs that happen in Europe; and if I be denied the liberty of offering it to my own country, I shall appeal to the learned world, by publishing it in Latin, and giving order to have it printed in Holland.

## CHAPTER IV

THE ACCOMPLISHMENT OF THE FIRST OF  
MR. BICKERSTAFF'S PREDICTIONS;

BEING AN ACCOUNT OF THE DEATH OF MR.  
PARTRIDGE THE ALMANACK-MAKER, UPON  
THE 29TH INSTANT.

IN A LETTER TO A PERSON OF HONOUR;  
WRITTEN IN THE YEAR 1708.

MY LORD,—In obedience to your lordship's commands, as well as to satisfy my own curiosity, I have for some days past inquired constantly after Partridge the almanack-maker, of whom it was foretold in Mr. Bickerstaff's predictions, published about a month ago, that he should die the 29th instant, about eleven at night, of a raging fever. I had some sort of knowledge of him when I was employed in the Revenue, because he used every year to present me with his almanack, as he did other gentlemen, upon the score of some little gratuity we gave him. I saw him accidentally once or twice about ten days before he died, and observed he began very much to droop and languish, though I hear his friends did not seem to apprehend him in any danger. About two or three days ago he grew ill, was confined first to his chamber, and in a few hours after to his bed, where Dr. Case and Mrs. Kirleus were sent for, to visit and to prescribe to him. Upon this intelligence I sent thrice every day one servant or other to inquire after his health; and yesterday, about four in the afternoon, word was brought me that he was past hopes; upon which, I prevailed with myself to go and see him, partly out of commiseration, and I confess, partly out of curiosity. He knew me very well, seemed surprised at my condescension, and made me compliments upon it as well as he could in the condition he was. The people about him said he had been or some



time delirious; but when I saw him, he had his understanding as well as ever I knew, and spoke strong and hearty, without any seeming uneasiness or constraint. After I had told him how sorry I was to see him in those melancholy circumstances, and said some other civilities suitable to the occasion, I desired him to tell me freely and ingenuously, whether the predictions Mr. Bickerstaff had published relating to his death had not too much affected and worked on his imagination. He confessed he had often had it in his head, but never with much apprehension, till about a fortnight before; since which time it had the perpetual possession of his mind and thoughts, and he did verily believe was the true natural cause of his present distemper: "For," said he, "I am thoroughly persuaded, and I think I have very good reasons, that Mr. Bickerstaff spoke altogether by guess, and knew no more what will happen this year than I did myself." I told him his discourse surprised me, and I would be glad he were in a state of health to be able to tell me what reason he had to be convinced of Mr. Bickerstaff's ignorance. He replied, "I am a poor, ignorant fellow, bred to a mean trade, yet I have sense enough to know that all pretences of foretelling by astrology are deceits, for this manifest reason, because the wise and the learned, who can only know whether there be any truth in this science, do all unanimously agree to laugh at and despise it; and none but the poor ignorant vulgar give it any credit, and that only upon the word of such silly wretches as I and my fellows, who can hardly write or read." I then asked him why he had not calculated his own nativity, to see whether it agreed with Bickerstaff's prediction, at which he shook his head and said, "Oh, sir, this is no time for jesting, but for repenting those fooleries, as I do now from the very bottom of my heart." "By what I can gather from you," said I, "the observations and predictions you printed with your almanacks were mere impositions on the people." He replied, "If it were otherwise I should have the less to answer for. We have a common form for all those things; as to foretelling the weather, we never meddle with that, but leave it to the printer, who takes it out of any old almanack as he thinks fit; the rest was my own invention, to make my almanack sell, having a wife to maintain, and no other way to get my bread; for mending old shoes is a poor livelihood; and," added he, sighing, "I wish I may not have done more mischief by my physic than my astrology; though I had some good receipts from my grandmother, and my own compositions were such as I thought could at least do no hurt."

I had some other discourse with him, which now I cannot call to mind; and I fear I have already tired your lordship. I shall only add one circumstance, that on his death-bed he declared himself a Nonconformist, and

had a fanatic preacher to be his spiritual guide. After half an hour's conversation I took my leave, being half stifled by the closeness of the room. I imagined he could not hold out long, and therefore withdrew to a little coffee-house hard by, leaving a servant at the house with orders to come immediately and tell me, as nearly as he could, the minute when Partridge should expire, which was not above two hours after, when, looking upon my watch, I found it to be above five minutes after seven; by which it is clear that Mr. Bickerstaff was mistaken almost four hours in his calculation. In the other circumstances he was exact enough. But, whether he has not been the cause of this poor man's death, as well as the predictor, may be very reasonably disputed. However, it must be confessed the matter is odd enough, whether we should endeavour to account for it by chance, or the effect of imagination. For my own part, though I believe no man has less faith in these matters, yet I shall wait with some impatience, and not without some expectation, the fulfilling of Mr. Bickerstaff's second prediction, that the Cardinal do Noailles is to die upon the 4th of April, and if that should be verified as exactly as this of poor Partridge, I must own I should be wholly surprised, and at a loss, and should infallibly expect the accomplishment of all the rest.

## CHAPTER V

### BAUCIS AND PHILEMON

#### IMITATED FROM THE EIGHTH BOOK OF OVID

In ancient times, as story tells,  
The saints would often leave their cells,  
And stroll about, but hide their quality,  
To try good people's hospitality.  
It happened on a winter night,  
As authors of the legend write,  
Two brother hermits, saints by trade,  
Taking their tour in masquerade,  
Disguised in tattered habits, went  
To a small village down in Kent;  
Where, in the strollers' canting strain,  
They begged from door to door in vain;  
Tried every tone might pity win,  
But not a soul would let them in.  
Our wandering saints in woeful state,  
Treated at this ungodly rate,  
Having through all the village passed,  
To a small cottage came at last,  
Where dwelt a good honest old yeoman,  
Called, in the neighbourhood, Philemon,  
Who kindly did these saints invite  
In his poor hut to pass the night;  
And then the hospitable Sire  
Bid goody Baucis mend the fire;  
While he from out the chimney took  
A fitch of bacon off the hook,  
And freely from the fattest side

Cut out large slices to be fried;  
Then stepped aside to fetch 'em drink,  
Filled a large jug up to the brink,  
And saw it fairly twice go round;  
Yet (what is wonderful) they found  
'Twas still replenished to the top,  
As if they ne'er had touched a drop  
The good old couple were amazed,  
And often on each other gazed;  
For both were frightened to the heart,  
And just began to cry,—What art!  
Then softly turned aside to view,  
Whether the lights were burning blue.  
The gentle pilgrims soon aware on't,  
Told 'em their calling, and their errant;  
“Good folks, you need not be afraid,  
We are but saints,” the hermits said;  
“No hurt shall come to you or yours;  
But, for that pack of churlish boors,  
Not fit to live on Christian ground,  
They and their houses shall be drowned;  
Whilst you shall see your cottage rise,  
And grow a church before your eyes.”  
They scarce had spoke; when fair and soft,  
The roof began to mount aloft;  
Aloft rose every beam and rafter,  
The heavy wall climbed slowly after.  
The chimney widened, and grew higher,  
Became a steeple with a spire.  
The kettle to the top was hoist,  
And there stood fastened to a joist;  
But with the upside down, to show  
Its inclination for below.  
In vain; for a superior force  
Applied at bottom, stops its course,  
Doomed ever in suspense to dwell,  
'Tis now no kettle, but a bell.  
A wooden jack, which had almost  
Lost, by disuse, the art to roast,  
A sudden alteration feels,

Increased by new intestine wheels;  
And what exalts the wonder more,  
The number made the motion slower.  
The flyer, though 't had leaden feet,  
Turned round so quick, you scarce could see 't;  
But slackened by some secret power,  
Now hardly moves an inch an hour.  
The jack and chimney near allied,  
Had never left each other's side;  
The chimney to a steeple grown,  
The jack would not be left alone;  
But up against the steeple reared,  
Became a clock, and still adhered;  
And still its love to household cares  
By a shrill voice at noon declares,  
Warning the cook-maid not to burn  
That roast meat which it cannot turn.  
The groaning chair began to crawl,  
Like a huge snail along the wall;  
There stuck aloft in public view;  
And with small change a pulpit grew.  
The porringers, that in a row  
Hung high, and made a glittering show,  
To a less noble substance changed,  
Were now but leathern buckets ranged.  
The ballads pasted on the wall,  
Of Joan of France, and English Moll,  
Fair Rosamond, and Robin Hood,  
The Little Children in the Wood,  
Now seemed to look abundance better,  
Improved in picture, size, and letter;  
And high in order placed, describe  
The heraldry of every tribe.  
A bedstead of the antique mode,  
Compact of timber, many a load,  
Such as our ancestors did use,  
Was metamorphosed into pews:  
Which still their ancient nature keep,  
By lodging folks disposed to sleep.  
The cottage, by such feats as these,

Grown to a church by just degrees,  
The hermits then desired their host  
To ask for what he fancied most.  
Philemon having paused a while,  
Returned 'em thanks in homely style;  
Then said, "My house is grown so fine,  
Methinks I still would call it mine:  
I'm old, and fain would live at ease,  
Make me the Parson, if you please."  
He spoke, and presently he feels  
His grazier's coat fall down his heels;  
He sees, yet hardly can believe,  
About each arm a pudding sleeve;  
His waistcoat to a cassock grew,  
And both assumed a sable hue;  
But being old, continued just  
As thread-bare, and as full of dust.  
His talk was now of tithes and dues;  
He smoked his pipe and read the news;  
Knew how to preach old sermons next,  
Vamped in the preface and the text;  
At christenings well could act his part,  
And had the service all by heart;  
Wished women might have children fast,  
And thought whose sow had farrowed last  
Against Dissenters would repine,  
And stood up firm for Right divine.  
Found his head filled with many a system,  
But classic authors,—he ne'er missed 'em.  
Thus having furbished up a parson,  
Dame Baucis next they played their farce on.  
Instead of home-spun coifs were seen  
Good pinners edg'd with colberteen;  
Her petticoat transformed apace,  
Became black satin flounced with lace.  
Plain Goody would no longer down,  
'Twas Madam, in her gogram gown.  
Philemon was in great surprise,  
And hardly could believe his eyes,  
Amazed to see her look so prim;

And she admired as much at him.  
Thus, happy in their change of life,  
Were several years this man and wife;  
When on a day, which proved their last,  
Discoursing o'er old stories past,  
They went by chance amidst their talk,  
To the church yard to take a walk;  
When Baucis hastily cried out,  
"My dear, I see your forehead sprout!"  
"Sprout," quoth the man, "what's this you tell us?  
I hope you don't believe me jealous,  
But yet, methinks, I feel it true;  
And really, yours is budding too—  
Nay,—now I cannot stir my foot;  
It feels as if 'twere taking root."  
Description would but tire my Muse;  
In short, they both were turned to Yews.  
Old Goodman Dobson of the green  
Remembers he the trees has seen;  
He'll talk of them from noon till night,  
And goes with folks to show the sight;  
On Sundays, after evening prayer,  
He gathers all the parish there,  
Points out the place of either Yew:  
Here Baucis, there Philemon grew,  
Till once a parson of our town,  
To mend his barn, cut Baucis down;  
At which, 'tis hard to be believed  
How much the other tree was grieved,  
Grow scrubby, died a-top, was stunted:  
So the next parson stubbed and burnt it.

## CHAPTER VI

### THE LOGICIANS REFUTED

Logicians have but ill defined  
As rational, the human kind;  
Reason, they say, belongs to man,  
But let them prove it, if they can.  
Wise Aristotle and Smiglesius,  
By ratiocinations specious,  
Have strove to prove with great precision,  
With definition and division,  
*Homo est ratione praeditum;*  
But, for my soul, I cannot credit 'em.  
And must, in spite of them, maintain  
That man and all his ways are vain;  
And that this boasted lord of nature  
Is both a weak and erring creature.  
That instinct is a surer guide  
Than reason-boasting mortals pride;  
And, that brute beasts are far before 'em,  
*Deus est anima brutorum.*  
Whoever knew an honest brute,  
At law his neighbour prosecute,  
Bring action for assault and battery,  
Or friend beguile with lies and flattery?  
O'er plains they ramble unconfined,  
No politics disturb their mind;  
They eat their meals, and take their sport,  
Nor know who's in or out at court.  
They never to the levee go  
To treat as dearest friend a foe;  
They never importune his grace,



Nor ever cringe to men in place;  
Nor undertake a dirty job,  
Nor draw the quill to write for Bob.  
Fraught with invective they ne'er go  
To folks at Paternoster Row:  
No judges, fiddlers, dancing-masters,  
No pickpockets, or poetasters  
Are known to honest quadrupeds:  
No single brute his fellows leads.  
Brutes never meet in bloody fray,  
Nor cut each others' throats for pay.  
Of beasts, it is confessed, the ape  
Comes nearest us in human shape;  
Like man, he imitates each fashion,  
And malice is his ruling passion:  
But, both in malice and grimaces,  
A courtier any ape surpasses.  
Behold him humbly cringing wait  
Upon the minister of state;  
View him, soon after, to inferiors  
Aping the conduct of superiors:  
He promises, with equal air,  
And to perform takes equal care.  
He, in his turn, finds imitators,  
At court the porters, lacqueys, waiters  
Their masters' manners still contract,  
And footmen, lords, and dukes can act.  
Thus, at the court, both great and small  
Behave alike, for all ape all.

## CHAPTER VII

### THE PUPPET SHOW

The life of man to represent,  
And turn it all to ridicule,  
Wit did a puppet-show invent,  
Where the chief actor is a fool.

The gods of old were logs of wood,  
And worship was to puppets paid;  
In antic dress the idol stood,  
And priests and people bowed the head.

No wonder then, if art began  
The simple votaries to frame,  
To shape in timber foolish man,  
And consecrate the block to fame.

From hence poetic fancy learned  
That trees might rise from human forms  
The body to a trunk be turned,  
And branches issue from the arms.

Thus Daedalus and Ovid too,  
That man's a blockhead have confessed,  
Powel and Stretch the hint pursue;  
Life is the farce, the world a jest.

The same great truth South Sea hath proved  
On that famed theatre, the ally,  
Where thousands by directors moved  
Are now sad monuments of folly.

What Momus was of old to Jove  
The same harlequin is now;  
The former was buffoon above,  
The latter is a Punch below.

This fleeting scene is but a stage,  
Where various images appear,  
In different parts of youth and age  
Alike the prince and peasant share.

Some draw our eyes by being great,  
False pomp conceals mere wood within,  
And legislators rang'd in state  
Are oft but wisdom in machine.

A stock may chance to wear a crown,  
And timber as a lord take place,  
A statue may put on a frown,  
And cheat us with a thinking face.

Others are blindly led away,  
And made to act for ends unknown,  
By the mere spring of wires they play,  
And speak in language not their own.

Too oft, alas! a scolding wife  
Usurps a jolly fellow's throne,  
And many drink the cup of life  
Mix'd and embittered by a Joan.

In short, whatever men pursue  
Of pleasure, folly, war, or love,  
This mimic-race brings all to view,  
Alike they dress, they talk, they move.

Go on, great Stretch, with artful hand,  
Mortals to please and to deride,  
And when death breaks thy vital band  
Thou shalt put on a puppet's pride.

Thou shalt in puny wood be shown,  
Thy image shall preserve thy fame,  
Ages to come thy worth shall own,  
Point at thy limbs, and tell thy name.

Tell Tom he draws a farce in vain,  
Before he looks in nature's glass;  
Puns cannot form a witty scene,  
Nor pedantry for humour pass.

To make men act as senseless wood,  
And chatter in a mystic strain,  
Is a mere force on flesh and blood,  
And shows some error in the brain.

He that would thus refine on thee,  
And turn thy stage into a school,  
The jest of Punch will ever be,  
And stand confessed the greater fool.

## CHAPTER VIII

CADENUS AND VANESSA.

WRITTEN ANNO 1713

The shepherds and the nymphs were seen  
Pleading before the Cyprian Queen.  
The counsel for the fair began  
Accusing the false creature, man.  
The brief with weighty crimes was charged,  
On which the pleader much enlarged:  
That Cupid now has lost his art,  
Or blunts the point of every dart;  
His altar now no longer smokes;  
His mother's aid no youth invokes -  
This tempts free-thinkers to refine,  
And bring in doubt their powers divine,  
Now love is dwindled to intrigue,  
And marriage grown a money-league.  
Which crimes aforesaid (with her leave)  
Were (as he humbly did conceive)  
Against our Sovereign Lady's peace,  
Against the statutes in that case,  
Against her dignity and crown:  
Then prayed an answer and sat down.

The nymphs with scorn beheld their foes:  
When the defendant's counsel rose,  
And, what no lawyer ever lacked,  
With impudence owned all the fact.  
But, what the gentlest heart would vex,  
Laid all the fault on t'other sex.  
That modern love is no such thing

As what those ancient poets sing;  
A fire celestial, chaste, refined,  
Conceived and kindled in the mind,  
Which having found an equal flame,  
Unites, and both become the same,  
In different breasts together burn,  
Together both to ashes turn.  
But women now feel no such fire,  
And only know the gross desire;  
Their passions move in lower spheres,  
Where'er caprice or folly steers.  
A dog, a parrot, or an ape,  
Or some worse brute in human shape  
Engross the fancies of the fair,  
The few soft moments they can spare  
From visits to receive and pay,  
From scandal, politics, and play,  
From fans, and flounces, and brocades,  
From equipage and park-parades,  
From all the thousand female toys,  
From every trifle that employs  
The out or inside of their heads  
Between their toilets and their beds.  
In a dull stream, which, moving slow,  
You hardly see the current flow,  
If a small breeze obstructs the course,  
It whirls about for want of force,  
And in its narrow circle gathers  
Nothing but chaff, and straws, and feathers:  
The current of a female mind  
Stops thus, and turns with every wind;  
Thus whirling round, together draws  
Fools, fops, and rakes, for chaff and straws.  
Hence we conclude, no women's hearts  
Are won by virtue, wit, and parts;  
Nor are the men of sense to blame  
For breasts incapable of flame:  
The fault must on the nymphs be placed,  
Grown so corrupted in their taste.  
The pleader having spoke his best,

Had witness ready to attest,  
Who fairly could on oath depose,  
When questions on the fact arose,  
That every article was true;  
*Nor further those deponents knew:*  
Therefore he humbly would insist,  
The bill might be with costs dismissed.  
The cause appeared of so much weight,  
That Venus from the judgment-seat  
Desired them not to talk so loud,  
Else she must interpose a cloud:  
For if the heavenly folk should know  
These pleadings in the Courts below,  
That mortals here disdain to love,  
She ne'er could show her face above.  
For gods, their betters, are too wise  
To value that which men despise.  
“And then,” said she, “my son and I  
Must stroll in air ‘twixt earth and sky:  
Or else, shut out from heaven and earth,  
Fly to the sea, my place of birth;  
There live with daggled mermaids pent,  
And keep on fish perpetual Lent.”  
But since the case appeared so nice,  
She thought it best to take advice.  
The Muses, by their king’s permission,  
Though foes to love, attend the session,  
And on the right hand took their places  
In order; on the left, the Graces:  
To whom she might her doubts propose  
On all emergencies that rose.  
The Muses oft were seen to frown;  
The Graces half ashamed look down;  
And ’twas observed, there were but few  
Of either sex, among the crew,  
Whom she or her assessors knew.  
The goddess soon began to see  
Things were not ripe for a decree,  
And said she must consult her books,  
The lovers’ Fletas, Bractons, Cokes.

First to a dapper clerk she beckoned,  
To turn to Ovid, book the second;  
She then referred them to a place  
In Virgil (*vide* Dido's case);  
As for Tibullus's reports,  
They never passed for law in Courts:  
For Cowley's brief, and pleas of Waller,  
Still their authority is smaller.  
There was on both sides much to say;  
She'd hear the cause another day;  
And so she did, and then a third,  
She heard it—there she kept her word;  
But with rejoinders and replies,  
Long bills, and answers, stuffed with lies  
Demur, imparlance, and essoign,  
The parties ne'er could issue join:  
For sixteen years the cause was spun,  
And then stood where it first begun.  
Now, gentle Clio, sing or say,  
What Venus meant by this delay.  
The goddess, much perplexed in mind,  
To see her empire thus declined,  
When first this grand debate arose  
Above her wisdom to compose,  
Conceived a project in her head,  
To work her ends; which, if it sped,  
Would show the merits of the cause  
Far better than consulting laws.  
In a glad hour Lucina's aid  
Produced on earth a wondrous maid,  
On whom the queen of love was bent  
To try a new experiment.  
She threw her law-books on the shelf,  
And thus debated with herself:-  
"Since men allege they ne'er can find  
Those beauties in a female mind  
Which raise a flame that will endure  
For ever, uncorrupt and pure;  
If 'tis with reason they complain,  
This infant shall restore my reign.



I'll search where every virtue dwells,  
From Courts inclusive down to cells.  
What preachers talk, or sages write,  
These I will gather and unite,  
And represent them to mankind  
Collected in that infant's mind."  
This said, she plucks in heaven's high bowers  
A sprig of Amaranthine flowers,  
In nectar thrice infuses bays,  
Three times refined in Titan's rays:  
Then calls the Graces to her aid,  
And sprinkles thrice the now-born maid.  
From whence the tender skin assumes  
A sweetness above all perfumes;  
From whence a cleanliness remains,  
Incapable of outward stains;  
From whence that decency of mind,  
So lovely in a female kind.  
Where not one careless thought intrudes  
Less modest than the speech of prudes;  
Where never blush was called in aid,  
The spurious virtue in a maid,  
A virtue but at second-hand;  
They blush because they understand.  
The Graces next would act their part,  
And show but little of their art;  
Their work was half already done,  
The child with native beauty shone,  
The outward form no help required:  
Each breathing on her thrice, inspired  
That gentle, soft, engaging air  
Which in old times adorned the fair,  
And said, "Vanessa be the name  
By which thou shalt be known to fame;  
Vanessa, by the gods enrolled:  
Her name on earth—shall not be told."  
But still the work was not complete,  
When Venus thought on a deceit:  
Drawn by her doves, away she flies,  
And finds out Pallas in the skies:

Dear Pallas, I have been this morn  
To see a lovely infant born:  
A boy in yonder isle below,  
So like my own without his bow,  
By beauty could your heart be won,  
You'd swear it is Apollo's son;  
But it shall ne'er be said, a child  
So hopeful has by me been spoiled;  
I have enough besides to spare,  
And give him wholly to your care.  
Wisdom's above suspecting wiles;  
The queen of learning gravely smiles,  
Down from Olympus comes with joy,  
Mistakes Vanessa for a boy;  
Then sows within her tender mind  
Seeds long unknown to womankind;  
For manly bosoms chiefly fit,  
The seeds of knowledge, judgment, wit,  
Her soul was suddenly endued  
With justice, truth, and fortitude;  
With honour, which no breath can stain,  
Which malice must attack in vain:  
With open heart and bounteous hand:  
But Pallas here was at a stand;  
She know in our degenerate days  
Bare virtue could not live on praise,  
That meat must be with money bought:  
She therefore, upon second thought,  
Infused yet as it were by stealth,  
Some small regard for state and wealth:  
Of which as she grew up there stayed  
A tincture in the prudent maid:  
She managed her estate with care,  
Yet liked three footmen to her chair,  
But lest he should neglect his studies  
Like a young heir, the thrifty goddess  
(For fear young master should be spoiled)  
Would use him like a younger child;  
And, after long computing, found  
'Twould come to just five thousand pound.

The Queen of Love was pleased and proud  
To we Vanessa thus endowed;  
She doubted not but such a dame  
Through every breast would dart a flame;  
That every rich and lordly swain  
With pride would drag about her chain;  
That scholars would forsake their books  
To study bright Vanessa's looks:  
As she advanced that womankind  
Would by her model form their mind,  
And all their conduct would be tried  
By her, as an unerring guide.  
Offending daughters oft would hear  
Vanessa's praise rung in their ear:  
Miss Betty, when she does a fault,  
Lest fall her knife, or spills the salt,  
Will thus be by her mother chid,  
"Tis what Vanessa never did."  
Thus by the nymphs and swains adored,  
My power shall be again restored,  
And happy lovers bless my reign -  
So Venus hoped, but hoped in vain.  
For when in time the martial maid  
Found out the trick that Venus played,  
She shakes her helm, she knits her brows,  
And fired with indignation, vows  
To-morrow, ere the setting sun,  
She'd all undo that she had done.  
But in the poets we may find  
A wholesome law, time out of mind,  
Had been confirmed by Fate's decree;  
That gods, of whatso'er degree,  
Resume not what themselves have given,  
Or any brother-god in Heaven;  
Which keeps the peace among the gods,  
Or they must always be at odds.  
And Pallas, if she broke the laws,  
Must yield her foe the stronger cause;  
A shame to one so much adored  
For Wisdom, at Jove's council-board.

Besides, she feared the queen of love  
Would meet with better friends above.  
And though she must with grief reflect  
To see a mortal virgin deck'd  
With graces hitherto unknown  
To female breasts, except her own,  
Yet she would act as best became  
A goddess of unspotted fame;  
She knew, by augury divine,  
Venus would fail in her design:  
She studied well the point, and found  
Her foe's conclusions were not sound,  
From premises erroneous brought,  
And therefore the deduction's nought,  
And must have contrary effects  
To what her treacherous foe expects.  
In proper season Pallas meets  
The queen of love, whom thus she greets  
(For Gods, we are by Homer told,  
Can in celestial language scold),  
"Perfidious Goddess! but in vain  
You formed this project in your brain,  
A project for thy talents fit,  
With much deceit, and little wit;  
Thou hast, as thou shalt quickly see,  
Deceived thyself instead of me;  
For how can heavenly wisdom prove  
An instrument to earthly love?  
Know'st thou not yet that men commence  
Thy votaries, for want of sense?  
Nor shall Vanessa be the theme  
To manage thy abortive scheme;  
She'll prove the greatest of thy foes,  
And yet I scorn to interpose,  
But using neither skill nor force,  
Leave all things to their natural course."  
The goddess thus pronounced her doom,  
When, lo, Vanessa in her bloom,  
Advanced like Atalanta's star,  
But rarely seen, and seen from far:

In a new world with caution stepped,  
Watched all the company she kept,  
Well knowing from the books she read  
What dangerous paths young virgins tread;  
Would seldom at the park appear,  
Nor saw the play-house twice a year;  
Yet not incurious, was inclined  
To know the converse of mankind.  
First issued from perfumers' shops  
A crowd of fashionable fops;  
They liked her how she liked the play?  
Then told the tattle of the day,  
A duel fought last night at two  
About a lady—you know who;  
Mentioned a new Italian, come  
Either from Muscovy or Rome;  
Gave hints of who and who's together;  
Then fell to talking of the weather:  
Last night was so extremely fine,  
The ladies walked till after nine.  
Then in soft voice, and speech absurd,  
With nonsense every second word,  
With fustian from exploded plays,  
They celebrate her beauty's praise,  
Run o'er their cant of stupid lies,  
And tell the murders of her eyes.  
With silent scorn Vanessa sat,  
Scarce list'ning to their idle chat;  
Further than sometimes by a frown,  
When they grew pert, to pull them down.  
At last she spitefully was bent  
To try their wisdom's full extent;  
And said, she valued nothing less  
Than titles, figure, shape, and dress;  
That merit should be chiefly placed  
In judgment, knowledge, wit, and taste;  
And these, she offered to dispute,  
Alone distinguished man from brute:  
That present times have no pretence  
To virtue, in the noble sense

By Greeks and Romans understood,  
To perish for our country's good.  
She named the ancient heroes round,  
Explained for what they were renowned;  
Then spoke with censure, or applause,  
Of foreign customs, rites, and laws;  
Through nature and through art she ranged,  
And gracefully her subject changed:  
In vain; her hearers had no share  
In all she spoke, except to stare.  
Their judgment was upon the whole,  
—That lady is the dullest soul—  
Then tipped their forehead in a jeer,  
As who should say - she wants it here;  
She may be handsome, young, and rich,  
But none will burn her for a witch.  
A party next of glittering dames,  
From round the purlieu of St. James,  
Came early, out of pure goodwill,  
To see the girl in deshabille.  
Their clamour 'lighting from their chairs,  
Grew louder, all the way up stairs;  
At entrance loudest, where they found  
The room with volumes littered round,  
Vanessa held Montaigne, and read,  
Whilst Mrs. Susan combed her head:  
They called for tea and chocolate,  
And fell into their usual chat,  
Discoursing with important face,  
On ribbons, fans, and gloves, and lace:  
Showed patterns just from India brought,  
And gravely asked her what she thought,  
Whether the red or green were best,  
And what they cost? Vanessa guessed,  
As came into her fancy first,  
Named half the rates, and liked the worst.  
To scandal next—What awkward thing  
Was that, last Sunday, in the ring?  
I'm sorry Mopsa breaks so fast;  
I said her face would never last,

Corinna with that youthful air,  
Is thirty, and a bit to spare.  
Her fondness for a certain earl  
Began, when I was but a girl.  
Phyllis, who but a month ago  
Was married to the Tunbridge beau,  
I saw coquetting t'other night  
In public with that odious knight.  
They rallied next Vanessa's dress;  
That gown was made for old Queen Bess.  
Dear madam, let me set your head;  
Don't you intend to put on red?  
A petticoat without a hoop!  
Sure, you are not ashamed to stoop;  
With handsome garters at your knees,  
No matter what a fellow sees.  
Filled with disdain, with rage inflamed,  
Both of herself and sex ashamed,  
The nymph stood silent out of spite,  
Nor would vouchsafe to set them right.  
Away the fair detractors went,  
And gave, by turns, their censures vent.  
She's not so handsome in my eyes:  
For wit, I wonder where it lies.  
She's fair and clean, and that's the most;  
But why proclaim her for a toast?  
A baby face, no life, no airs,  
But what she learnt at country fairs.  
Scarce knows what difference is between  
Rich Flanders lace, and Colberteen.  
I'll undertake my little Nancy,  
In flounces has a better fancy.  
With all her wit, I would not ask  
Her judgment, how to buy a mask.  
We begged her but to patch her face,  
She never hit one proper place;  
Which every girl at five years old  
Can do as soon as she is told.  
I own, that out-of-fashion stuff  
Becomes the creature well enough.

The girl might pass, if we could get her  
To know the world a little better.  
(*To know the world!* a modern phrase  
For visits, ombre, balls, and plays.)  
Thus, to the world's perpetual shame,  
The queen of beauty lost her aim,  
Too late with grief she understood  
Pallas had done more harm than good;  
For great examples are but vain,  
Where ignorance begets disdain.  
Both sexes, armed with guilt and spite,  
Against Vanessa's power unite;  
To copy her few nymphs aspired;  
Her virtues fewer swains admired;  
So stars, beyond a certain height,  
Give mortals neither heat nor light.  
Yet some of either sex, endowed  
With gifts superior to the crowd,  
With virtue, knowledge, taste, and wit,  
She condescended to admit;  
With pleasing arts she could reduce  
Men's talents to their proper use;  
And with address each genius hold  
To that wherein it most excelled;  
Thus making others' wisdom known,  
Could please them and improve her own.  
A modest youth said something new,  
She placed it in the strongest view.  
All humble worth she strove to raise;  
Would not be praised, yet loved to praise.  
The learned met with free approach,  
Although they came not in a coach.  
Some clergy too she would allow,  
Nor quarreled at their awkward bow.  
But this was for Cadenus' sake;  
A gownman of a different make.  
Whom Pallas, once Vanessa's tutor,  
Had fixed on for her coadjutor.  
But Cupid, full of mischief, longs  
To vindicate his mother's wrongs.



On Pallas all attempts are vain;  
One way he knows to give her pain;  
Vows on Vanessa's heart to take  
Due vengeance, for her patron's sake.  
Those early seeds by Venus sown,  
In spite of Pallas, now were grown;  
And Cupid hoped they would improve  
By time, and ripen into love.  
The boy made use of all his craft,  
In vain discharging many a shaft,  
Pointed at colonels, lords, and beaux;  
Cadenus warded off the blows,  
For placing still some book betwixt,  
The darts were in the cover fixed,  
Or often blunted and recoiled,  
On Plutarch's morals struck, were spoiled.  
The queen of wisdom could foresee,  
But not prevent the Fates decree;  
And human caution tries in vain  
To break that adamant chain.  
Vanessa, though by Pallas taught,  
By love invulnerable thought,  
Searching in books for wisdom's aid,  
Was, in the very search, betrayed.  
Cupid, though all his darts were lost,  
Yet still resolved to spare no cost;  
He could not answer to his fame  
The triumphs of that stubborn dame,  
A nymph so hard to be subdued,  
Who neither was coquette nor prude.  
I find, says he, she wants a doctor,  
Both to adore her, and instruct her:  
I'll give her what she most admires,  
Among those venerable sires.  
Cadenus is a subject fit,  
Grown old in politics and wit;  
Caressed by Ministers of State,  
Of half mankind the dread and hate.  
Whate'er vexations love attend,  
She need no rivals apprehend

Her sex, with universal voice,  
Must laugh at her capricious choice.  
Cadenus many things had writ,  
Vanessa much esteemed his wit,  
And called for his poetic works!  
Meantime the boy in secret lurks.  
And while the book was in her hand,  
The urchin from his private stand  
Took aim, and shot with all his strength  
A dart of such prodigious length,  
It pierced the feeble volume through,  
And deep transfixed her bosom too.  
Some lines, more moving than the rest,  
Struck to the point that pierced her breast;  
And, borne directly to the heart,  
With pains unknown, increased her smart.  
Vanessa, not in years a score,  
Dreams of a gown of forty-four;  
Imaginary charms can find,  
In eyes with reading almost blind;  
Cadenus now no more appears  
Declined in health, advanced in years.  
She fancies music in his tongue,  
Nor farther looks, but thinks him young.  
What mariner is not afraid  
To venture in a ship decayed?  
What planter will attempt to yoke  
A sapling with a falling oak?  
As years increase, she brighter shines,  
Cadenus with each day declines,  
And he must fall a prey to Time,  
While she continues in her prime.  
Cadenus, common forms apart,  
In every scene had kept his heart;  
Had sighed and languished, vowed and writ,  
For pastime, or to show his wit;  
But time, and books, and State affairs,  
Had spoiled his fashionable airs,  
He now could praise, esteem, approve,  
But understood not what was love.

His conduct might have made him styled  
A father, and the nymph his child.  
That innocent delight he took  
To see the virgin mind her book,  
Was but the master's secret joy  
In school to hear the finest boy.  
Her knowledge with her fancy grew,  
She hourly pressed for something new;  
Ideas came into her mind  
So fast, his lessons lagged behind;  
She reasoned, without plodding long,  
Nor ever gave her judgment wrong,  
But now a sudden change was wrought,  
She minds no longer what he taught.  
Cadenus was amazed to find  
Such marks of a distracted mind;  
For though she seemed to listen more  
To all he spoke, than e'er before.  
He found her thoughts would absent range,  
Yet guessed not whence could spring the change.  
And first he modestly conjectures,  
His pupil might be tired with lectures,  
Which helped to mortify his pride,  
Yet gave him not the heart to chide;  
But in a mild dejected strain,  
At last he ventured to complain:  
Said, she should be no longer teased,  
Might have her freedom when she pleased;  
Was now convinced he acted wrong,  
To hide her from the world so long,  
And in dull studies to engage  
One of her tender sex and age.  
That every nymph with envy owned,  
How she might shine in the *grande-monde*,  
And every shepherd was undone,  
To see her cloistered like a nun.  
This was a visionary scheme,  
He waked, and found it but a dream;  
A project far above his skill,  
For Nature must be Nature still.

If she was bolder than became  
A scholar to a courtly dame,  
She might excuse a man of letters;  
Thus tutors often treat their betters,  
And since his talk offensive grew,  
He came to take his last adieu.  
Vanessa, filled with just disdain,  
Would still her dignity maintain,  
Instructed from her early years  
To scorn the art of female tears.  
Had he employed his time so long,  
To teach her what was right or wrong,  
Yet could such notions entertain,  
That all his lectures were in vain?  
She owned the wand'ring of her thoughts,  
But he must answer for her faults.  
She well remembered, to her cost,  
That all his lessons were not lost.  
Two maxims she could still produce,  
And sad experience taught her use;  
That virtue, pleased by being shown,  
Knows nothing which it dare not own;  
Can make us without fear disclose  
Our inmost secrets to our foes;  
That common forms were not designed  
Directors to a noble mind.  
Now, said the nymph, I'll let you see  
My actions with your rules agree,  
That I can vulgar forms despise,  
And have no secrets to disguise.  
I knew by what you said and writ,  
How dangerous things were men of wit;  
You cautioned me against their charms,  
But never gave me equal arms;  
Your lessons found the weakest part,  
Aimed at the head, but reached the heart.  
Cadenus felt within him rise  
Shame, disappointment, guilt, surprise.  
He know not how to reconcile  
Such language, with her usual style:

And yet her words were so expressed,  
He could not hope she spoke in jest.  
His thoughts had wholly been confined  
To form and cultivate her mind.  
He hardly knew, till he was told,  
Whether the nymph were young or old;  
Had met her in a public place,  
Without distinguishing her face,  
Much less could his declining age  
Vanessa's earliest thoughts engage.  
And if her youth indifference met,  
His person must contempt beget,  
Or grant her passion be sincere,  
How shall his innocence be clear?  
Appearances were all so strong,  
The world must think him in the wrong;  
Would say he made a treach'rous use.  
Of wit, to flatter and seduce;  
The town would swear he had betrayed,  
By magic spells, the harmless maid;  
And every beau would have his jokes,  
That scholars were like other folks;  
That when Platonic flights were over,  
The tutor turned a mortal lover.  
So tender of the young and fair;  
It showed a true paternal care -  
Five thousand guineas in her purse;  
The doctor might have fancied worst, -  
Hardly at length he silence broke,  
And faltered every word he spoke;  
Interpreting her complaisance,  
Just as a man sans consequence.  
She rallied well, he always knew;  
Her manner now was something new;  
And what she spoke was in an air,  
As serious as a tragic player.  
But those who aim at ridicule,  
Should fix upon some certain rule,  
Which fairly hints they are in jest,  
Else he must enter his protest;

For let a man be ne'er so wise,  
He may be caught with sober lies;  
A science which he never taught,  
And, to be free, was dearly bought;  
For, take it in its proper light,  
'Tis just what coxcombs call a bite.  
But not to dwell on things minute,  
Vanessa finished the dispute,  
Brought weighty arguments to prove,  
That reason was her guide in love.  
She thought he had himself described,  
His doctrines when she fist imbibed;  
What he had planted now was grown,  
His virtues she might call her own;  
As he approves, as he dislikes,  
Love or contempt her fancy strikes.  
Self-love in nature rooted fast,  
Attends us first, and leaves us last:  
Why she likes him, admire not at her,  
She loves herself, and that's the matter.  
How was her tutor wont to praise  
The geniuses of ancient days!  
(Those authors he so oft had named  
For learning, wit, and wisdom famed).  
Was struck with love, esteem, and awe,  
For persons whom he never saw.  
Suppose Cadenus flourished then,  
He must adore such God-like men.  
If one short volume could comprise  
All that was witty, learned, and wise,  
How would it be esteemed, and read,  
Although the writer long were dead?  
If such an author were alive,  
How all would for his friendship strive;  
And come in crowds to see his face?  
And this she takes to be her case.  
Cadenus answers every end,  
The book, the author, and the friend,  
The utmost her desires will reach,  
Is but to learn what he can teach;

His converse is a system fit  
Alone to fill up all her wit;  
While ev'ry passion of her mind  
In him is centred and confined.  
Love can with speech inspire a mute,  
And taught Vanessa to dispute.  
This topic, never touched before,  
Displayed her eloquence the more:  
Her knowledge, with such pains acquired,  
By this new passion grew inspired.  
Through this she made all objects pass,  
Which gave a tincture o'er the mass;  
As rivers, though they bend and twine,  
Still to the sea their course incline;  
Or, as philosophers, who find  
Some fav'rite system to their mind,  
In every point to make it fit,  
Will force all nature to submit.  
Cadenus, who could ne'er suspect  
His lessons would have such effect,  
Or be so artfully applied,  
Insensibly came on her side;  
It was an unforeseen event,  
Things took a turn he never meant.  
Whoe'er excels in what we prize,  
Appears a hero to our eyes;  
Each girl, when pleased with what is taught,  
Will have the teacher in her thought.  
When miss delights in her spinnet,  
A fiddler may a fortune get;  
A blockhead, with melodious voice  
In boarding-schools can have his choice;  
And oft the dancing-master's art  
Climbs from the toe to touch the heart.  
In learning let a nymph delight,  
The pedant gets a mistress by't.  
Cadenus, to his grief and shame,  
Could scarce oppose Vanessa's flame;  
But though her arguments were strong,  
At least could hardly with them wrong.

Howe'er it came, he could not tell,  
But, sure, she never talked so well.  
His pride began to interpose,  
Preferred before a crowd of beaux,  
So bright a nymph to come unsought,  
Such wonder by his merit wrought;  
'Tis merit must with her prevail,  
He never know her judgment fail.  
She noted all she ever read,  
And had a most discerning head.  
'Tis an old maxim in the schools,  
That vanity's the food of fools;  
Yet now and then your men of wit  
Will condescend to take a bit.  
So when Cadenus could not hide,  
He chose to justify his pride;  
Construing the passion she had shown,  
Much to her praise, more to his own.  
Nature in him had merit placed,  
In her, a most judicious taste.  
Love, hitherto a transient guest,  
Ne'er held possession in his breast;  
So long attending at the gate,  
Disdain'd to enter in so late.  
Love, why do we one passion call?  
When 'tis a compound of them all;  
Where hot and cold, where sharp and sweet,  
In all their equipages meet;  
Where pleasures mixed with pains appear,  
Sorrow with joy, and hope with fear.  
Wherein his dignity and age  
Forbid Cadenus to engage.  
But friendship in its greatest height,  
A constant, rational delight,  
On virtue's basis fixed to last,  
When love's allurements long are past;  
Which gently warms, but cannot burn;  
He gladly offers in return;  
His want of passion will redeem,  
With gratitude, respect, esteem;



With that devotion we bestow,  
When goddesses appear below.  
While thus Cadenus entertains  
Vanessa in exalted strains,  
The nymph in sober words intreats  
A truce with all sublime conceits.  
For why such raptures, flights, and fancies,  
To her who durst not read romances;  
In lofty style to make replies,  
Which he had taught her to despise?  
But when her tutor will affect  
Devotion, duty, and respect,  
He fairly abdicates his throne,  
The government is now her own;  
He has a forfeiture incurred,  
She vows to take him at his word,  
And hopes he will not take it strange  
If both should now their stations change  
The nymph will have her turn, to be  
The tutor; and the pupil he:  
Though she already can discern  
Her scholar is not apt to learn;  
Or wants capacity to reach  
The science she designs to teach;  
Wherein his genius was below  
The skill of every common beau;  
Who, though he cannot spell, is wise  
Enough to read a lady's eyes?  
And will each accidental glance  
Interpret for a kind advance.  
But what success Vanessa met  
Is to the world a secret yet;  
Whether the nymph, to please her swain,  
Talks in a high romantic strain;  
Or whether he at last descends  
To like with less seraphic ends;  
Or to compound the bus'ness, whether  
They temper love and books together;  
Must never to mankind be told,  
Nor shall the conscious muse unfold.

Meantime the mournful queen of love  
Led but a weary life above.  
She ventures now to leave the skies,  
Grown by Vanessa's conduct wise.  
For though by one perverse event  
Pallas had crossed her first intent,  
Though her design was not obtained,  
Yet had she much experience gained;  
And, by the project vainly tried,  
Could better now the cause decide.  
She gave due notice that both parties,  
*Coram Regina Prox' die martis,*  
Should at their peril without fail  
Come and appear, and save their bail.  
All met, and silence thrice proclaimed,  
One lawyer to each side was named.  
The judge discovered in her face  
Resentments for her late disgrace;  
And, full of anger, shame, and grief,  
Directed them to mind their brief;  
Nor spend their time to show their reading,  
She'd have a summary proceeding.  
She gathered under every head,  
The sum of what each lawyer said;  
Gave her own reasons last; and then  
Decreed the cause against the men.  
But, in a weighty case like this,  
To show she did not judge amiss,  
Which evil tongues might else report,  
She made a speech in open court;  
Wherein she grievously complains,  
"How she was cheated by the swains."  
On whose petition (humbly showing  
That women were not worth the wooing,  
And that unless the sex would mend,  
The race of lovers soon must end);  
"She was at Lord knows what expense,  
To form a nymph of wit and sense;  
A model for her sex designed,  
Who never could one lover find,

She saw her favour was misplaced;  
The follows had a wretched taste;  
She needs must tell them to their face,  
They were a senseless, stupid race;  
And were she to begin again,  
She'd study to reform the men;  
Or add some grains of folly more  
To women than they had before.  
To put them on an equal foot;  
And this, or nothing else, would do't.  
This might their mutual fancy strike,  
Since every being loves its like.  
But now, repenting what was done,  
She left all business to her son;  
She puts the world in his possession,  
And let him use it at discretion.”  
The crier was ordered to dismiss  
The court, so made his last O yes!  
The goddess would no longer wait,  
But rising from her chair of state,  
Left all below at six and seven,  
Harnessed her doves, and flew to Heaven.

## CHAPTER IX

### STELLA'S BIRTHDAY, 1718

Stella this day is thirty-four  
(We shan't dispute a year or more)  
However, Stella, be not troubled,  
Although thy size and years are doubled  
Since first I saw thee at sixteen,  
The brightest virgin on the green.  
So little is thy form declined;  
Made up so largely in thy mind.  
Oh, would it please the gods to split  
Thy beauty, size, and years, and wit,  
No age could furnish out a pair  
Of nymphs so graceful, wise, and fair:  
With half the lustre of your eyes,  
With half your wit, your years, and size.  
And then, before it grew too late,  
How should I beg of gentle fate,  
(That either nymph might lack her swain),  
To split my worship too in twain.

STELLA'S BIRTHDAY, 1720

All travellers at first incline  
Where'er they see the fairest sign;  
And if they find the chambers neat,  
And like the liquor and the meat,  
Will call again and recommend  
The Angel Inn to every friend  
What though the painting grows decayed,  
The house will never lose its trade:  
Nay, though the treach'rous tapster Thomas  
Hangs a new angel two doors from us,  
As fine as daubers' hands can make it,  
In hopes that strangers may mistake it,  
We think it both a shame and sin,  
To quit the true old Angel Inn.  
Now, this is Stella's case in fact,  
An angel's face, a little cracked  
(Could poets, or could painters fix  
How angels look at, thirty-six):  
This drew us in at first, to find  
In such a form an angel's mind;  
And every virtue now supplies  
The fainting rays of Stella's eyes.  
See, at her levee, crowding swains,  
Whom Stella freely entertains,  
With breeding, humour, wit, and sense;  
And puts them but to small expense;  
Their mind so plentifully fills,  
And makes such reasonable bills,  
So little gets for what she gives,  
We really wonder how she lives!  
And had her stock been less, no doubt,  
She must have long ago run out.

Then who can think we'll quit the place,  
When Doll hangs out a newer face;  
Or stop and light at Cloe's Head,  
With scraps and leavings to be fed.  
Then Cloe, still go on to prate  
Of thirty-six, and thirty-eight;  
Pursue your trade of scandal picking,  
Your hints that Stella is no chicken.  
Your innuendoes when you tell us,  
That Stella loves to talk with fellows;  
And let me warn you to believe  
A truth, for which your soul should grieve:  
That should you live to see the day  
When Stella's locks, must all be grey,  
When age must print a furrowed trace  
On every feature of her face;  
Though you and all your senseless tribe,  
Could art, or time, or nature bribe  
To make you look like beauty's queen,  
And hold for ever at fifteen;  
No bloom of youth can ever blind  
The cracks and wrinkles of your mind;  
All men of sense will pass your door,  
And crowd to Stella's at fourscore.

STELLA'S BIRTHDAY

A GREAT BOTTLE OF WINE, LONG BURIED,  
BEING THAT DAY DUG UP. 1722.

Resolved my annual verse to pay,  
By duty bound, on Stella's day;  
Furnished with paper, pens, and ink,  
I gravely sat me down to think:  
I bit my nails, and scratched my head,  
But found my wit and fancy fled;  
Or, if with more than usual pain,  
A thought came slowly from my brain,  
It cost me Lord knows how much time  
To shape it into sense and rhyme;  
And, what was yet a greater curse,  
Long-thinking made my fancy worse  
Forsaken by th' inspiring nine,  
I waited at Apollo's shrine;  
I told him what the world would sa  
If Stella were unsung to-day;  
How I should hide my head for shame,  
When both the Jacks and Robin came;  
How Ford would frown, how Jim would leer,  
How Sh-r the rogue would sneer,  
And swear it does not always follow,  
That *semel'n anno ridet* Apollo.  
I have assured them twenty times,  
That Phoebus helped me in my rhymes,  
Phoebus inspired me from above,  
And he and I were hand and glove.  
But finding me so dull and dry since,  
They'll call it all poetic licence.

And when I brag of aid divine,  
Think Eusden's right as good as mine.  
Nor do I ask for Stella's sake;  
'Tis my own credit lies at stake.  
And Stella will be sung, while I  
Can only be a stander by.  
Apollo having thought a little,  
Returned this answer to a tittle.  
Tho' you should live like old Methusalem,  
I furnish hints, and you should use all 'em,  
You yearly sing as she grows old,  
You'd leave her virtues half untold.  
But to say truth, such dulness reigns  
Through the whole set of Irish Deans;  
I'm daily stunned with such a medley,  
Dean W-, Dean D-I, and Dean S-;  
That let what Dean soever come,  
My orders are, I'm not at home;  
And if your voice had not been loud,  
You must have passed among the crowd.  
But, now your danger to prevent,  
You must apply to Mrs. Brent,  
For she, as priestess, knows the rites  
Wherein the God of Earth delights.  
First, nine ways looking, let her stand  
With an old poker in her hand;  
Let her describe a circle round  
In Saunder's cellar on the ground  
A spade let prudent Archy hold,  
And with discretion dig the mould;  
Let Stella look with watchful eye,  
Rebecca, Ford, and Grattons by.  
Behold the bottle, where it lies  
With neck elated tow'rd the skies!  
The god of winds, and god of fire,  
Did to its wondrous birth conspire;  
And Bacchus for the poet's use  
Poured in a strong inspiring juice:  
See! as you raise it from its tomb,  
It drags behind a spacious womb,



And in the spacious womb contains  
A sovereign med'cine for the brains.  
You'll find it soon, if fate consents;  
If not, a thousand Mrs. Brents,  
Ten thousand Archys arm'd with spades,  
May dig in vain to Pluto's shades.  
From thence a plenteous draught infuse,  
And boldly then invoke the muse  
(But first let Robert on his knees  
With caution drain it from the lees);  
The muse will at your call appear,  
With Stella's praise to crown the year.

STELLA'S BIRTHDAY, 1724

As when a beauteous nymph decays,  
We say she's past her dancing days;  
So poets lose their feet by time,  
And can no longer dance in rhyme.  
Your annual bard had rather chose  
To celebrate your birth in prose;  
Yet merry folks who want by chance  
A pair to make a country dance,  
Call the old housekeeper, and get her  
To fill a place, for want of better;  
While Sheridan is off the hooks,  
And friend Delany at his books,  
That Stella may avoid disgrace,  
Once more the Dean supplies their place.  
Beauty and wit, too sad a truth,  
Have always been confined to youth;  
The god of wit, and beauty's queen,  
He twenty-one, and she fifteen;  
No poet ever sweetly sung.  
Unless he were like Phoebus, young;  
Nor ever nymph inspired to rhyme,  
Unless like Venus in her prime.  
At fifty-six, if this be true,  
Am I a poet fit for you;  
Or at the age of forty-three,  
Are you a subject fit for me?  
Adieu bright wit, and radiant eyes;  
You must be grave, and I be wise.  
Our fate in vain we would oppose,  
But I'll be still your friend in prose;  
Esteem and friendship to express,  
Will not require poetic dress;

And if the muse deny her aid  
To have them sung, they may be said.  
But, Stella say, what evil tongue  
Reports you are no longer young?  
That Time sits with his scythe to mow  
Where erst sat Cupid with his bow;  
That half your locks are turned to grey;  
I'll ne'er believe a word they say.  
'Tis true, but let it not be known,  
My eyes are somewhat dimish grown;  
For nature, always in the right,  
To your decays adapts my sight,  
And wrinkles undistinguished pass,  
For I'm ashamed to use a glass;  
And till I see them with these eyes,  
Whoever says you have them, lies.  
No length of time can make you quit  
Honour and virtue, sense and wit,  
Thus you may still be young to me,  
While I can better hear than see:  
Oh, ne'er may fortune show her spite,  
To make me deaf, and mend my sight.

STELLA'S BIRTHDAY, MARCH 13, 1726

This day, whate'er the Fates decree,  
Shall still be kept with joy by me;  
This day, then, let us not be told  
That you are sick, and I grown old,  
Nor think on our approaching ills,  
And talk of spectacles and pills;  
To-morrow will be time enough  
To hear such mortifying stuff.  
Yet, since from reason may be brought  
A better and more pleasing thought,  
Which can, in spite of all decays,  
Support a few remaining days:  
From not the gravest of divines  
Accept for once some serious lines.  
Although we now can form no more  
Long schemes of life, as heretofore;  
Yet you, while time is running fast,  
Can look with joy on what is past.  
Were future happiness and pain  
A mere contrivance of the brain,  
As Atheists argue, to entice,  
And fit their proselytes for vice  
(The only comfort they propose,  
To have companions in their woes).  
Grant this the case, yet sure 'tis hard  
That virtue, styled its own reward,  
And by all sages understood  
To be the chief of human good,  
Should acting, die, or leave behind  
Some lasting pleasure in the mind.  
Which by remembrance will assuage  
Grief, sickness, poverty, and age;

And strongly shoot a radiant dart,  
To shine through life's declining part.  
Say, Stella, feel you no content,  
Reflecting on a life well spent;  
Your skilful hand employed to save  
Despairing wretches from the grave;  
And then supporting with your store,  
Those whom you dragged from death before?  
So Providence on mortals waits,  
Preserving what it first creates,  
You generous boldness to defend  
An innocent and absent friend;  
That courage which can make you just,  
To merit humbled in the dust;  
The detestation you express  
For vice in all its glittering dress:  
That patience under to torturing pain,  
Where stubborn stoics would complain.  
Must these like empty shadows pass,  
Or forms reflected from a glass?  
Or mere chimæras in the mind,  
That fly, and leave no marks behind?  
Does not the body thrive and grow  
By food of twenty years ago?  
And, had it not been still supplied,  
It must a thousand times have died.  
Then, who with reason can maintain  
That no effects of food remain?  
And, is not virtue in mankind  
The nutriment that feeds the mind?  
Upheld by each good action past,  
And still continued by the last:  
Then, who with reason can pretend  
That all effects of virtue end?  
Believe me, Stella, when you show  
That true contempt for things below,  
Nor prize your life for other ends  
Than merely to oblige your friends,  
Your former actions claim their part,  
And join to fortify your heart.

For virtue in her daily race,  
Like Janus, bears a double face.  
Look back with joy where she has gone,  
And therefore goes with courage on.  
She at your sickly couch will wait,  
And guide you to a better state.  
O then, whatever heav'n intends,  
Take pity on your pitying friends;  
Nor let your ills affect your mind,  
To fancy they can be unkind;  
Me, surely me, you ought to spare,  
Who gladly would your sufferings share;  
Or give my scrap of life to you,  
And think it far beneath your due;  
You to whose care so oft I owe  
That I'm alive to tell you so.

## CHAPTER X

TO STELLA, VISITING ME IN MY SICKNESS,  
OCTOBER, 1727.

Pallas, observing Stella's wit  
Was more than for her sex was fit;  
And that her beauty, soon or late,  
Might breed confusion in the state;  
In high concern for human kind,  
Fixed honour in her infant mind.  
But (not in wranglings to engage  
With such a stupid vicious age),  
If honour I would here define,  
It answers faith in things divine.  
As natural life the body warms,  
And, scholars teach, the soul informs;  
So honour animates the whole,  
And is the spirit of the soul.  
Those numerous virtues which the tribe  
Of tedious moralists describe,  
And by such various titles call,  
True honour comprehends them all.  
Let melancholy rule supreme,  
Choler preside, or blood, or phlegm.  
It makes no difference in the case.  
Nor is complexion honour's place.  
But, lest we should for honour take  
The drunken quarrels of a rake,  
Or think it seated in a scar,  
Or on a proud triumphal car,  
Or in the payment of a debt,  
We lose with sharpers at piquet;

Or, when a whore in her vocation,  
Keeps punctual to an assignation;  
Or that on which his lordship swears,  
When vulgar knaves would lose their ears:  
Let Stella's fair example preach  
A lesson she alone can teach.  
In points of honour to be tried,  
All passions must be laid aside;  
Ask no advice, but think alone,  
Suppose the question not your own;  
How shall I act? is not the case,  
But how would Brutus in my place;  
In such a cause would Cato bleed;  
And how would Socrates proceed?  
Drive all objections from your mind,  
Else you relapse to human kind;  
Ambition, avarice, and lust,  
And factious rage, and breach of trust,  
And flattery tipped with nauseous flear,  
And guilt and shame, and servile fear,  
Envy, and cruelty, and pride,  
Will in your tainted heart preside.  
Heroes and heroines of old,  
By honour only were enrolled  
Among their brethren in the skies,  
To which (though late) shall Stella rise.  
Ten thousand oaths upon record  
Are not so sacred as her word;  
The world shall in its atoms end  
Ere Stella can deceive a friend.  
By honour seated in her breast,  
She still determines what is best;  
What indignation in her mind,  
Against enslavers of mankind!  
Base kings and ministers of state,  
Eternal objects of her hate.  
She thinks that Nature ne'er designed,  
Courage to man alone confined;  
Can cowardice her sex adorn,  
Which most exposes ours to scorn;



She wonders where the charm appears  
In Florimel's affected fears;  
For Stella never learned the art  
At proper times to scream and start;  
Nor calls up all the house at night,  
And swears she saw a thing in white.  
Doll never flies to cut her lace,  
Or throw cold water in her face,  
Because she heard a sudden drum,  
Or found an earwig in a plum.  
Her hearers are amazed from whence  
Proceeds that fund of wit and sense;  
Which, though her modesty would shroud,  
Breaks like the sun behind a cloud,  
While gracefulness its art conceals,  
And yet through every motion steals.  
Say, Stella, was Prometheus blind,  
And forming you, mistook your kind?  
No; 'twas for you alone he stole  
The fire that forms a manly soul;  
Then, to complete it every way,  
He moulded it with female clay,  
To that you owe the nobler flame,  
To this, the beauty of your frame.  
How would ingratitude delight?  
And how would censure glut her spite?  
If I should Stella's kindness hide  
In silence, or forget with pride,  
When on my sickly couch I lay,  
Impatient both of night and day,  
Lamenting in unmanly strains,  
Called every power to ease my pains,  
Then Stella ran to my relief  
With cheerful face and inward grief;  
And though by Heaven's severe decree  
She suffers hourly more than me,  
No cruel master could require,  
From slaves employed for daily hire,  
What Stella by her friendship warmed,  
With vigour and delight performed.

My sinking spirits now supplies  
With cordials in her hands and eyes,  
Now with a soft and silent tread,  
Unheard she moves about my bed.  
I see her taste each nauseous draught,  
And so obligingly am caught:  
I bless the hand from whence they came,  
Nor dare distort my face for shame.  
Best pattern of true friends beware,  
You pay too dearly for your care;  
If while your tenderness secures  
My life, it must endanger yours.  
For such a fool was never found,  
Who pulled a palace to the ground,  
Only to have the ruins made  
Materials for a house decayed.

## CHAPTER XI

THE FIRST HE WROTE OCT. 17, 1727.

MOST MERCIFUL FATHER, accept our humblest prayers in behalf of this Thy languishing servant; forgive the sins, the frailties, and infirmities of her life past. Accept the good deeds she hath done in such a manner that, at whatever time Thou shalt please to call her, she may be received into everlasting habitations. Give her grace to continue sincerely thankful to Thee for the many favours Thou hast bestowed upon her, the ability and inclination and practice to do good, and those virtues which have procured the esteem and love of her friends, and a most unspotted name in the world. O God, Thou dispensest Thy blessings and Thy punishments, as it becometh infinite justice and mercy; and since it was Thy pleasure to afflict her with a long, constant, weakly state of health, make her truly sensible that it was for very wise ends, and was largely made up to her in other blessings, more valuable and less common. Continue to her, O Lord, that firmness and constancy of mind wherewith Thou hast most graciously endowed her, together with that contempt of worldly things and vanities that she hath shown in the whole conduct of her life. O All-powerful Being, the least motion of whose Will can create or destroy a world, pity us, the mournful friends of Thy distressed servant, who sink under the weight of her present condition, and the fear of losing the most valuable of our friends; restore her to us, O Lord, if it be Thy gracious Will, or inspire us with constancy and resignation to support ourselves under so heavy an affliction. Restore her, O Lord, for the sake of those poor, who by losing her will be desolate, and those sick, who will not only want her bounty, but her care and tending; or else, in Thy mercy, raise up some other in her place with equal disposition and better abilities. Lessen, O Lord, we beseech thee, her bodily pains, or give her a double strength of mind to support them. And if Thou wilt soon take her to Thyself, turn our thoughts rather upon that felicity which we hope she shall enjoy, than upon that unspeakable loss we shall endure. Let her memory be ever dear

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unto us, and the example of her many virtues, as far as human infirmity will admit, our constant imitation. Accept, O Lord, these prayers poured from the very bottom of our hearts, in Thy mercy, and for the merits of our blessed Saviour. AMEN.

## CHAPTER XII

### THE SECOND PRAYER WAS WRITTEN NOV. 6, 1727.

O MERCIFUL FATHER, who never afflictest Thy children but for their own good, and with justice, over which Thy mercy always prevaieth, either to turn them to repentance, or to punish them in the present life, in order to reward them in a better; take pity, we beseech Thee, upon this Thy poor afflicted servant, languishing so long and so grievously under the weight of Thy Hand. Give her strength, O Lord, to support her weakness, and patience to endure her pains, without repining at Thy correction. Forgive every rash and inconsiderate expression which her anguish may at any time force from her tongue, while her heart continueth in an entire submission to Thy Will. Suppress in her, O Lord, all eager desires of life, and lessen her fears of death, by inspiring into her an humble yet assured hope of Thy mercy. Give her a sincere repentance for all her transgressions and omissions, and a firm resolution to pass the remainder of her life in endeavouring to her utmost to observe all thy precepts. We beseech Thee likewise to compose her thoughts, and preserve to her the use of her memory and reason during the course of her sickness. Give her a true conception of the vanity, folly, and insignificancy of all human things; and strengthen her so as to beget in her a sincere love of Thee in the midst of her sufferings. Accept and impute all her good deeds, and forgive her all those offences against Thee, which she hath sincerely repented of, or through the frailty of memory hath forgot. And now, O Lord, we turn to Thee in behalf of ourselves, and the rest of her sorrowful friends. Let not our grief afflict her mind, and thereby have an ill effect on her present distemper. Forgive the sorrow and weakness of those among us who sink under the grief and terror of losing so dear and useful a friend. Accept and pardon our most earnest prayers and wishes for her longer continuance in this evil world, to do what Thou art pleased to call Thy service, and is only her bounden duty; that she may be still a comfort to us, and to all others, who

will want the benefit of her conversation, her advice, her good offices, or her charity. And since Thou hast promised that where two or three are gathered together in Thy Name, Thou wilt be in the midst of them to grant their request, O Gracious Lord, grant to us who are here met in Thy Name, that those requests, which in the utmost sincerity and earnestness of our hearts we have now made in behalf of this Thy distressed servant, and of ourselves, may effectually be answered; through the merits of Jesus Christ our Lord. AMEN,

## CHAPTER XIII

### THE BEASTS' CONFESSION (1732)

When beasts could speak (the learned say  
They still can do so every day),  
It seems, they had religion then,  
As much as now we find in men.  
It happened when a plague broke out  
(Which therefore made them more devout)  
The king of brutes (to make it plain,  
Of quadrupeds I only mean),  
By proclamation gave command,  
That every subject in the land  
Should to the priest confess their sins;  
And thus the pious wolf begins:  
Good father, I must own with shame,  
That, often I have been to blame:  
I must confess, on Friday last,  
Wretch that I was, I broke my fast:  
But I defy the basest tongue  
To prove I did my neighbour wrong;  
Or ever went to seek my food  
By rapine, theft, or thirst of blood.

The ass approaching next, confessed,  
That in his heart he loved a jest:  
A wag he was, he needs must own,  
And could not let a dunce alone:  
Sometimes his friend he would not spare,  
And might perhaps be too severe:  
But yet, the worst that could be said,  
He was a wit both born and bred;

And, if it be a sin or shame,  
Nature alone must bear the blame:  
One fault he hath, is sorry for't,  
His ears are half a foot too short;  
Which could he to the standard bring,  
He'd show his face before the king:  
Then, for his voice, there's none disputes  
That he's the nightingale of brutes.

The swine with contrite heart allowed,  
His shape and beauty made him proud:  
In diet was perhaps too nice,  
But gluttony was ne'er his vice:  
In every turn of life content,  
And meekly took what fortune sent:  
Enquire through all the parish round,  
A better neighbour ne'er was found:  
His vigilance might seine displease;  
'Tis true, he hated sloth like pease.

The mimic ape began his chatter,  
How evil tongues his life bespatter:  
Much of the cens'ring world complained,  
Who said his gravity was feigned:  
Indeed, the strictness of his morals  
Engaged him in a hundred quarrels:  
He saw, and he was grieved to see't,  
His zeal was sometimes indiscreet:  
He found his virtues too severe  
For our corrupted times to bear:  
Yet, such a lewd licentious age  
Might well excuse a stoic's rage.

The goat advanced with decent pace:  
And first excused his youthful face;  
Forgiveness begged, that he appeared  
('Twas nature's fault) without a beard.  
'Tis true, he was not much inclined  
To fondness for the female kind;  
Not, as his enemies object,



From chance or natural defect;  
Not by his frigid constitution,  
But through a pious resolution;  
For he had made a holy vow  
Of chastity, as monks do now;  
Which he resolved to keep for ever hence,  
As strictly, too, as doth his reverence.

Apply the tale, and you shall find  
How just it suits with human kind.  
Some faults we own: but, can you guess?  
Why?—virtue's carried to excess;  
Wherewith our vanity endows us,  
Though neither foe nor friend allows us.

The lawyer swears, you may rely on't,  
He never squeezed a needy client:  
And this he makes his constant rule,  
For which his brethren call him fool;  
His conscience always was so nice,  
He freely gave the poor advice;  
By which he lost, he may affirm,  
A hundred fees last Easter term.  
While others of the learned robe  
Would break the patience of a Job;  
No pleader at the bar could match  
His diligence and quick despatch;  
Ne'er kept a cause, he well may boast,  
Above a term or two at most.

The cringing knave, who seeks a place  
Without success, thus tells his case:  
Why should he longer mince the matter?  
He failed because he could not flatter:  
He had not learned to turn his coat,  
Nor for a party give his vote.  
His crime he quickly understood;  
Too zealous for the nation's good:  
He found the ministers resent it,  
Yet could not for his heart repent it.

The chaplain vows he cannot fawn,  
Though it would raise him to the lawn:  
He passed his hours among his books;  
You find it in his meagre looks:  
He might, if he were worldly-wise,  
Preferment get, and spare his eyes:  
But owned he had a stubborn spirit,  
That made him trust alone in merit:  
Would rise by merit to promotion;  
Alas! a mere chimeric notion.

The doctor, if you will believe him,  
Confessed a sin, and God forgive him:  
Called up at midnight, ran to save  
A blind old beggar from the grave:  
But, see how Satan spreads his snares;  
He quite forgot to say his prayers.  
He cannot help it, for his heart,  
Sometimes to act the parson's part,  
Quotes from the Bible many a sentence  
That moves his patients to repentance:  
And, when his medicines do no good,  
Supports their minds with heavenly food.  
At which, however well intended,  
He hears the clergy are offended;  
And grown so bold behind his back,  
To call him hypocrite and quack.  
In his own church he keeps a seat;  
Says grace before and after meat;  
And calls, without affecting airs,  
His household twice a day to prayers.  
He shuns apothecaries' shops;  
And hates to cram the sick with slops:  
He scorns to make his art a trade,  
Nor bribes my lady's favourite maid.  
Old nurse-keepers would never hire  
To recommend him to the Squire;  
Which others, whom he will not name,  
Have often practised to their shame.

The statesman tells you with a sneer,  
His fault is to be too sincere;  
And, having no sinister ends,  
Is apt to disoblige his friends.  
The nation's good, his Master's glory,  
Without regard to Whig or Tory,  
Were all the schemes he had in view;  
Yet he was seconded by few:  
Though some had spread a thousand lies,  
'Twas he defeated the Excise.  
'Twas known, though he had borne aspersion,  
That standing troops were his aversion:  
His practice was, in every station,  
To serve the king, and please the nation.  
Though hard to find in every case  
The fittest man to fill a place:  
His promises he ne'er forgot,  
But took memorials on the spot:  
His enemies, for want of charity,  
Said he affected popularity:  
'Tis true, the people understood,  
That all he did was for their good;  
Their kind affections he has tried;  
No love is lost on either side.  
He came to court with fortune clear,  
Which now he runs out every year;  
Must, at the rate that he goes on,  
Inevitably be undone.  
Oh! if his Majesty would please  
To give him but a writ of ease,  
Would grant him license to retire,  
As it hath long been his desire,  
By fair accounts it would be found,  
He's poorer by ten thousand pound.  
He owns, and hopes it is no sin,  
He ne'er was partial to his kin;  
He thought it base for men in stations  
To crowd the court with their relations:  
His country was his dearest mother,

And every virtuous man his brother:  
Through modesty or awkward shame  
(For which he owns himself to blame),  
He found the wisest men he could,  
Without respect to friends or blood;  
Nor never acts on private views,  
When he hath liberty to choose.

The sharper swore he hated play,  
Except to pass an hour away:  
And well he might; for to his cost,  
By want of skill, he always lost.  
He heard there was a club of cheats,  
Who had contrived a thousand feats;  
Could change the stock, or cog a dye,  
And thus deceive the sharpest eye:  
No wonder how his fortune sunk,  
His brothers fleece him when he's drunk.

I own the moral not exact;  
Besides, the tale is false in fact;  
And so absurd, that, could I raise up  
From fields Elysian, fabling Æsop;  
I would accuse him to his face,  
For libelling the four-foot race.  
Creatures of every kind but ours  
Well comprehend their natural powers;  
While we, whom reason ought to sway,  
Mistake our talents every day:  
The ass was never known so stupid  
To act the part of Tray or Cupid;  
Nor leaps upon his master's lap,  
There to be stroked, and fed with pap:  
As Æsop would the world persuade;  
He better understands his trade:  
Nor comes whene'er his lady whistles,  
But carries loads, and feeds on thistles;  
Our author's meaning, I presume, is  
A creature *bipes et implumis*;  
Wherein the moralist designed

A compliment on human-kind:  
For, here he owns, that now and then  
Beasts may degenerate into men.

## CHAPTER XIV

AN ARGUMENT TO PROVE THAT THE ABOLISHING OF CHRISTIANITY IN ENGLAND MAY, AS THINGS NOW STAND, BE ATTENDED WITH SOME INCONVENIENCES, AND PERHAPS NOT PRODUCE THOSE MANY GOOD EFFECTS PROPOSED THEREBY.

WRITTEN IN THE YEAR 1708.

I AM VERY SENSIBLE what a weakness and presumption it is to reason against the general humour and disposition of the world. I remember it was with great justice, and a due regard to the freedom, both of the public and the press, forbidden upon several penalties to write, or discourse, or lay wagers against the - even before it was confirmed by Parliament; because that was looked upon as a design to oppose the current of the people, which, besides the folly of it, is a manifest breach of the fundamental law, that makes this majority of opinions the voice of God. In like manner, and for the very same reasons, it may perhaps be neither safe nor prudent to argue against the abolishing of Christianity, at a juncture when all parties seem so unanimously determined upon the point, as we cannot but allow from their actions, their discourses, and their writings. However, I know not how, whether from the affectation of singularity, or the perverseness of human nature, but so it unhappily falls out, that I cannot be entirely of this opinion. Nay, though I were sure an order were issued for my immediate prosecution by the Attorney-General, I should still confess, that in the present posture of our affairs at home or abroad, I do not yet see the absolute necessity of extirpating the Christian religion from among us.

This perhaps may appear too great a paradox even for our wise and paradoxical age to endure; therefore I shall handle it with all tenderness,

and with the utmost deference to that great and profound majority which is of another sentiment.

And yet the curious may please to observe, how much the genius of a nation is liable to alter in half an age. I have heard it affirmed for certain by some very odd people, that the contrary opinion was even in their memories as much in vogue as the other is now; and that a project for the abolishing of Christianity would then have appeared as singular, and been thought as absurd, as it would be at this time to write or discourse in its defence.

Therefore I freely own, that all appearances are against me. The system of the Gospel, after the fate of other systems, is generally antiquated and exploded, and the mass or body of the common people, among whom it seems to have had its latest credit, are now grown as much ashamed of it as their betters; opinions, like fashions, always descending from those of quality to the middle sort, and thence to the vulgar, where at length they are dropped and vanish.

But here I would not be mistaken, and must therefore be so bold as to borrow a distinction from the writers on the other side, when they make a difference betwixt nominal and real Trinitarians. I hope no reader imagines me so weak to stand up in the defence of real Christianity, such as used in primitive times (if we may believe the authors of those ages) to have an influence upon men's belief and actions. To offer at the restoring of that, would indeed be a wild project: it would be to dig up foundations; to destroy at one blow all the wit, and half the learning of the kingdom; to break the entire frame and constitution of things; to ruin trade, extinguish arts and sciences, with the professors of them; in short, to turn our courts, exchanges, and shops into deserts; and would be full as absurd as the proposal of Horace, where he advises the Romans, all in a body, to leave their city, and seek a new seat in some remote part of the world, by way of a cure for the corruption of their manners.

Therefore I think this caution was in itself altogether unnecessary (which I have inserted only to prevent all possibility of cavilling), since every candid reader will easily understand my discourse to be intended only in defence of nominal Christianity, the other having been for some time wholly laid aside by general consent, as utterly inconsistent with all our present schemes of wealth and power.

But why we should therefore cut off the name and title of Christians, although the general opinion and resolution be so violent for it, I confess I cannot (with submission) apprehend the consequence necessary. However, since the undertakers propose such wonderful advantages to the nation by

this project, and advance many plausible objections against the system of Christianity, I shall briefly consider the strength of both, fairly allow them their greatest weight, and offer such answers as I think most reasonable. After which I will beg leave to show what inconveniences may possibly happen by such an innovation, in the present posture of our affairs.

First, one great advantage proposed by the abolishing of Christianity is, that it would very much enlarge and establish liberty of conscience, that great bulwark of our nation, and of the Protestant religion, which is still too much limited by priestcraft, notwithstanding all the good intentions of the legislature, as we have lately found by a severe instance. For it is confidently reported, that two young gentlemen of real hopes, bright wit, and profound judgment, who, upon a thorough examination of causes and effects, and by the mere force of natural abilities, without the least tincture of learning, having made a discovery that there was no God, and generously communicating their thoughts for the good of the public, were some time ago, by an unparalleled severity, and upon I know not what obsolete law, broke for blasphemy. And as it has been wisely observed, if persecution once begins, no man alive knows how far it may reach, or where it will end.

In answer to all which, with deference to wiser judgments, I think this rather shows the necessity of a nominal religion among us. Great wits love to be free with the highest objects; and if they cannot be allowed a god to revile or renounce, they will speak evil of dignities, abuse the government, and reflect upon the ministry, which I am sure few will deny to be of much more pernicious consequence, according to the saying of Tiberius, *Deorum offensa diis curae*. As to the particular fact related, I think it is not fair to argue from one instance, perhaps another cannot be produced: yet (to the comfort of all those who may be apprehensive of persecution) blasphemy we know is freely spoke a million of times in every coffee-house and tavern, or wherever else good company meet. It must be allowed, indeed, that to break an English free-born officer only for blasphemy was, to speak the gentlest of such an action, a very high strain of absolute power. Little can be said in excuse for the general; perhaps he was afraid it might give offence to the allies, among whom, for aught we know, it may be the custom of the country to believe a God. But if he argued, as some have done, upon a mistaken principle, that an officer who is guilty of speaking blasphemy may, some time or other, proceed so far as to raise a mutiny, the consequence is by no means to be admitted: for surely the commander of an English army is like to be but ill obeyed whose soldiers fear and reverence him as little as they do a Deity.



It is further objected against the Gospel system that it obliges men to the belief of things too difficult for Freethinkers, and such who have shook off the prejudices that usually cling to a confined education. To which I answer, that men should be cautious how they raise objections which reflect upon the wisdom of the nation. Is not everybody freely allowed to believe whatever he pleases, and to publish his belief to the world whenever he thinks fit, especially if it serves to strengthen the party which is in the right? Would any indifferent foreigner, who should read the trumpery lately written by Asgil, Tindal, Toland, Coward, and forty more, imagine the Gospel to be our rule of faith, and to be confirmed by Parliaments? Does any man either believe, or say he believes, or desire to have it thought that he says he believes, one syllable of the matter? And is any man worse received upon that score, or does he find his want of nominal faith a disadvantage to him in the pursuit of any civil or military employment? What if there be an old dormant statute or two against him, are they not now obsolete, to a degree, that Empson and Dudley themselves, if they were now alive, would find it impossible to put them in execution?

It is likewise urged, that there are, by computation, in this kingdom, above ten thousand parsons, whose revenues, added to those of my lords the bishops, would suffice to maintain at least two hundred young gentlemen of wit and pleasure, and free-thinking, enemies to priestcraft, narrow principles, pedantry, and prejudices, who might be an ornament to the court and town: and then again, so a great number of able [bodied] divines might be a recruit to our fleet and armies. This indeed appears to be a consideration of some weight; but then, on the other side, several things deserve to be considered likewise: as, first, whether it may not be thought necessary that in certain tracts of country, like what we call parishes, there should be one man at least of abilities to read and write. Then it seems a wrong computation that the revenues of the Church throughout this island would be large enough to maintain two hundred young gentlemen, or even half that number, after the present refined way of living, that is, to allow each of them such a rent as, in the modern form of speech, would make them easy. But still there is in this project a greater mischief behind; and we ought to beware of the woman's folly, who killed the hen that every morning laid her a golden egg. For, pray what would become of the race of men in the next age, if we had nothing to trust to beside the scrofulous consumptive production furnished by our men of wit and pleasure, when, having squandered away their vigour, health, and estates, they are forced, by some disagreeable marriage, to piece up their broken fortunes, and entail rottenness and politeness on their posterity? Now, here are ten

thousand persons reduced, by the wise regulations of Henry VIII., to the necessity of a low diet, and moderate exercise, who are the only great restorers of our breed, without which the nation would in an age or two become one great hospital.

Another advantage proposed by the abolishing of Christianity is the clear gain of one day in seven, which is now entirely lost, and consequently the kingdom one seventh less considerable in trade, business, and pleasure; besides the loss to the public of so many stately structures now in the hands of the clergy, which might be converted into play-houses, exchanges, market-houses, common dormitories, and other public edifices.

I hope I shall be forgiven a hard word if I call this a perfect cavil. I readily own there hath been an old custom, time out of mind, for people to assemble in the churches every Sunday, and that shops are still frequently shut, in order, as it is conceived, to preserve the memory of that ancient practice; but how this can prove a hindrance to business or pleasure is hard to imagine. What if the men of pleasure are forced, one day in the week, to game at home instead of the chocolate-house? Are not the taverns and coffee-houses open? Can there be a more convenient season for taking a dose of physic? Is not that the chief day for traders to sum up the accounts of the week, and for lawyers to prepare their briefs? But I would fain know how it can be pretended that the churches are misapplied? Where are more appointments and rendezvouses of gallantry? Where more care to appear in the foremost box, with greater advantage of dress? Where more meetings for business? Where more bargains driven of all sorts? And where so many conveniences or incitements to sleep?

There is one advantage greater than any of the foregoing, proposed by the abolishing of Christianity, that it will utterly extinguish parties among us, by removing those factious distinctions of high and low church, of Whig and Tory, Presbyterian and Church of England, which are now so many mutual clogs upon public proceedings, and are apt to prefer the gratifying themselves or depressing their adversaries before the most important interest of the State.

I confess, if it were certain that so great an advantage would redound to the nation by this expedient, I would submit, and be silent; but will any man say, that if the words, whoring, drinking, cheating, lying, stealing, were, by Act of Parliament, ejected out of the English tongue and dictionaries, we should all awake next morning chaste and temperate, honest and just, and lovers of truth? Is this a fair consequence? Or if the physicians would forbid us to pronounce the words pox, gout, rheumatism, and stone, would that expedient serve like so many talismen to destroy the

diseases themselves? Are party and faction rooted in men's hearts no deeper than phrases borrowed from religion, or founded upon no firmer principles? And is our language so poor that we cannot find other terms to express them? Are envy, pride, avarice, and ambition such ill nomenclators, that they cannot furnish appellations for their owners? Will not heydukes and mamalukes, mandarins and patshaws, or any other words formed at pleasure, serve to distinguish those who are in the ministry from others who would be in it if they could? What, for instance, is easier than to vary the form of speech, and instead of the word church, make it a question in politics, whether the monument be in danger? Because religion was nearest at hand to furnish a few convenient phrases, is our invention so barren we can find no other? Suppose, for argument sake, that the Tories favoured Margarita, the Whigs, Mrs. Tofts, and the Trimmers, Valentini, would not Margaritians, Toftians, and Valentinians be very tolerable marks of distinction? The Prasini and Veniti, two most virulent factions in Italy, began, if I remember right, by a distinction of colours in ribbons, which we might do with as good a grace about the dignity of the blue and the green, and serve as properly to divide the Court, the Parliament, and the kingdom between them, as any terms of art whatsoever, borrowed from religion. And therefore I think there is little force in this objection against Christianity, or prospect of so great an advantage as is proposed in the abolishing of it.

It is again objected, as a very absurd, ridiculous custom, that a set of men should be suffered, much less employed and hired, to bawl one day in seven against the lawfulness of those methods most in use towards the pursuit of greatness, riches, and pleasure, which are the constant practice of all men alive on the other six. But this objection is, I think, a little unworthy so refined an age as ours. Let us argue this matter calmly. I appeal to the breast of any polite Free-thinker, whether, in the pursuit of gratifying a pre-dominant passion, he hath not always felt a wonderful incitement, by reflecting it was a thing forbidden; and therefore we see, in order to cultivate this test, the wisdom of the nation hath taken special care that the ladies should be furnished with prohibited silks, and the men with prohibited wine. And indeed it were to be wished that some other prohibitions were promoted, in order to improve the pleasures of the town, which, for want of such expedients, begin already, as I am told, to flag and grow languid, giving way daily to cruel inroads from the spleen.

'Tis likewise proposed, as a great advantage to the public, that if we once discard the system of the Gospel, all religion will of course be banished for ever, and consequently along with it those grievous prejudices of

education which, under the names of conscience, honour, justice, and the like, are so apt to disturb the peace of human minds, and the notions whereof are so hard to be eradicated by right reason or free-thinking, sometimes during the whole course of our lives.

Here first I observe how difficult it is to get rid of a phrase which the world has once grown fond of, though the occasion that first produced it be entirely taken away. For some years past, if a man had but an ill-favoured nose, the deep thinkers of the age would, some way or other contrive to impute the cause to the prejudice of his education. From this fountain were said to be derived all our foolish notions of justice, piety, love of our country; all our opinions of God or a future state, heaven, hell, and the like; and there might formerly perhaps have been some pretence for this charge. But so effectual care hath been since taken to remove those prejudices, by an entire change in the methods of education, that (with honour I mention it to our polite innovators) the young gentlemen, who are now on the scene, seem to have not the least tincture left of those infusions, or string of those weeds, and by consequence the reason for abolishing nominal Christianity upon that pretext is wholly ceased.

For the rest, it may perhaps admit a controversy, whether the banishing all notions of religion whatsoever would be inconvenient for the vulgar. Not that I am in the least of opinion with those who hold religion to have been the invention of politicians, to keep the lower part of the world in awe by the fear of invisible powers; unless mankind were then very different from what it is now; for I look upon the mass or body of our people here in England to be as Freethinkers, that is to say, as staunch unbelievers, as any of the highest rank. But I conceive some scattered notions about a superior power to be of singular use for the common people, as furnishing excellent materials to keep children quiet when they grow peevish, and providing topics of amusement in a tedious winter night.

Lastly, it is proposed, as a singular advantage, that the abolishing of Christianity will very much contribute to the uniting of Protestants, by enlarging the terms of communion, so as to take in all sorts of Dissenters, who are now shut out of the pale upon account of a few ceremonies, which all sides confess to be things indifferent. That this alone will effectually answer the great ends of a scheme for comprehension, by opening a large noble gate, at which all bodies may enter; whereas the chaffering with Dissenters, and dodging about this or t'other ceremony, is but like opening a few wickets, and leaving them at jar, by which no more than one can get in at a time, and that not without stooping, and sideling, and squeezing his body.

To all this I answer, that there is one darling inclination of mankind which usually affects to be a retainer to religion, though she be neither its parent, its godmother, nor its friend. I mean the spirit of opposition, that lived long before Christianity, and can easily subsist without it. Let us, for instance, examine wherein the opposition of sectaries among us consists. We shall find Christianity to have no share in it at all. Does the Gospel anywhere prescribe a starched, squeezed countenance, a stiff formal gait, a singularity of manners and habit, or any affected forms and modes of speech different from the reasonable part of mankind? Yet, if Christianity did not lend its name to stand in the gap, and to employ or divert these humours, they must of necessity be spent in contraventions to the laws of the land, and disturbance of the public peace. There is a portion of enthusiasm assigned to every nation, which, if it hath not proper objects to work on, will burst out, and set all into a flame. If the quiet of a State can be bought by only flinging men a few ceremonies to devour, it is a purchase no wise man would refuse. Let the mastiffs amuse themselves about a sheep's skin stuffed with hay, provided it will keep them from worrying the flock. The institution of convents abroad seems in one point a strain of great wisdom, there being few irregularities in human passions which may not have recourse to vent themselves in some of those orders, which are so many retreats for the speculative, the melancholy, the proud, the silent, the politic, and the morose, to spend themselves, and evaporate the noxious particles; for each of whom we in this island are forced to provide a several sect of religion to keep them quiet; and whenever Christianity shall be abolished, the Legislature must find some other expedient to employ and entertain them. For what imports it how large a gate you open, if there will be always left a number who place a pride and a merit in not coming in?

Having thus considered the most important objections against Christianity, and the chief advantages proposed by the abolishing thereof, I shall now, with equal deference and submission to wiser judgments, as before, proceed to mention a few inconveniences that may happen if the Gospel should be repealed, which, perhaps, the projectors may not have sufficiently considered.

And first, I am very sensible how much the gentlemen of wit and pleasure are apt to murmur, and be choked at the sight of so many daggletailed parsons that happen to fall in their way, and offend their eyes; but at the same time, these wise reformers do not consider what an advantage and felicity it is for great wits to be always provided with objects of scorn and contempt, in order to exercise and improve their talents, and divert

their spleen from falling on each other, or on themselves, especially when all this may be done without the least imaginable danger to their persons.

And to urge another argument of a parallel nature: if Christianity were once abolished, how could the Freethinkers, the strong reasoners, and the men of profound learning be able to find another subject so calculated in all points whereon to display their abilities? What wonderful productions of wit should we be deprived of from those whose genius, by continual practice, hath been wholly turned upon raillery and invectives against religion, and would therefore never be able to shine or distinguish themselves upon any other subject? We are daily complaining of the great decline of wit among us, and would we take away the greatest, perhaps the only topic we have left? Who would ever have suspected Asgil for a wit, or Toland for a philosopher, if the inexhaustible stock of Christianity had not been at hand to provide them with materials? What other subject through all art or nature could have produced Tindal for a profound author, or furnished him with readers? It is

the wise choice of the subject that alone adorns and distinguishes the writer. For had a hundred such pens as these been employed on the side of religion, they would have immediately sunk into silence and oblivion.

Nor do I think it wholly groundless, or my fears altogether imaginary, that the abolishing of Christianity may perhaps bring the Church in danger, or at least put the Senate to the trouble of another securing vote. I desire I may not be mistaken; I am far from presuming to affirm or think that the Church is in danger at present, or as things now stand; but we know not how soon it may be so when the Christian religion is repealed. As plausible as this project seems, there may be a dangerous design lurk under it. Nothing can be more notorious than that the Atheists, Deists, Socinians, Anti-Trinitarians, and other subdivisions of Freethinkers, are persons of little zeal for the present ecclesiastical establishment: their declared opinion is for repealing the sacramental test; they are very indifferent with regard to ceremonies; nor do they hold the *jus divinum* of episcopacy: therefore they may be intended as one politic step towards altering the constitution of the Church established, and setting up Presbytery in the stead, which I leave to be further considered by those at the helm.

In the last place, I think nothing can be more plain, than that by this expedient we shall run into the evil we chiefly pretend to avoid; and that the abolishment of the Christian religion will be the readiest course we can take to introduce Popery. And I am the more inclined to this opinion because we know it has been the constant practice of the Jesuits to send over emissaries, with instructions to personate themselves members of the several prevailing

sects amongst us. So it is recorded that they have at sundry times appeared in the guise of Presbyterians, Anabaptists, Independents, and Quakers, according as any of these were most in credit; so, since the fashion hath been taken up of exploding religion, the Popish missionaries have not been wanting to mix with the Freethinkers; among whom Toland, the great oracle of the Anti-Christians, is an Irish priest, the son of an Irish priest; and the most learned and ingenious author of a book called the "Rights of the Christian Church," was in a proper juncture reconciled to the Romish faith, whose true son, as appears by a hundred passages in his treatise, he still continues. Perhaps I could add some others to the number; but the fact is beyond dispute, and the reasoning they proceed by is right: for supposing Christianity to be extinguished the people will never be at ease till they find out some other method of worship, which will as infallibly produce superstition as this will end in Popery.

And therefore, if, notwithstanding all I have said, it still be thought necessary to have a Bill brought in for repealing Christianity, I would humbly offer an amendment, that instead of the word Christianity may be put religion in general, which I conceive will much better answer all the good ends proposed by the projectors of it. For as long as we leave in being a God and His Providence, with all the necessary consequences which curious and inquisitive men will be apt to draw from such promises, we do not strike at the root of the evil, though we should ever so effectually annihilate the present scheme of the Gospel; for of what use is freedom of thought if it will not produce freedom of action, which is the sole end, how remote soever in appearance, of all objections against Christianity? and therefore, the Freethinkers consider it as a sort of edifice, wherein all the parts have such a mutual dependence on each other, that if you happen to pull out one single nail, the whole fabric must fall to the ground. This was happily expressed by him who had heard of a text brought for proof of the Trinity, which in an ancient manuscript was differently read; he thereupon immediately took the hint, and by a sudden deduction of a long Sorites, most logically concluded: why, if it be as you say, I may safely drink on, and defy the parson. From which, and many the like instances easy to be produced, I think nothing can be more manifest than that the quarrel is not against any particular points of hard digestion in the Christian system, but against religion in general, which, by laying restraints on human nature, is supposed the great enemy to the freedom of thought and action.

Upon the whole, if it shall still be thought for the benefit of Church and State that Christianity be abolished, I conceive, however, it may be

more convenient to defer the execution to a time of peace, and not venture in this conjuncture to disoblige our allies, who, as it falls out, are all Christians, and many of them, by the prejudices of their education, so bigoted as to place a sort of pride in the appellation. If, upon being rejected by them, we are to trust to an alliance with the Turk, we shall find ourselves much deceived; for, as he is too remote, and generally engaged in war with the Persian emperor, so his people would be more scandalised at our infidelity than our Christian neighbours. For they are not only strict observers of religions worship, but what is worse, believe a God; which is more than is required of us, even while we preserve the name of Christians.

To conclude, whatever some may think of the great advantages to trade by this favourite scheme, I do very much apprehend that in six months' time after the Act is passed for the extirpation of the Gospel, the Bank and East India stock may fall at least one per cent. And since that is fifty times more than ever the wisdom of our age thought fit to venture for the preservation of Christianity, there is no reason we should be at so great a loss merely for the sake of destroying it.



## CHAPTER XV

### HINTS TOWARDS AN ESSAY ON CONVERSATION

I HAVE OBSERVED few obvious subjects to have been so seldom, or at least so slightly, handled as this; and, indeed, I know few so difficult to be treated as it ought, nor yet upon which there seemeth so much to be said.

Most things pursued by men for the happiness of public or private life our wit or folly have so refined, that they seldom subsist but in idea; a true friend, a good marriage, a perfect form of government, with some others, require so many ingredients, so good in their several kinds, and so much niceness in mixing them, that for some thousands of years men have despaired of reducing their schemes to perfection. But in conversation it is or might be otherwise; for here we are only to avoid a multitude of errors, which, although a matter of some difficulty, may be in every man's power, for want of which it remaineth as mere an idea as the other. Therefore it seemeth to me that the truest way to understand conversation is to know the faults and errors to which it is subject, and from thence every man to form maxims to himself whereby it may be regulated, because it requireth few talents to which most men are not born, or at least may not acquire without any great genius or study. For nature bath left every man a capacity of being agreeable, though not of shining in company; and there are a hundred men sufficiently qualified for both, who, by a very few faults that they might correct in half an hour, are not so much as tolerable.

I was prompted to write my thoughts upon this subject by mere indignation, to reflect that so useful and innocent a pleasure, so fitted for every period and condition of life, and so much in all men's power, should be so much neglected and abused.

And in this discourse it will be necessary to note those errors that are obvious, as well as others which are seldomer observed, since there are few so obvious or acknowledged into which most men, some time or other, are not apt to run.

For instance, nothing is more generally exploded than the folly of talk-

ing too much; yet I rarely remember to have seen five people together where some one among them hath not been predominant in that kind, to the great constraint and disgust of all the rest. But among such as deal in multitudes of words, none are comparable to the sober deliberate talker, who proceedeth with much thought and caution, maketh his preface, brancheth out into several digressions, findeth a hint that putteth him in mind of another story, which he promiseth to tell you when this is done; cometh back regularly to his subject, cannot readily call to mind some person's name, holdeth his head, complaineth of his memory; the whole company all this while in suspense; at length, says he, it is no matter, and so goes on. And, to crown the business, it perhaps proveth at last a story the company hath heard fifty times before; or, at best, some insipid adventure of the relater.

Another general fault in conversation is that of those who affect to talk of themselves. Some, without any ceremony, will run over the history of their lives; will relate the annals of their diseases, with the several symptoms and circumstances of them; will enumerate the hardships and injustice they have suffered in court, in parliament, in love, or in law. Others are more dexterous, and with great art will lie on the watch to hook in their own praise. They will call a witness to remember they always foretold what would happen in such a case, but none would believe them; they advised such a man from the beginning, and told him the consequences just as they happened, but he would have his own way. Others make a vanity of telling their faults. They are the strangest men in the world; they cannot dissemble; they own it is a folly; they have lost abundance of advantages by it; but, if you would give them the world, they cannot help it; there is something in their nature that abhors insincerity and constraint; with many other unsufferable topics of the same altitude.

Of such mighty importance every man is to himself, and ready to think he is so to others, without once making this easy and obvious reflection, that his affairs can have no more weight with other men than theirs have with him; and how little that is he is sensible enough.

Where company hath met, I often have observed two persons discover by some accident that they were bred together at the same school or university, after which the rest are condemned to silence, and to listen while these two are refreshing each other's memory with the arch tricks and passages of themselves and their comrades.

I know a great officer of the army, who will sit for some time with a supercilious and impatient silence, full of anger and contempt for those who are talking; at length of a sudden demand audience; decide the mat-

ter in a short dogmatical way; then withdraw within himself again, and vouchsafe to talk no more, until his spirits circulate again to the same point.

There are some faults in conversation which none are so subject to as the men of wit, nor ever so much as when they are with each other. If they have opened their mouths without endeavouring to say a witty thing, they think it is so many words lost. It is a torment to the hearers, as much as to themselves, to see them upon the rack for invention, and in perpetual constraint, with so little success. They must do something extraordinary, in order to acquit themselves, and answer their character, else the standers by may be disappointed and be apt to think them only like the rest of mortals. I have known two men of wit industriously brought together, in order to entertain the company, where they have made a very ridiculous figure, and provided all the mirth at their own expense.

I know a man of wit, who is never easy but where he can be allowed to dictate and preside; he neither expecteth to be informed or entertained, but to display his own talents. His business is to be good company, and not good conversation, and therefore he chooseth to frequent those who are content to listen, and profess themselves his admirers. And, indeed, the worst conversation I ever remember to have heard in my life was that at Will's coffee-house, where the wits, as they were called, used formerly to assemble; that is to say, five or six men who had written plays, or at least prologues, or had share in a miscellany, came thither, and entertained one another with their trifling composures in so important an air, as if they had been the noblest efforts of human nature, or that the fate of kingdoms depended on them; and they were usually attended with a humble audience of young students from the inns of courts, or the universities, who, at due distance, listened to these oracles, and returned home with great contempt for their law and philosophy, their heads filled with trash under the name of politeness, criticism, and belles lettres.

By these means the poets, for many years past, were all overrun with pedantry. For, as I take it, the word is not properly used; because pedantry is the too front or unseasonable obtruding our own knowledge in common discourse, and placing too great a value upon it; by which definition men of the court or the army may be as guilty of pedantry as a philosopher or a divine; and it is the same vice in women when they are over copious upon the subject of their petticoats, or their fans, or their china. For which reason, although it be a piece of prudence, as well as good manners, to put men upon talking on subjects they are best versed in, yet that is a liberty a wise man could hardly take; because, beside the imputa-

tion of pedantry, it is what he would never improve by.

This great town is usually provided with some player, mimic, or buffoon, who hath a general reception at the good tables; familiar and domestic with persons of the first quality, and usually sent for at every meeting to divert the company, against which I have no objection. You go there as to a farce or a puppet-show; your business is only to laugh in season, either out of inclination or civility, while this merry companion is acting his part. It is a business he hath undertaken, and we are to suppose he is paid for his day's work. I only quarrel when in select and private meetings, where men of wit and learning are invited to pass an evening, this jester should be admitted to run over his circle of tricks, and make the whole company unfit for any other conversation, besides the indignity of confounding men's talents at so shameful a rate.

Raillery is the finest part of conversation; but, as it is our usual custom to counterfeit and adulterate whatever is too dear for us, so we have done with this, and turned it all into what is generally called repartee, or being smart; just as when an expensive fashion cometh up, those who are not able to reach it content themselves with some paltry imitation. It now passeth for raillery to run a man down in discourse, to put him out of countenance, and make him ridiculous, sometimes to expose the defects of his person or understanding; on all which occasions he is obliged not to be angry, to avoid the imputation of not being able to take a jest. It is admirable to observe one who is dexterous at this art, singling out a weak adversary, getting the laugh on his side, and then carrying all before him. The French, from whom we borrow the word, have a quite different idea of the thing, and so had we in the politer age of our fathers. Raillery was, to say something that at first appeared a reproach or reflection, but, by some turn of wit unexpected and surprising, ended always in a compliment, and to the advantage of the person it was addressed to. And surely one of the best rules in conversation is, never to say a thing which any of the company can reasonably wish we had rather left unsaid; nor can there anything be well more contrary to the ends for which people meet together, than to part unsatisfied with each other or themselves.

There are two faults in conversation which appear very different, yet arise from the same root, and are equally blamable; I mean, an impatience to interrupt others, and the uneasiness of being interrupted ourselves. The two chief ends of conversation are, to entertain and improve those we are among, or to receive those benefits ourselves; which whoever will consider, cannot easily run into either of those two errors; because, when any man speaketh in company, it is to be supposed he doth it for his hearers'

sake, and not his own; so that common discretion will teach us not to force their attention, if they are not willing to lend it; nor, on the other side, to interrupt him who is in possession, because that is in the grossest manner to give the preference to our own good sense.

There are some people whose good manners will not suffer them to interrupt you; but, what is almost as bad, will discover abundance of impatience, and lie upon the watch until you have done, because they have started something in their own thoughts which they long to be delivered of. Meantime, they are so far from regarding what passes, that their imaginations are wholly turned upon what they have in reserve, for fear it should slip out of their memory; and thus they confine their invention, which might otherwise range over a hundred things full as good, and that might be much more naturally introduced.

There is a sort of rude familiarity, which some people, by practising among their intimates, have introduced into their general conversation, and would have it pass for innocent freedom or humour, which is a dangerous experiment in our northern climate, where all the little decorum and politeness we have are purely forced by art, and are so ready to lapse into barbarity. This, among the Romans, was the raillery of slaves, of which we have many instances in Plautus. It seemeth to have been introduced among us by Cromwell, who, by preferring the scum of the people, made it a court-entertainment, of which I have heard many particulars; and, considering all things were turned upside down, it was reasonable and judicious; although it was a piece of policy found out to ridicule a point of honour in the other extreme, when the smallest word misplaced among gentlemen ended in a duel.

There are some men excellent at telling a story, and provided with a plentiful stock of them, which they can draw out upon occasion in all companies; and considering how low conversation runs now among us, it is not altogether a contemptible talent; however, it is subject to two unavoidable defects: frequent repetition, and being soon exhausted; so that whoever valueth this gift in himself hath need of a good memory, and ought frequently to shift his company, that he may not discover the weakness of his fund; for those who are thus endowed have seldom any other revenue, but live upon the main stock.

Great speakers in public are seldom agreeable in private conversation, whether their faculty be natural, or acquired by practice and often venturing. Natural elocution, although it may seem a paradox, usually springeth from a barrenness of invention and of words, by which men who have only one stock of notions upon every subject, and one set of phrases to

express them in, they swim upon the superficies, and offer themselves on every occasion; therefore, men of much learning, and who know the compass of a language, are generally the worst talkers on a sudden, until much practice hath inured and emboldened them; because they are confounded with plenty of matter, variety of notions, and of words, which they cannot readily choose, but are perplexed and entangled by too great a choice, which is no disadvantage in private conversation; where, on the other side, the talent of haranguing is, of all others, most insupportable.

Nothing hath spoiled men more for conversation than the character of being wits; to support which, they never fail of encouraging a number of followers and admirers, who list themselves in their service, wherein they find their accounts on both sides by pleasing their mutual vanity. This hath given the former such an air of superiority, and made the latter so pragmatical, that neither of them are well to be endured. I say nothing here of the itch of dispute and contradiction, telling of lies, or of those who are troubled with the disease called the wandering of the thoughts, that they are never present in mind at what passeth in discourse; for whoever labours under any of these possessions is as unfit for conversation as madmen in Bedlam.

I think I have gone over most of the errors in conversation that have fallen under my notice or memory, except some that are merely personal, and others too gross to need exploding; such as lewd or profane talk; but I pretend only to treat the errors of conversation in general, and not the several subjects of discourse, which would be infinite. Thus we see how human nature is most debased, by the abuse of that faculty, which is held the great distinction between men and brutes; and how little advantage we make of that which might be the greatest, the most lasting, and the most innocent, as well as useful pleasure of life: in default of which, we are forced to take up with those poor amusements of dress and visiting, or the more pernicious ones of play, drink, and vicious amours, whereby the nobility and gentry of both sexes are entirely corrupted both in body and mind, and have lost all notions of love, honour, friendship, and generosity; which, under the name of fopperies, have been for some time laughed out of doors.

This degeneracy of conversation, with the pernicious consequences thereof upon our humours and dispositions, hath been owing, among other causes, to the custom arisen, for some time past, of excluding women from any share in our society, further than in parties at play, or dancing, or in the pursuit of an amour. I take the highest period of politeness in England (and it is of the same date in France) to have been the peaceable part of King Charles I.'s reign; and from what we read of those times, as

well as from the accounts I have formerly met with from some who lived in that court, the methods then used for raising and cultivating conversation were altogether different from ours; several ladies, whom we find celebrated by the poets of that age, had assemblies at their houses, where persons of the best understanding, and of both sexes, met to pass the evenings in discoursing upon whatever agreeable subjects were occasionally started; and although we are apt to ridicule the sublime Platonic notions they had, or personated in love and friendship, I conceive their refinements were grounded upon reason, and that a little grain of the romance is no ill ingredient to preserve and exalt the dignity of human nature, without which it is apt to degenerate into everything that is sordid, vicious, and low. If there were no other use in the conversation of ladies, it is sufficient that it would lay a restraint upon those odious topics of immodesty and indecencies, into which the rudeness of our northern genius is so apt to fall. And, therefore, it is observable in those sprightly gentlemen about the town, who are so very dexterous at entertaining a vizard mask in the park or the playhouse, that, in the company of ladies of virtue and honour, they are silent and disconcerted, and out of their element.

There are some people who think they sufficiently acquit themselves and entertain their company with relating of facts of no consequence, nor at all out of the road of such common incidents as happen every day; and this I have observed more frequently among the Scots than any other nation, who are very careful not to omit the minutest circumstances of time or place; which kind of discourse, if it were not a little relieved by the uncouth terms and phrases, as well as accent and gesture peculiar to that country, would be hardly tolerable. It is not a fault in company to talk much; but to continue it long is certainly one; for, if the majority of those who are got together be naturally silent or cautious, the conversation will flag, unless it be often renewed by one among them who can start new subjects, provided he doth not dwell upon them, but leaveth room for answers and replies.

## CHAPTER XVI

### THOUGHTS ON VARIOUS SUBJECTS

WE HAVE JUST enough religion to make us hate, but not enough to make us love one another.

Reflect on things past as wars, negotiations, factions, etc. We enter so little into those interests, that we wonder how men could possibly be so busy and concerned for things so transitory; look on the present times, we find the same humour, yet wonder not at all.

A wise man endeavours, by considering all circumstances, to make conjectures and form conclusions; but the smallest accident intervening (and in the course of affairs it is impossible to foresee all) does often produce such turns and changes, that at last he is just as much in doubt of events as the most ignorant and inexperienced person.

Positiveness is a good quality for preachers and orators, because he that would obtrude his thoughts and reasons upon a multitude, will convince others the more, as he appears convinced himself.

How is it possible to expect that mankind will take advice, when they will not so much as take warning?

I forget whether Advice be among the lost things which Aristo says are to be found in the moon; that and Time ought to have been there.

No preacher is listened to but Time, which gives us the same train and turn of thought that older people have tried in vain to put into our heads before.

When we desire or solicit anything, our minds run wholly on the good side or circumstances of it; when it is obtained, our minds run wholly on the bad ones.

In a glass-house the workmen often fling in a small quantity of fresh coals, which seems to disturb the fire, but very much enlivens it. This seems to allude to a gentle stirring of the passions, that the mind may not languish.

Religion seems to have grown an infant with age, and requires miracles to nurse it, as it had in its infancy.



All fits of pleasure are balanced by an equal degree of pain or languor; it is like spending this year part of the next year's revenue.

The latter part of a wise man's life is taken up in curing the follies, prejudices, and false opinions he had contracted in the former.

Would a writer know how to behave himself with relation to posterity, let him consider in old books what he finds that he is glad to know, and what omissions he most laments.

Whatever the poets pretend, it is plain they give immortality to none but themselves; it is Homer and Virgil we reverence and admire, not Achilles or Æneas. With historians it is quite the contrary; our thoughts are taken up with the actions, persons, and events we read, and we little regard the authors.

When a true genius appears in the world you may know him by this sign; that the dunces are all in confederacy against him.

Men who possess all the advantages of life, are in a state where there are many accidents to disorder and discompose, but few to please them.

It is unwise to punish cowards with ignominy, for if they had regarded that they would not have been cowards; death is their proper punishment, because they fear it most.

The greatest inventions were produced in the times of ignorance, as the use of the compass, gunpowder, and printing, and by the dullest nation, as the Germans.

One argument to prove that the common relations of ghosts and spectres are generally false, may be drawn from the opinion held that spirits are never seen by more than one person at a time; that is to say, it seldom happens to above one person in a company to be possessed with any high degree of spleen or melancholy.

I am apt to think that, in the day of Judgment, there will be small allowance given to the wise for their want of morals, nor to the ignorant for their want of faith, because both are without excuse. This renders the advantages equal of ignorance and knowledge. But, some scruples in the wise, and some vices in the ignorant, will perhaps be forgiven upon the strength of temptation to each.

The value of several circumstances in story lessens very much by distance of time, though some minute circumstances are very valuable; and it requires great judgment in a writer to distinguish.

It is grown a word of course for writers to say, "This critical age," as divines say, "This sinful age."

It is pleasant to observe how free the present age is in laying taxes on the next. *Future ages shall talk of this; this shall be famous to all posterity.* Whereas their time and thoughts will be taken up about present things, as ours are now.

The chameleon, who is said to feed upon nothing but air, hath, of all animals, the nimblest tongue.

When a man is made a spiritual peer he loses his surname; when a temporal, his Christian name.

It is in disputes as in armies, where the weaker side sets up false lights, and makes a great noise, to make the enemy believe them more numerous and strong than they really are.

Some men, under the notions of weeding out prejudices, eradicate virtue, honesty, and religion.

In all well-instituted commonwealths, care has been taken to limit men's possessions; which is done for many reasons, and among the rest, for one which perhaps is not often considered: that when bounds are set to men's desires, after they have acquired as much as the laws will permit them, their private interest is at an end, and they have nothing to do but to take care of the public.

There are but three ways for a man to revenge himself of the censure of the world: to despise it, to return the like, or to endeavour to live so as to avoid it. The first of these is usually pretended, the last is almost impossible; the universal practice is for the second.

I never heard a finer piece of satire against lawyers than that of astrologers, when they pretend by rules of art to tell when a suit will end, and whether to the advantage of the plaintiff or defendant; thus making the matter depend entirely upon the influence of the stars, without the least regard to the merits of the cause.

The expression in Apocrypha about Tobit and his dog following him I have often heard ridiculed, yet Homer has the same words of Telemachus more than once; and Virgil says something like it of Evander. And I take the book of Tobit to be partly poetical.

I have known some men possessed of good qualities, which were very serviceable to others, but useless to themselves; like a sun-dial on the front of a house, to inform the neighbours and passengers, but not the owner within.

If a man would register all his opinions upon love, politics, religion, learning, etc., beginning from his youth and so go on to old age, what a bundle of inconsistencies and contradictions would appear at last!

What they do in heaven we are ignorant of; what they do not we are told expressly: that they neither marry, nor are given in marriage.

It is a miserable thing to live in suspense; it is the life of a spider.

The Stoical scheme of supplying our wants by lopping off our desires, is like cutting off our feet when we want shoes.

Physicians ought not to give their judgment of religion, for the same reason that butchers are not admitted to be jurors upon life and death.

The reason why so few marriages are happy, is, because young ladies spend their time in making nets, not in making cages.

If a man will observe as he walks the streets, I believe he will find the merriest countenances in mourning coaches.

Nothing more unqualifies a man to act with prudence than a misfortune that is attended with shame and guilt.

The power of fortune is confessed only by the miserable; for the happy impute all their success to prudence or merit.

Ambition often puts men upon doing the meanest offices; so climbing is performed in the same posture with creeping.

Censure is the tax a man pays to the public for being eminent.

Although men are accused for not knowing their own weakness, yet perhaps as few know their own strength. It is, in men as in soils, where sometimes there is a vein of gold which the owner knows not of.

Satire is reckoned the easiest of all wit, but I take it to be otherwise in very bad times: for it is as hard to satirise well a man of distinguished vices, as to praise well a man of distinguished virtues. It is easy enough to do either to people of moderate characters.

Invention is the talent of youth, and judgment of age; so that our judgment grows harder to please, when we have fewer things to offer it: this goes through the whole commerce of life. When we are old, our friends find it difficult to please us, and are less concerned whether we be pleased or no.

No wise man ever wished to be younger.

An idle reason lessens the weight of the good ones you gave before.

The motives of the best actions will not bear too strict an inquiry. It is allowed that the cause of most actions, good or bad, may be resolved into the love of ourselves; but the self-love of some men inclines them to please others, and the self-love of others is wholly employed in pleasing themselves. This makes the great distinction between virtue and vice. Religion is the best motive of all actions, yet religion is allowed to be the highest instance of self-love.

Old men view best at a distance with the eyes of their understanding as well as with those of nature.

Some people take more care to hide their wisdom than their folly.

Anthony Henley's farmer, dying of an asthma, said, "Well, if I can get this breath once *out*, I'll take care it never get *in* again."

The humour of exploding many things under the name of trifles, fop-

peries, and only imaginary goods, is a very false proof either of wisdom or magnanimity, and a great check to virtuous actions. For instance, with regard to fame, there is in most people a reluctance and unwillingness to be forgotten. We observe, even among the vulgar, how fond they are to have an inscription over their grave. It requires but little philosophy to discover and observe that there is no intrinsic value in all this; however, if it be founded in our nature as an incitement to virtue, it ought not to be ridiculed.

Complaint is the largest tribute heaven receives, and the sincerest part of our devotion.

The common fluency of speech in many men, and most women, is owing to a scarcity of matter, and a scarcity of words; for whoever is a master of language, and hath a mind full of ideas, will be apt, in speaking, to hesitate upon the choice of both; whereas common speakers have only one set of ideas, and one set of words to clothe them in, and these are always ready at the mouth. So people come faster out of a church when it is almost empty, than when a crowd is at the door.

Few are qualified to shine in company; but it is in most men's power to be agreeable. The reason, therefore, why conversation runs so low at present, is not the defect of understanding, but pride, vanity, ill-nature, affectation, singularity, positiveness, or some other vice, the effect of a wrong education.

To be vain is rather a mark of humility than pride. Vain men delight in telling what honours have been done them, what great company they have kept, and the like, by which they plainly confess that these honours were more than their due, and such as their friends would not believe if they had not been told: whereas a man truly proud thinks the greatest honours below his merit, and consequently scorns to boast. I therefore deliver it as a maxim, that whoever desires the character of a proud man, ought to conceal his vanity.

Law, in a free country, is, or ought to be, the determination of the majority of those who have property in land.

One argument used to the disadvantage of Providence I take to be a very strong one in its defence. It is objected that storms and tempests, unfruitful seasons, serpents, spiders, flies, and other noxious or troublesome animals, with many more instances of the like kind, discover an imperfection in nature, because human life would be much easier without them; but the design of Providence may clearly be perceived in this proceeding. The motions of the sun and moon—in short, the whole system of the universe, as far as philosophers have been able to discover and ob-

serve, are in the utmost degree of regularity and perfection; but wherever God hath left to man the power of interposing a remedy by thought or labour, there he hath placed things in a state of imperfection, on purpose to stir up human industry, without which life would stagnate, or, indeed, rather, could not subsist at all: *curis accunt mortalia corda*.

Praise is the daughter of present power.

How inconsistent is man with himself!

I have known several persons of great fame for wisdom in public affairs and counsels governed by foolish servants.

I have known great Ministers, distinguished for wit and learning, who preferred none but dunces.

I have known men of great valour cowards to their wives.

I have known men of the greatest cunning perpetually cheated.

I knew three great Ministers, who could exactly compute and settle the accounts of a kingdom, but were wholly ignorant of their own economy.

The preaching of divines helps to preserve well-inclined men in the course of virtue, but seldom or never reclaims the vicious.

Princes usually make wiser choices than the servants whom they trust for the disposal of places: I have known a prince, more than once, choose an able Minister, but I never observed that Minister to use his credit in the disposal of an employment to a person whom he thought the fittest for it. One of the greatest in this age owned and excused the matter from the violence of parties and the unreasonableness of friends.

Small causes are sufficient to make a man uneasy when great ones are not in the way. For want of a block he will stumble at a straw.

Dignity, high station, or great riches, are in some sort necessary to old men, in order to keep the younger at a distance, who are otherwise too apt to insult them upon the score of their age.

Every man desires to live long; but no man would be old.

Love of flattery in most men proceeds from the mean opinion they have of themselves; in women from the contrary.

If books and laws continue to increase as they have done for fifty years past, I am in some concern for future ages how any man will be learned, or any man a lawyer.

Kings are commonly said to have *long hands*; I wish they had as *long ears*.

Princes in their infancy, childhood, and youth are said to discover prodigious parts and wit, to speak things that surprise and astonish. Strange, so many hopeful princes, and so many shameful kings! If they happen to die young, they would have been prodigies of wisdom and

virtue. If they live, they are often prodigies indeed, but of another sort.

Politics, as the word is commonly understood, are nothing but corruptions, and consequently of no use to a good king or a good ministry; for which reason Courts are so overrun with politics.

A nice man is a man of nasty ideas.

Apollo was held the god of physic and sender of diseases. Both wore originally the same trade, and still continue.

Old men and comets have been revered for the same reason: their long beards, and pretences to foretell events.

A person was asked at court, what he thought of an ambassador and his train, who were all embroidery and lace, full of bows, cringes, and gestures; he said, it was Solomon's importation, gold and apes.

Most sorts of diversion in men, children, and other animals, is an imitation of fighting.

Augustus meeting an ass with a lucky name foretold himself good fortune. I meet many asses, but none of them have lucky names.

If a man makes me keep my distance, the comfort is he keeps his at the same time.

Who can deny that all men are violent lovers of truth when we see them so positive in their errors, which they will maintain out of their zeal to truth, although they contradict themselves every day of their lives?

That was excellently observed, say I, when I read a passage in an author, where his opinion agrees with mine. When we differ, there I pronounce him to be mistaken.

Very few men, properly speaking, live at present, but are providing to live another time.

Laws penned with the utmost care and exactness, and in the vulgar language, are often perverted to wrong meanings; then why should we wonder that the Bible is so?

Although men are accused for not knowing their weakness, yet perhaps as few know their own strength.

A man seeing a wasp creeping into a vial filled with honey, that was hung on a fruit tree, said thus: "Why, thou sottish animal, art thou mad to go into that vial, where you see many hundred of your kind there dying in it before you?" "The reproach is just," answered the wasp, "but not from you men, who are so far from taking example by other people's follies, that you will not take warning by your own. If after falling several times into this vial, and escaping by chance, I should fall in again, I should then but resemble you."

An old miser kept a tame jackdaw, that used to steal pieces of money, and hide them in a hole, which the cat observing, asked why he would hoard up those round shining things that he could make no use of? "Why," said the jackdaw, "my master has a whole chest full, and makes no more use of them than I."

Men are content to be laughed at for their wit, but not for their folly.

If the men of wit and genius would resolve never to complain in their works of critics and detractors, the next age would not know that they ever had any.

After all the maxims and systems of trade and comerce, a stander-by would think the affairs of the world were most ridiculously contrived.

There are few countries which, if well cultivated, would not support double the number of their inhabitants, and yet fewer where one-third of the people are not extremely stinted even in the necessaries of life. I send out twenty barrels of corn, which would maintain a family in bread for a year, and I bring back in return a vessel of wine, which half a dozen good fellows would drink in less than a month, at the expense of their health and reason.

A man would have but few spectators, if he offered to show for threepence how he could thrust a red-hot iron into a barrel of gunpowder, and it should not take fire.

# THREE SERMONS AND PRAYERS

## ON MUTUAL SUBJECTION<sup>1</sup>

—(First Printed in 1744)

“Yea, all of you be subject one to another.”

—I Peter v. 5

THE APOSTLE having, in many parts of this Epistle, given directions to Christians concerning the duty of subjection or obedience to superiors, in the several instances of the subject to the prince, the child to his parent, the servant to his master, the wife to her husband, and the younger to the elder, doth here, in the words of my text, sum up the whole by advancing a point of doctrine, which at first may appear a little extraordinary. “Yea, all of you,” saith he, “be subject one to another.” For it should seem that two persons cannot properly be said to be subject to each other, and that subjection is only due from inferiors to those above them; yet St. Paul hath several passages to the same purpose. For he exhorts the Romans “in honour to prefer one another;” and the Philippians, “that in lowliness of mind they should each esteem other better than themselves;” and the Ephesians, “that they should submit themselves one to another in the fear of the Lord.” Here we find these two great Apostles recommending to all Christians this duty of mutual subjection. For we may observe, by St. Peter, that having mentioned the several relations which men bear to each other, as governor and subject, master and servant, and the rest which I have already repeated, he makes no exception, but sums up the whole with commanding “all to be subject one to another.” Whence we may

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<sup>1</sup> A clearer style, or a discourse more properly adapted to a public audience, can scarce be framed. Every paragraph is simple, nervous, and intelligible. The threads of each argument are closely connected and logically pursued.—Orrery.



conclude that this subjection due from all men to all men is something more than the compliment of course, when our betters are pleased to tell us they are our humble servants, but understand us to be their slaves.

I know very well that some of those who explain this text apply it to humility, to the duties of charity, to private exhortations, and to bearing with each other's infirmities; and it is probable the Apostle may have had a regard to all these. But, however, many learned men agree that there is something more understood, and so the words in their plain natural meaning must import, as you will observe yourselves if you read them with the beginning of the verse, which is thus: "Likewise, ye younger, submit yourselves unto the elder; yea, all of you be subject one to another." So that, upon the whole, there must be some kind of subjection due from every man to every man, which cannot be made void by any power, pre-eminence, or authority whatsoever. Now what sort of subjection this is, and how it ought to be paid, shall be the subject of my present discourse.

As God hath contrived all the works of Nature to be useful, and in some manner a support to each other, by which the whole frame of the world, under His providence, is preserved and kept up, so among mankind our particular stations are appointed to each of us by God Almighty, wherein we are obliged to act as far as our power reacheth toward the good of the whole community. And he who doth not perform that part assigned him towards advancing the benefit of the whole, in proportion to his opportunities and abilities, is not only a useless, but a very mischievous member of the public; because he takes his share of the profit, and yet leaves his share of the burden to be borne by others, which is the true principal cause of most miseries and misfortunes in life. For a wise man who does not assist with his counsels, a great man with his protection, a rich man with his bounty and charity, and a poor man with his labour, are perfect nuisances in a commonwealth. Neither is any condition of life more honourable in the sight of God than another; otherwise He would be a respecter of persons, which He assures us He is not; for He hath proposed the same salvation to all men, and hath only placed them in different ways or stations to work it out. Princes are born with no more advantages of strength or wisdom than other men, and, by an unhappy education, are usually more defective in both than thousands of their subjects. They depend for every necessary of life upon the meanest of their subjects. They depend for every necessary of life upon the meanest of their subjects. They depend for every necessary of life upon the meanest of their subjects. They depend for every necessary of life upon the meanest of their subjects. They depend for every necessary of life upon the meanest of their subjects. Besides, obedience and subjection were never enjoined by God to humour the passions, lusts, and vanities of those who demand them from us; but we are commanded to obey our governors, because disobedience would breed seditions in the state. Thus servants are directed to obey their masters, children their par-

ents, and wives their husbands, not from any respect of persons in God, but because otherwise there would be nothing but confusion in private families. This matter will be clearly explained by considering the comparison which St. Paul makes between the Church of Christ and the body of man; for the same resemblance will hold not only to families and kingdoms, but to the whole corporation of mankind. "The eye," saith he, "cannot say unto the hand, 'I have no need of thee;' nor again the hand to the foot, 'I have no need of thee.' Nay, much more those members of the body which seem to be more feeble are necessary; and whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or one member be honoured, all the members rejoice with it." The case is directly the same among mankind. The prince cannot say to the merchant, "I have no need of thee," nor the merchant to the labourer, "I have no need of thee." Nay, much more those members which seem to be more feeble are necessary; for the poor are generally more necessary members of the commonwealth than the rich; which clearly shows that God never intended such possessions for the sake and service of those to whom He lends them, but because he hath assigned every man his particular station to be useful in life, and this for the reason given by the Apostle, "that there may be no schism in the body."

From hence may partly be gathered the nature of that subjection which we all owe to one another. God Almighty hath been pleased to put us into an imperfect state, where we have perpetual occasion of each other's assistance. There is none so low as not to be in a capacity of assisting the highest, nor so high as not to want the assistance of the lowest.

It plainly appears, from what hath been said, that no one human creature is more worthy than another in the sight of God, further than according to the goodness or holiness of their lives; and that power, wealth, and the like outward advantages, are so far from being the marks of God's approving or preferring those on whom they are bestowed, that, on the contrary, He is pleased to suffer them to be almost engrossed by those who have least title to His favour. Now, according to this equality wherein God hath placed all mankind with relation to Himself, you will observe that in all the relations between man and man there is a mutual dependence, whereby the one cannot subsist without the other. Thus no man can be a prince without subjects, nor a master without servants, nor a father without children. And this both explains and confirms the doctrine of the text; for where there is a mutual dependence there must be a mutual duty, and consequently a mutual subjection. For instance, the subject must obey his prince, because God commands it, human laws require it, and

the safety of the public makes it necessary; for the same reasons we must obey all that are in authority, and submit ourselves not only to the good and gentle, but also to the froward, whether they rule according to our liking or not. On the other side, in those countries that pretend to freedom, princes are subject to those laws which their people have chosen; they are bound to protect their subjects in liberty, property, and religion, to receive their petitions and redress their grievances, so that the best prince is, in the opinion of wise men, only the greatest servant of the nation—not only a servant to the public in general, but in some sort to every man in it. In the like manner a servant owes obedience, and diligence, and faithfulness to his master, from whom, at the same time, he hath a just demand for protection, and maintenance, and gentle treatment. Nay, even the poor beggar hath a just demand of an alms from the rich man, who is guilty of fraud, injustice, and oppression if he does not afford relief according to his abilities.

But this subjection we all owe one another is nowhere more necessary than in the common conversations of life, for without it there could be no society among men. If the learned would not sometimes submit to the ignorant, the wise to the simple, the gentle to the froward, the old to the weaknesses of the young, there would be nothing but everlasting variance in the world. This our Saviour Himself confirmed by His own example; for He appeared in the form of a servant and washed His disciples' feet, adding those memorable words, "Ye call me Lord and Master, and ye say well, for so I am. If I then, your Lord and Master, wash your feet, how much more ought ye to wash one another's feet?" Under which expression of washing the feet is included all that subjection, assistance, love, and duty, which every good Christian ought to pay his brother, in whatever station God hath placed him. For the greatest prince and the meanest slave are not, by infinite degrees, so distant as our Saviour and those disciples, whose feet He vouchsafed to wash.

And although this doctrine of subjecting ourselves to one another may seem to grate upon the pride and vanity of mankind, and may therefore be hard to be digested by those who value themselves upon their greatness or their wealth, yet it is really no more than what most men practise upon other occasions. For if our neighbour, who is our inferior, comes to see us, we rise to receive him; we place him above us, and respect him as if he were better than ourselves; and this is thought both decent and necessary, and is usually called good manners. Now the duty required by the Apostle is only that we should enlarge our minds, and that what we thus practise in the common course of life we should imitate in all our actions and

proceedings whatsoever; since our Saviour tells us that every man is our neighbour, and since we are so ready, in point of civility, to yield to others in our own houses, where only we have any title to govern.

Having thus shown you what sort of subjection it is which all men owe one another, and in what manner it ought to be paid, I shall now draw some observations from what hath been said.

And first, a thorough practice of this duty of subjecting ourselves to the wants and infirmities of each other would utterly extinguish in us the vice of pride.

For if God has pleased to intrust me with a talent, not for my own sake, but for the service of others, and at the same time hath left me full of wants and necessities which others must supply, I can then have no cause to set any extraordinary value upon myself, or to despise my brother because he hath not the same talents which were lent to me. His being may probably be as useful to the public as mine; and therefore, by the rules of right reason, I am in no sort preferable to him.

Secondly, It is very manifest, from what has been said, that no man ought to look upon the advantages of life, such as riches, honour, power, and the like, as his property, but merely as a trust which God hath deposited with him to be employed for the use of his brethren, and God will certainly punish the breach of that trust, though the laws of man will not, or rather indeed cannot; because the trust was conferred only by God, who has not left it to any power on earth to decide infallibly whether a man makes a good use of his talents or not, or to punish him where he fails. And therefore God seems to have more particularly taken this matter into His own hands, and will most certainly reward or punish us in proportion to our good or ill performance in it. Now, although the advantages which one possesseth more than another may, in some sense, be called his property with respect to other men, yet with respect to God they are, as I said, only a trust, which will plainly appear from hence: if a man does not use those advantages to the good of the public or the benefit of his neighbour, it is certain he doth not deserve them, and consequently that God never intended them for a blessing to him; and on the other side, whoever does employ his talents as he ought will find, by his own experience, that they were chiefly lent him for the service of others, for to the service of others he will certainly employ them.

Thirdly, If we could all be brought to practise this duty of subjecting ourselves to each other, it would very much contribute to the general happiness of mankind, for this would root out envy and malice from the heart of man; because you cannot envy your neighbour's strength if he

make use of it to defend your life or carry your burden; you cannot envy his wisdom if he gives you good counsel; nor his riches if he supplies your wants; nor his greatness if he employs it to your protection. The miseries of life are not properly owing to the unequal distribution of things, but God Almighty, the great King of heaven, is treated like the kings of the earth, who, although perhaps intending well themselves, have often most abominable ministers and stewards, and those generally the vilest to whom they intrust the most talents. But here is the difference, that the princes of this world see by other men's eyes, but God sees all things; and therefore, whenever He permits His blessings to be dealt among those who are unworthy, we may certainly conclude that He intends them only as a punishment to an evil world, as well as to the owners. It were well if those would consider this, whose riches serve them only as a spur to avarice or as an instrument of their lusts; whose wisdom is only of this world, to put false colours upon things, to call good evil and evil good against the conviction of their own consciences; and lastly, who employ their power and favour in acts of oppression or injustice, in misrepresenting persons and things, or in countenancing the wicked to the ruin of the innocent.

Fourthly, The practice of this duty of being subject to one another would make us rest contented in the several stations of life wherein God hath thought fit to place us, because it would, in the best and easiest manner, bring us back, as it were, to that early state of the Gospel when Christians had all things in common. For if the poor found the rich disposed to supply their want, if the ignorant found the wise ready to instruct and direct them, or if the weak might always find protection from the mighty, they could none of them, with the least pretence of justice, lament their own condition.

From all that hath been hitherto said it appears that great abilities of any sort, when they are employed as God directs, do but make the owners of them greater and more painful servants to their neighbour and the public. However, we are by no means to conclude from hence that they are not really blessings, when they are in the hands of good men. For, first, what can be a greater honour than to be chosen one of the stewards and dispensers of God's bounty to mankind? What is there that can give a generous spirit more pleasure and complacency of mind than to consider that he is an instrument of doing much good; that great numbers owe to him, under God, their subsistence, their safety, their health, and the good conduct of their lives? The wickedest man upon earth takes a pleasure in doing good to those he loves; and therefore surely a good Christian, who obeys our Saviour's commands of loving all men, cannot but take delight

in doing good even to his enemies. God, who gives all things to all men, can receive nothing from any; and those among men who do the most good and receive the fewest returns do most resemble the Creator; for which reason St. Paul delivers it as a saying of our Saviour, that “it is more blessed to give than receive.” By this rule, what must become of those things which the world values as the greatest blessings—riches, power, and the like—when our Saviour plainly determines that the best way to make them blessings is to part with them? Therefore, although the advantages which one man hath over another may be called blessings, yet they are by no means so in the sense the world usually understands. Thus, for example, great riches are no blessings in themselves, because the poor man, with the common necessities of life, enjoys more health and has fewer cares without them. How then do they become blessings? No otherwise than by being employed in feeding the hungry, clothing the naked, rewarding worthy men, and, in short, doing acts of charity and generosity. Thus, likewise, power is no blessing in itself, because private men bear less envy, and trouble, and anguish without it. But when it is employed to protect the innocent, to relieve the oppressed, and to punish the oppressor, then it becomes a great blessing.

And so, lastly, even great wisdom is, in the opinion of Solomon, not a blessing in itself; for “in much wisdom is much sorrow;” and men of common understanding, if they serve God and mind their callings, make fewer mistakes in the conduct of life than those who have better heads. And yet wisdom is a mighty blessing when it is applied to good purposes, to instruct the ignorant, to be a faithful counsellor either in public or private, to be a director to youth, and to many other ends needless here to mention.

To conclude: God sent us into the world to obey His commands, by doing as much good as our abilities will reach, and as little evil as our many infirmities will permit. Some He hath only trusted with one talent, some with five, and some with ten. No man is without his talent; and he that is faithful or negligent in a little shall be rewarded or punished, as well as he that hath been so in a great deal.

Consider what hath been said, &c.

## ON SLEEPING IN CHURCH

“And there sat in the window a certain young man named Eutychus, being fallen into a deep sleep; and while Paul was long preaching, he sunk down with sleep, and fell down from the third loft, and was taken up dead.”

—Acts xx. 9.

I HAVE CHOSEN these words with design, if possible, to disturb some part in this audience of half an hour's sleep, for the convenience and exercise whereof this place, at this season of the day, is very much celebrated.

There is indeed one mortal disadvantage to which all preaching is subject, that those who, by the wickedness of their lives, stand in greatest need, have usually the smallest share; for either they are absent upon the account of idleness, or spleen, or hatred to religion, or in order to doze away the intemperance of the week; or, if they do come, they are sure to employ their minds rather any other way than regarding or attending to the business of the place.

The accident which happened to this young man in the text hath not been sufficient to discourage his successors; but because the preachers now in the world, however they may exceed St. Paul in the art of setting men to sleep, do extremely fall short of him in the working of miracles, therefore men are become so cautious as, to choose more safe and convenient stations and postures for taking their repose without hazard of their persons, and upon the whole matter choose rather to trust their destruction to a miracle than their safety. However, this being not the only way by which the lukewarm Christians and scorners of the age discover their neglect and contempt of preaching, I shall enter expressly into consideration of this matter, and order my discourse in the following method:-

First, I shall produce several instances to show the great neglect of preaching now among us.

Secondly, I shall reckon up some of the usual quarrels men have against preaching.

Thirdly, I shall get forth the great evil of this neglect and contempt of

preaching, and discover the real causes whence it proceedeth.

Lastly, I shall offer some remedies against this great and spreading evil.

First, I shall produce certain instances to show the great neglect of preaching now among us.

These may be reduced under two heads. First, men's absence from the service of the church; and secondly, their misbehaviour when they are here.

The first instance of men's neglect is in their frequent absence from the church.

There is no excuse so trivial that will not pass upon some men's consciences to excuse their attendance at the public worship of God. Some are so unfortunate as to be always indisposed on the Lord's day, and think nothing so unwholesome as the air of a church. Others have their affairs so oddly contrived as to be always unluckily prevented by business. With some it is a great mark of wit and deep understanding to stay at home on Sundays. Others again discover strange fits of laziness, that seize them particularly on that day, and confine them to their beds. Others are absent out of mere contempt of religion. And lastly, there are not a few who look upon it as a day of rest, and therefore claim the privilege of their cattle, to keep the Sabbath by eating, drinking, and sleeping, after the toil and labour of the week. Now in all this, the worst circumstance is that these persons are such whose company is most required, and who stand most in need of a physician.

Secondly, Men's great neglect and contempt of preaching appear by their misbehaviour when at church.

If the audience were to be ranked under several heads, according to their behaviour when the Word of God is delivered, how small a number would appear of those who receive it as they ought! How much of the seed then sown would be found to fall by the wayside, upon stony ground, or among thorns! and how little good ground would there be to take it! A preacher cannot look round from the pulpit without observing that some are in a perpetual whisper, and by their air and gesture give occasion to suspect that they are in those very minutes defaming their neighbour. Others have their eyes and imagination constantly engaged in such a circle of objects, perhaps to gratify the most unwarrantable desires, that they never once attend to the business of the place; the sound of the preacher's words do not so much as once interrupt them. Some have their minds wandering among idle, worldly, or vicious thoughts; some lie at catch to ridicule whatever they hear, and with much wit and humour, provide a stock of laughter by furnishing themselves from the pulpit. But of all



misbehaviour, none is comparable to that of those who come here to sleep. Opium is not so stupefying to many persons as an afternoon sermon. Perpetual custom hath so brought it about that the words of whatever preacher become only a sort of uniform sound at a distance, than which nothing is more effectual to lull the senses. For that it is the very sound of the sermon which bindeth up their faculties is manifest from hence, because they all awake so very regularly as soon as it ceaseth, and with much devotion receive the blessing, dozed and besotted with indecencies I am ashamed to repeat.

I proceed, secondly, to reckon up some of the usual quarrels men have against preaching, and to show the unreasonableness of them.

Such unwarrantable behaviour as I have described among Christians in the house of God in a solemn assembly, while their faith and duty are explained and delivered, have put those who are guilty upon inventing some excuses to extenuate their fault; this they do by turning the blame either upon the particular preacher or upon preaching in general. First, they object against the particular preacher: his manner, his delivery, his voice, are disagreeable; his style and expression are flat and slow, sometimes improper and absurd; the matter is heavy, trivial, and insipid, sometimes despicable and perfectly ridiculous; or else, on the other side, he runs up into unintelligible speculation, empty notions, and abstracted flights, all clad in words above usual understandings.

Secondly, They object against preaching in general. It is a perfect road of talk; they know already whatever can be said; they have heard the same a hundred times over. They quarrel that preachers do not relieve an old beaten subject with wit and invention, and that now the art is lost of moving men's passions, so common among the ancient orators of Greece and Rome. These and the like objections are frequently in the mouths of men who despise the foolishness of preaching. But let us examine the reasonableness of them.

The doctrine delivered by all preachers is the same: "So we preach, and so ye believe." But the manner of delivering is suited to the skill and abilities of each, which differ in preachers just as in the rest of mankind. However, in personal dislikes of a particular preacher, are these men sure they are always in the right? Do they consider how mixed a thing is every audience, whose taste and judgment differ, perhaps, every day, not only from each other, but themselves? And how to calculate a discourse that shall exactly suit them all, is beyond the force and reach of human reason, knowledge, or invention. Wit and eloquence are shining qualities that

God hath imparted in great degrees to very few, nor any more to be expected in the generality of any rank among men than riches and honour. But further, if preaching in general be all old and beaten, and that they are already so well acquainted with it, more shame and guilt to them who so little edify by it! But these men, whose ears are so delicate as not to endure a plain discourse of religion, who expect a constant supply of wit and eloquence on a subject handled so many thousand times, what will they say when we turn the objection upon themselves, who, with all the rude and profane liberty of discourse they take upon so many thousand subjects, are so dull as to furnish nothing but tedious repetitions, and little paltry, nauseous commonplaces, so vulgar, so worn, or so obvious, as, upon any other occasion but that of advancing vice, would be hooted off the stage? Nor, lastly, are preachers justly blamed for neglecting human oratory to move the passions, which is not the business of a Christian orator, whose office it is only to work upon faith and reason. All other eloquence hath been a perfect cheat, to stir up men's passions against truth and justice for the service of a faction, to put false colours upon things, and, by an amusement of agreeable words, make the worst reason appear to be the better. This is certainly not to be allowed in Christian eloquence, and therefore St. Paul took quite the other course. He "came not with the excellency of words, or enticing speech of men's wisdom, but in plain evidence of the Spirit and power." And perhaps it was for that reason the young man Eutyclus, used to the Grecian eloquence, grew tired and fell so fast asleep.

I go on, thirdly, to set forth the great evil of this neglect and scorn of preaching, and to discover the real causes whence it proceedeth.

I think it is obvious that this neglect of preaching hath very much occasioned the great decay of religion among us. To this may be imputed no small part of that contempt some men bestow on the clergy, for whoever talketh without being regarded is sure to be despised. To this we owe in a great measure the spreading of atheism and infidelity among us, for religion, like all other things, is soonest put out of countenance by being ridiculed. The scorn of preaching might perhaps have been at first introduced by men of nice ears and refined taste, but it is now become a spreading evil through all degrees and both sexes; for, since sleeping, talking, and laughing are qualities sufficient to furnish out a critic, the meanest and most ignorant have set up a title, and succeeded in it as well as their betters. Thus are the last efforts of reforming mankind rendered wholly useless. "How shall they hear," saith the Apostle, "without a preacher?" But if

they have a preacher, and make it a point of wit or breeding not to hear him, what remedy is left? To this neglect of preaching we may also entirely impute that gross ignorance among us in the very principles of religion, which it is amazing to find in persons who very much value their own knowledge and understanding in other things; yet it is a visible, inexcusable ignorance, even in the meanest among us, considering the many advantages they have of learning their duty. And it hath been the great encouragement to all manner of vice; for in vain we preach down sin to a people “whose hearts are waxed gross, whose ears are dull of hearing and whose eyes are closed.” Therefore Christ Himself in His discourses frequently rouseth up the attention of the multitude, and of His disciples themselves, with this expression, “He that hath ears to hear let him hear.” But among all neglects of preaching, none is so fatal as that of sleeping in the house of God. A scorner may listen to truth and reason, and in time grow serious; an unbeliever may feel the pangs of a guilty conscience; one whose thoughts or eyes wander among other objects may, by a lucky word, be called back to attention; but the sleeper shuts up all avenues to his soul; he is “like the deaf adder, that hearkeneth not to the voice of the charmer, charm he never so wisely;” and we may preach with as good success to the grave that is under his feet.

But the great evil of this neglect will further yet appear from considering the real causes whence it proceedeth, whereof the first I take to be an evil conscience. Many men come to church to save or gain a reputation, or because they will not be singular, but comply with an established custom, yet all the while they are loaded with the guilt of old rooted sins. These men can expect to hear of nothing but terrors and threatenings, their sins laid open in true colours, and eternal misery the reward of them; therefore, no wonder they stop their care and divert their thoughts, and seek any amusement rather than stir the hell within them.

Another cause of this neglect is a heart set upon worldly things. Men whose minds are much enslaved to earthly affairs all the week cannot disengage or break the chain of their thoughts so suddenly as to apply to a discourse that is wholly foreign to what they have most at heart. Tell a usurer of charity, and mercy, and restitution—you talk to the deaf; his heart and soul, with all his senses, are got among his bags, or he is gravely asleep and dreaming of a mortgage. Tell a man of business, that the cares of the world choke the good seed; that we must not encumber ourselves with much serving; that the salvation of his soul is the one thing necessary; you see, indeed, the shape of a man before you, but his faculties are all gone off among clients and papers, thinking how to defend a bad cause

or find flaws in a good one; or he weareth out the time in drowsy nods.

A third cause of the great neglect and scorn of preaching ariseth from the practice of men who set up to decry and disparage religion; these, being zealous to promote infidelity and vice, learn a rote of buffoonery that serveth all occasions, and refutes the strongest arguments for piety and good manners. These have a set of ridicule calculated for all sermons and all preachers, and can be extremely witty as often as they please upon the same fund.

Let me now, in the last place, offer some remedies against this great evil.

It will be one remedy against the contempt of preaching rightly to consider the end for which it was designed. There are many who place abundance of merit in going to church, although it be with no other prospect but that of being well entertained, wherein if they happen to fail, they return wholly disappointed. Hence it is become an impertinent vein among people of all sorts to hunt after what they call a good sermon, as if it were a matter of pastime and diversion. Our business, alas! is quite another thing; either to learn, or at least be reminded of, our duty; to apply the doctrines delivered, compare the rules we hear with our lives and actions, and find wherein we have transgressed. These are the dispositions men should bring into the house of God, and then they will be little concerned about the preacher's wit or eloquence, nor be curious to inquire out his faults and infirmities, but consider how to correct their own.

Another remedy against the contempt of preaching is that men would consider whether it be not reasonable to give more allowance for the different abilities of preachers than they usually do. Refinements of style and flights of wit, as they are not properly the business of any preacher, so they cannot possibly be the talents of all. In most other discourses, men are satisfied with sober sense and plain reason; and, as understandings usually go, even that is not over-frequent. Then why they should be so over-nice in expectation of eloquence, where it is neither necessary nor convenient, is hard to imagine.

Lastly, The scornors of preaching would do well to consider that this talent of ridicule they value so much is a perfection very easily acquired, and applied to all things whatsoever; neither is anything at all the worse because it is capable of being perverted to burlesque; perhaps it may be the more perfect upon that score, since we know the most celebrated pieces have been thus treated with greatest success. It is in any man's power to suppose a fool's-cap on the wisest head, and then laugh at his own supposition. I think there are not many things cheaper than supposing and

laughing; and if the uniting these two talents can bring a thing into contempt, it is hard to know where it may end.

To conclude: These considerations may perhaps have some effect while men are awake; but what arguments shall we use to the sleeper? What methods shall we take to hold open his eyes? Will he be moved by considerations of common civility? We know it is reckoned a point of very bad manners to sleep in private company, when, perhaps, the tedious impertinence of many talkers would render it at least as excusable as the dullest sermon. Do they think it a small thing to watch four hours at a play, where all virtue and religion are openly reviled; and can they not watch one half hour to hear them defended? Is this to deal like a judge (I mean like a good judge), to listen on one side of the cause and sleep on the other? I shall add but one word more. That this indecent sloth is very much owing to that luxury and excess men usually practise upon this day, by which half the service thereof is turned to sin; men dividing their time between God and their bellies, when, after a gluttonous meal, their senses dozed and stupefied, they retire to God's house to sleep out the afternoon. Surely, brethren, these things ought not so to be.

"He that hath ears to hear let him hear." And God give us all, grace to hear and receive His Holy Word to the salvation of our own souls.

## ON THE WISDOM OF THIS WORLD

“The wisdom of this world is foolishness with God.”

—I Cor. iii. 19.

IT IS REMARKABLE that about the time of our Saviour's coming into the world all kinds of learning flourished to a very great degree, insomuch that nothing is more frequent in the mouths of many men, even such who pretend to read and to know, than an extravagant praise and opinion of the wisdom and virtue of the Gentile sages of those days, and likewise of those ancient philosophers who went before them, whose doctrines are left upon record, either by themselves or other writers. As far as this may be taken for granted, it may be said that the providence of God brought this about for several very wise ends and purposes; for it is certain that these philosophers had been a long time before searching out where to fix the true happiness of man; and not being able to agree upon any certainty about it, they could not possibly but conclude, if they judged impartially, that all their inquiries were in the end but vain and fruitless, the consequence of which must be not only an acknowledgment of the weakness of all human wisdom, but likewise an open passage hereby made for letting in those beams of light which the glorious sunshine of the Gospel then brought into the world, by revealing those hidden truths which they had so long before been labouring to discover, and fixing the general happiness of mankind beyond all controversy and dispute. And therefore the providence of God wisely suffered men of deep genius and learning then to arise, who should search into the truth of the Gospel now made known, and canvass its doctrines with all the subtilty and knowledge they were masters of, and in the end freely acknowledge that to be the true wisdom only “which cometh from above.”

However, to make a further inquiry into the truth of this observation, I doubt not but there is reason to think that a great many of those encomiums given to ancient philosophers are taken upon trust, and by a sort of men who are not very likely to be at the pains of an inquiry that would employ so much time and thinking. For the usual ends why men affect

this kind of discourse appear generally to be either out of ostentation, that they may pass upon the world for persons of great knowledge and observation, or, what is worse, there are some who highly exalt the wisdom of those Gentile sages, thereby obliquely to glance at and traduce Divine revelation, and more especially that of the Gospel; for the consequence they would have us draw is this: that since those ancient philosophers rose to a greater pitch of wisdom and virtue than was ever known among Christians, and all this purely upon the strength of their own reason and liberty of thinking; therefore it must follow that either all revelation is false, or, what is worse, that it has depraved the nature of man, and left him worse than it found him.

But this high opinion of heathen wisdom is not very ancient in the world, nor at all countenanced from primitive times. Our Saviour had but a low esteem of it, as appears by His treatment of the Pharisees and Sadducees, who followed the doctrines of Plato and Epicurus. St. Paul likewise, who was well versed in all the Grecian literature, seems very much to despise their philosophy, as we find in his writings, cautioning the Colossians to “beware lest any man spoil them through philosophy and vain deceit;” and in another place he advises Timothy to “avoid profane and vain babblings, and oppositions of science falsely so called;” that is, not to introduce into the Christian doctrine the janglings of those vain philosophers, which they would pass upon the world for science. And the reasons he gives are, first, that those who professed them did err concerning the faith; secondly, because the knowledge of them did increase ungodliness, vain babblings being otherwise expounded vanities or empty sounds; that is, tedious disputes about words, which the philosophers were always so full of, and which were the natural product of disputes and dissensions between several sects.

Neither had the primitive fathers any great or good opinion of the heathen philosophy, as is manifest from several passages in their writings; so that this vein of affecting to raise the reputation of those sages so high is a mode and a vice but of yesterday, assumed chiefly, as I have said, to disparage revealed knowledge and the consequences of it among us.

Now, because this is a prejudice which may prevail with some persons so far as to lessen the influence of the Gospel, and whereas, therefore, this is an opinion which men of education are likely to be encountered with when they have produced themselves into the world, I shall endeavour to show that their preference of heathen wisdom and virtue before that of the Christian is every way unjust, and grounded upon ignorance or mistake; in order to which I shall consider four things:-

First, I shall produce certain points wherein the wisdom and virtue of all unrevealed philosophy in general fell short and was very imperfect.

Secondly, I shall show, in several instances, where some of the most renowned philosophers have been grossly defective in their lessons of morality.

Thirdly, I shall prove the perfection of Christian wisdom from the proper characters and marks of it.

Lastly, I shall show that the great examples of wisdom and virtue among the heathen wise men were produced by personal merit, and not influenced by the doctrine of any sect; whereas, in Christianity, it is quite the contrary.

First, I shall produce certain points wherein the wisdom and virtue of all unrevealed philosophy in general fell short and was very imperfect.

My design is to persuade men that Christian philosophy is in all things preferable to heathen wisdom; from which, or its professors, I shall, however, have no occasion to detract. They were as wise and as good as it was possible for them to be under such disadvantages, and would have probably been infinitely more so with such aids as we enjoy; but our lessons are certainly much better, however our practices may fall short.

The first point I shall mention is that universal defect which was in all their schemes, that they could not agree about their chief good, or wherein to place the happiness of mankind; nor had any of them a tolerable answer upon this difficulty to satisfy a reasonable person. For to say, as the most plausible of them did, "That happiness consisted in virtue," was but vain babbling, and a mere sound of words to amuse others and themselves; because they were not agreed what this virtue was or wherein it did consist; and likewise, because several among the best of them taught quite different things, placing happiness in health or good fortune, in riches or in honour, where all were agreed that virtue was not, as I shall have occasion to show when I speak of their particular tenets.

The second great defect in the Gentile philosophy was that it wanted some suitable reward proportioned to the better part of man—his mind, as an encouragement for his progress in virtue. The difficulties they met with upon the score of this default were great, and not to be accounted for; bodily goods, being only suitable to bodily wants, are no rest at all for the mind; and if they were, yet are they not the proper fruits of wisdom and virtue, being equally attainable by the ignorant and wicked. Now human nature is so constituted that we can never pursue anything heartily but upon hopes of a reward. If we run a race, it is in expectation of a prize; and the greater the prize the faster we run; for an incorruptible crown, if



we understand it and believe it to be such, more than a corruptible one. But some of the philosophers gave all this quite another turn, and pretended to refine so far as to call virtue its own reward, and worthy to be followed only for itself; whereas, if there be anything in this more than the sound of the words, it is at least too abstracted to become a universal influencing principle in the world, and therefore could not be of general use.

It was the want of assigning some happiness proportioned to the soul of man that caused many of them, either on the one hand, to be sour and morose, supercilious and untreatable, or, on the other, to fall into the vulgar pursuits of common men, to hunt after greatness and riches, to make their court and to serve occasions, as Plato did to the younger Dionysius, and Aristotle to Alexander the Great. So impossible it is for a man who looks no further than the present world to fix himself long in a contemplation where the present world has no part; he has no sure hold, no firm footing; he can never expect to remove the earth he rests upon while he has no support besides for his feet, but wants, like Archimedes, some other place whereon to stand. To talk of bearing pain and grief without any sort of present or future hope cannot be purely greatness of spirit; there must be a mixture in it of affectation and an alloy of pride, or perhaps is wholly counterfeit.

It is true there has been all along in the world a notion of rewards and punishments in another life, but it seems to have rather served as an entertainment to poets or as a terror of children than a settled principle by which men pretended to govern any of their actions. The last celebrated words of Socrates, a little before his death, do not seem to reckon or build much upon any such opinion; and Caesar made no scruple to disown it and ridicule it in open senate.

Thirdly, the greatest and wisest of all their philosophers were never able to give any satisfaction to others and themselves in their notions of a deity. They were often extremely gross and absurd in their conceptions, and those who made the fairest conjectures are such as were generally allowed by the learned to have seen the system of Moses, if I may so call it, who was in great reputation at that time in the heathen world, as we find by Diodorus, Justin, Longinus, and other authors; for the rest, the wisest among them laid aside all notions after a deity as a disquisition vain and fruitless, which indeed it was upon unrevealed principles; and those who ventured to engage too far fell into incoherence and confusion.

Fourthly, Those among them who had the justest conceptions of a Divine power, and did also admit a providence, had no notion at all of en-

tirely relying and depending upon either; they trusted in themselves for all things, but as for a trust or dependence upon God, they would not have understood the phrase; it made no part of the profane style.

Therefore it was that, in all issues and events which they could not reconcile to their own sentiments of reason and justice, they were quite disconcerted; they had no retreat, but upon every blow of adverse fortune, either affected to be indifferent, or grew sullen and severe, or else yielded and sunk like other men.

Having now produced certain points wherein the wisdom and virtue of all unrevealed philosophy fell short and was very imperfect, I go on, in the second place, to show, in several instances, where some of the most renowned philosophers have been grossly defective in their lessons of morality.

Thales, the founder of the Ionic sect, so celebrated for morality, being asked how a man might bear ill-fortune with greatest ease, answered, "By seeing his enemies in a worse condition." An answer truly barbarous, unworthy of human nature, and which included such consequences as must destroy all society from the world.

Solon lamenting the death of a son, one told him, "You lament in vain." "Therefore," said he, "I lament, because it is in vain." This was a plain confession how imperfect all his philosophy was, and that something was still wanting. He owned that all his wisdom and morals were useless, and this upon one of the most frequent accidents in life. How much better could he have learned to support himself even from David, by his entire dependence upon God, and that before our Saviour had advanced the notions of religion to the height and perfection wherewith He hath instructed His disciples!

Plato himself, with all his refinements, placed happiness in wisdom, health, good fortune, honour, and riches, and held that they who enjoyed all these were perfectly happy; which opinion was indeed unworthy its owner, leaving the wise and good man wholly at the mercy of uncertain chance, and to be miserable without resource.

His scholar Aristotle fell more grossly into the same notion, and plainly affirmed, "That virtue, without the goods of fortune, was not sufficient for happiness, but that a wise man must be miserable in poverty and sickness." Nay, Diogenes himself, from whose pride and singularity one would have looked for other notions, delivered it as his opinion, "That a poor old man was the most miserable thing in life."

Zeno also and his followers fell into many absurdities, among which

nothing could be greater than that of maintaining all crimes to be equal; which, instead of making vice hateful, rendered it as a thing indifferent and familiar to all men.

Lastly, Epicurus had no notion of justice but as it was profitable; and his placing happiness in pleasure, with all the advantages he could expound it by, was liable to very great exception; for although he taught that pleasure did consist in virtue, yet he did not any way fix or ascertain the boundaries of virtue, as he ought to have done; by which means he misled his followers into the greatest vices, making their names to become odious and scandalous even in the heathen world.

I have produced these few instances from a great many others to show the imperfection of heathen philosophy, wherein I have confined myself wholly to their morality. And surely we may pronounce upon it, in the words of St. James, that "This wisdom descended not from above, but was earthly and sensual." What if I had produced their absurd notions about God and the soul? It would then have completed the character given it by that Apostle, and appeared to have been devilish too. But it is easy to observe from the nature of these few particulars that their defects in morals were purely the flagging and fainting of the mind for want of a support by revelation from God.

I proceed, therefore, in the third place, to show the perfection of Christian wisdom from above; and I shall endeavour to make it appear from those proper characters and marks of it by the Apostle before mentioned, in the third chapter, and 15th, 16th, and 17th verses.

The words run thus—

"This wisdom descendeth not from above, but is earthly, sensual, devilish.

"For where envying and strife is, there is confusion and every evil work.

"But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality and without hypocrisy."

"The wisdom from above is first pure." This purity of the mind and spirit is peculiar to the Gospel. Our Saviour says, "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God." A mind free from all pollution of lusts shall have a daily vision of God, whereof unrevealed religion can form no notion. This is it that keeps us unspotted from the world, and hereby many have been prevailed upon to live in the practice of all purity, holiness, and righteousness, far beyond the examples of the most celebrated philosophers.

It is "peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated." The Christian doctrine teacheth us all those dispositions that make us affable and courteous, gentle and kind, without any morose leaven of pride or vanity, which entered into the composition of most heathen schemes: so we are taught to be meek and lowly. Our Saviour's last legacy was peace, and He commands us to forgive our offending brother unto seventy times seven. Christian wisdom is full of mercy and good works, teaching the height of all moral virtues, of which the heathens fell infinitely short. Plato indeed (and it is worth observing) has somewhere a dialogue, or part of one, about forgiving our enemies, which was perhaps the highest strain ever reached by man without Divine assistance; yet how little is that to what our Saviour commands us, "To love them that hate us, to bless them that curse us, and to do good to them that despitefully use us."

Christian wisdom is "without partiality;" it is not calculated for this or that nation of people, but the whole race of mankind. Not so the philosophical schemes, which were narrow and confined, adapted to their peculiar towns, governments, or sects; but "in every nation, he that feareth God and worketh righteousness is accepted with Him."

Lastly, It is "without hypocrisy;" it appears to be what it really is; it is all of a piece. By the doctrines of the Gospel we are so far from being allowed to publish to the world those virtues we have not, that we are commanded to hide even from ourselves those we really have, and not to let our right hand know what our left hand does, unlike several branches of the heathen wisdom, which pretended to teach insensibility and indifference, magnanimity and contempt of life, while at the same time, in other parts, it belied its own doctrines.

I come now, in the last place, to show that the great examples of wisdom and virtue among the Grecian sages were produced by personal merit; and not influenced by the doctrine of any particular sect, whereas in Christianity it is quite the contrary.

The two virtues most celebrated by ancient moralists were fortitude and temperance, as relating to the government of man in his private capacity, to which their schemes were generally addressed and confined, and the two instances wherein those virtues arrived at the greatest height were Socrates and Cato. But neither these, nor any other virtues possessed by these two, were at all owing to any lessons or doctrines of a sect. For Socrates himself was of none at all; and although Cato was called a Stoic, it was more from a resemblance of manners in his worst qualities, than that he avowed himself one of their disciples. The same may be affirmed of many other great men of antiquity. Whence I infer that those who were

renowned for virtue among them were more obliged to the good natural dispositions of their own minds than to the doctrines of any sect they pretended to follow.

On the other side, as the examples of fortitude and patience among the primitive Christians have been infinitely greater, and more numerous, so they were altogether the product of their principles and doctrine, and were such as the same persons, without those aids, would never have arrived to. Of this truth most of the Apostles, with many thousand martyrs, are a cloud of witnesses beyond exception. Having, therefore, spoken so largely upon the former heads, I shall dwell no longer upon this.

And if it should here be objected, Why does not Christianity still produce the same effects? it is easy to answer, first, that, although the number of pretended Christians be great, yet that of true believers, in proportion to the other, was never so small; and it is a true lively faith alone that, by the assistance of God's grace, can influence our practice.

Secondly, We may answer that Christianity itself has very much suffered by being blended up with Gentile philosophy. The Platonic system, first taken into religion, was thought to have given matter for some early heresies in the Church. When disputes began to arise, the Peripatetic forms were introduced by Scotus as best fitted for controversy. And however this may now have become necessary, it was surely the author of a litigious vein, which has since occasioned very pernicious consequences, stopped the progress of Christianity, and been a great promoter of vice; verifying that sentence given by St. James, and mentioned before, "Where envying and strife is, there is confusion and every evil work." This was the fatal stop to the Grecians in their progress both of arts and arms; their wise men were divided under several sects, and their governments under several commonwealths, all in opposition to each other, which engaged them in eternal quarrels among themselves, while they should have been armed against the common enemy. And I wish we had no other examples, from the like causes, less foreign or ancient than that. Diogenes said Socrates was a madman; the disciples of Zeno and Epicurus, nay, of Plato and Aristotle, were engaged in fierce disputes about the most insignificant trifles. And if this be the present language and practice among us Christians no wonder that Christianity does not still produce the same effects which it did at first, when it was received and embraced in its utmost purity and perfection; for such wisdom as this cannot "descend from above," but must be "earthly, sensual, devilish, full of confusion and every evil work," whereas, "the wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and

*Three Sermons and Prayers*

without hypocrisy." This is the true heavenly wisdom, which Christianity only can boast of, and which the greatest of the heathen wise men could never arrive at.

Now to God the Father, &c.

THREE PRAYERS USED BY THE DEAN FOR  
STELLA IN HER LAST SICKNESS, 1727

I

ALMIGHTY and most gracious Lord God, extend, we beseech Thee, Thy pity and compassion toward this Thy languishing servant; teach her to place her hope and confidence entirely in Thee; give her a true sense of the emptiness and vanity of all earthly things; make her truly sensible of all the infirmities of her life past, and grant to her such a true sincere repentance as is not to be repented of. Preserve her, O Lord, in a sound mind and understanding during this Thy visitation; keep her from both the sad extremes of presumption and despair. If Thou shalt please to restore her to her former health, give her grace to be ever mindful of that mercy, and to keep those good resolutions she now makes in her sickness, so that no length of time nor prosperity may entice her to forget them. Let no thought of her misfortunes distract her mind, and prevent the means toward her recovery, or disturb her in her preparations for a better life. We beseech thee also, O Lord, of Thy infinite goodness, to remember the good actions of this Thy servant; that the naked she hath clothed, the hungry she hath fed, the sick and the fatherless whom she hath relieved, may be reckoned according to Thy gracious promise, as if they had been done unto Thee. Hearken, O Lord, to the prayers offered up by the friends of this Thy servant in her behalf, and especially those now made by us unto thee. Give Thy blessing to those endeavours used for her recovery; but take from her all violent desire either of life or death, further than with resignation to Thy holy will. And now, O Lord, we implore Thy gracious favour toward us here met together. Grant that the sense of this Thy servant's weakness may add strength to our faith; that we, considering the infirmities of our nature and the uncertainty of life, may by this example be drawn to repentance before it shall please Thee to visit us in like manner. Accept these prayers, we beseech Thee, for the sake of Thy dear Son Jesus Christ, our Lord, who, with Thee and the Holy Ghost, liveth and reigneth,

ever one God, world without end. Amen.

## II. Written October 17, 1727

MOST MERCIFUL FATHER, accept our humblest prayers in behalf of this Thy languishing servant; forgive the sins, the frailties, and infirmities of her life past. Accept the good deeds she hath done in such a manner that, at whatever time Thou shalt please to call her, she may be received into everlasting habitations. Give her grace to continue sincerely thankful to Thee for the many favours Thou hast bestowed upon her, the ability and inclination and practice to do good, and those virtues which have procured the esteem and love of her friends and a most unspotted name in the world. O God, Thou dispensest Thy blessings and Thy punishments as it becometh infinite justice and mercy; and since it was Thy pleasure to afflict her with a long, constant, weakly state of health, make her truly sensible that it was for very wise ends, and was largely made up to her in other blessings more valuable and less common. Continue to her, O Lord, that firmness and constancy of mind wherewith Thou hast most graciously endowed her, together with that contempt of worldly things and vanities that she has shown in the whole conduct of her life. O All-powerful Being, the least motion of whose will can create or destroy a world, pity us, the mournful friends of Thy distressed servant, who sink under the weight of her present condition, and the fear of losing the most valuable of our friends. Restore her to us, O Lord, if it be Thy gracious will, or inspire us with constancy and resignation to support ourselves under so heavy an affliction. Restore her, O Lord, for the sake of those poor who, by losing her, will be desolate, and those sick who will not only want her bounty, but her care and tending; or else, in Thy mercy, raise up some other in her place with equal disposition and better abilities. Lessen, O Lord, we beseech Thee, her bodily pains, or give her a double strength of mind to support them. And if Thou wilt soon take her to Thyself, turn our thoughts rather upon that felicity which we hope she shall enjoy, than upon that unspeakable loss we shall endure. Let her memory be ever dear unto us, and the example of her many virtues, as far as human infirmity will admit, our constant imitation. Accept, O Lord, these prayers, poured from the very bottom of our hearts, in Thy mercy, and for the merits of our blessed Saviour. Amen.



III. Written November 6, 1727

O MERCIFUL FATHER, who never afflictest Thy children but for their own good, and with justice, over which Thy mercy always prevaieth, either to turn them to repentance, or to punish them in the present life in order to reward them in a better; take pity, we beseech Thee, upon this Thy poor afflicted servant, languishing so long and so grievously under the weight of Thy hand. Give her strength, O Lord, to support her weakness, and patience to endure her pains without repining at Thy correction. Forgive every rash and inconsiderate expression which her anguish may at any time force from her tongue, while her heart continueth in an entire submission to Thy will. Suppress in her, O Lord, all eager desires of life, and lessen her fears of death by inspiring into her an humble yet assured hope of Thy mercy. Give her a sincere repentance for all her transgressions and omissions, and a firm resolution to pass the remainder of her life in endeavouring to her utmost to observe all Thy precepts. We beseech Thee likewise to compose her thoughts, and preserve to her the use of her memory and reason during the course of her sickness. Give her a true conception of the vanity, folly, and insignificance of all human things, and strengthen her so as to beget in her a sincere love of Thee in the midst of her sufferings. Accept and impute all her good deeds, and forgive her all those offences against Thee which she hath sincerely repented of or through the frailty of memory hath forgot. And now, O Lord, we turn to Thee in behalf of ourselves and the rest of her sorrowful friends. Let not our grief afflict her mind, and thereby have an ill effect on her present distemper. Forgive the sorrow and weakness of those among us who sink under the grief and terror of losing so dear and useful a friend. Accept and pardon our most earnest prayers and wishes for her longer continuance in this evil world, to do what Thou art pleased to call Thy service, and is only her bounden duty, that she may be still a comfort to us and to all others who will want the benefit of her conversation, her advice, her good offices, or her charity. And since Thou hast promised that where two or three are gathered together in Thy name Thou wilt be in the midst of them to grant their request, O gracious Lord, grant to us who are here met in Thy name that those requests, which in the utmost sincerity and earnestness of our hearts we have now made in behalf of this Thy distressed servant and of ourselves, may effectually be answered, through the merits of Jesus Christ our Lord. AMEN.

# A TALE OF A TUB

## ADVERT

Treatises writ by the fame Author, moft of them mentioned in the following Discourfes; which will be fpeedily publifhed.

A Character of the prefent Set of Wits in this Ifland. A Panegyric Effay upon the Number *Three*. A Differtation upon the principal productions of Grub-ftree. Lectures upon the Diffection of Human Nature. A Panegyrick upon the World. An Analytical Difcourfe upon Zeal, Hiftoritheo-phyfi-logically confidered. A general Hiftory of Ears. A modeft Defence of the Proceedings of the Rabble in all Ages. A Defcription of the Kingdom of Abfurdities. A Voyage into England, by a Perfon of Quality in Terra Auftralis incognita, tranflated from the Original. A Critical Effay upon the Art of Canting, Philofophically, Phyfically, and Mufically confidered.

TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE JOHN LORD SOMERS.

My LORD,

Though the author has written a large Dedication, yet that being ad-dressed to a Prince whom I am never likely to have the honour of being known to; a person, besides, as far as I can obferve, not at all regarded or thought on by any of our prefent writers; and I being wholly free from that slavery which booksellers usually lie under to the caprices of authors, I think it a wife piece of prefumption to infcribe thefe papers to your Lordship, and to implore your Lordship's protection of them. God and your Lordship know their faults and their merits; for as to my own particular, I am altogether a ftranger to the matter; and though everybody

else should be equally ignorant, I do not fear the sale of the book at all the worse upon that score. Your Lordship's name on the front in capital letters will at any time get off one edition: neither would I desire any other help to grow an alderman than a patent for the sole privilege of dedicating to your Lordship.

I should now, in right of a dedicator, give your Lordship a list of your own virtues, and at the same time be very unwilling to offend your modesty; but chiefly I should celebrate your liberality towards men of great parts and small fortunes, and give you broad hints that I mean myself. And I was just going on in the usual method to peruse a hundred or two of dedications, and transcribe an abstract to be applied to your Lordship, but I was diverted by a certain accident. For upon the covers of these papers I casually observed written in large letters the two following words, *detur dignissimo*, which, for aught I knew, might contain some important meaning. But it unluckily fell out that none of the Authors I employ understood Latin (though I have them often in pay to translate out of that language). I was therefore compelled to have recourse to the Curate of our Parish, who Englished it thus, Let it be given to the worthiest; and his comment was that the Author meant his work should be dedicated to the sublimest genius of the age for wit, learning, judgment, eloquence, and wisdom. I called at a poet's chamber (who works for my shop) in an alley hard by, showed him the translation, and desired his opinion who it was that the Author could mean. He told me, after some consideration, that vanity was a thing he abhorred, but by the description he thought himself to be the person aimed at; and at the same time he very kindly offered his own assistance gratis towards penning a dedication to himself. I desired him, however, to give a second guess. Why then, said he, it must be I, or my Lord Somers. From thence I went to several other wits of my acquaintance, with no small hazard and weariness to my person, from a prodigious number of dark winding stairs; but found them all in the same story, both of your Lordship and themselves. Now your Lordship is to understand that this proceeding was not of my own invention; for I have somewhere heard it is a maxim that those to whom everybody allows the second place have an undoubted title to the first.

This infallibly convinced me that your Lordship was the person intended by the Author. But being very unacquainted in the style and form of dedications, I employed those wits aforesaid to furnish me with hints and materials towards a panegyric upon your Lordship's virtues.

In two days they brought me ten sheets of paper filled up on every side. They swore to me that they had ransacked whatever could be found in the

characters of Socrates, Aristides, Epaminondas, Cato, Tully, Atticus, and other hard names which I cannot now recollect. However, I have reason to believe they imposed upon my ignorance, because when I came to read over their collections, there was not a syllable there but what I and everybody else knew as well as themselves: therefore I grievously suspect a cheat; and that these Authors of mine stole and transcribed every word from the universal report of mankind. So that I took upon myself as fifty shillings out of pocket to no manner of purpose.

If by altering the title I could make the same materials serve for another dedication (as my betters have done), it would help to make up my loss; but I have made several persons dip here and there in those papers, and before they read three lines they have all assured me plainly that they cannot possibly be applied to any person besides your Lordship.

I expected, indeed, to have heard of your Lordship's bravery at the head of an army; of your undaunted courage in mounting a breach or scaling a wall; or to have had your pedigree traced in a lineal descent from the House of Austria; or of your wonderful talent at dress and dancing; or your profound knowledge in algebra, metaphysics, and the Oriental tongues: but to ply the world with an old beaten story of your wit, and eloquence, and learning, and wisdom, and justice, and politeness, and candour, and evenness of temper in all scenes of life; of that great discernment in discovering and readiness in favouring deserving men; with forty other common topics; I confess I have neither conscience nor countenance to do it. Because there is no virtue either of a public or private life which some circumstances of your own have not often produced upon the stage of the world; and those few which for want of occasions to exert them might otherwise have passed unseen or unobserved by your friends, your enemies have at length brought to light.

It is true I should be very loth the bright example of your Lordship's virtues should be lost to after-ages, both for their sake and your own; but chiefly because they will be so very necessary to adorn the history of a late reign; and that is another reason why I would forbear to make a recital of them here; because I have been told by wise men that as dedications have run for some years past, a good historian will not be apt to have recourse thither in search of characters.

There is one point wherein I think we dedicators would do well to change our measures; I mean, instead of running on so far upon the praise of our patron's liberality, to spend a word or two in admiring their patience. I can put no greater compliment on your Lordship's than by giving you so ample an occasion to exercise it at present. Though perhaps I shall

not be apt to reckon much merit to your Lordship upon that score, who having been formerly used to tedious harangues, and sometimes to as little purpose, will be the readier to pardon this, especially when it is offered by one who is, with all respect and veneration,

My LORD, Your Lordship's most obedient and most faithful Servant,  
*The Bookseller.*

## THE BOOKSELLER TO THE READER

It is now six years since these papers came first to my hand, which seems to have been about a twelvemonth after they were written, for the Author tells us in his preface to the first treatise that he had calculated it for the year 1697; and in several passages of that discourse, as well as the second, it appears they were written about that time.

As to the Author, I can give no manner of satisfaction. However, I am credibly informed that this publication is without his knowledge, for he concludes the copy is lost, having lent it to a person since dead, and being never in possession of it after; so that, whether the work received his last hand, or whether he intended to fill up the defective places, is like to remain a secret.

If I should go about to tell the reader by what accident I became master of these papers, it would, in this unbelieving age, pass for little more than the cant or jargon of the trade. I therefore gladly spare both him and myself so unnecessary a trouble. There yet remains a difficult question—why I published them no sooner? I forbore upon two accounts. First, because I thought I had better work upon my hands; and secondly, because I was not without some hope of hearing from the Author and receiving his directions. But I have been lately alarmed with intelligence of a surreptitious copy which a certain great wit had new polished and refined, or, as our present writers express themselves, “fitted to the humour of the age,” as they have already done with great felicity to Don Quixote, Boccalini, La Bruyere, and other authors. However, I thought it fairer dealing to offer the whole work in its naturals. If any gentleman will please to furnish me with a key, in order to explain the more difficult parts, I shall very gratefully acknowledge the favour, and print it by itself.

THE EPISTLE DEDICATORY TO HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS PRINCE POSTERITY

SIR,

I here present your Highness with the fruits of a very few leisure hours, stolen from the short intervals of a world of business, and of an employment quite alien from such amusements as this; the poor production of that refuse of time which has lain heavy upon my hands during a long prorogation of Parliament, a great dearth of foreign news, and a tedious fit of rainy weather. For which, and other reasons, it cannot choose extremely to deserve such a patronage as that of your Highness, whose numberless virtues in so few years, make the world look upon you as the future example to all princes. For although your Highness is hardly got clear of infancy, yet has the universal learned world already resolved upon appealing to your future dictates with the lowest and most resigned submission, fate having decreed you sole arbiter of the productions of human wit in this polite and most accomplished age. Methinks the number of appellants were enough to shock and startle any judge of a genius less unlimited than yours; but in order to prevent such glorious trials, the person, it seems, to whose care the education of your Highness is committed, has resolved, as I am told, to keep you in almost an universal ignorance of our studies, which it is your inherent birthright to inspect.

It is amazing to me that this person should have assurance, in the face of the sun, to go about persuading your Highness that our age is almost wholly illiterate and has hardly produced one writer upon any subject. I know very well that when your Highness shall come to riper years, and have gone through the learning of antiquity, you will be too curious to neglect inquiring into the authors of the very age before you; and to think that this insolent, in the account he is preparing for your view, designs to reduce them to a number so insignificant as I am ashamed to mention; it moves my zeal and my spleen for the honour and interest of our vast flourishing body, as well as of myself, for whom I know by long experi-

ence he has professed, and still continues, a peculiar malice.

It is not unlikely that, when your Highness will one day peruse what I am now writing, you may be ready to expostulate with your governor upon the credit of what I here affirm, and command him to show you some of our productions. To which he will answer—for I am well informed of his designs—by asking your Highness where they are, and what is become of them? and pretend it a demonstration that there never were any, because they are not then to be found. Not to be found! Who has mislaid them? Are they sunk in the abyss of things? It is certain that in their own nature they were light enough to swim upon the surface for all eternity; therefore, the fault is in him who tied weights so heavy to their heels as to depress them to the centre. Is their very essence destroyed? Who has annihilated them? Were they drowned by purges or martyred by pipes? Who administered them to the posteriors of ———. But that it may no longer be a doubt with your Highness who is to be the author of this universal ruin, I beseech you to observe that large and terrible scythe which your governor affects to bear continually about him. Be pleased to remark the length and strength, the sharpness and hardness, of his nails and teeth; consider his baneful, abominable breath, enemy to life and matter, infectious and corrupting, and then reflect whether it be possible for any mortal ink and paper of this generation to make a suitable resistance. Oh, that your Highness would one day resolve to disarm this usurping maitre de palais of his furious engines, and bring your empire hors du page.

It were endless to recount the several methods of tyranny and destruction which your governor is pleased to practise upon this occasion. His inveterate malice is such to the writings of our age, that, of several thousands produced yearly from this renowned city, before the next revolution of the sun there is not one to be heard of. Unhappy infants! many of them barbarously destroyed before they have so much as learnt their mother-tongue to beg for pity. Some he stifles in their cradles, others he frights into convulsions, whereof they suddenly die, some he flays alive, others he tears limb from limb, great numbers are offered to Moloch, and the rest, tainted by his breath, die of a languishing consumption.

But the concern I have most at heart is for our Corporation of Poets, from whom I am preparing a petition to your Highness, to be subscribed with the names of one hundred and thirty-six of the first race, but whose immortal productions are never likely to reach your eyes, though each of them is now an humble and an earnest appellant for the laurel, and has large comely volumes ready to show for a support to his pretensions. The never-dying works of these illustrious persons your governor, sir, has de-



voted to unavoidable death, and your Highness is to be made believe that our age has never arrived at the honour to produce one single poet.

We confess immortality to be a great and powerful goddess, but in vain we offer up to her our devotions and our sacrifices if your Highness's governor, who has usurped the priesthood, must, by an unparalleled ambition and avarice, wholly intercept and devour them.

To affirm that our age is altogether unlearned and devoid of writers in any kind, seems to be an assertion so bold and so false, that I have been sometimes thinking the contrary may almost be proved by uncontrollable demonstration. It is true, indeed, that although their numbers be vast and their productions numerous in proportion, yet are they hurried so hastily off the scene that they escape our memory and delude our sight. When I first thought of this address, I had prepared a copious list of titles to present your Highness as an undisputed argument for what I affirm. The originals were posted fresh upon all gates and corners of streets; but returning in a very few hours to take a review, they were all torn down and fresh ones in their places. I inquired after them among readers and booksellers, but I inquired in vain; the memorial of them was lost among men, their place was no more to be found; and I was laughed to scorn for a clown and a pedant, devoid of all taste and refinement, little versed in the course of present affairs, and that knew nothing of what had passed in the best companies of court and town. So that I can only avow in general to your Highness that we do abound in learning and wit, but to fix upon particulars is a task too slippery for my slender abilities. If I should venture, in a windy day, to affirm to your Highness that there is a large cloud near the horizon in the form of a bear, another in the zenith with the head of an ass, a third to the westward with claws like a dragon; and your Highness should in a few minutes think fit to examine the truth, it is certain they would be all chanced in figure and position, new ones would arise, and all we could agree upon would be, that clouds there were, but that I was grossly mistaken in the zoography and topography of them.

But your governor, perhaps, may still insist, and put the question, What is then become of those immense bales of paper which must needs have been employed in such numbers of books? Can these also be wholly annihilated, and to of a sudden, as I pretend? What shall I say in return of so invidious an objection? It ill befits the distance between your Highness and me to send you for ocular conviction to a jakes or an oven, to the windows of a bawdyhouse, or to a sordid lanthorn. Books, like men their authors, have no more than one way of coming into the world, but there are ten thousand to go out of it and return no more.

I profess to your Highness, in the integrity of my heart, that what I am going to say is literally true this minute I am writing; what revolutions may happen before it shall be ready for your perusal I can by no means warrant; however, I beg you to accept it as a specimen of our learning, our politeness, and our wit. I do therefore affirm, upon the word of a sincere man, that there is now actually in being a certain poet called John Dryden, whose translation of Virgil was lately printed in large folio, well bound, and if diligent search were made, for aught I know, is yet to be seen. There is another called Nahum Tate, who is ready to make oath that he has caused many reams of verse to be published, whereof both himself and his bookseller, if lawfully required, can still produce authentic copies, and therefore wonders why the world is pleased to make such a secret of it. There is a third, known by the name of Tom Durfey, a poet of a vast comprehension, an universal genius, and most profound learning. There are also one Mr. Rymer and one Mr. Dennis, most profound critics. There is a person styled Dr. Bentley, who has wrote near a thousand pages of immense erudition, giving a full and true account of a certain squabble of wonderful importance between himself and a bookseller; he is a writer of infinite wit and humour, no man rallies with a better grace and in more sprightly turns. Further, I avow to your Highness that with these eyes I have beheld the person of William Wotton, B.D., who has written a good-sized volume against a friend of your governor, from whom, alas! he must therefore look for little favour, in a most gentlemanly style, adorned with utmost politeness and civility, replete with discoveries equally valuable for their novelty and use, and embellished with traits of wit so poignant and so apposite, that he is a worthy yoke-mate to his fore-mentioned friend.

Why should I go upon farther particulars, which might fill a volume with the just eulogies of my contemporary brethren? I shall bequeath this piece of justice to a larger work, wherein I intend to write a character of the present set of wits in our nation; their persons I shall describe particularly and at length, their genius and understandings in miniature.

In the meantime, I do here make bold to present your Highness with a faithful abstract drawn from the universal body of all arts and sciences, intended wholly for your service and instruction. Nor do I doubt in the least but your Highness will peruse it as carefully and make as considerable improvements as other young princes have already done by the many volumes of late years written for a help to their studies.

That your Highness may advance in wisdom and virtue, as well as years, and at last outshine all your royal ancestors, shall be the daily prayer of,  
SIR, Your Highness's most devoted, &c. Decemb. 1697.

## THE PREFACE

The wits of the present age being so very numerous and penetrating, it seems the grandees of Church and State begin to fall under horrible apprehensions lest these gentlemen, during the intervals of a long peace, should find leisure to pick holes in the weak sides of religion and government. To prevent which, there has been much thought employed of late upon certain projects for taking off the force and edge of those formidable inquirers from canvassing and reasoning upon such delicate points. They have at length fixed upon one, which will require some time as well as cost to perfect. Meanwhile, the danger hourly increasing, by new levies of wits, all appointed (as there is reason to fear) with pen, ink, and paper, which may at an hour's warning be drawn out into pamphlets and other offensive weapons ready for immediate execution, it was judged of absolute necessity that some present expedient be thought on till the main design can be brought to maturity. To this end, at a grand committee, some days ago, this important discovery was made by a certain curious and refined observer, that seamen have a custom when they meet a Whale to fling him out an empty Tub, by way of amusement, to divert him from laying violent hands upon the Ship. This parable was immediately mythologised; the Whale was interpreted to be Hobbes's "Leviathan," which tosses and plays with all other schemes of religion and government, whereof a great many are hollow, and dry, and empty, and noisy, and wooden, and given to rotation. This is the Leviathan from whence the terrible wits of our age are said to borrow their weapons. The Ship in danger is easily understood to be its old antitype the commonwealth. But how to analyse the Tub was a matter of difficulty, when, after long inquiry and debate, the literal meaning was preserved, and it was decreed that, in order to prevent these Leviathans from tossing and sporting with the commonwealth, which of itself is too apt to fluctuate, they should be diverted from that game by "A Tale of a Tub." And my genius being conceived to lie not unhappily that way, I had the honour done me to be engaged in the performance.

This is the sole design in publishing the following treatise, which I hope

will serve for an interim of some months to employ those unquiet spirits till the perfecting of that great work, into the secret of which it is reasonable the courteous reader should have some little light.

It is intended that a large Academy be erected, capable of containing nine thousand seven hundred forty and three persons, which, by modest computation, is reckoned to be pretty near the current number of wits in this island<sup>1</sup>. These are to be disposed into the several schools of this Academy, and there pursue those studies to which their genius most inclines them. The undertaker himself will publish his proposals with all convenient speed, to which I shall refer the curious reader for a more particular account, mentioning at present only a few of the principal schools. There is, first, a large pederastic school, with French and Italian masters; there is also the spelling school, a very spacious building; the school of looking-glasses; the school of swearing; the school of critics; the school of salivation; the school of hobby-horses; the school of poetry; the school of tops; the school of spleen; the school of gaming; with many others too tedious to recount. No person to be admitted member into any of these schools without an attestation under two sufficient persons' hands certifying him to be a wit.

But to return. I am sufficiently instructed in the principal duty of a preface if my genius, were capable of arriving at it. Thrice have I forced my imagination to take the tour of my invention, and thrice it has returned empty, the latter having been wholly drained by the following treatise. Not so my more successful brethren the moderns, who will by no means let slip a preface or dedication without some notable distinguishing stroke to surprise the reader at the entry, and kindle a wonderful expectation of what is to ensue. Such was that of a most ingenious poet, who, soliciting his brain for something new, compared himself to the hangman and his patron to the patient. This was *insigne, recens, indictum ore alio*<sup>2</sup>. When I went through that necessary and noble course of study,<sup>3</sup> I had the happiness to observe many such egregious touches, which I shall not injure the authors by transplanting, because I have remarked that nothing is so very tender as a modern piece of wit, and which is apt to suffer so much in the carriage. Some things are extremely witty to-day, or fasting, or in this place, or at eight o'clock, or over a bottle, or spoke by Mr. Whatdyecall'm, or in a summer's morning, any of which, by the smallest transposal or misapplication, is ut-

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1 The number of livings in England.—Pate.

2 "Distinguished, new, told by no other tongue."—Horace.

3 "Reading prefaces, &c."—Swift's note in the margin.

terly annihilate. Thus wit has its walks and purlieus, out of which it may not stray the breadth of a hair, upon peril of being lost. The moderns have artfully fixed this Mercury, and reduced it to the circumstances of time, place, and person. Such a jest there is that will not pass out of Covent Garden, and such a one that is nowhere intelligible but at Hyde Park Corner. Now, though it sometimes tenderly affects me to consider that all the towardly passages I shall deliver in the following treatise will grow quite out of date and relish with the first shifting of the present scene, yet I must need subscribe to the justice of this proceeding, because I cannot imagine why we should be at expense to furnish wit for succeeding ages, when the former have made no sort of provision for ours; wherein I speak the sentiment of the very newest, and consequently the most orthodox refiners, as well as my own. However, being extremely solicitous that every accomplished person who has got into the taste of wit calculated for this present month of August 1697 should descend to the very bottom of all the sublime throughout this treatise, I hold it fit to lay down this general maxim. Whatever reader desires to have a thorough comprehension of an author's thoughts, cannot take a better method than by putting himself into the circumstances and posture of life that the writer was in upon every important passage as it flowed from his pen, for this will introduce a parity and strict correspondence of ideas between the reader and the author. Now, to assist the diligent reader in so delicate an affair—as far as brevity will permit—I have recollected that the shrewdest pieces of this treatise were conceived in bed in a garret. At other times (for a reason best known to myself) I thought fit to sharpen my invention with hunger, and in general the whole work was begun, continued, and ended under a long course of physic and a great want of money. Now, I do affirm it will be absolutely impossible for the candid peruser to go along with me in a great many bright passages, unless upon the several difficulties emergent he will please to capacitate and prepare himself by these directions. And this I lay down as my principal postulatum.

Because I have professed to be a most devoted servant of all modern forms, I apprehend some curious wit may object against me for proceeding thus far in a preface without declaiming, according to custom, against the multitude of writers whereof the whole multitude of writers most reasonably complain. I am just come from perusing some hundreds of prefaces, wherein the authors do at the very beginning address the gentle reader concerning this enormous grievance. Of these I have preserved a few examples, and shall set them down as near as my memory has been able to retain them.

One begins thus: "For a man to set up for a writer when the press swarms with," &c.

Another: "The tax upon paper does not lessen the number of scribblers who daily pester," &c.

Another: "When every little would-be wit takes pen in hand, 'tis in vain to enter the lists," &c.

Another: "To observe what trash the press swarms with," &c.

Another: "Sir, it is merely in obedience to your commands that I venture into the public, for who upon a less consideration would be of a party with such a rabble of scribblers," &c.

Now, I have two words in my own defence against this objection. First, I am far from granting the number of writers a nuisance to our nation, having strenuously maintained the contrary in several parts of the following discourse; secondly, I do not well understand the justice of this proceeding, because I observe many of these polite prefaces to be not only from the same hand, but from those who are most voluminous in their several productions; upon which I shall tell the reader a short tale.

A mountebank in Leicester Fields had drawn a huge assembly about him. Among the rest, a fat unwieldy fellow, half stifled in the press, would be every fit crying out, "Lord! what a filthy crowd is here. Pray, good people, give way a little. Bless need what a devil has raked this rabble together. Z——ds, what squeezing is this? Honest friend, remove your elbow." At last a weaver that stood next him could hold no longer. "A plague confound you," said he, "for an overgrown sloven; and who in the devil's name, I wonder, helps to make up the crowd half so much as yourself? Don't you consider that you take up more room with that carcass than any five here? Is not the place as free for us as for you? Bring your own guts to a reasonable compass, and then I'll engage we shall have room enough for us all."

There are certain common privileges of a writer, the benefit whereof I hope there will be no reason to doubt; particularly, that where I am not understood, it shall be concluded that something very useful and profound is couched underneath; and again, that whatever word or sentence is printed in a different character shall be judged to contain something extraordinary either of wit or sublime.

As for the liberty I have thought fit to take of praising myself, upon some occasions or none, I am sure it will need no excuse if a multitude of great examples be allowed sufficient authority; for it is here to be noted that praise was originally a pension paid by the world, but the moderns, finding the trouble and charge too great in collecting it, have lately bought out the fee-simple, since which time the right of presentation is wholly in ourselves. For this reason it is that when an author makes his own eulogy,

he uses a certain form to declare and insist upon his title, which is commonly in these or the like words, "I speak without vanity," which I think plainly shows it to be a matter of right and justice. Now, I do here once for all declare, that in every encounter of this nature through the following treatise the form aforesaid is implied, which I mention to save the trouble of repeating it on so many occasions.

It is a great ease to my conscience that I have written so elaborate and useful a discourse without one grain of satire intermixed, which is the sole point wherein I have taken leave to dissent from the famous originals of our age and country. I have observed some satirists to use the public much at the rate that pedants do a naughty boy ready horsed for discipline. First expostulate the case, then plead the necessity of the rod from great provocations, and conclude every period with a lash. Now, if I know anything of mankind, these gentlemen might very well spare their reproof and correction, for there is not through all Nature another so callous and insensible a member as the world's posteriors, whether you apply to it the toe or the birch. Besides, most of our late satirists seem to lie under a sort of mistake, that because nettles have the prerogative to sting, therefore all other weeds must do so too. I make not this comparison out of the least design to detract from these worthy writers, for it is well known among mythologists that weeds have the pre-eminence over all other vegetables; and therefore the first monarch of this island whose taste and judgment were so acute and refined, did very wisely root out the roses from the collar of the order and plant the thistles in their stead, as the nobler flower of the two. For which reason it is conjectured by profounder antiquaries that the satirical itch, so prevalent in this part of our island, was first brought among us from beyond the Tweed. Here may it long flourish and abound; may it survive and neglect the scorn of the world with as much ease and contempt as the world is insensible to the lashes of it. May their own dulness, or that of their party, be no discouragement for the authors to proceed; but let them remember it is with wits as with razors, which are never so apt to cut those they are employed on as when they have lost their edge. Besides, those whose teeth are too rotten to bite are best of all others qualified to revenge that defect with their breath.

I am not, like other men, to envy or undervalue the talents I cannot reach, for which reason I must needs bear a true honour to this large eminent sect of our British writers. And I hope this little panegyric will not be offensive to their ears, since it has the advantage of being only designed for themselves. Indeed, Nature herself has taken order that fame and honour should be purchased at a better pennyworth by satire than by

any other productions of the brain, the world being soonest provoked to praise by lashes, as men are to love. There is a problem in an ancient author why dedications and other bundles of flattery run all upon stale musty topics, without the smallest tincture of anything new, not only to the torment and nauseating of the Christian reader, but, if not suddenly prevented, to the universal spreading of that pestilent disease the lethargy in this island, whereas there is very little satire which has not something in it untouched before. The defects of the former are usually imputed to the want of invention among those who are dealers in that kind; but I think with a great deal of injustice, the solution being easy and natural, for the materials of panegyric, being very few in number, have been long since exhausted; for as health is but one thing, and has been always the same, whereas diseases are by thousands, besides new and daily additions, so all the virtues that have been ever in mankind are to be counted upon a few fingers, but his follies and vices are innumerable, and time adds hourly to the heap. Now the utmost a poor poet can do is to get by heart a list of the cardinal virtues and deal them with his utmost liberality to his hero or his patron. He may ring the changes as far as it will go, and vary his phrase till he has talked round, but the reader quickly finds it is all pork,<sup>4</sup> with a little variety of sauce, for there is no inventing terms of art beyond our ideas, and when ideas are exhausted, terms of art must be so too.

But though the matter for panegyric were as fruitful as the topics of satire, yet would it not be hard to find out a sufficient reason why the latter will be always better received than the first; for this being bestowed only upon one or a few persons at a time, is sure to raise envy, and consequently ill words, from the rest who have no share in the blessing. But satire, being levelled at all, is never resented for an offence by any, since every individual person makes bold to understand it of others, and very wisely removes his particular part of the burden upon the shoulders of the World, which are broad enough and able to bear it. To this purpose I have sometimes reflected upon the difference between Athens and England with respect to the point before us. In the Attic<sup>5</sup> commonwealth it was the privilege and birthright of every citizen and poet to rail aloud and in public, or to expose upon the stage by name any person they pleased, though of the greatest figure, whether a Creon, an Hyperbolus, an Alcibiades, or a Demosthenes. But, on the other side, the least reflecting word let fall against the people in general was immediately caught up and revenged upon the authors, however considerable for their quality or their merits;

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<sup>4</sup> Plutarch.—Swift's note in the margin.

<sup>5</sup> Xenophon.—Swift's note in the margin, marked, in future, S.



whereas in England it is just the reverse of all this. Here you may securely display your utmost rhetoric against mankind in the face of the world; tell them that all are gone astray; that there is none that doeth good, no, not one; that we live in the very dregs of time; that knavery and atheism are epidemic as the pox; that honesty is fled with *Astraea*; with any other common-places equally new and eloquent, which are furnished by the *splendida bills*<sup>6</sup>; and when you have done, the whole audience, far from being offended, shall return you thanks as a deliverer of precious and useful truths. Nay, further, it is but to venture your lungs, and you may preach in *Covent Garden* against foppery and fornication, and something else; against pride, and dissimulation, and bribery at *Whitehall*. You may expose rapine and injustice in the *Inns-of-Court* chapel, and in a *City* pulpit be as fierce as you please against avarice, hypocrisy, and extortion. It is but a ball bandied to and fro, and every man carries a racket about him to strike it from himself among the rest of the company. But, on the other side, whoever should mistake the nature of things so far as to drop but a single hint in public how such a one starved half the fleet, and half poisoned the rest; how such a one, from a true principle of love and honour, pays no debts but for wenches and play; how such a one runs out of his estate; how *Paris*, bribed by *Juno* and *Venus*, loath to offend either party, slept out the whole cause on the bench; or how such an orator makes long speeches in the *Senate*, with much thought, little sense, and to no purpose;—whoever, I say, should venture to be thus particular, must expect to be imprisoned for *scandalum magnatum*, to have challenges sent him, to be sued for defamation, and to be brought before the bar of the House.

But I forget that I am expatiating on a subject wherein I have no concern, having neither a talent nor an inclination for satire. On the other side, I am so entirely satisfied with the whole present procedure of human things, that I have been for some years preparing material towards “*A Panegyric upon the World*,” to which I intended to add a second part, entitled “*A Modest Defence of the Proceedings of the Rabble in all Ages*.” Both these I had thoughts to publish by way of appendix to the following treatise; but finding my common-place book fill much slower than I had reason to expect, I have chosen to defer them to another occasion. Besides, I have been unhappily prevented in that design by a certain domestic misfortune, in the particulars whereof, though it would be very seasonable, and much in the modern way, to inform the gentle reader, and would also be of great assistance towards extending this preface into the size now

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<sup>6</sup> *Spleen*.—*Horace*.

*A Tale of a Tub*

in vogue—which by rule ought to be large in proportion as the subsequent volume is small—yet I shall now dismiss our impatient reader from any further attendance at the porch; and having duly prepared his mind by a preliminary discourse, shall gladly introduce him to the sublime mysteries that ensue.

## SECTION I. THE INTRODUCTION

WHOEVER HAS AN AMBITION to be heard in a crowd must press, and squeeze, and thrust, and climb with indefatigable pains, till he has exalted himself to a certain degree of altitude above them. Now, in all assemblies, though you wedge them ever so close, we may observe this peculiar property, that over their heads there is room enough; but how to reach it is the difficult point, it being as hard to get quit of number as of hell.

“—Evadere ad auras,  
Hoc opus, hic labor est.”<sup>7</sup>

To this end the philosopher’s way in all ages has been by erecting certain edifices in the air; but whatever practice and reputation these kind of structures have formerly possessed, or may still continue in, not excepting even that of Socrates when he was suspended in a basket to help contemplation, I think, with due submission, they seem to labour under two inconveniences. First, that the foundations being laid too high, they have been often out of sight and ever out of hearing. Secondly, that the materials being very transitory, have suffered much from inclemencies of air, especially in these north-west regions.

Therefore, towards the just performance of this great work there remain but three methods that I can think on; whereof the wisdom of our ancestors being highly sensible, has, to encourage all aspiring adventures, thought fit to erect three wooden machines for the use of those orators who desire to talk much without interruption. These are the Pulpit, the Ladder, and the Stage-itinerant. For as to the Bar, though it be compounded of the

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7 "But to return, and view the cheerful skies,  
In this the task and mighty labour lies."

—Dryden's "Virgil."

same matter and designed for the same use, it cannot, however, be well allowed the honour of a fourth, by reason of its level or inferior situation exposing it to perpetual interruption from collaterals. Neither can the Bench itself, though raised to a proper eminency, put in a better claim, whatever its advocates insist on. For if they please to look into the original design of its erection, and the circumstances or adjuncts subservient to that design, they will soon acknowledge the present practice exactly correspondent to the primitive institution, and both to answer the etymology of the name, which in the Phoenician tongue is a word of great signification, importing, if literally interpreted, "The place of sleep," but in common acceptation, "A seat well bolstered and cushioned, for the repose of old and gouty limbs;" *senes ut in otia tuta recedant*<sup>7</sup>. Fortune being indebted to them this part of retaliation, that as formerly they have long talked whilst others slept, so now they may sleep as long whilst others talk.

But if no other argument could occur to exclude the Bench and the Bar from the list of oratorical machines, it were sufficient that the admission of them would overthrow a number which I was resolved to establish, whatever argument it might cost me; in imitation of that prudent method observed by many other philosophers and great clerks, whose chief art in division has been to grow fond of some proper mystical number, which their imaginations have rendered sacred to a degree that they force common reason to find room for it in every part of Nature, reducing, including, and adjusting, every genus and species within that compass by coupling some against their wills and banishing others at any rate. Now, among all the rest, the profound number THREE<sup>8</sup> is that which has most employed my sublimest speculations, nor ever without wonderful delight. There is now in the press, and will be published next term, a panegyric essay of mine upon this number, wherein I have, by most convincing

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<sup>7</sup>a "That the old may withdraw into safe ease."

<sup>8</sup> In his subsequent apology for "The Tale of a Tub," Swift wrote of these machines that, "In the original manuscript there was a description of a fourth, which those who had the papers in their power blotted out, as having something in it of satire that I suppose they thought was too particular; and therefore they were forced to change it to the number three, whence some have endeavoured to squeeze out a dangerous meaning that was never thought on. And indeed the conceit was half spoiled by changing the numbers; that of four being much more cabalistic, and therefore better exposing the pretended virtue of numbers, a superstition then intended to be ridiculed."

proofs, not only reduced the senses and the elements under its banner, but brought over several deserters from its two great rivals, SEVEN and NINE.

Now, the first of these oratorical machines, in place as well as dignity, is the Pulpit. Of pulpits there are in this island several sorts, but I esteem only that made of timber from the Sylva Caledonia, which agrees very well with our climate. If it be upon its decay, it is the better, both for conveyance of sound and for other reasons to be mentioned by and by. The degree of perfection in shape and size I take to consist in being extremely narrow, with little ornament, and, best of all, without a cover; for, by ancient rule, it ought to be the only uncovered vessel in every assembly where it is rightfully used, by which means, from its near resemblance to a pillory, it will ever have a mighty influence on human ears.

Of Ladders I need say nothing. It is observed by foreigners themselves, to the honour of our country, that we excel all nations in our practice and understanding of this machine. The ascending orators do not only oblige their audience in the agreeable delivery, but the whole world in their early publication of their speeches, which I look upon as the choicest treasury of our British eloquence, and whereof I am informed that worthy citizen and bookseller, Mr. John Dunton, has made a faithful and a painful collection, which he shortly designs to publish in twelve volumes in folio, illustrated with copper-plates,—a work highly useful and curious, and altogether worthy of such a hand.

The last engine of orators is the Stage-itinerant, erected with much sagacity, sub Jove pluvio, in triviis et quadriviis.<sup>9</sup> It is the great seminary of the two former, and its orators are sometimes preferred to the one and sometimes to the other, in proportion to their deservings, there being a strict and perpetual intercourse between all three.

From this accurate deduction it is manifest that for obtaining attention in public there is of necessity required a superior position of place. But although this point be generally granted, yet the cause is little agreed in; and it seems to me that very few philosophers have fallen into a true natural solution of this phenomenon. The deepest account, and the most fairly digested of any I have yet met with is this, that air being a heavy body, and therefore, according to the system of Epicurus<sup>10</sup>, continually descending, must needs be more so when laden and pressed down by words, which are also bodies of much weight and gravity, as is manifest from those deep impressions they make and leave upon us, and therefore must be delivered

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<sup>9</sup> "Under the rainy sky, in the meetings of three and of four ways."

<sup>10</sup> Lucretius, lib. 2.—S.

from a due altitude, or else they will neither carry a good aim nor fall down with a sufficient force.

“Corpoream quoque enim vocem constare fatendum est,  
Et sonitum, quoniam possunt impellere sensus.”

—Lucr. lib. 4.<sup>11</sup>

And I am the readier to favour this conjecture from a common observation, that in the several assemblies of these orators Nature itself has instructed the hearers to stand with their mouths open and erected parallel to the horizon, so as they may be intersected by a perpendicular line from the zenith to the centre of the earth. In which position, if the audience be well compact, every one carries home a share, and little or nothing is lost.

I confess there is something yet more refined in the contrivance and structure of our modern theatres. For, first, the pit is sunk below the stage with due regard to the institution above deduced, that whatever weighty matter shall be delivered thence, whether it be lead or gold, may fall plump into the jaws of certain critics, as I think they are called, which stand ready open to devour them. Then the boxes are built round and raised to a level with the scene, in deference to the ladies, because that large portion of wit laid out in raising prurientes and protuberances is observed to run much upon a line, and ever in a circle. The whining passions and little starved conceits are gently wafted up by their own extreme levity to the middle region, and there fix and are frozen by the frigid understandings of the inhabitants. Bombast and buffoonery, by nature lofty and light, soar highest of all, and would be lost in the roof if the prudent architect had not, with much foresight, contrived for them a fourth place, called the twelve-penny gallery, and there planted a suitable colony, who greedily intercept them in their passage.

Now this physico-logical scheme of oratorical receptacles or machines contains a great mystery, being a type, a sign, an emblem, a shadow, a symbol, bearing analogy to the spacious commonwealth of writers and to those methods by which they must exalt themselves to a certain eminency above the inferior world. By the Pulpit are adumbrated the writings of our modern saints in Great Britain, as they have spiritualised and refined them from the dross and grossness of sense and human reason. The matter, as we have said, is of rotten wood, and that upon two considerations: because it is the

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11 "'Tis certain, then, the voice that thus can wound;  
Is all material body, every sound."

quality of rotten wood to light in the dark; and secondly, because its cavities are full of worms—which is a type with a pair of handles, having a respect to the two principal qualifications of the orator and the two different fates attending upon his works.<sup>12</sup>

The Ladder is an adequate symbol of faction and of poetry, to both of which so noble a number of authors are indebted for their fame. Of faction, because (Hiatus in MS.). Of poetry, because its orators do perorare with a song; and because, climbing up by slow degrees, fate is sure to turn them off before they can reach within many steps of the top; and because it is a preferment attained by transferring of propriety and a confounding of meum and tuum.

Under the Stage-itinerant are couched those productions designed for the pleasure and delight of mortal man, such as “Six Pennyworth of Wit,” “Westminster Drolleries,” “Delightful Tales,” “Complete Jesters,” and the like, by which the writers of and for Grub Street have in these later ages so nobly triumphed over time, have clipped his wings, pared his nails, filed his teeth, turned back his hour-glass, blunted his scythe, and drawn the hobnails out of his shoes. It is under this class I have presumed to list my present treatise, being just come from having the honour conferred upon me to be adopted a member of that illustrious fraternity.

Now, I am not unaware how the productions of the Grub Street brotherhood have of late years fallen under many prejudices, nor how it has been the perpetual employment of two junior start-up societies to ridicule them and their authors as unworthy their established post in the commonwealth of wit and learning. Their own consciences will easily inform them whom I mean; nor has the world been so negligent a looker-on as not to observe the continual efforts made by the societies of Gresham and of Will’s<sup>13</sup>, to edify a name and reputation upon the ruin of ours. And this is yet a more feeling grief to us, upon the regards of tenderness as well as of justice, when we reflect on their proceedings not only as unjust, but as ungrateful, undutiful, and unnatural. For how can it be forgot by the world or themselves, to say nothing of our own records, which are full and clear in the point, that they both are seminaries, not only of our planting, but our watering too. I am informed our two rivals have lately made an offer to enter into the lists with united forces and challenge us to a comparison of books, both as to weight and number. In return to which, with license from our president, I humbly offer two answers. First, we say the

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<sup>12</sup> To be burnt or worm-eaten.

<sup>13</sup> The Royal Society first met at Gresham College, the resort of men of science. Will’s Coffee-House was the resort of wits and men of letters.

proposal is like that which Archimedes made upon a smaller affair<sup>14</sup>, including an impossibility in the practice; for where can they find scales of capacity enough for the first, or an arithmetician of capacity enough for the second. Secondly, we are ready to accept the challenge, but with this condition, that a third indifferent person be assigned, to whose impartial judgment it shall be left to decide which society each book, treatise, or pamphlet do most properly belong to. This point, God knows, is very far from being fixed at present, for we are ready to produce a catalogue of some thousands which in all common justice ought to be entitled to our fraternity, but by the revolted and newfangled writers most perfidiously ascribed to the others. Upon all which we think it very unbecoming our prudence that the determination should be remitted to the authors themselves, when our adversaries by briguing and caballing have caused so universal a defection from us, that the greatest part of our society has already deserted to them, and our nearest friends begin to stand aloof, as if they were half ashamed to own us.

This is the utmost I am authorised to say upon so ungrateful and melancholy a subject, because we are extremely unwilling to inflame a controversy whose continuance may be so fatal to the interests of us all, desiring much rather that things be amicably composed; and we shall so far advance on our side as to be ready to receive the two prodigals with open arms whenever they shall think fit to return from their husks and their harlots, which I think, from the present course of their studies<sup>15</sup>, they most properly may be said to be engaged in, and, like an indulgent parent, continue to them our affection and our blessing.

But the greatest maim given to that general reception which the writings of our society have formerly received, next to the transitory state of all sublunary things, has been a superficial vein among many readers of the present age, who will by no means be persuaded to inspect beyond the surface and the rind of things; whereas wisdom is a fox, who, after long hunting, will at last cost you the pains to dig out. It is a cheese which, by how much the richer, has the thicker, the homelier, and the coarser coat, and whereof to a judicious palate the maggots are the best. It is a sack-posset, wherein the deeper you go you will find it the sweeter. Wisdom is a hen whose cackling we must value and consider, because it is attended with an egg. But then, lastly, it is a nut, which, unless you choose with judgment, may cost you a tooth, and pay you with nothing but a worm.

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<sup>14</sup> Viz., about moving the earth.—S.

<sup>15</sup> Viz., about moving the earth.—S.



In consequence of these momentous truths, the Grubaeon sages have always chosen to convey their precepts and their arts shut up within the vehicles of types and fables; which having been perhaps more careful and curious in adorning than was altogether necessary, it has fared with these vehicles after the usual fate of coaches over-finely painted and gilt, that the transitory gazers have so dazzled their eyes and filled their imaginations with the outward lustre, as neither to regard nor consider the person or the parts of the owner within. A misfortune we undergo with somewhat less reluctance, because it has been common to us with Pythagoras, Æsop, Socrates, and other of our predecessors.

However, that neither the world nor ourselves may any longer suffer by such misunderstandings, I have been prevailed on, after much importunity from my friends, to travail in a complete and laborious dissertation upon the prime productions of our society, which, besides their beautiful externals for the gratification of superficial readers, have darkly and deeply couched under them the most finished and refined systems of all sciences and arts, as I do not doubt to lay open by untwisting or unwinding, and either to draw up by exantlation or display by incision.

This great work was entered upon some years ago by one of our most eminent members. He began with the "History of Reynard the Fox," but neither lived to publish his essay nor to proceed farther in so useful an attempt, which is very much to be lamented, because the discovery he made and communicated to his friends is now universally received; nor do I think any of the learned will dispute that famous treatise to be a complete body of civil knowledge, and the revelation, or rather the apocalypse, of all state arcana. But the progress I have made is much greater, having already finished my annotations upon several dozens from some of which I shall impart a few hints to the candid reader, as far as will be necessary to the conclusion at which I aim.

The first piece I have handled is that of "Tom Thumb," whose author was a Pythagorean philosopher. This dark treatise contains the whole scheme of the metempsychosis, deducing the progress of the soul through all her stages.

The next is "Dr. Faustus," penned by Artepheus, an author bonae notae and an adeptus; he published it in the nine hundred and eighty-fourth year<sup>16</sup> of his age; this writer proceeds wholly by reincrudation, or in the *via humida*; and the marriage between Faustus and Helen does most conspicuously dilucidate the fermenting of the male and female dragon.

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<sup>16</sup> He lived a thousand.—S.

“Whittington and his Cat” is the work of that mysterious Rabbi, Jehuda Hannasi, containing a defence of the Gemara of the Jerusalem Misna, and its just preference to that of Babylon, contrary to the vulgar opinion.

“The Hind and Panther.” This is the masterpiece of a famous writer now living<sup>17</sup>, intended for a complete abstract of sixteen thousand schoolmen from Scotus to Bellarmine.

“Tommy Potts.” Another piece, supposed by the same hand, by way of supplement to the former.

The “Wise Men of Gotham,” cum Appendice. This is a treatise of immense erudition, being the great original and fountain of those arguments bandied about both in France and England, for a just defence of modern learning and wit, against the presumption, the pride, and the ignorance of the ancients. This unknown author hath so exhausted the subject, that a penetrating reader will easily discover whatever has been written since upon that dispute to be little more than repetition. An abstract of this treatise has been lately published by a worthy member of our society.

These notices may serve to give the learned reader an idea as well as a taste of what the whole work is likely to produce, wherein I have now altogether circumscribed my thoughts and my studies; and if I can bring it to a perfection before I die, shall reckon I have well employed the poor remains of an unfortunate life. This indeed is more than I can justly expect from a quill worn to the pith in the service of the State, in pros and cons upon Popish Plots, and Meal Tubs, and Exclusion Bills, and Passive Obedience, and Addresses of Lives and Fortunes; and Prerogative, and Property, and Liberty of Conscience, and Letters to a Friend: from an understanding and a conscience, threadbare and ragged with perpetual turning; from a head broken in a hundred places by the malignants of the opposite factions, and from a body spent with poxes ill cured, by trusting to bawds and surgeons, who (as it afterwards appeared) were professed enemies to me and the Government, and revenged their party’s quarrel upon my nose and shins. Fourscore and eleven pamphlets have I written under three reigns, and for the service of six-and-thirty factions. But finding the State has no farther occasion for me and my ink, I retire willingly to draw it out into speculations more becoming a philosopher, having, to my unspeakable comfort, passed a long life with a conscience void of offence towards God and towards men.

But to return. I am assured from the reader’s candour that the brief specimen I have given will easily clear all the rest of our society’s produc-

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<sup>17</sup> Viz., in the year 1697.—S. Dryden died in 1700, and the publication of the “Tale of a Tub,” written in 1697, was not until 1704.

tions from an aspersion grown, as it is manifest, out of envy and ignorance, that they are of little farther use or value to mankind beyond the common entertainments of their wit and their style; for these I am sure have never yet been disputed by our keenest adversaries; in both which, as well as the more profound and most mystical part, I have throughout this treatise closely followed the most applauded originals. And to render all complete I have with much thought and application of mind so ordered that the chief title prefixed to it (I mean that under which I design it shall pass in the common conversation of court and town) is modelled exactly after the manner peculiar to our society.

I confess to have been somewhat liberal in the business of titles<sup>18</sup>, having observed the humour of multiplying them, to bear great vogue among certain writers, whom I exceedingly reverence. And indeed it seems not unreasonable that books, the children of the brain, should have the honour to be christened with variety of names, as well as other infants of quality. Our famous Dryden has ventured to proceed a point farther, endeavouring to introduce also a multiplicity of godfathers<sup>19</sup>, which is an improvement of much more advantage, upon a very obvious account. It is a pity this admirable invention has not been better cultivated, so as to grow by this time into general imitation, when such an authority serves it for a precedent. Nor have my endeavours been wanting to second so useful an example, but it seems there is an unhappy expense usually annexed to the calling of a godfather, which was clearly out of my head, as it is very reasonable to believe. Where the pinch lay, I cannot certainly affirm; but having employed a world of thoughts and pains to split my treatise into forty sections, and having entreated forty Lords of my acquaintance that they would do me the honour to stand, they all made it matter of conscience, and sent me their excuses.

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<sup>18</sup> The title-page in the original was so torn that it was not possible to recover several titles which the author here speaks of.—S.

<sup>19</sup> See Virgil translated, &c.—S.

## SECTION II.

Once upon a time there was a man who had three sons by one wife<sup>20</sup> and all at a birth, neither could the midwife tell certainly which was the eldest. Their father died while they were young, and upon his death-bed, calling the lads to him, spoke thus:-

“Sons, because I have purchased no estate, nor was born to any, I have long considered of some good legacies to bequeath you, and at last, with much care as well as expense, have provided each of you (here they are) a new coat. Now, you are to understand that these coats have two virtues contained in them; one is, that with good wearing they will last you fresh and sound as long as you live; the other is, that they will grow in the same proportion with your bodies, lengthening and widening of themselves, so as to be always fit. Here, let me see them on you before I die. So, very well! Pray, children, wear them clean and brush them often. You will find in my will (here it is) full instructions in every particular concerning the wearing and management of your coats, wherein you must be very exact to avoid the penalties I have appointed for every transgression or neglect, upon which your future fortunes will entirely depend. I have also commanded in my will that you should live together in one house like brethren and friends, for then you will be sure to thrive and not otherwise.”

Here the story says this good father died, and the three sons went all together to seek their fortunes.

I shall not trouble you with recounting what adventures they met for the first seven years, any farther than by taking notice that they carefully observed their father’s will and kept their coats in very good order; that they

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<sup>20</sup> Peter, the Church of Rome; Martin, the Reformed Church as established by authority in England; Jack, the dissenters from the English Church Establishment. Martin, named probably from Martin Luther; Jack, from John Calvin. The coats are the coats of righteousness, in which all servants of God should be clothed; alike in love and duty, however they may differ in opinion.

travelled through several countries, encountered a reasonable quantity of giants, and slew certain dragons.

Being now arrived at the proper age for producing themselves, they came up to town and fell in love with the ladies, but especially three, who about that time were in chief reputation, the Duchess d'Argent, Madame de Grands-Titres, and the Countess d'Orgueil<sup>21</sup>. On their first appearance, our three adventurers met with a very bad reception, and soon with great sagacity guessing out the reason, they quickly began to improve in the good qualities of the town. They wrote, and rallied, and rhymed, and sung, and said, and said nothing; they drank, and fought, and slept, and swore, and took snuff; they went to new plays on the first night, haunted the chocolate-houses, beat the watch; they bilked hackney-coachmen, ran in debt with shopkeepers, and lay with their wives; they killed bailiffs, kicked fiddlers down-stairs, ate at Locket's, loitered at Will's; they talked of the drawing-room and never came there; dined with lords they never saw; whispered a duchess and spoke never a word; exposed the scrawls of their laundress for billet-doux of quality; came ever just from court and were never seen in it; attended the levee sub dio; got a list of peers by heart in one company, and with great familiarity retailed them in another. Above all, they constantly attended those committees of Senators who are silent in the House and loud in the coffeehouse, where they nightly adjourn to chew the cud of politics, and are encompassed with a ring of disciples who lie in wait to catch up their droppings. The three brothers had acquired forty other qualifications of the like stamp too tedious to recount, and by consequence were justly reckoned the most accomplished persons in town. But all would not suffice, and the ladies aforesaid continued still inflexible. To clear up which difficulty, I must, with the reader's good leave and patience, have recourse to some points of weight which the authors of that age have not sufficiently illustrated.

For about this time it happened a sect arose whose tenets obtained and spread very far, especially in the grand monde, and among everybody of good fashion. They worshipped a sort of idol<sup>22</sup>, who, as their doctrine delivered, did daily create men by a kind of manufactory operation. This idol they placed in the highest parts of the house on an altar erected about three feet. He was shown in the posture of a Persian emperor sitting on a

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<sup>21</sup> Covetousness, ambition, and pride, which were the three great vices that the ancient fathers inveighed against as the first corruptions of Christianity.—W. Wotton.

<sup>22</sup> The tailor.

superficies with his legs interwoven under him. This god had a goose for his ensign, whence it is that some learned men pretend to deduce his original from Jupiter Capitolinus. At his left hand, beneath the altar, Hell seemed to open and catch at the animals the idol was creating, to prevent which, certain of his priests hourly flung in pieces of the uninformed mass or substance, and sometimes whole limbs already enlivened, which that horrid gulph insatiably swallowed, terrible to behold. The goose was also held a subaltern divinity or *Deus minorum gentium*, before whose shrine was sacrificed that creature whose hourly food is human gore, and who is in so great renown abroad for being the delight and favourite of the Egyptian *Cercopithecus*<sup>23</sup>. Millions of these animals were cruelly slaughtered every day to appease the hunger of that consuming deity. The chief idol was also worshipped as the inventor of the yard and the needle, whether as the god of seamen, or on account of certain other mystical attributes, hath not been sufficiently cleared.

The worshippers of this deity had also a system of their belief which seemed to turn upon the following fundamental. They held the universe to be a large suit of clothes which invests everything; that the earth is invested by the air; the air is invested by the stars; and the stars are invested by the *Primum Mobile*. Look on this globe of earth, you will find it to be a very complete and fashionable dress. What is that which some call land but a fine coat faced with green, or the sea but a waistcoat of water-tabby? Proceed to the particular works of the creation, you will find how curious journeyman Nature hath been to trim up the vegetable beaux; observe how sparkish a periwig adorns the head of a beech, and what a fine doublet of white satin is worn by the birch. To conclude from all, what is man himself but a microcoat, or rather a complete suit of clothes with all its trimmings? As to his body there can be no dispute, but examine even the acquirements of his mind, you will find them all contribute in their order towards furnishing out an exact dress. To instance no more, is not religion a cloak, honesty a pair of shoes worn out in the dirt, self-love a surtout, vanity a shirt, and conscience a pair of breeches, which, though a cover for lewdness as well as nastiness, is easily slipped down for the service of both.

These postulata being admitted, it will follow in due course of reasoning that those beings which the world calls improperly suits of clothes are in reality the most refined species of animals, or to proceed higher, that they are rational creatures or men. For is it not manifest that they live, and move, and talk, and perform all other offices of human life? Are not beauty,

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<sup>23</sup> A sacred monkey.

and wit, and mien, and breeding their inseparable proprieties? In short, we see nothing but them, hear nothing but them. Is it not they who walk the streets, fill up Parliament-, coffee-, play-, bawdy-houses. It is true, indeed, that these animals, which are vulgarly called suits of clothes or dresses, do according to certain compositions receive different appellations. If one of them be trimmed up with a gold chain, and a red gown, and a white rod, and a great horse, it is called a Lord Mayor; if certain ermines and furs be placed in a certain position, we style them a judge, and so an apt conjunction of lawn and black satin we entitle a Bishop.

Others of these professors, though agreeing in the main system, were yet more refined upon certain branches of it; and held that man was an animal compounded of two dresses, the natural and the celestial suit, which were the body and the soul; that the soul was the outward, and the body the inward clothing; that the latter was *ex traduce*, but the former of daily creation and circumfusion. This last they proved by Scripture, because in them we live, and move, and have our being: as likewise by philosophy, because they are all in all, and all in every part. Besides, said they, separate these two, and you will find the body to be only a senseless unsavoury carcass. By all which it is manifest that the outward dress must needs be the soul.

To this system of religion were tagged several subaltern doctrines, which were entertained with great vogue; as particularly the faculties of the mind were deduced by the learned among them in this manner: embroidery was sheer wit, gold fringe was agreeable conversation, gold lace was repartee, a huge long periwig was humour, and a coat full of powder was very good raillery. All which required abundance of finesse and delicatessen to manage with advantage, as well as a strict observance after times and fashions.

I have with much pains and reading collected out of ancient authors this short summary of a body of philosophy and divinity which seems to have been composed by a vein and race of thinking very different from any other systems, either ancient or modern. And it was not merely to entertain or satisfy the reader's curiosity, but rather to give him light into several circumstances of the following story, that, knowing the state of dispositions and opinions in an age so remote, he may better comprehend those great events which were the issue of them. I advise, therefore, the courteous reader to peruse with a world of application, again and again, whatever I have written upon this matter. And so leaving these broken ends, I carefully gather up the chief thread of my story, and proceed.

These opinions, therefore, were so universal, as well as the practices of them, among the refined part of court and town, that our three brother

adventurers, as their circumstances then stood, were strangely at a loss. For, on the one side, the three ladies they addressed themselves to (whom we have named already) were ever at the very top of the fashion, and abhorred all that were below it but the breadth of a hair. On the other side, their father's will was very precise, and it was the main precept in it, with the greatest penalties annexed, not to add to or diminish from their coats one thread without a positive command in the will. Now the coats their father had left them were, it is true, of very good cloth, and besides, so neatly sewn you would swear they were all of a piece, but, at the same time, very plain, with little or no ornament; and it happened that before they were a month in town great shoulder-knots came up. Straight all the world was shoulder-knots; no approaching the ladies' ruelles without the quota of shoulder-knots. "That fellow," cries one, "has no soul: where is his shoulder-knot?"<sup>23a</sup> Our three brethren soon discovered their want by sad experience, meeting in their walks with forty mortifications and indignities. If they went to the playhouse, the doorkeeper showed them into the twelve-penny gallery. If they called a boat, says a waterman, "I am first sculler." If they stepped into the "Rose" to take a bottle, the drawer would cry, "Friend, we sell no ale." If they went to visit a lady, a footman met them at the door with "Pray, send up your message." In this unhappy case they went immediately to consult their father's will, read it over and over, but not a word of the shoulder-knot. What should they do? What temper should they find? Obedience was absolutely necessary, and yet shoulder-knots appeared extremely requisite. After much thought, one of the brothers, who happened to be more book-learned than the other two, said he had found an expedient. "It is true," said he, "there is nothing here in this will, totidem verbis, making mention of shoulder-knots, but I dare conjecture we may find them inclusive, or totidem syllabis." This distinction was immediately approved by all; and so they fell again to examine the will. But their evil star had so directed the matter that the first syllable was not to be found in the whole writing; upon which

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<sup>23a</sup> The Roman Catholics were considered by the Reformers to have added to the simple doctrines of Christianity inventions of their own, and to have laid especial stress on the adoption of them. Upon Swift's saying of the three brothers, "Now the coats their father had left them were, it is true, of very good cloth, and besides so neatly sewn that you would swear they were all of a piece, but, at the same time, very plain, with little or no ornament," W. Wotton observes: "This is the distinguishing character of the Christian religion. Christiana religio absoluta et simplex, was Ammianus



disappointment, he who found the former evasion took heart, and said, "Brothers, there is yet hopes; for though we cannot find them totidem verbis nor totidem syllabis, I dare engage we shall make them out tertio modo or totidem literis." This discovery was also highly commended, upon which they fell once more to the scrutiny, and soon picked out S, H, O, U, L, D, E, R, when the same planet, enemy to their repose, had wonderfully contrived that a K was not to be found. Here was a weighty difficulty! But the distinguishing brother (for whom we shall hereafter find a name), now his hand was in, proved by a very good argument that K was a modern illegitimate letter, unknown to the learned ages, nor anywhere to be found in ancient manuscripts. "It is true," said he, "the word *Calendae*, had in Q. V. C.<sup>24</sup> been sometimes writ with a K, but erroneously, for in the best copies it is ever spelt with a C; and by consequence it was a gross mistake in our language to spell 'knot' with a K," but that from henceforward he would take care it should be writ with a C. Upon this all further difficulty vanished; shoulder-knots were made clearly out to be *jure paterno*, and our three gentlemen swaggered with as large and as flaunting ones as the best.

But as human happiness is of a very short duration, so in those days were human fashions, upon which it entirely depends. Shoulder-knots had their time, and we must now imagine them in their decline, for a certain lord came just from Paris with fifty yards of gold lace upon his coat, exactly trimmed after the court fashion of that month. In two days all mankind appeared closed up in bars of gold lace. Whoever durst peep abroad without his complement of gold lace was as scandalous as a ———, and as ill received among the women. What should our three knights do in this momentous affair? They had sufficiently strained a point already in the affair of shoulder-knots. Upon recourse to the will, nothing appeared there but *altum silentium*. That of the shoulder-knots was a loose, flying, circumstantial point, but this of gold lace seemed too considerable an alteration without better warrant. It did *aliquo modo essentiae adhaerere*, and therefore required a positive precept. But about this time it fell out that the learned brother aforesaid had read "*Aristotelis Dialectica*," and especially that wonderful piece de *Interpretatione*, which has the faculty of teaching its readers to find out a meaning in everything but itself, like commentators on the Revelations, who proceed prophets without understanding a syllable of the text. "Brothers," said he, "you are to be informed that of wills, *duo sunt genera*, nuncupatory and scriptory,<sup>25</sup> that in the

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<sup>24</sup> *Quibusdam veteribus codicibus* [some ancient MSS.].—S.

<sup>25</sup> There are two kinds—oral tradition and the written record,—reference to the value attached to tradition in the Roman Church.

scriptory will here before us there is no precept or mention about gold lace, conceditur, but si idem affirmetur de nuncupatorio negatur. For, brothers, if you remember, we heard a fellow say when we were boys that he heard my father's man say that he heard my father say that he would advise his sons to get gold lace on their coats as soon as ever they could procure money to buy it." "That is very true," cries the other. "I remember it perfectly well," said the third. And so, without more ado, they got the largest gold lace in the parish, and walked about as fine as lords.

A while after, there came up all in fashion a pretty sort of flame-coloured satin<sup>26</sup> for linings, and the mercer brought a pattern of it immediately to our three gentlemen. "An please your worships," said he, "my Lord C— and Sir J. W. had linings out of this very piece last night; it takes wonderfully, and I shall not have a remnant left enough to make my wife a pin-cushion by to-morrow morning at ten o'clock." Upon this they fell again to rummage the will, because the present case also required a positive precept, the lining being held by orthodox writers to be of the essence of the coat. After long search they could fix upon nothing to the matter in hand, except a short advice in their father's will to take care of fire and put out their candles before they went to sleep<sup>27</sup>. This, though a good deal for the purpose, and helping very far towards self-conviction, yet not seeming wholly of force to establish a command, and being resolved to avoid farther scruple, as well as future occasion for scandal, says he that was the scholar, "I remember to have read in wills of a codicil annexed, which is indeed a part of the will, and what it contains hath equal authority with the rest. Now I have been considering of this same will here before us, and I cannot reckon it to be complete for want of such a codicil. I will therefore fasten one in its proper place very dexterously. I have had it by me some time; it was written by a dog-keeper of my grandfather's, and talks a great deal, as good luck would have it, of this very flame-coloured satin." The project was immediately approved by the other two; an old parchment scroll was tagged on according to art, in the form of a codicil annexed, and the satin bought and worn.

Next winter a player, hired for the purpose by the Corporation of Fringemakers, acted his part in a new comedy, all covered with silver fringe<sup>28</sup>, and according to the laudable custom gave rise to that fashion. Upon which the brothers, consulting their father's will, to their great as-

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<sup>26</sup> The flame-coloured lining figures the doctrine of Purgatory; and the codicil annexed, the Apocryphal books annexed to the Bible. The dog-keeper is said to be an allusion to the Apocryphal book of Tobit.

<sup>27</sup> Dread hell and subdue their lusts.

<sup>28</sup> Strained glosses and interpretations of the simple text.

tonishment found these words: "Item, I charge and command my said three sons to wear no sort of silver fringe upon or about their said coats," &c., with a penalty in case of disobedience too long here to insert. However, after some pause, the brother so often mentioned for his erudition, who was well skilled in criticisms, had found in a certain author, which he said should be nameless, that the same word which in the will is called fringe does also signify a broom-stick, and doubtless ought to have the same interpretation in this paragraph. This another of the brothers disliked, because of that epithet silver, which could not, he humbly conceived, in propriety of speech be reasonably applied to a broom-stick; but it was replied upon him that this epithet was understood in a mythological and allegorical sense. However, he objected again why their father should forbid them to wear a broom-stick on their coats, a caution that seemed unnatural and impertinent; upon which he was taken up short, as one that spoke irreverently of a mystery which doubtless was very useful and significant, but ought not to be over-curiously pried into or nicely reasoned upon. And in short, their father's authority being now considerably sunk, this expedient was allowed to serve as a lawful dispensation for wearing their full proportion of silver fringe.

A while after was revived an old fashion, long antiquated, of embroidery with Indian figures of men, women, and children<sup>29</sup>. Here they had no occasion to examine the will. They remembered but too well how their father had always abhorred this fashion; that he made several paragraphs on purpose, importing his utter detestation of it, and bestowing his everlasting curse to his sons whenever they should wear it. For all this, in a few days they appeared higher in the fashion than anybody else in the town. But they solved the matter by saying that these figures were not at all the same with those that were formerly worn and were meant in the will; besides, they did not wear them in that sense, as forbidden by their father, but as they were a commendable custom, and of great use to the public. That these rigorous clauses in the will did therefore require some allowance and a favourable interpretation, and ought to be understood *cum grano salis*.

But fashions perpetually altering in that age, the scholastic brother grew weary of searching further evasions and solving everlasting contradictions. Resolved, therefore, at all hazards to comply with the modes of the world, they concerted matters together, and agreed unanimously to lock up their father's will in a strong-box, brought out of Greece or Italy<sup>30</sup> (I have

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<sup>29</sup> Images in churches.

<sup>30</sup> The locking up of the Gospel in the original Greek or in the Latin of the Vulgate, and forbidding its diffusion in the language of the people.

forgot which), and trouble themselves no farther to examine it, but only refer to its authority whenever they thought fit. In consequence whereof, a while after it grew a general mode to wear an infinite number of points, most of them tagged with silver; upon which the scholar pronounced ex cathedra<sup>31</sup> that points were absolutely jure paterno as they might very well remember. It is true, indeed, the fashion prescribed somewhat more than were directly named in the will; however, that they, as heirs-general of their father, had power to make and add certain clauses for public emolument, though not deducible *todidem verbis* from the letter of the will, or else *multa absurda sequerentur*. This was understood for canonical, and therefore on the following Sunday they came to church all covered with points.

The learned brother so often mentioned was reckoned the best scholar in all that or the next street to it; insomuch, as having run something behindhand with the world, he obtained the favour from a certain lord<sup>32</sup> to receive him into his house and to teach his children. A while after the lord died, and he, by long practice upon his father's will, found the way of contriving a deed of conveyance of that house to himself and his heirs; upon which he took possession, turned the young squires out, and received his brothers in their stead.

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<sup>31</sup> The Pope's bulls and decretals, issued by his paternal authority, that must determine questions of interpretation and tradition, or else many absurd things would follow.

<sup>32</sup> Constantine the Great, from whom the Church of Rome was said to have received the donation of St. Peter's patrimony, and first derived the wealth described by our old Reformers as "the fatal gift of Constantine."

### SECTION III. A DIGRESSION CONCERNING CRITICS.

Though I have been hitherto as cautious as I could, upon all occasions, most nicely to follow the rules and methods of writing laid down by the example of our illustrious moderns, yet has the unhappy shortness of my memory led me into an error, from which I must immediately extricate myself, before I can decently pursue my principal subject. I confess with shame it was an unpardonable omission to proceed so far as I have already done before I had performed the due discourses, expostulatory, supplicatory, or deprecatory, with my good lords the critics. Towards some atonement for this grievous neglect, I do here make humbly bold to present them with a short account of themselves and their art, by looking into the original and pedigree of the word, as it is generally understood among us, and very briefly considering the ancient and present state thereof.

By the word critic, at this day so frequent in all conversations, there have sometimes been distinguished three very different species of mortal men, according as I have read in ancient books and pamphlets. For first, by this term were understood such persons as invented or drew up rules for themselves and the world, by observing which a careful reader might be able to pronounce upon the productions of the learned, form his taste to a true relish of the sublime and the admirable, and divide every beauty of matter or of style from the corruption that apes it. In their common perusal of books, singling out the errors and defects, the nauseous, the fulsome, the dull, and the impertinent, with the caution of a man that walks through Edinburgh streets in a morning, who is indeed as careful as he can to watch diligently and spy out the filth in his way; not that he is curious to observe the colour and complexion of the ordure or take its dimensions, much less to be paddling in or tasting it, but only with a design to come out as cleanly as he may. These men seem, though very

erroneously, to have understood the appellation of critic in a literal sense; that one principal part of his office was to praise and acquit, and that a critic who sets up to read only for an occasion of censure and reproof is a creature as barbarous as a judge who should take up a resolution to hang all men that came before him upon a trial.

Again, by the word critic have been meant the restorers of ancient learning from the worms, and graves, and dust of manuscripts.

Now the races of these two have been for some ages utterly extinct, and besides to discourse any further of them would not be at all to my purpose.

The third and noblest sort is that of the true critic, whose original is the most ancient of all. Every true critic is a hero born, descending in a direct line from a celestial stem, by Momus and Hybris, who begat Zoilus, who begat Tigellius, who begat Etcaetera the elder, who begat Bentley, and Rymer, and Wotton, and Perrault, and Dennis, who begat Etcaetera the younger.

And these are the critics from whom the commonwealth of learning has in all ages received such immense benefits, that the gratitude of their admirers placed their origin in heaven, among those of Hercules, Theseus, Perseus, and other great deservers of mankind. But heroic virtue itself hath not been exempt from the obloquy of evil tongues. For it hath been objected that those ancient heroes, famous for their combating so many giants, and dragons, and robbers, were in their own persons a greater nuisance to mankind than any of those monsters they subdued; and therefore, to render their obligations more complete, when all other vermin were destroyed, should in conscience have concluded with the same justice upon themselves, as Hercules most generously did, and hath upon that score procured for himself more temples and votaries than the best of his fellows. For these reasons I suppose it is why some have conceived it would be very expedient for the public good of learning that every true critic, as soon as he had finished his task assigned, should immediately deliver himself up to ratsbane or hemp, or from some convenient altitude, and that no man's pretensions to so illustrious a character should by any means be received before that operation was performed.

Now, from this heavenly descent of criticism, and the close analogy it bears to heroic virtue, it is easy to assign the proper employment of a true, ancient, genuine critic: which is, to travel through this vast world of writings; to peruse and hunt those monstrous faults bred within them; to drag out the lurking errors, like Cacus from his den; to multiply them like Hydra's heads; and rake them together like Augeas's dung; or else to drive

away a sort of dangerous fowl who have a perverse inclination to plunder the best branches of the tree of knowledge, like those Stymphalian birds that ate up the fruit.

These reasonings will furnish us with an adequate definition of a true critic: that he is a discoverer and collector of writers' faults; which may be further put beyond dispute by the following demonstration:- That whoever will examine the writings in all kinds wherewith this ancient sect hath honoured the world, shall immediately find from the whole thread and tenor of them that the ideas of the authors have been altogether conversant and taken up with the faults, and blemishes, and oversights, and mistakes of other writers, and let the subject treated on be whatever it will, their imaginations are so entirely possessed and replete with the defects of other pens, that the very quintessence of what is bad does of necessity distil into their own, by which means the whole appears to be nothing else but an abstract of the criticisms themselves have made.

Having thus briefly considered the original and office of a critic, as the word is understood in its most noble and universal acceptation, I proceed to refute the objections of those who argue from the silence and pretermission of authors, by which they pretend to prove that the very art of criticism, as now exercised, and by me explained, is wholly modern, and consequently that the critics of Great Britain and France have no title to an original so ancient and illustrious as I have deduced. Now, if I can clearly make out, on the contrary, that the most ancient writers have particularly described both the person and the office of a true critic agreeable to the definition laid down by me, their grand objection—from the silence of authors—will fall to the ground.

I confess to have for a long time borne a part in this general error, from which I should never have acquitted myself but through the assistance of our noble moderns, whose most edifying volumes I turn indefatigably over night and day, for the improvement of my mind and the good of my country. These have with unwearied pains made many useful searches into the weak sides of the ancients, and given us a comprehensive list of them<sup>33</sup>. Besides, they have proved beyond contradiction that the very finest things delivered of old have been long since invented and brought to light by much later pens, and that the noblest discoveries those ancients ever made in art or nature have all been produced by the transcending genius of the present age, which clearly shows how little merit those ancients can justly pretend to, and takes off that blind admiration paid them by men in a corner, who have the unhappiness of conversing too little

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<sup>33</sup> See Wotton "Of Ancient and Modern Learning."—S.

with present things. Reflecting maturely upon all this, and taking in the whole compass of human nature, I easily concluded that these ancients, highly sensible of their many imperfections, must needs have endeavoured, from some passages in their works, to obviate, soften, or divert the censorious reader, by satire or panegyric upon the true critics, in imitation of their masters, the moderns. Now, in the commonplaces<sup>34</sup> of both these I was plentifully instructed by a long course of useful study in prefaces and prologues, and therefore immediately resolved to try what I could discover of either, by a diligent perusal of the most ancient writers, and especially those who treated of the earliest times.

Here I found, to my great surprise, that although they all entered upon occasion into particular descriptions of the true critic, according as they were governed by their fears or their hopes, yet whatever they touched of that kind was with abundance of caution, adventuring no further than mythology and hieroglyphic. This, I suppose, gave ground to superficial readers for urging the silence of authors against the antiquity of the true critic, though the types are so apposite, and the applications so necessary and natural, that it is not easy to conceive how any reader of modern eye and taste could overlook them. I shall venture from a great number to produce a few which I am very confident will put this question beyond doubt.

It well deserves considering that these ancient writers, in treating enigmatically upon this subject, have generally fixed upon the very same hieroglyph, varying only the story according to their affections or their wit. For first, Pausanias is of opinion that the perfection of writing correct was entirely owing to the institution of critics, and that he can possibly mean no other than the true critic is, I think, manifest enough from the following description. He says they were a race of men who delighted to nibble at the superfluties and excrescences of books, which the learned at length observing, took warning of their own accord to lop the luxuriant, the rotten, the dead, the sapless, and the overgrown branches from their works. But now all this he cunningly shades under the following allegory: That the Nauplians in Argia learned the art of pruning their vines by observing that when an ass had browsed upon one of them, it thrived the better and bore fairer fruit. But Herodotus holding the very same hieroglyph, speaks much plainer and almost in terminis. He hath been so bold as to tax the true critics of ignorance and malice, telling us openly, for I think nothing can be plainer, that in the western part of Libya there

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<sup>34</sup> See Wotton "Of Ancient and Modern Learning."—S.



were asses with horns, upon which relation Ctesias<sup>35</sup> yet refines, mentioning the very same animal about India; adding, that whereas all other asses wanted a gall, these horned ones were so redundant in that part that their flesh was not to be eaten because of its extreme bitterness.

Now, the reason why those ancient writers treated this subject only by types and figures was because they durst not make open attacks against a party so potent and so terrible as the critics of those ages were, whose very voice was so dreadful that a legion of authors would tremble and drop their pens at the sound. For so Herodotus tells us expressly in another place how a vast army of Scythians was put to flight in a panic terror by the braying of an ass. From hence it is conjectured by certain profound philologers, that the great awe and reverence paid to a true critic by the writers of Britain have been derived to us from those our Scythian ancestors. In short, this dread was so universal, that in process of time those authors who had a mind to publish their sentiments more freely in describing the true critics of their several ages, were forced to leave off the use of the former hieroglyph as too nearly approaching the prototype, and invented other terms instead thereof that were more cautious and mystical. So Diodorus, speaking to the same purpose, ventures no farther than to say that in the mountains of Helicon there grows a certain weed which bears a flower of so damned a scent as to poison those who offer to smell it. Lucretius gives exactly the same relation.

“Est etiam in magnis Heliconis montibus arbos,  
Floris odore hominem retro consueta necare.”

—Lib. 6.36

But Ctesias, whom we lately quoted, has been a great deal bolder; he had been used with much severity by the true critics of his own age, and therefore could not forbear to leave behind him at least one deep mark of his vengeance against the whole tribe. His meaning is so near the surface that I wonder how it possibly came to be overlooked by those who deny the antiquity of the true critics. For pretending to make a description of many strange animals about India, he has set down these remarkable words. “Among the rest,” says he, “there is a serpent that wants teeth, and consequently cannot bite, but if its vomit (to which it is much addicted) hap-

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<sup>35</sup> Vide excerpta ex eo apud Photium—S.

<sup>36</sup> "Near Helicon and round the learned hill  
Grow trees whose blossoms with their odour kill."

—Hawkesworth.

pens to fall upon anything, a certain rottenness or corruption ensues. These serpents are generally found among the mountains where jewels grow, and they frequently emit a poisonous juice, whereof whoever drinks, that person's brain flies out of his nostrils."

There was also among the ancients a sort of critic, not distinguished in specie from the former but in growth or degree, who seem to have been only the tyros or junior scholars, yet because of their differing employments they are frequently mentioned as a sect by themselves. The usual exercise of these young students was to attend constantly at theatres, and learn to spy out the worst parts of the play, whereof they were obliged carefully to take note, and render a rational account to their tutors. Fleshed at these smaller sports, like young wolves, they grew up in time to be nimble and strong enough for hunting down large game. For it has been observed, both among ancients and moderns, that a true critic has one quality in common with a whore and an alderman, never to change his title or his nature; that a grey critic has been certainly a green one, the perfections and acquirements of his age being only the improved talents of his youth, like hemp, which some naturalists inform us is bad for suffocations, though taken but in the seed. I esteem the invention, or at least the refinement of prologues, to have been owing to these younger proficientes, of whom Terence makes frequent and honourable mention, under the name of Malevoli.

Now it is certain the institution of the true critics was of absolute necessity to the commonwealth of learning. For all human actions seem to be divided like Themistocles and his company. One man can fiddle, and another can make a small town a great city; and he that cannot do either one or the other deserves to be kicked out of the creation. The avoiding of which penalty has doubtless given the first birth to the nation of critics, and withal an occasion for their secret detractors to report that a true critic is a sort of mechanic set up with a stock and tools for his trade, at as little expense as a tailor; and that there is much analogy between the utensils and abilities of both. That the "Tailor's Hell" is the type of a critic's commonplace-book, and his wit and learning held forth by the goose. That it requires at least as many of these to the making up of one scholar as of the others to the composition of a man. That the valour of both is equal, and their weapons near of a size. Much may be said in answer to these invidious reflections; and I can positively affirm the first to be a falsehood: for, on the contrary, nothing is more certain than that it requires greater layings out to be free of the critic's company than of any other you can name. For as to be a true beggar, it will cost the richest

candidate every groat he is worth, so before one can commence a true critic, it will cost a man all the good qualities of his mind, which perhaps for a less purchase would be thought but an indifferent bargain.

Having thus amply proved the antiquity of criticism and described the primitive state of it, I shall now examine the present condition of this Empire, and show how well it agrees with its ancient self<sup>37</sup>. A certain author, whose works have many ages since been entirely lost, does in his fifth book and eighth chapter say of critics that "their writings are the mirrors of learning." This I understand in a literal sense, and suppose our author must mean that whoever designs to be a perfect writer must inspect into the books of critics, and correct his inventions there as in a mirror. Now, whoever considers that the mirrors of the ancients were made of brass and fine mercurio, may presently apply the two principal qualifications of a true modern critic, and consequently must needs conclude that these have always been and must be for ever the same. For brass is an emblem of duration, and when it is skilfully burnished will cast reflections from its own superficies without any assistance of mercury from behind. All the other talents of a critic will not require a particular mention, being included or easily deducible to these. However, I shall conclude with three maxims, which may serve both as characteristics to distinguish a true modern critic from a pretender, and will be also of admirable use to those worthy spirits who engage in so useful and honourable an art.

The first is, that criticism, contrary to all other faculties of the intellect, is ever held the truest and best when it is the very first result of the critic's mind; as fowlers reckon the first aim for the surest, and seldom fail of missing the mark if they stay not for a second.

Secondly, the true critics are known by their talent of swarming about the noblest writers, to which they are carried merely by instinct, as a rat to the best cheese, or a wasp to the fairest fruit. So when the king is a horseback he is sure to be the dirtiest person of the company, and they that make their court best are such as bespatter him most.

Lastly, a true critic in the perusal of a book is like a dog at a feast, whose thoughts and stomach are wholly set upon what the guests fling away, and consequently is apt to snarl most when there are the fewest bones<sup>38</sup>.

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<sup>37</sup> A quotation after the manner of a great author. Vide Bentley's "Dissertation," &c.—S.

<sup>38</sup> "And how they're disappointed when they're pleased."

—Congreve, quoted by Pate.

Thus much I think is sufficient to serve by way of address to my patrons, the true modern critics, and may very well atone for my past silence, as well as that which I am like to observe for the future. I hope I have deserved so well of their whole body as to meet with generous and tender usage at their hands. Supported by which expectation I go on boldly to pursue those adventures already so happily begun.

## SECTION IV. A TALE OF A TUB.

I have now with much pains and study conducted the reader to a period where he must expect to hear of great revolutions. For no sooner had our learned brother, so often mentioned, got a warm house of his own over his head, than he began to look big and to take mightily upon him, insomuch that unless the gentle reader out of his great candour will please a little to exalt his idea, I am afraid he will henceforth hardly know the hero of the play when he happens to meet him, his part, his dress, and his mien being so much altered.

He told his brothers he would have them to know that he was their elder, and consequently his father's sole heir; nay, a while after, he would not allow them to call him brother, but Mr. Peter; and then he must be styled Father Peter, and sometimes My Lord Peter. To support this grandeur, which he soon began to consider could not be maintained without a better fonde than what he was born to, after much thought he cast about at last to turn projector and virtuoso, wherein he so well succeeded, that many famous discoveries, projects, and machines which bear great vogue and practice at present in the world, are owing entirely to Lord Peter's invention. I will deduce the best account I have been able to collect of the chief amongst them, without considering much the order they came out in, because I think authors are not well agreed as to that point.

I hope when this treatise of mine shall be translated into foreign languages (as I may without vanity affirm that the labour of collecting, the faithfulness in recounting, and the great usefulness of the matter to the public, will amply deserve that justice), that of the several Academies abroad, especially those of France and Italy, will favourably accept these humble offers for the advancement of universal knowledge. I do also advertise the most reverend fathers the Eastern missionaries that I have purely for their sakes made use of such words and phrases as will best admit an easy turn into any of the Oriental languages, especially the Chinese. And so I pro-

ceed with great content of mind upon reflecting how much emolument this whole globe of earth is like to reap by my labours.

The first undertaking of Lord Peter was to purchase a large continent, lately said to have been discovered in Terra Australis incognita. This tract of land he bought at a very great pennyworth from the discoverers themselves (though some pretended to doubt whether they had ever been there), and then retailed it into several cantons to certain dealers, who carried over colonies, but were all shipwrecked in the voyage; upon which Lord Peter sold the said continent to other customers again and again, and again and again, with the same success.

The second project I shall mention was his sovereign remedy for the worms, especially those in the spleen. The patient was to eat nothing after supper for three nights; as soon as he went to bed, he was carefully to lie on one side, and when he grew weary, to turn upon the other. He must also duly confine his two eyes to the same object, and by no means break wind at both ends together without manifest occasion. These prescriptions diligently observed, the worms would void insensibly by perspiration ascending through the brain.

A third invention was the erecting of a whispering-office for the public good and ease of all such as are hypochondriacal or troubled with the cholic, as likewise of all eavesdroppers, physicians, midwives, small politicians, friends fallen out, repeating poets, lovers happy or in despair, bawds, privy-counsellors, pages, parasites and buffoons, in short, of all such as are in danger of bursting with too much wind. An ass's head was placed so conveniently, that the party affected might easily with his mouth accost either of the animal's ears, which he was to apply close for a certain space, and by a fugitive faculty peculiar to the ears of that animal, receive immediate benefit, either by eructation, or expiration, or evomition.

Another very beneficial project of Lord Peter's was an office of insurance for tobacco-pipes, martyrs of the modern zeal, volumes of poetry, shadows ... and rivers, that these, nor any of these, shall receive damage by fire. From whence our friendly societies may plainly find themselves to be only transcribers from this original, though the one and the other have been of great benefit to the undertakers as well as of equal to the public.

Lord Peter was also held the original author of puppets and raree-shows, the great usefulness whereof being so generally known, I shall not enlarge farther upon this particular.

But another discovery for which he was much renowned was his famous universal pickle. For having remarked how your common pickle in use among housewives was of no farther benefit than to preserve dead flesh

and certain kinds of vegetables, Peter with great cost as well as art had contrived a pickle proper for houses, gardens, towns, men, women, children, and cattle, wherein he could preserve them as sound as insects in amber. Now this pickle to the taste, the smell, and the sight, appeared exactly the same with what is in common service for beef, and butter, and herrings (and has been often that way applied with great success), but for its may sovereign virtues was quite a different thing. For Peter would put in a certain quantity of his powder pimperlím-pimp, after which it never failed of success. The operation was performed by spargefaction in a proper time of the moon. The patient who was to be pickled, if it were a house, would infallibly be preserved from all spiders, rats, and weasels; if the party affected were a dog, he should be exempt from mange, and madness, and hunger. It also infallibly took away all scabs and lice, and scalled heads from children, never hindering the patient from any duty, either at bed or board.

But of all Peter's rarities, he most valued a certain set of bulls, whose race was by great fortune preserved in a lineal descent from those that guarded the golden-fleece. Though some who pretended to observe them curiously doubted the breed had not been kept entirely chaste, because they had degenerated from their ancestors in some qualities, and had acquired others very extraordinary, but a foreign mixture. The bulls of Colchis are recorded to have brazen feet; but whether it happened by ill pasture and running, by an alloy from intervention of other parents from stolen intrigues; whether a weakness in their progenitors had impaired the seminal virtue, or by a decline necessary through a long course of time, the originals of nature being depraved in these latter sinful ages of the world—whatever was the cause, it is certain that Lord Peter's bulls were extremely vitiated by the rust of time in the metal of their feet, which was now sunk into common lead. However, the terrible roaring peculiar to their lineage was preserved, as likewise that faculty of breathing out fire from their nostrils; which notwithstanding many of their detractors took to be a feat of art, and to be nothing so terrible as it appeared, proceeding only from their usual course of diet, which was of squibs and crackers. However, they had two peculiar marks which extremely distinguished them from the bulls of Jason, and which I have not met together in the description of any other monster beside that in. Horace, "*Varias inducere plumas,*" and "*Atrum definit in piscem.*" For these had fishes tails, yet upon occasion could outfly any bird in the air. Peter put these bulls upon several employs. Sometimes he would set them a roaring to fright naughty boys and make them quiet. Sometimes he would send them out upon errands of

great importance, where it is wonderful to recount, and perhaps the cautious reader may think much to believe it; an appetitus sensibilis deriving itself through the whole family from their noble ancestors, guardians of the Golden Fleece, they continued so extremely fond of gold, that if Peter sent them abroad, though it were only upon a compliment, they would roar, and spit, and belch, and snivel out fire, and keep a perpetual coil till you flung them a bit of gold; but then pulveris exigui jactu, they would grow calm and quiet as lambs. In short, whether by secret connivance or encouragement from their master, or out of their own liquorish affection to gold, or both, it is certain they were no better than a sort of sturdy, swaggering beggars; and where they could not prevail to get an alms, would make women miscarry and children fall into fits; who to this very day usually call sprites and hobgoblins by the name of bull-beggars. They grew at last so very troublesome to the neighbourhood, that some gentlemen of the North-West got a parcel of right English bull-dogs, and baited them so terribly, that they felt it ever after.

I must needs mention one more of Lord Peter's projects, which was very extraordinary, and discovered him to be master of a high reach and profound invention. Whenever it happened that any rogue of Newgate was condemned to be hanged, Peter would offer him a pardon for a certain sum of money, which when the poor caitiff had made all shifts to scrape up and send, his lordship would return a piece of paper in this form:-

“To all mayors, sheriffs, jailors, constables, bailiffs, hangmen, &c. Whereas we are informed that A. B. remains in the hands of you, or any of you, under the sentence of death. We will and command you, upon sight hereof, to let the said prisoner depart to his own habitation, whether he stands condemned for murder, sodomy, rape, sacrilege, incest, treason, blasphemy, &c., for which this shall be your sufficient warrant. And it you fail hereof, G—d—mn you and yours to all eternity. And so we bid you heartily farewell. Your most humble man's man,

*“Emperor Peter.”*

The wretches trusting to this lost their lives and money too.

I desire of those whom the learned among posterity will appoint for commentators upon this elaborate treatise, that they will proceed with



great caution upon certain dark points, wherein all who are not vere adepti may be in danger to form rash and hasty conclusions, especially in some mysterious paragraphs, where certain arcana are joined for brevity sake, which in the operation must be divided. And I am certain that future sons of art will return large thanks to my memory for so grateful, so useful an inmuendo.

It will be no difficult part to persuade the reader that so many worthy discoveries met with great success in the world; though I may justly assure him that I have related much the smallest number; my design having been only to single out such as will be of most benefit for public imitation, or which best served to give some idea of the reach and wit of the inventor. And therefore it need not be wondered if by this time Lord Peter was become exceeding rich. But alas! he had kept his brain so long and so violently upon the rack, that at last it shook itself, and began to turn round for a little ease. In short, what with pride, projects, and knavery, poor Peter was grown distracted, and conceived the strangest imaginations in the world. In the height of his fits (as it is usual with those who run mad out of pride) he would call himself God Almighty, and sometimes monarch of the universe. I have seen him (says my author) take three old high-crowned hats, and clap them all on his head, three storey high, with a huge bunch of keys at his girdle, and an angling rod in his hand. In which guise, whoever went to take him by the hand in the way of salutation, Peter with much grace, like a well-educated spaniel, would present them with his foot, and if they refused his civility, then he would raise it as high as their chops, and give them a damned kick on the mouth, which hath ever since been called a salute. Whoever walked by without paying him their compliments, having a wonderful strong breath, he would blow their hats off into the dirt. Meantime his affairs at home went upside down, and his two brothers had a wretched time, where his first boutade was to kick both their wives one morning out of doors, and his own too, and in their stead gave orders to pick up the first three strollers could be met with in the streets. A while after he nailed up the cellar door, and would not allow his brothers a drop of drink to their victuals<sup>39</sup>. Dining one day at an alderman's in the city, Peter observed him expatiating, after the manner of his brethren in the praises of his sirloin of beef. "Beef," said the sage magistrate, "is the king of meat; beef comprehends in it the quin-

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<sup>39</sup> Refusing the cup of sacrament to the laity. Thomas Warton observes on the following passage its close resemblance to the speech of Panurge in Rabelais, and says that Swift formed himself upon Rabelais.

tessence of partridge, and quail, and venison, and pheasant, and plum-pudding, and custard." When Peter came home, he would needs take the fancy of cooking up this doctrine into use, and apply the precept in default of a sirloin to his brown loaf. "Bread," says he, "dear brothers, is the staff of life, in which bread is contained inclusive the quintessence of beef, mutton, veal, venison, partridge, plum-pudding, and custard, and to render all complete, there is intermingled a due quantity of water, whose crudities are also corrected by yeast or barm, through which means it becomes a wholesome fermented liquor, diffused through the mass of the bread." Upon the strength of these conclusions, next day at dinner was the brown loaf served up in all the formality of a City feast. "Come, brothers," said Peter, "fall to, and spare not; here is excellent good mutton<sup>40</sup>; or hold, now my hand is in, I'll help you." At which word, in much ceremony, with fork and knife, he carves out two good slices of a loaf, and presents each on a plate to his brothers. The elder of the two, not suddenly entering into Lord Peter's conceit, began with very civil language to examine the mystery. "My lord," said he, "I doubt, with great submission, there may be some mistake." "What!" says Peter, "you are pleasant; come then, let us hear this jest your head is so big with." "None in the world, my Lord; but unless I am very much deceived, your Lordship was pleased a while ago to let fall a word about mutton, and I would be glad to see it with all my heart." "How," said Peter, appearing in great surprise, "I do not comprehend this at all;" upon which the younger, interposing to set the business right, "My Lord," said he, "my brother, I suppose, is hungry, and longs for the mutton your Lordship hath promised us to dinner." "Pray," said Peter, "take me along with you, either you are both mad, or disposed to be merrier than I approve of; if you there do not like your piece, I will carve you another, though I should take that to be the choice bit of the whole shoulder." "What then, my Lord?" replied the first; "it seems this is a shoulder of mutton all this while." "Pray, sir," says Peter, "eat your victuals and leave off your impertinence, if you please, for I am not disposed to relish it at present;" but the other could not forbear, being over-provoked at the affected seriousness of Peter's countenance. "My Lord," said he, "I can only say, that to my eyes and fingers, and teeth and nose, it seems to be nothing but a crust of bread." Upon which the second put in his word. "I never saw a piece of mutton in my life so nearly resembling a slice from a twelve-penny loaf." "Look ye, gentlemen," cries Peter in a rage, "to convince you what a couple of blind, positive, ignorant,

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<sup>40</sup> Transubstantiation.

wilful puppies you are, I will use but this plain argument; by G—, it is true, good, natural mutton as any in Leadenhall Market; and G— confound you both eternally if you offer to believe otherwise.” Such a thundering proof as this left no further room for objection; the two unbelievers began to gather and pocket up their mistake as hastily as they could. “Why, truly,” said the first, “upon more mature consideration”—”Ay,” says the other, interrupting him, “now I have thought better on the thing, your Lordship seems to have a great deal of reason.” “Very well,” said Peter. “Here, boy, fill me a beer-glass of claret. Here’s to you both with all my heart.” The two brethren, much delighted to see him so readily appeased, returned their most humble thanks, and said they would be glad to pledge his Lordship. “That you shall,” said Peter, “I am not a person to refuse you anything that is reasonable; wine moderately taken is a cordial. Here is a glass apiece for you; it is true natural juice from the grape; none of your damned vintner’s brewings.” Having spoke thus, he presented to each of them another large dry crust, bidding them drink it off, and not be bashful, for it would do them no hurt. The two brothers, after having performed the usual office in such delicate conjunctures, of staring a sufficient period at Lord Peter and each other, and finding how matters were like to go, resolved not to enter on a new dispute, but let him carry the point as he pleased; for he was now got into one of his mad fits, and to argue or expostulate further would only serve to render him a hundred times more untractable.

I have chosen to relate this worthy matter in all its circumstances, because it gave a principal occasion to that great and famous rupture<sup>41</sup> which happened about the same time among these brethren, and was never afterwards made up. But of that I shall treat at large in another section.

However, it is certain that Lord Peter, even in his lucid intervals, was very lewdly given in his common conversation, extreme wilful and positive, and would at any time rather argue to the death than allow himself to be once in an error. Besides, he had an abominable faculty of telling huge palpable lies upon all occasions, and swearing not only to the truth, but cursing the whole company to hell if they pretended to make the least scruple of believing him. One time he swore he had a cow at home which gave as much milk at a meal as would fill three thousand churches, and what was yet more extraordinary, would never turn sour. Another time he was telling of an old sign-post<sup>42</sup> that belonged to his father, with nails

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<sup>41</sup> The Reformation.

<sup>42</sup> The cross (in hoc signo vinces). Pieces of the wood said to be part of it were many in the churches.

and timber enough on it to build sixteen large men-of-war. Talking one day of Chinese waggons, which were made so light as to sail over mountains, “Z—nds,” said Peter, “where’s the wonder of that? By G—, I saw a large house of lime and stone travel over sea and land (granting that it stopped sometimes to bait) above two thousand German leagues.”<sup>43</sup> And that which was the good of it, he would swear desperately all the while that he never told a lie in his life, and at every word: “By G—— gentlemen, I tell you nothing but the truth, and the d—l broil them eternally that will not believe me.”

In short, Peter grew so scandalous that all the neighbourhood began in plain words to say he was no better than a knave; and his two brothers, long weary of his ill-usage, resolved at last to leave him; but first they humbly desired a copy of their father’s will, which had now lain by neglected time out of mind. Instead of granting this request, he called them rogues, traitors, and the rest of the vile names he could muster up. However, while he was abroad one day upon his projects, the two youngsters watched their opportunity, made a shift to come at the will, and took a copia vera<sup>44</sup>, by which they presently saw how grossly they had been abused, their father having left them equal heirs, and strictly commanded that whatever they got should lie in common among them all. Pursuant to which, their next enterprise was to break open the cellar-door and get a little good drink to spirit and comfort their hearts<sup>45</sup>. In copying the will, they had met another precept against whoring, divorce, and separate maintenance; upon which, their next work was to discard their concubines and send for their wives<sup>46</sup>. Whilst all this was in agitation, there enters a solicitor from Newgate, desiring Lord Peter would please to procure a pardon for a thief that was to be hanged to-morrow. But the two brothers told him he was a coxcomb to seek pardons from a fellow who deserved to be hanged much better than his client, and discovered all the method of that imposture in the same form I delivered it a while ago, advising the solicitor to put his friend upon obtaining a pardon from the king. In the midst of all this platter and revolution in comes Peter with a file of dragoons at his heels, and gathering from all hands what was in the wind, he and his gang, after several millions of scurrilities and curses not very im-

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43 One miracle to be believed was that the Chapel of Loretto travelled from the Holy Land to Italy.

44 Made a true copy of the Bible in the language of the people.

45 Gave the cup to the laity.

46 Allowed marriages of priests.

portant here to repeat, by main force very fairly kicks them both out of doors, and would never let them come under his roof from that day to this.

## SECTION V. A DIGRESSION IN THE MODERN KIND.

We whom the world is pleased to honour with the title of modern authors, should never have been able to compass our great design of an everlasting remembrance and never-dying fame if our endeavours had not been so highly serviceable to the general good of mankind. This, O universe! is the adventurous attempt of me, thy secretary—

“*Quemvis perferre laborem  
Suadet, et inducit noctes vigilare serenas.*”

To this end I have some time since, with a world of pains and art, dissected the carcass of human nature, and read many useful lectures upon the several parts, both containing and contained, till at last it smelt so strong I could preserve it no longer. Upon which I have been at a great expense to fit up all the bones with exact contexture and in due symmetry, so that I am ready to show a very complete anatomy thereof to all curious gentlemen and others. But not to digress further in the midst of a digression, as I have known some authors enclose digressions in one another like a nest of boxes, I do affirm that, having carefully cut up human nature, I have found a very strange, new, and important discovery: that the public good of mankind is performed by two ways—instruction and diversion. And I have further proved my said several readings (which, perhaps, the world may one day see, if I can prevail on any friend to steal a copy, or on certain gentlemen of my admirers to be very importunate) that, as mankind is now disposed, he receives much greater advantage by being diverted than instructed, his epidemical diseases being fastidiousity, amorphy, and oscitation; whereas, in the present universal empire of wit and learn-

ing, there seems but little matter left for instruction. However, in compliance with a lesson of great age and authority, I have attempted carrying the point in all its heights, and accordingly throughout this divine treatise have skilfully kneaded up both together with a layer of utile and a layer of dulce.

When I consider how exceedingly our illustrious moderns have eclipsed the weak glimmering lights of the ancients, and turned them out of the road of all fashionable commerce to a degree that our choice town wits of most refined accomplishments are in grave dispute whether there have been ever any ancients or no; in which point we are like to receive wonderful satisfaction from the most useful labours and lucubrations of that worthy modern, Dr. Bentley. I say, when I consider all this, I cannot but bewail that no famous modern hath ever yet attempted an universal system in a small portable volume of all things that are to be known, or believed, or imagined, or practised in life. I am, however, forced to acknowledge that such an enterprise was thought on some time ago by a great philosopher of O-Brazile. The method he proposed was by a certain curious receipt, a nostrum, which after his untimely death I found among his papers, and do here, out of my great affection to the modern learned, present them with it, not doubting it may one day encourage some worthy undertaker.

You take fair correct copies, well bound in calf's skin and lettered at the back, of all modern bodies of arts and sciences whatsoever, and in what language you please. These you distil in balneo Mariae, infusing quintessence of poppy Q.S., together with three pints of lethe, to be had from the apothecaries. You cleanse away carefully the sordes and caput mortuum, letting all that is volatile evaporate. You preserve only the first running, which is again to be distilled seventeen times, till what remains will amount to about two drams. This you keep in a glass vial hermetically sealed for one-and-twenty days. Then you begin your catholic treatise, taking every morning fasting (first shaking the vial) three drops of this elixir, snuffing it strongly up your nose. It will dilate itself about the brain (where there is any) in fourteen minutes, and you immediately perceive in your head an infinite number of abstracts, summaries, compendiums, extracts, collections, medullas, excerpta quaedams, florilegias and the like, all disposed into great order and reducible upon paper.

I must needs own it was by the assistance of this arcanum that I, though otherwise impar, have adventured upon so daring an attempt, never achieved or undertaken before but by a certain author called Homer, in whom, though otherwise a person not without some abilities, and for an

ancient of a tolerable genius; I have discovered many gross errors which are not to be forgiven his very ashes, if by chance any of them are left. For whereas we are assured he designed his work for a complete body of all knowledge, human, divine, political, and mechanic<sup>47</sup>, it is manifest he hath wholly neglected some, and been very imperfect perfect in the rest. For, first of all, as eminent a cabalist as his disciples would represent him, his account of the opus magnum is extremely poor and deficient; he seems to have read but very superficially either Sendivogus, Behmen, or Anthroposophia Theomagica<sup>48</sup>. He is also quite mistaken about the sphaera pyroplastica, a neglect not to be atoned for, and (if the reader will admit so severe a censure) *vix crederem autorem hunc unquam audivisse ignis vocem*. His failings are not less prominent in several parts of the mechanics. For having read his writings with the utmost application usual among modern wits, I could never yet discover the least direction about the structure of that useful instrument a save-all; for want of which, if the moderns had not lent their assistance, we might yet have wandered in the dark. But I have still behind a fault far more notorious to tax this author with; I mean his gross ignorance in the common laws of this realm, and in the doctrine as well as discipline of the Church of England. A defect, indeed, for which both he and all the ancients stand most justly censured by my worthy and ingenious friend Mr. Wotton, Bachelor of Divinity, in his incomparable treatise of ancient and modern learning; a book never to be sufficiently valued, whether we consider the happy turns and flowings of the author's wit, the great usefulness of his sublime discoveries upon the subject of flies and spittle, or the laborious eloquence of his style. And I cannot forbear doing that author the justice of my public acknowledgments for the great helps and liftings I had out of his incomparable piece while I was penning this treatise.

But besides these omissions in Homer already mentioned, the curious reader will also observe several defects in that author's writings for which he is not altogether so accountable. For whereas every branch of knowledge has received such wonderful acquirements since his age, especially within these last three years or thereabouts, it is almost impossible he

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<sup>47</sup> *Homerus omnes res humanas poematis complexus est.*—Xenophon in *Conviv.*—S.

<sup>48</sup> A treatise written about fifty years ago by a Welsh gentleman of Cambridge. His name, as I remember, Vaughan, as appears by the answer to it by the learned Dr. Henry More. It is a piece of the most unintelligible fustian that perhaps was ever published in any language.—S. This piece was by the brother of Henry Vaughan, the poet.



could be so very perfect in modern discoveries as his advocates pretend. We freely acknowledge him to be the inventor of the compass, of gunpowder, and the circulation of the blood; but I challenge any of his admirers to show me in all his writings a complete account of the spleen. Does he not also leave us wholly to seek in the art of political wagering? What can be more defective and unsatisfactory than his long dissertation upon tea? and as to his method of salivation without mercury, so much celebrated of late, it is to my own knowledge and experience a thing very little to be relied on.

It was to supply such momentous defects that I have been prevailed on, after long solicitation, to take pen in hand, and I dare venture to promise the judicious reader shall find nothing neglected here that can be of use upon any emergency of life. I am confident to have included and exhausted all that human imagination can rise or fall to. Particularly I recommend to the perusal of the learned certain discoveries that are wholly untouched by others, whereof I shall only mention, among a great many more, my "New Help of Smatterers, or the Art of being Deep Learned and Shallow Read," "A Curious Invention about Mouse-traps," "A Universal Rule of Reason, or Every Man his own Carver," together with a most useful engine for catching of owls. All which the judicious reader will find largely treated on in the several parts of this discourse.

I hold myself obliged to give as much light as possible into the beauties and excellences of what I am writing, because it is become the fashion and humour most applauded among the first authors of this polite and learned age, when they would correct the ill nature of critical or inform the ignorance of courteous readers. Besides, there have been several famous pieces lately published, both in verse and prose, wherein if the writers had not been pleased, out of their great humanity and affection to the public, to give us a nice detail of the sublime and the admirable they contain, it is a thousand to one whether we should ever have discovered one grain of either. For my own particular, I cannot deny that whatever I have said upon this occasion had been more proper in a preface, and more agreeable to the mode which usually directs it there. But I here think fit to lay hold on that great and honourable privilege of being the last writer. I claim an absolute authority in right as the freshest modern, which gives me a despotic power over all authors before me. In the strength of which title I do utterly disapprove and declare against that pernicious custom of making the preface a bill of fare to the book. For I have always looked upon it as a high point of indiscretion in monstermongers and other retailers of strange sights to hang out a fair large picture over the door, drawn after the life,

with a most eloquent description underneath. This has saved me many a threepence, for my curiosity was fully satisfied, and I never offered to go in, though often invited by the urging and attending orator with his last moving and standing piece of rhetoric, "Sir, upon my word, we are just going to begin." Such is exactly the fate at this time of Prefaces, Epistles, Advertisements, Introductions, Prolegomenas, Apparatuses, To the Readers's. This expedient was admirable at first; our great Dryden has long carried it as far as it would go, and with incredible success. He has often said to me in confidence that the world would never have suspected him to be so great a poet if he had not assured them so frequently in his prefaces, that it was impossible they could either doubt or forget it. Perhaps it may be so. However, I much fear his instructions have edified out of their place, and taught men to grow wiser in certain points where he never intended they should; for it is lamentable to behold with what a lazy scorn many of the yawning readers in our age do now-a-days twirl over forty or fifty pages of preface and dedication (which is the usual modern stint), as if it were so much Latin. Though it must be also allowed, on the other hand, that a very considerable number is known to proceed critics and wits by reading nothing else. Into which two factions I think all present readers may justly be divided. Now, for myself, I profess to be of the former sort, and therefore having the modern inclination to expatiate upon the beauty of my own productions, and display the bright parts of my discourse, I thought best to do it in the body of the work, where as it now lies it makes a very considerable addition to the bulk of the volume, a circumstance by no means to be neglected by a skilful writer.

Having thus paid my due deference and acknowledgment to an established custom of our newest authors, by a long digression unsought for and a universal censure unprovoked, by forcing into the light, with much pains and dexterity, my own excellences and other men's defaults, with great justice to myself and candour to them, I now happily resume my subject, to the infinite satisfaction both of the reader and the author.

## SECTION VI. A TALE OF A TUB.

We left Lord Peter in open rupture with his two brethren, both for ever discarded from his house, and resigned to the wide world with little or nothing to trust to. Which are circumstances that render them proper subjects for the charity of a writer's pen to work on, scenes of misery ever affording the fairest harvest for great adventures. And in this the world may perceive the difference between the integrity of a generous Author and that of a common friend. The latter is observed to adhere close in prosperity, but on the decline of fortune to drop suddenly off; whereas the generous author, just on the contrary, finds his hero on the dunghill, from thence, by gradual steps, raises him to a throne, and then immediately withdraws, expecting not so much as thanks for his pains; in imitation of which example I have placed Lord Peter in a noble house, given him a title to wear and money to spend. There I shall leave him for some time, returning, where common charity directs me, to the assistance of his two brothers at their lowest ebb. However, I shall by no means forget my character of a historian, to follow the truth step by step whatever happens, or wherever it may lead me.

The two exiles so nearly united in fortune and interest took a lodging together, where at their first leisure they began to reflect on the numberless misfortunes and vexations of their life past, and could not tell of the sudden to what failure in their conduct they ought to impute them, when, after some recollection, they called to mind the copy of their father's will which they had so happily recovered. This was immediately produced, and a firm resolution taken between them to alter whatever was already amiss, and reduce all their future measures to the strictest obedience prescribed therein. The main body of the will (as the reader cannot easily have forgot) consisted in certain admirable rules, about the wearing of their coats, in the perusal whereof the two brothers at every period duly comparing the doctrine with the practice, there was never seen a wider difference between two things,

horrible downright transgressions of every point. Upon which they both resolved without further delay to fall immediately upon reducing the whole exactly after their father's model.

But here it is good to stop the hasty reader, ever impatient to see the end of an adventure before we writers can duly prepare him for it. I am to record that these two brothers began to be distinguished at this time by certain names. One of them desired to be called Martin, and the other took the appellation of Jack. These two had lived in much friendship and agreement under the tyranny of their brother Peter, as it is the talent of fellow-sufferers to do, men in misfortune being like men in the dark, to whom all colours are the same. But when they came forward into the world, and began to display themselves to each other and to the light, their complexions appeared extremely different, which the present posture of their affairs gave them sudden opportunity to discover.

But here the severe reader may justly tax me as a writer of short memory, a deficiency to which a true modern cannot but of necessity be a little subject. Because, memory being an employment of the mind upon things past, is a faculty for which the learned in our illustrious age have no manner of occasion, who deal entirely with invention and strike all things out of themselves, or at least by collision from each other; upon which account, we think it highly reasonable to produce our great forgetfulness as an argument unanswerable for our great wit. I ought in method to have informed the reader about fifty pages ago of a fancy Lord Peter took, and infused into his brothers, to wear on their coats whatever trimmings came up in fashion, never pulling off any as they went out of the mode, but keeping on all together, which amounted in time to a medley the most antic you can possibly conceive, and this to a degree that, upon the time of their falling out, there was hardly a thread of the original coat to be seen, but an infinite quantity of lace, and ribbands, and fringe, and embroidery, and points (I mean only those tagged with silver, for the rest fell off). Now this material circumstance having been forgot in due place, as good fortune hath ordered, comes in very properly here, when the two brothers are just going to reform their vestures into the primitive state prescribed by their father's will.

They both unanimously entered upon this great work, looking sometimes on their coats and sometimes on the will. Martin laid the first hand; at one twitch brought off a large handful of points, and with a second pull stripped away ten dozen yards of fringe. But when he had gone thus far he demurred a while. He knew very well there yet remained a great deal more to be done; however, the first heat being over, his violence began to cool,

and he resolved to proceed more moderately in the rest of the work, having already very narrowly escaped a swinging rent in pulling off the points, which being tagged with silver (as we have observed before), the judicious workman had with much sagacity double sewn to preserve them from falling. Resolving therefore to rid his coat of a huge quantity of gold lace, he picked up the stitches with much caution and diligently gleaned out all the loose threads as he went, which proved to be a work of time. Then he fell about the embroidered Indian figures of men, women, and children, against which, as you have heard in its due place, their father's testament was extremely exact and severe. These, with much dexterity and application, were after a while quite eradicated or utterly defaced. For the rest, where he observed the embroidery to be worked so close as not to be got away without damaging the cloth, or where it served to hide or strengthened any flaw in the body of the coat, contracted by the perpetual tampering of workmen upon it, he concluded the wisest course was to let it remain, resolving in no case whatsoever that the substance of the stuff should suffer injury, which he thought the best method for serving the true intent and meaning of his father's will. And this is the nearest account I have been able to collect of Martin's proceedings upon this great revolution.

But his brother Jack, whose adventures will be so extraordinary as to furnish a great part in the remainder of this discourse, entered upon the matter with other thoughts and a quite different spirit. For the memory of Lord Peter's injuries produced a degree of hatred and spite which had a much greater share of inciting him than any regards after his father's commands, since these appeared at best only secondary and subservient to the other. However, for this medley of humour he made a shift to find a very plausible name, honouring it with the title of zeal, which is, perhaps, the most significant word that has been ever yet produced in any language, as, I think, I have fully proved in my excellent analytical discourse upon that subject, wherein I have deduced a histori-theo-physiological account of zeal, showing how it first proceeded from a notion into a word, and from thence in a hot summer ripened into a tangible substance. This work, containing three large volumes in folio, I design very shortly to publish by the modern way of subscription, not doubting but the nobility and gentry of the land will give me all possible encouragement, having already had such a taste of what I am able to perform.

I record, therefore, that brother Jack, brimful of this miraculous compound, reflecting with indignation upon Peter's tyranny, and further provoked by the despondency of Martin, prefaced his resolutions to this pur-

pose. "What!" said he, "a rogue that locked up his drink, turned away our wives, cheated us of our fortunes, palmed his crusts upon us for mutton, and at last kicked us out of doors; must we be in his fashions? A rascal, besides, that all the street cries out against." Having thus kindled and inflamed himself as high as possible, and by consequence in a delicate temper for beginning a reformation, he set about the work immediately, and in three minutes made more dispatch than Martin had done in as many hours. For, courteous reader, you are given to understand that zeal is never so highly obliged as when you set it a-tearing; and Jack, who doted on that quality in himself, allowed it at this time its full swing. Thus it happened that, stripping down a parcel of gold lace a little too hastily, he rent the main body of his coat from top to bottom<sup>49</sup>; and whereas his talent was not of the happiest in taking up a stitch, he knew no better way than to darn it again with packthread thread and a skewer. But the matter was yet infinitely worse (I record it with tears) when he proceeded to the embroidery; for being clumsy of nature, and of temper impatient withal, beholding millions of stitches that required the nicest hand and sedatest constitution to extricate, in a great rage he tore off the whole piece, cloth and all, and flung it into the kennel, and furiously thus continuing his career, "Ah! good brother Martin," said he, "do as I do, for the love of God; strip, tear, pull, rend, flay off all that we may appear as unlike that rogue Peter as it is possible. I would not for a hundred pounds carry the least mark about me that might give occasion to the neighbours of suspecting I was related to such a rascal." But Martin, who at this time happened to be extremely phlegmatic and sedate, begged his brother, of all love, not to damage his coat by any means, for he never would get such another; desired him to consider that it was not their business to form their actions by any reflection upon Peter's, but by observing the rules prescribed in their father's will. That he should remember Peter was still their brother, whatever faults or injuries he had committed, and therefore they should by all means avoid such a thought as that of taking measures for good and evil from no other rule than of opposition to him. That it was true the testament of their good father was very exact in what related to the wearing of their coats; yet was it no less penal and strict in prescribing agreement, and friendship, and affection between them. And therefore, if straining a point were at all defensible, it would certainly be so

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<sup>49</sup> After the changes made by Martin that transformed the Church of Rome into the Church of England, Jack's proceedings made a rent from top to bottom by the separation of the Presbyterians from the Church Establishment.

rather to the advance of unity than increase of contradiction.

Martin had still proceeded as gravely as he began, and doubtless would have delivered an admirable lecture of morality, which might have exceedingly contributed to my reader's repose both of body and mind (the true ultimate end of ethics), but Jack was already gone a flight-shot beyond his patience. And as in scholastic disputes nothing serves to rouse the spleen of him that opposes so much as a kind of pedantic affected calmness in the respondent, disputants being for the most part like unequal scales, where the gravity of one side advances the lightness of the other, and causes it to fly up and kick the beam; so it happened here that the weight of Martin's arguments exalted Jack's levity, and made him fly out and spurn against his brother's moderation. In short, Martin's patience put Jack in a rage; but that which most afflicted him was to observe his brother's coat so well reduced into the state of innocence, while his own was either wholly rent to his shirt, or those places which had escaped his cruel clutches were still in Peter's livery. So that he looked like a drunken beau half rifled by bullies, or like a fresh tenant of Newgate when he has refused the payment of garnish, or like a discovered shoplifter left to the mercy of Exchange-women<sup>50</sup>, or like a bawd in her old velvet petticoat resigned into the secular hands of the mobile<sup>51</sup>. Like any or like all of these, a medley of rags, and lace, and fringes, unfortunate Jack did now appear; he would have been extremely glad to see his coat in the condition of Martin's, but infinitely gladder to find that of Martin in the same predicament with his. However, since neither of these was likely to come to pass, he thought fit to lend the whole business another turn, and to dress up necessity into a virtue. Therefore, after as many of the fox's arguments as he could muster up for bringing Martin to reason, as he called it, or as he meant it, into his own ragged, bobtailed condition, and observing he said all to little purpose, what alas! was left for the forlorn Jack to do, but, after a million of scurrilities against his brother, to run mad with spleen, and spite, and contradiction. To be short, here began a mortal breach between these two. Jack went immediately to new lodgings, and in a few days it was for certain reported that he had run out of his wits. In a short time after he appeared abroad, and confirmed the report by falling into the oddest whim-

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<sup>50</sup> The galleries over the piazzas in the old Royal Exchange were formerly filled with shops, kept chiefly by women. Illustrations of this feature in London life are to be found in Dekker's "Shoemaker's Holiday," and other plays.

<sup>51</sup> The contraction of the word mobile to mob first appeared in the time of Charles the Second.

sies that ever a sick brain conceived.

And now the little boys in the streets began to salute him with several names. Sometimes they would call him Jack the Bald, sometimes Jack with a Lanthorn, sometimes Dutch Jack, sometimes French Hugh, sometimes Tom the Beggar, and sometimes Knocking Jack of the North<sup>52</sup>. And it was under one or some or all of these appellations (which I leave the learned reader to determine) that he hath given rise to the most illustrious and epidemic sect of AEolists, who, with honourable commemoration, do still acknowledge the renowned Jack for their author and founder. Of whose originals as well as principles I am now advancing to gratify the world with a very particular account.

“Mellaeo contingens cuncta lepore.”

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<sup>52</sup> Jack the Bald, Calvin, from *calvus*, bald; Jack with a Lanthorn, professing inward lights, Quakers; Dutch Jack, Jack of Leyden, Anabaptists; French Hugh, the Huguenots; Tom the Beggar, the Gueuses of Flanders; Knocking Jack of the North, John Knox of Scotland. AEolists pretenders to inspiration.



## SECTION VII. A DIGRESSION IN PRAISE OF DIGRESSIONS.

I have sometimes heard of an Iliad in a nut-shell, but it has been my fortune to have much oftener seen a nut-shell in an Iliad. There is no doubt that human life has received most wonderful advantages from both; but to which of the two the world is chiefly indebted, I shall leave among the curious as a problem worthy of their utmost inquiry. For the invention of the latter, I think the commonwealth of learning is chiefly obliged to the great modern improvement of digressions. The late refinements in knowledge, running parallel to those of diet in our nation, which among men of a judicious taste are dressed up in various compounds, consisting in soups and olios, fricassees and ragouts.

It is true there is a sort of morose, detracting, ill-bred people who pretend utterly to disrelish these polite innovations. And as to the similitude from diet, they allow the parallel, but are so bold as to pronounce the example itself a corruption and degeneracy of taste. They tell us that the fashion of jumbling fifty things together in a dish was at first introduced in compliance to a depraved and debauched appetite, as well as to a crazy constitution, and to see a man hunting through an olio after the head and brains of a goose, a widgeon, or a woodcock, is a sign he wants a stomach and digestion for more substantial victuals. Further, they affirm that digressions in a book are like foreign troops in a state, which argue the nation to want a heart and hands of its own, and often either subdue the natives, or drive them into the most unfruitful corners.

But after all that can be objected by these supercilious censors, it is manifest the society of writers would quickly be reduced to a very inconsiderable number if men were put upon making books with the fatal confinement of delivering nothing beyond what is to the purpose. It is acknowledged that were the case the same among us as with the Greeks and

Romans, when learning was in its cradle, to be reared and fed and clothed by invention, it would be an easy task to fill up volumes upon particular occasions without further expatiating from the subject than by moderate excursions, helping to advance or clear the main design. But with knowledge it has fared as with a numerous army encamped in a fruitful country, which for a few days maintains itself by the product of the soil it is on, till provisions being spent, they send to forage many a mile among friends or enemies, it matters not. Meanwhile the neighbouring fields, trampled and beaten down, become barren and dry, affording no sustenance but clouds of dust.

The whole course of things being thus entirely changed between us and the ancients, and the moderns wisely sensible of it, we of this age have discovered a shorter and more prudent method to become scholars and wits, without the fatigue of reading or of thinking. The most accomplished way of using books at present is twofold: either first to serve them as some men do lords, learn their titles exactly, and then brag of their acquaintance; or, secondly, which is indeed the choicer, the profounder, and politer method, to get a thorough insight into the index by which the whole book is governed and turned, like fishes by the tail. For to enter the palace of learning at the great gate requires an expense of time and forms, therefore men of much haste and little ceremony are content to get in by the back-door. For the arts are all in a flying march, and therefore more easily subdued by attacking them in the rear. Thus physicians discover the state of the whole body by consulting only what comes from behind. Thus men catch knowledge by throwing their wit on the posteriors of a book, as boys do sparrows with flinging salt upon their tails. Thus human life is best understood by the wise man's rule of regarding the end. Thus are the sciences found, like Hercules' oxen, by tracing them backwards. Thus are old sciences unravelled like old stockings, by beginning at the foot.

Besides all this, the army of the sciences hath been of late with a world of martial discipline drawn into its close order, so that a view or a muster may be taken of it with abundance of expedition. For this great blessing we are wholly indebted to systems and abstracts, in which the modern fathers of learning, like prudent usurers, spent their sweat for the ease of us their children. For labour is the seed of idleness, and it is the peculiar happiness of our noble age to gather the fruit.

Now the method of growing wise, learned, and sublime having become so regular an affair, and so established in all its forms, the number of writers must needs have increased accordingly, and to a pitch that has made it of absolute necessity for them to interfere continually with each other. Besides,

it is reckoned that there is not at this present a sufficient quantity of new matter left in Nature to furnish and adorn any one particular subject to the extent of a volume. This I am told by a very skilful computer, who hath given a full demonstration of it from rules of arithmetic.

This perhaps may be objected against by those who maintain the infinity of matter, and therefore will not allow that any species of it can be exhausted. For answer to which, let us examine the noblest branch of modern wit or invention planted and cultivated by the present age, and which of all others hath borne the most and the fairest fruit. For though some remains of it were left us by the ancients, yet have not any of those, as I remember, been translated or compiled into systems for modern use. Therefore we may affirm, to our own honour, that it has in some sort been both invented and brought to a perfection by the same hands. What I mean is, that highly celebrated talent among the modern wits of deducing similitudes, allusions, and applications, very surprising, agreeable, and apposite, from the signs of either sex, together with their proper uses. And truly, having observed how little invention bears any vogue besides what is derived into these channels, I have sometimes had a thought that the happy genius of our age and country was prophetically held forth by that ancient typical description of the Indian pigmies whose stature did not exceed above two feet, *sed quorum pudenda crassa, et ad talos usque pertingentia*. Now I have been very curious to inspect the late productions, wherein the beauties of this kind have most prominently appeared. And although this vein hath bled so freely, and all endeavours have been used in the power of human breath to dilate, extend, and keep it open, like the Scythians<sup>53</sup>, who had a custom and an instrument to blow up those parts of their mares, that they might yield the more milk; yet I am under an apprehension it is near growing dry and past all recovery, and that either some new *fonde* of wit should, if possible, be provided, or else that we must e'en be content with repetition here as well as upon all other occasions.

This will stand as an uncontestable argument that our modern wits are not to reckon upon the infinity of matter for a constant supply. What remains, therefore, but that our last recourse must be had to large indexes and little compendiums? Quotations must be plentifully gathered and booked in alphabet. To this end, though authors need be little consulted, yet critics, and commentators, and lexicons carefully must. But above all, those judicious collectors of bright parts, and flowers, and observandas are to be nicely dwelt on by some called the sieves and boulders of learn-

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<sup>53</sup> Herodotus, 1. 4.—S.

ing, though it is left undetermined whether they dealt in pearls or meal, and consequently whether we are more to value that which passed through or what stayed behind.

By these methods, in a few weeks there starts up many a writer capable of managing the profoundest and most universal subjects. For what though his head be empty, provided his commonplace book be full? And if you will bate him but the circumstances of method, and style, and grammar, and invention; allow him but the common privileges of transcribing from others, and digressing from himself as often as he shall see occasion, he will desire no more ingredients towards fitting up a treatise that shall make a very comely figure on a bookseller's shelf, there to be preserved neat and clean for a long eternity, adorned with the heraldry of its title fairly inscribed on a label, never to be thumbed or greased by students, nor bound to everlasting chains of darkness in a library, but when the fulness of time is come shall happily undergo the trial of purgatory in order to ascend the sky.

Without these allowances how is it possible we modern wits should ever have an opportunity to introduce our collections listed under so many thousand heads of a different nature, for want of which the learned world would be deprived of infinite delight as well as instruction, and we ourselves buried beyond redress in an inglorious and undistinguished oblivion?

From such elements as these I am alive to behold the day wherein the corporation of authors can outvie all its brethren in the field—a happiness derived to us, with a great many others, from our Scythian ancestors, among whom the number of pens was so infinite that the Grecian eloquence had no other way of expressing it than by saying that in the regions far to the north it was hardly possible for a man to travel, the very air was so replete with feathers.

The necessity of this digression will easily excuse the length, and I have chosen for it as proper a place as I could readily find. If the judicious reader can assign a fitter, I do here empower him to remove it into any other corner he please. And so I return with great alacrity to pursue a more important concern.

## SECTION VIII. A TALE OF A TUB.

The learned Æolists maintain the original cause of all things to be wind, from which principle this whole universe was at first produced, and into which it must at last be resolved, that the same breath which had kindled and blew up the flame of Nature should one day blow it out.

“*Quod procul a nobis flectat Fortuna gubernans.*”

This is what the Adepti understand by their *anima mundi*, that is to say, the spirit, or breath, or wind of the world; or examine the whole system by the particulars of Nature, and you will find it not to be disputed. For whether you please to call the *forma informans* of man by the name of *spiritus*, *animus*, *afflatus*, or *anima*, what are all these but several appellations for wind, which is the ruling element in every compound, and into which they all resolve upon their corruption. Further, what is life itself but, as it is commonly called, the breath of our nostrils, whence it is very justly observed by naturalists that wind still continues of great emolument in certain mysteries not to be named, giving occasion for those happy epithets of *turgidus* and *inflatus*, applied either to the emittent or recipient organs.

By what I have gathered out of ancient records, I find the compass of their doctrine took in two-and-thirty points, wherein it would be tedious to be very particular. However, a few of their most important precepts deducible from it are by no means to be omitted; among which, the following maxim was of much weight: That since wind had the master share as well as operation in every compound, by consequence those beings must be of chief excellence wherein that *primordium* appears most prominently to abound, and therefore man is in highest perfection of all created things, as having, by the great bounty of philosophers, been endued with three distinct *animas* or winds, to which the sage Æolists, with much

liberality, have added a fourth, of equal necessity as well as ornament with the other three, by this quartum principium taking in the four corners of the world. Which gave occasion to that renowned cabalist Bombastus<sup>54</sup> of placing the body of man in due position to the four cardinal points.

In consequence of this, their next principle was that man brings with him into the world a peculiar portion or grain of wind, which may be called a quinta essentia extracted from the other four. This quintessence is of catholic use upon all emergencies of life, is improveable into all arts and sciences, and may be wonderfully refined as well as enlarged by certain methods in education. This, when blown up to its perfection, ought not to be covetously boarded up, stifled, or hid under a bushel, but freely communicated to mankind. Upon these reasons, and others of equal weight, the wise Æolists affirm the gift of belching to be the noblest act of a rational creature. To cultivate which art, and render it more serviceable to mankind, they made use of several methods. At certain seasons of the year you might behold the priests amongst them in vast numbers with their mouths gaping wide against a storm. At other times were to be seen several hundreds linked together in a circular chain, with every man a pair of bellows applied to his neighbour, by which they blew up each other to the shape and size of a tun; and for that reason with great propriety of speech did usually call their bodies their vessels<sup>55</sup>. When, by these and the like performances, they were grown sufficiently replete, they would immediately depart, and disembody for the public good a plentiful share of their acquirements into their disciples' chaps. For we must here observe that all learning was esteemed among them to be compounded from the same principle. Because, first, it is generally affirmed or confessed that learning puffeth men up; and, secondly, they proved it by the following syllogism: "Words are but wind, and learning is nothing but words; ergo, learning is nothing but wind." For this reason the philosophers among them did in their schools deliver to their pupils all their doctrines and opinions by eructation, wherein they had acquired a wonderful eloquence, and of incredible variety. But the great characteristic by which their chief sages were best distinguished was a certain position of countenance, which gave undoubted intelligence to what degree or proportion the spirit agitated the inward mass. For after certain gripings, the wind and vapours issuing forth, having first by their turbulence and convulsions within caused an earthquake in man's little world, distorted the mouth, bloated the cheeks, and gave the eyes a terrible kind of relievo. At which junctures all their

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<sup>54</sup> Bombast von Hohenheim—Paracelsus.

<sup>55</sup> Fanatical preachers of rebellion.

belches were received for sacred, the sourer the better, and swallowed with infinite consolation by their meagre devotees. And to render these yet more complete, because the breath of man's life is in his nostrils, therefore the choicest, most edifying, and most enlivening belches were very wisely conveyed through that vehicle to give them a tincture as they passed.

Their gods were the four winds, whom they worshipped as the spirits that pervade and enliven the universe, and as those from whom alone all inspiration can properly be said to proceed. However, the chief of these, to whom they performed the adoration of Latria, was the Almighty North, an ancient deity, whom the inhabitants of Megalopolis in Greece had likewise in highest reverence. "Omnium deorum Boream maxime celebrant."<sup>56</sup> This god, though endued with ubiquity, was yet supposed by the profounder AEolists to possess one peculiar habitation, or (to speak in form) a caelum empyraeum, wherein he was more intimately present. This was situated in a certain region well known to the ancient Greeks, by them called [*Greek text which cannot be reproduced*], the Land of Darkness. And although many controversies have arisen upon that matter, yet so much is undisputed, that from a region of the like denomination the most refined AEolists have borrowed their original, from whence in every age the zealous among their priesthood have brought over their choicest inspiration, fetching it with their own hands from the fountain-head in certain bladders, and disploding it among the sectaries in all nations, who did, and do, and ever will, daily gasp and pant after it.

Now their mysteries and rites were performed in this manner. It is well known among the learned that the virtuosos of former ages had a contrivance for carrying and preserving winds in casks or barrels, which was of great assistance upon long sea-voyages, and the loss of so useful an art at present is very much to be lamented, though, I know not how, with great negligence omitted by Pancirollus. It was an invention ascribed to Æolists himself, from whom this sect is denominated, and who, in honour of their founder's memory, have to this day preserved great numbers of those barrels, whereof they fix one in each of their temples, first beating out the top. Into this barrel upon solemn days the priest enters, where, having before duly prepared himself by the methods already described, a secret funnel is also conveyed to the bottom of the barrel, which admits new supplies of inspiration from a northern chink or cranny. Whereupon you behold him swell immediately to the shape and size of his vessel. In this posture he disembogues whole tempests upon his auditory, as the spirit from beneath gives him utterance, which issuing ex adytis and penetralibus,

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<sup>56</sup> Pausanias, 1. 8.—S.

is not performed without much pain and griping. And the wind in breaking forth deals with his face as it does with that of the sea, first blackening, then wrinkling, and at last bursting it into a foam. It is in this guise the sacred Æolists delivers his oracular belches to his panting disciples, of whom some are greedily gaping after the sanctified breath, others are all the while hymning out the praises of the winds, and gently wafted to and fro by their own humming, do thus represent the soft breezes of their deities appeased.

It is from this custom of the priests that some authors maintain these Æolists to have been very ancient in the world, because the delivery of their mysteries, which I have just now mentioned, appears exactly the same with that of other ancient oracles, whose inspirations were owing to certain subterraneous effluvioms of wind delivered with the same pain to the priest, and much about the same influence on the people. It is true indeed that these were frequently managed and directed by female officers, whose organs were understood to be better disposed for the admission of those oracular gusts, as entering and passing up through a receptacle of greater capacity, and causing also a pruriency by the way, such as with due management has been refined from carnal into a spiritual ecstasy. And to strengthen this profound conjecture, it is further insisted that this custom of female priests is kept up still in certain refined colleges of our modern Æolists<sup>57</sup>, who are agreed to receive their inspiration, derived through the receptacle aforesaid, like their ancestors the Sybils.

And whereas the mind of man, when he gives the spur and bridle to his thoughts, does never stop, but naturally sallies out into both extremes of high and low, of good and evil, his first flight of fancy commonly transports him to ideas of what is most perfect, finished, and exalted, till, having soared out of his own reach and sight, not well perceiving how near the frontiers of height and depth border upon each other, with the same course and wing he falls down plump into the lowest bottom of things, like one who travels the east into the west, or like a straight line drawn by its own length into a circle. Whether a tincture of malice in our natures makes us fond of furnishing every bright idea with its reverse, or whether reason, reflecting upon the sum of things, can, like the sun, serve only to enlighten one half of the globe, leaving the other half by necessity under shade and darkness, or whether fancy, flying up to the imagination of what is highest and best, becomes over-short, and spent, and weary, and suddenly falls, like a dead bird of paradise, to the ground; or whether,

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<sup>57</sup> The Quakers allowed women to preach.



after all these metaphysical conjectures, I have not entirely missed the true reason; the proposition, however, which has stood me in so much circumstance is altogether true, that as the most uncivilised parts of mankind have some way or other climbed up into the conception of a God or Supreme Power, so they have seldom forgot to provide their fears with certain ghastly notions, which, instead of better, have served them pretty tolerably for a devil. And this proceeding seems to be natural enough, for it is with men whose imaginations are lifted up very high after the same rate as with those whose bodies are so, that as they are delighted with the advantage of a nearer contemplation upwards, so they are equally terrified with the dismal prospect of the precipice below. Thus in the choice of a devil it has been the usual method of mankind to single out some being, either in act or in vision, which was in most antipathy to the god they had framed. Thus also the sect of the Æolists possessed themselves with a dread and horror and hatred of two malignant natures, betwixt whom and the deities they adored perpetual enmity was established. The first of these was the chameleon, sworn foe to inspiration, who in scorn devoured large influences of their god, without refunding the smallest blast by eructation. The other was a huge terrible monster called Moulinavent, who with four strong arms waged eternal battle with all their divinities, dexterously turning to avoid their blows and repay them with interest.<sup>58</sup>

Thus furnished, and set out with gods as well as devils, was the renowned sect of Æolists, which makes at this day so illustrious a figure in the world, and whereof that polite nation of Laplanders are beyond all doubt a most authentic branch, of whom I therefore cannot without injustice here omit to make honourable mention, since they appear to be so closely allied in point of interest as well as inclinations with their brother Æolists among us, as not only to buy their winds by wholesale from the same merchants, but also to retail them after the same rate and method, and to customers much alike.

Now whether the system here delivered was wholly compiled by Jack, or, as some writers believe, rather copied from the original at Delphos, with certain additions and emendations suited to times and circumstances, I shall not absolutely determine. This I may affirm, that Jack gave it at least a new turn, and formed it into the same dress and model as it lies deduced by me.

I have long sought after this opportunity of doing justice to a society of

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<sup>58</sup> The worshippers of wind or air found their evil spirits in the chameleon, by which it was eaten, and the windmill, Moulin-a-vent, by whose four hands it was beaten.

men for whom I have a peculiar honour, and whose opinions as well as practices have been extremely misrepresented and traduced by the malice or ignorance of their adversaries. For I think it one of the greatest and best of human actions to remove prejudices and place things in their truest and fairest light, which I therefore boldly undertake, without any regards of my own beside the conscience, the honour, and the thanks.

SECTION IX.  
A DIGRESSION  
CONCERNING THE  
ORIGINAL, THE USE, AND  
IMPROVEMENT OF  
MADNESS IN A  
COMMONWEALTH.

Nor shall it any ways detract from the just reputation of this famous sect that its rise and institution are owing to such an author as I have described Jack to be, a person whose intellectuals were overturned and his brain shaken out of its natural position, which we commonly suppose to be a distemper, and call by the name of madness or frenzy. For if we take a survey of the greatest actions that have been performed in the world under the influence of single men, which are the establishment of new empires by conquest, the advance and progress of new schemes in philosophy, and the contriving as well as the propagating of new religions, we shall find the authors of them all to have been persons whose natural reason hath admitted great revolutions from their diet, their education, the prevalency of some certain temper, together with the particular influence of air and climate. Besides, there is something individual in human minds that easily kindles at the accidental approach and collision of certain circumstances, which, though of paltry and mean appearance, do often flame out into the greatest emergencies of life. For great turns are not always given by strong hands, but by lucky adaptation and at proper seasons, and it is of no import where the fire was kindled if the vapour has

once got up into the brain. For the upper region of man is furnished like the middle region of the air, the materials are formed from causes of the widest difference, yet produce at last the same substance and effect. Mists arise from the earth, steams from dunghills, exhalations from the sea, and smoke from fire; yet all clouds are the same in composition as well as consequences, and the fumes issuing from a jakes will furnish as comely and useful a vapour as incense from an altar. Thus far, I suppose, will easily be granted me; and then it will follow that as the face of Nature never produces rain but when it is overcast and disturbed, so human understanding seated in the brain must be troubled and overspread by vapours ascending from the lower faculties to water the invention and render it fruitful. Now although these vapours (as it hath been already said) are of as various original as those of the skies, yet the crop they produce differs both in kind and degree, merely according to the soil. I will produce two instances to prove and explain what I am now advancing.

A certain great prince<sup>59</sup> raised a mighty army, filled his coffers with infinite treasures, provided an invincible fleet, and all this without giving the least part of his design to his greatest ministers or his nearest favourites. Immediately the whole world was alarmed, the neighbouring crowns in trembling expectation towards what point the storm would burst, the small politicians everywhere forming profound conjectures. Some believed he had laid a scheme for universal monarchy; others, after much insight, determined the matter to be a project for pulling down the Pope and setting up the Reformed religion, which had once been his own. Some again, of a deeper sagacity, sent him into Asia to subdue the Turk and recover Palestine. In the midst of all these projects and preparations, a certain state-surgeon<sup>60</sup>, gathering the nature of the disease by these symptoms, attempted the cure, at one blow performed the operation, broke the bag and out flew the vapour; nor did anything want to render it a complete remedy, only that the prince unfortunately happened to die in the performance. Now is the reader exceeding curious to learn from whence this vapour took its rise, which had so long set the nations at a gaze? What secret wheel, what hidden spring, could put into motion so wonderful an engine? It was afterwards discovered that the movement of this whole machine had been directed by an absent female, who was removed into an enemy's country. What should an unhappy prince do in such ticklish circumstances as these? He tried in vain the poet's never-failing receipt of

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<sup>59</sup> Henry IV. of France.

<sup>60</sup> Ravallac, who stabbed Henry IV.

corpora quaeque, for

“Idque petit corpus mens unde est saucia amore;  
Unde feritur, eo tendit, gestitque coire.”

—Lucr.

Having to no purpose used all peaceable endeavours, the collected part of the semen, raised and inflamed, became adust, converted to choler, turned head upon the spinal duct, and ascended to the brain. The very same principle that influences a bully to break the windows of a woman who has jilted him naturally stirs up a great prince to raise mighty armies and dream of nothing but sieges, battles, and victories.

The other instance is what I have read somewhere in a very ancient author of a mighty king<sup>61</sup>, who, for the space of above thirty years, amused himself to take and lose towns, beat armies and be beaten, drive princes out of their dominions, fright children from their bread and butter, burn, lay waste, plunder, dragoon, massacre subject and stranger, friend and foe, male and female. It is recorded that the philosophers of each country were in grave dispute upon causes natural, moral, and political, to find out where they should assign an original solution of this phenomenon. At last the vapour or spirit which animated the hero's brain, being in perpetual circulation, seized upon that region of the human body so renowned for furnishing the *zibeta occidentalis*<sup>62</sup>, and gathering there into a tumour, left the rest of the world for that time in peace. Of such mighty consequence is it where those exhalations fix, and of so little from whence they proceed. The same spirits which in their superior progress would conquer a kingdom descending upon the anus, conclude in a fistula.

Let us next examine the great introducers of new schemes in philosophy, and search till we can find from what faculty of the soul the disposition arises in mortal man of taking it into his head to advance new systems with such an eager zeal in things agreed on all hands impossible to be known; from what seeds this disposition springs, and to what quality of human nature these grand innovators have been indebted for their number of disciples, because it is plain that several of the chief among them,

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61 Swift's contemporary, Louis XIV. of France.

62 Western civet. Paracelsus was said to have endeavoured to extract a perfume from human excrement that might become as fashionable as civet from the cat. It was called *zibeta occidentalis*, the back being, according to Paracelsus, the western part of the body.

both ancient and modern, were usually mistaken by their adversaries, and, indeed, by all, except their own followers, to have been persons crazed or out of their wits, having generally proceeded in the common course of their words and actions by a method very different from the vulgar dictates of unrefined reason, agreeing for the most part in their several models with their present undoubted successors in the academy of modern Bedlam, whose merits and principles I shall further examine in due place. Of this kind were Epicurus, Diogenes, Apollonius, Lucretius, Paracelsus, Des Cartes, and others, who, if they were now in the world, tied fast and separate from their followers, would in this our undistinguishing age incur manifest danger of phlebotomy, and whips, and chains, and dark chambers, and straw. For what man in the natural state or course of thinking did ever conceive it in his power to reduce the notions of all mankind exactly to the same length, and breadth, and height of his own? Yet this is the first humble and civil design of all innovators in the empire of reason. Epicurus modestly hoped that one time or other a certain fortuitous concourse of all men's opinions, after perpetual jostlings, the sharp with the smooth, the light and the heavy, the round and the square, would, by certain clinamina, unite in the notions of atoms and void, as these did in the originals of all things. Cartesius reckoned to see before he died the sentiments of all philosophers, like so many lesser stars in his romantic system, rapt and drawn within his own vortex. Now I would gladly be informed how it is possible to account for such imaginations as these in particular men, without recourse to my phenomenon of vapours ascending from the lower faculties to overshadow the brain, and there distilling into conceptions, for which the narrowness of our mother-tongue has not yet assigned any other name beside that of madness or frenzy. Let us therefore now conjecture how it comes to pass that none of these great prescribers do ever fail providing themselves and their notions with a number of implicit disciples, and I think the reason is easy to be assigned, for there is a peculiar string in the harmony of human understanding, which in several individuals is exactly of the same tuning. This, if you can dexterously screw up to its right key, and then strike gently upon it whenever you have the good fortune to light among those of the same pitch, they will by a secret necessary sympathy strike exactly at the same time. And in this one circumstance lies all the skill or luck of the matter; for, if you chance to jar the string among those who are either above or below your own height, instead of subscribing to your doctrine, they will tie you fast, call you mad, and feed you with bread and water. It is therefore a point of the nicest conduct to distinguish and adapt this noble talent with respect

to the differences of persons and of times. Cicero understood this very well, when, writing to a friend in England, with a caution, among other matters, to beware of being cheated by our hackney-coachmen (who, it seems, in those days were as arrant rascals as they are now), has these remarkable words, *Est quod gaudeas te in ista loca venisse, ubi aliquid sapere viderere*<sup>63</sup>. For, to speak a bold truth, it is a fatal miscarriage so ill to order affairs as to pass for a fool in one company, when in another you might be treated as a philosopher; which I desire some certain gentlemen of my acquaintance to lay up in their hearts as a very seasonable inuendo.

This, indeed, was the fatal mistake of that worthy gentleman, my most ingenious friend Mr. Wotton, a person in appearance ordained for great designs as well as performances, whether you will consider his notions or his looks. Surely no man ever advanced into the public with fitter qualifications of body and mind for the propagation of a new religion. Oh, had those happy talents, misapplied to vain philosophy, been turned into their proper channels of dreams and visions, where distortion of mind and countenance are of such sovereign use, the base, detracting world would not then have dared to report that something is amiss, that his brain hath undergone an unlucky shake, which even his brother modernists themselves, like ungrates, do whisper so loud that it reaches up to the very garret I am now writing in.

Lastly, whoever pleases to look into the fountains of enthusiasm, from whence in all ages have eternally proceeded such fattening streams, will find the spring-head to have been as troubled and muddy as the current. Of such great emolument is a tincture of this vapour, which the world calls madness, that without its help the world would not only be deprived of those two great blessings, conquests and systems, but even all mankind would unhappily be reduced to the same belief in things invisible. Now the former postulatam being held, that it is of no import from what originals this vapour proceeds, but either in what angles it strikes and spreads over the understanding, or upon what species of brain it ascends, it will be a very delicate point to cut the feather and divide the several reasons to a nice and curious reader, how this numerical difference in the brain can produce effects of so vast a difference from the same vapour as to be the sole point of individuation between Alexander the Great, Jack of Leyden, and Monsieur Des Cartes. The present argument is the most abstracted

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<sup>63</sup> Ep. Fam. vii. 10, to Trebatius, who, as the next sentence in the letter shows, had not gone into England.

that ever I engaged in; it strains my faculties to their highest stretch, and I desire the reader to attend with utmost perpensity, for I now proceed to unravel this knotty point.

There is in mankind a certain ... *Hic multa ... desiderantur ...* and this I take to be a clear solution of the matter.

Having, therefore, so narrowly passed through this intricate difficulty, the reader will, I am sure, agree with me in the conclusion that, if the moderns mean by madness only a disturbance or transposition of the brain, by force of certain vapours issuing up from the lower faculties, then has this madness been the parent of all those mighty revolutions that have happened in empire, in philosophy, and in religion. For the brain in its natural position and state of serenity disposeth its owner to pass his life in the common forms, without any thought of subduing multitudes to his own power, his reasons, or his visions, and the more he shapes his understanding by the pattern of human learning, the less he is inclined to form parties after his particular notions, because that instructs him in his private infirmities, as well as in the stubborn ignorance of the people. But when a man's fancy gets astride on his reason, when imagination is at cuffs with the senses, and common understanding as well as common sense is kicked out of doors, the first proselyte he makes is himself; and when that is once compassed, the difficulty is not so great in bringing over others, a strong delusion always operating from without as vigorously as from within. For cant and vision are to the ear and the eye the same that tickling is to the touch. Those entertainments and pleasures we most value in life are such as dupe and play the wag with the senses. For if we take an examination of what is generally understood by happiness, as it has respect either to the understanding or the senses we shall find all its properties and adjuncts will herd under this short definition, that it is a perpetual possession of being well deceived. And first, with relation to the mind or understanding, it is manifest what mighty advantages fiction has over truth, and the reason is just at our elbow: because imagination can build nobler scenes and produce more wonderful revolutions than fortune or Nature will be at the expense to furnish. Nor is mankind so much to blame in his choice thus determining him, if we consider that the debate merely lies between things past and things conceived, and so the question is only this: whether things that have place in the imagination may not as properly be said to exist as those that are seated in the memory? which may be justly held in the affirmative, and very much to the advantage of the former, since this is acknowledged to be the womb of things, and the other allowed to be no more than the grave. Again, if we take this definition of happiness and



examine it with reference to the senses, it will be acknowledged wonderfully adapt. How sad and insipid do all objects accost us that are not conveyed in the vehicle of delusion! How shrunk is everything as it appears in the glass of Nature, so that if it were not for the assistance of artificial mediums, false lights, refracted angles, varnish, and tinsel, there would be a mighty level in the felicity and enjoyments of mortal men. If this were seriously considered by the world, as I have a certain reason to suspect it hardly will, men would no longer reckon among their high points of wisdom the art of exposing weak sides and publishing infirmities—an employment, in my opinion, neither better nor worse than that of unmasking, which, I think, has never been allowed fair usage, either in the world or the playhouse.

In the proportion that credulity is a more peaceful possession of the mind than curiosity, so far preferable is that wisdom which converses about the surface to that pretended philosophy which enters into the depths of things and then comes gravely back with informations and discoveries, that in the inside they are good for nothing. The two senses to which all objects first address themselves are the sight and the touch; these never examine farther than the colour, the shape, the size, and whatever other qualities dwell or are drawn by art upon the outward of bodies; and then comes reason officiously, with tools for cutting, and opening, and mangling, and piercing, offering to demonstrate that they are not of the same consistence quite through. Now I take all this to be the last degree of perverting Nature, one of whose eternal laws it is to put her best furniture forward. And therefore, in order to save the charges of all such expensive anatomy for the time to come, I do here think fit to inform the reader that in such conclusions as these reason is certainly in the right; and that in most corporeal beings which have fallen under my cognisance, the outside hath been infinitely preferable to the in, whereof I have been further convinced from some late experiments. Last week I saw a woman flayed, and you will hardly believe how much it altered her person for the worse. Yesterday I ordered the carcass of a beau to be stripped in my presence, when we were all amazed to find so many unsuspected faults under one suit of clothes. Then I laid open his brain, his heart, and his spleen, but I plainly perceived at every operation that the farther we proceeded, we found the defects increase upon us, in number and bulk; from all which I justly formed this conclusion to myself, that whatever philosopher or projector can find out an art to sodder and patch up the flaws and imperfections of Nature, will deserve much better of mankind and teach us a more useful science than that so much in present esteem, of widening and ex-

posing them (like him who held anatomy to be the ultimate end of physic). And he whose fortunes and dispositions have placed him in a convenient station to enjoy the fruits of this noble art, he that can with Epicurus content his ideas with the films and images that fly off upon his senses from the superficies of things, such a man, truly wise, creams off Nature, leaving the sour and the dregs for philosophy and reason to lap up. This is the sublime and refined point of felicity called the possession of being well-deceived, the serene peaceful state of being a fool among knaves.

But to return to madness. It is certain that, according to the system I have above deduced, every species thereof proceeds from a redundancy of vapour; therefore, as some kinds of frenzy give double strength to the sinews, so there are of other species which add vigour, and life, and spirit to the brain. Now it usually happens that these active spirits, getting possession of the brain, resemble those that haunt other waste and empty dwellings, which for want of business either vanish and carry away a piece of the house, or else stay at home and fling it all out of the windows. By which are mystically displayed the two principal branches of madness, and which some philosophers, not considering so well as I, have mistook to be different in their causes, over-hastily assigning the first to deficiency and the other to redundancy.

I think it therefore manifest, from what I have here advanced, that the main point of skill and address is to furnish employment for this redundancy of vapour, and prudently to adjust the seasons of it, by which means it may certainly become of cardinal and catholic emolument in a commonwealth. Thus one man, choosing a proper juncture, leaps into a gulf, from thence proceeds a hero, and is called the saviour of his country. Another achieves the same enterprise, but unluckily timing it, has left the brand of madness fixed as a reproach upon his memory. Upon so nice a distinction are we taught to repeat the name of Curtius with reverence and love, that of Empedocles with hatred and contempt. Thus also it is usually conceived that the elder Brutus only personated the fool and madman for the good of the public; but this was nothing else than a redundancy of the same vapour long misapplied, called by the Latins *ingenium par negotiis*, or (to translate it as nearly as I can), a sort of frenzy never in its right element till you take it up in business of the state.

Upon all which, and many other reasons of equal weight, though not equally curious, I do here gladly embrace an opportunity I have long sought for, of recommending it as a very noble undertaking to Sir Edward Seymour, Sir Christopher Musgrave, Sir John Bowles, John Howe, Esq., and other patriots concerned, that they would move for leave to bring in a Bill for

appointing commissioners to inspect into Bedlam and the parts adjacent, who shall be empowered to send for persons, papers, and records, to examine into the merits and qualifications of every student and professor, to observe with utmost exactness their several dispositions and behaviour, by which means, duly distinguishing and adapting their talents, they might produce admirable instruments for the several offices in a state, ... civil and military, proceeding in such methods as I shall here humbly propose. And I hope the gentle reader will give some allowance to my great solitudes in this important affair, upon account of that high esteem I have ever borne that honourable society, whereof I had some time the happiness to be an unworthy member.

Is any student tearing his straw in piecemeal, swearing and blaspheming, biting his grate, foaming at the mouth, and emptying his vessel in the spectators' faces? Let the right worshipful the Commissioners of Inspection give him a regiment of dragoons, and send him into Flanders among the rest. Is another eternally talking, sputtering, gaping, bawling, in a sound without period or article? What wonderful talents are here mislaid! Let him be furnished immediately with a green bag and papers, and threepence in his pocket<sup>64</sup>, and away with him to Westminster Hall. You will find a third gravely taking the dimensions of his kennel, a person of foresight and insight, though kept quite in the dark; for why, like Moses, *Ecce cornuta erat ejus facies*. He walks duly in one pace, entreats your penny with due gravity and ceremony, talks much of hard times, and taxes, and the whore of Babylon, bars up the wooden of his cell constantly at eight o'clock, dreams of fire, and shoplifters, and court-customers, and privileged places. Now what a figure would all these acquirements amount to if the owner were sent into the City among his brethren! Behold a fourth in much and deep conversation with himself, biting his thumbs at proper junctures, his countenance chequered with business and design; sometimes walking very fast, with his eyes nailed to a paper that he holds in his hands; a great saver of time, somewhat thick of hearing, very short of sight, but more of memory; a man ever in haste, a great hatcher and breeder of business, and excellent at the famous art of whispering nothing; a huge idolator of monosyllables and procrastination, so ready to give his word to everybody that he never keeps it; one that has forgot the common meaning of words, but an admirable retainer of the sound; extremely subject to the looseness, for his occasions are perpetually calling him away. If you approach his grate in his familiar intervals, "Sir," says he, "give me a penny

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<sup>64</sup> A lawyer's coach-hire.—S.

and I'll sing you a song; but give me the penny first" (hence comes the common saying and commoner practice of parting with money for a song). What a complete system of court-skill is here described in every branch of it, and all utterly lost with wrong application! Accost the hole of another kennel, first stopping your nose, you will behold a surly, gloomy, nasty, slovenly mortal, raking in his own dung and dabbling in his urine. The best part of his diet is the reversion of his own ordure, which expiring into steams, whirls perpetually about, and at last reinfunds. His complexion is of a dirty yellow, with a thin scattered beard, exactly agreeable to that of his diet upon its first declination, like other insects, who, having their birth and education in an excrement, from thence borrow their colour and their smell. The student of this apartment is very sparing of his words, but somewhat over-liberal of his breath. He holds his hand out ready to receive your penny, and immediately upon receipt withdraws to his former occupations. Now is it not amazing to think the society of Warwick Lane<sup>65</sup> should have no more concern for the recovery of so useful a member, who, if one may judge from these appearances, would become the greatest ornament to that illustrious body? Another student struts up fiercely to your teeth, puffing with his lips, half squeezing out his eyes, and very graciously holds out his hand to kiss. The keeper desires you not to be afraid of this professor, for he will do you no hurt; to him alone is allowed the liberty of the ante-chamber, and the orator of the place gives you to understand that this solemn person is a tailor run mad with pride. This considerable student is adorned with many other qualities, upon which at present I shall not further enlarge .... Hark in your ear .... I am strangely mistaken if all his address, his motions, and his airs would not then be very natural and in their proper element.

I shall not descend so minutely as to insist upon the vast number of beaux, fiddlers, poets, and politicians that the world might recover by such a reformation, but what is more material, beside the clear gain redounding to the commonwealth by so large an acquisition of persons to employ, whose talents and acquirements, if I may be so bold to affirm it, are now buried or at least misapplied. It would be a mighty advantage accruing to the public from this inquiry that all these would very much excel and arrive at great perfection in their several kinds, which I think is manifest from what I have already shown, and shall enforce by this one plain instance, that even I myself, the author of these momentous truths, am a person whose imaginations are hard-mouthed and exceedingly dis-

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<sup>65</sup> The College of Physicians.

posed to run away with his reason, which I have observed from long experience to be a very light rider, and easily shook off; upon which account my friends will never trust me alone without a solemn promise to vent my speculations in this or the like manner, for the universal benefit of human kind, which perhaps the gentle, courteous, and candid reader, brimful of that modern charity and tenderness usually annexed to his office, will be very hardly persuaded to believe.

## SECTION X. A FARTHER DIGRESSION.

It is an unanswerable argument of a very refined age the wonderful civilities that have passed of late years between the nation of authors and that of readers. There can hardly pop out a play, a pamphlet, or a poem without a preface full of acknowledgments to the world for the general reception and applause they have given it, which the Lord knows where, or when, or how, or from whom it received. In due deference to so laudable a custom, I do here return my humble thanks to His Majesty and both Houses of Parliament, to the Lords of the King's most honourable Privy Council, to the reverend the Judges, to the Clergy, and Gentry, and Yeomanry of this land; but in a more especial manner to my worthy brethren and friends at Will's Coffee-house, and Gresham College, and Warwick Lane, and Moorfields, and Scotland Yard, and Westminster Hall, and Guildhall; in short, to all inhabitants and retainers whatsoever, either in court, or church, or camp, or city, or country, for their generosity and universal acceptance of this divine treatise. I accept their approbation and good opinion with extreme gratitude, and to the utmost of my poor capacity shall take hold of all opportunities to return the obligation.

I am also happy that fate has flung me into so blessed an age for the mutual felicity of booksellers and authors, whom I may safely affirm to be at this day the two only satisfied parties in England. Ask an author how his last piece has succeeded, "Why, truly he thanks his stars the world has been very favourable, and he has not the least reason to complain." And yet he wrote it in a week at bits and starts, when he could steal an hour from his urgent affairs, as it is a hundred to one you may see further in the preface, to which he refers you, and for the rest to the bookseller. There you go as a customer, and make the same question, "He blesses his God the thing takes wonderful; he is just printing a second edition, and has but three left in his shop." "You beat down the price; sir, we shall not differ," and in hopes of your custom another time, lets you have it as reasonable as

you please; “And pray send as many of your acquaintance as you will; I shall upon your account furnish them all at the same rate.”

Now it is not well enough considered to what accidents and occasions the world is indebted for the greatest part of those noble writings which hourly start up to entertain it. If it were not for a rainy day, a drunken vigil, a fit of the spleen, a course of physic, a sleepy Sunday, an ill run at dice, a long tailor’s bill, a beggar’s purse, a factious head, a hot sun, costive diet, want of books, and a just contempt of learning,—but for these events, I say, and some others too long to recite (especially a prudent neglect of taking brimstone inwardly), I doubt the number of authors and of writings would dwindle away to a degree most woeful to behold. To confirm this opinion, hear the words of the famous troglodyte philosopher. “It is certain,” said he, “some grains of folly are of course annexed as part in the composition of human nature; only the choice is left us whether we please to wear them inlaid or embossed, and we need not go very far to seek how that is usually determined, when we remember it is with human faculties as with liquors, the lightest will be ever at the top.”

There is in this famous island of Britain a certain paltry scribbler, very voluminous, whose character the reader cannot wholly be a stranger to. He deals in a pernicious kind of writings called “Second Parts,” and usually passes under the name of “The Author of the First.” I easily foresee that as soon as I lay down my pen this nimble operator will have stole it, and treat me as inhumanly as he has already done Dr. Blackmore, Lestrangle, and many others who shall here be nameless. I therefore fly for justice and relief into the hands of that great rectifier of saddles and lover of mankind, Dr. Bentley, begging he will take this enormous grievance into his most modern consideration; and if it should so happen that the furniture of an ass in the shape of a second part must for my sins be clapped, by mistake, upon my back, that he will immediately please, in the presence of the world, to lighten me of the burthen, and take it home to his own house till the true beast thinks fit to call for it.

In the meantime, I do here give this public notice that my resolutions are to circumscribe within this discourse the whole stock of matter I have been so many years providing. Since my vein is once opened, I am content to exhaust it all at a running, for the peculiar advantage of my dear country, and for the universal benefit of mankind. Therefore, hospitably considering the number of my guests, they shall have my whole entertainment at a meal, and I scorn to set up the leavings in the cupboard. What the guests cannot eat may be given to the poor, and the dogs under the table may gnaw the bones<sup>66</sup>. This I understand for a more generous pro-

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<sup>66</sup> The bad critics.

ceeding than to turn the company's stomachs by inviting them again tomorrow to a scurvy meal of scraps.

If the reader fairly considers the strength of what I have advanced in the foregoing section, I am convinced it will produce a wonderful revolution in his notions and opinions, and he will be abundantly better prepared to receive and to relish the concluding part of this miraculous treatise. Readers may be divided into three classes—the superficial, the ignorant, and the learned, and I have with much felicity fitted my pen to the genius and advantage of each. The superficial reader will be strangely provoked to laughter, which clears the breast and the lungs, is sovereign against the spleen, and the most innocent of all diuretics. The ignorant reader (between whom and the former the distinction is extremely nice) will find himself disposed to stare, which is an admirable remedy for ill eyes, serves to raise and enliven the spirits, and wonderfully helps perspiration. But the reader truly learned, chiefly for whose benefit I wake when others sleep, and sleep when others wake, will here find sufficient matter to employ his speculations for the rest of his life. It were much to be wished, and I do here humbly propose for an experiment, that every prince in Christendom will take seven of the deepest scholars in his dominions and shut them up close for seven years in seven chambers, with a command to write seven ample commentaries on this comprehensive discourse. I shall venture to affirm that, whatever difference may be found in their several conjectures, they will be all, without the least distortion, manifestly deducible from the text. Meantime it is my earnest request that so useful an undertaking may be entered upon (if their Majesties please) with all convenient speed, because I have a strong inclination before I leave the world to taste a blessing which we mysterious writers can seldom reach till we have got into our graves, whether it is that fame being a fruit grafted on the body, can hardly grow and much less ripen till the stock is in the earth, or whether she be a bird of prey, and is lured among the rest to pursue after the scent of a carcass, or whether she conceives her trumpet sounds best and farthest when she stands on a tomb, by the advantage of a rising ground and the echo of a hollow vault.

It is true, indeed, the republic of dark authors, after they once found out this excellent expedient of dying, have been peculiarly happy in the variety as well as extent of their reputation. For night being the universal mother of things, wise philosophers hold all writings to be fruitful in the proportion they are dark, and therefore the true illuminated (that is to say, the darkest of all) have met with such numberless commentators, whose scholastic midwifery hath delivered them of meanings that the authors



themselves perhaps never conceived, and yet may very justly be allowed the lawful parents of them, the words of such writers being like seed, which, however scattered at random, when they light upon a fruitful ground, will multiply far beyond either the hopes or imagination of the sower.

And therefore, in order to promote so useful a work, I will here take leave to glance a few innuendos that may be of great assistance to those sublime spirits who shall be appointed to labour in a universal comment upon this wonderful discourse. And first, I have couched a very profound mystery in the number of 0's multiplied by seven and divided by nine. Also, if a devout brother of the Rosy Cross will pray fervently for sixty-three mornings with a lively faith, and then transpose certain letters and syllables according to prescription, in the second and fifth section they will certainly reveal into a full receipt of the opus magnum. Lastly, whoever will be at the pains to calculate the whole number of each letter in this treatise, and sum up the difference exactly between the several numbers, assigning the true natural cause for every such difference, the discoveries in the product will plentifully reward his labour. But then he must beware of Bythus and Sige, and be sure not to forget the qualities of Acamoth; a cujus lacrymis humecta prodit substantia, a risu lucida, a tristitia solida, et a timore mobilis, wherein Eugenius Philalethes<sup>67</sup> hath committed an unpardonable mistake.

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<sup>67</sup> A name under which Thomas Vaughan wrote.

## SECTION XI. A TALE OF A TUB.

After so wide a compass as I have wandered, I do now gladly overtake and close in with my subject, and shall henceforth hold on with it an even pace to the end of my journey, except some beautiful prospect appears within sight of my way, whereof, though at present I have neither warning nor expectation, yet upon such an accident, come when it will, I shall beg my reader's favour and company, allowing me to conduct him through it along with myself. For in writing it is as in travelling. If a man is in haste to be at home (which I acknowledge to be none of my case, having never so little business as when I am there), if his horse be tired with long riding and ill ways, or be naturally a jade, I advise him clearly to make the straightest and the commonest road, be it ever so dirty; but then surely we must own such a man to be a scurvy companion at best. He spatters himself and his fellow-travellers at every step. All their thoughts, and wishes, and conversation turn entirely upon the subject of their journey's end, and at every splash, and plunge, and stumble they heartily wish one another at the devil.

On the other side, when a traveller and his horse are in heart and plight, when his purse is full and the day before him, he takes the road only where it is clean or convenient, entertains his company there as agreeably as he can, but upon the first occasion carries them along with him to every delightful scene in view, whether of art, of Nature, or of both; and if they chance to refuse out of stupidity or weariness, let them jog on by themselves, and be d—n'd. He'll overtake them at the next town, at which arriving, he rides furiously through, the men, women, and children run out to gaze, a hundred noisy curs run barking after him, of which, if he honours the boldest with a lash of his whip, it is rather out of sport than revenge. But should some sourer mongrel dare too near an approach, he receives a salute on the chaps by an accidental stroke from the courser's heels, nor is any ground lost by the blow, which sends him yelping and limping home.

I now proceed to sum up the singular adventures of my renowned Jack, the state of whose dispositions and fortunes the careful reader does, no doubt, most exactly remember, as I last parted with them in the conclusion of a former section. Therefore, his next care must be from two of the foregoing to extract a scheme of notions that may best fit his understanding for a true relish of what is to ensue.

Jack had not only calculated the first revolution of his brain so prudently as to give rise to that epidemic sect of AEolists, but succeeding also into a new and strange variety of conceptions, the fruitfulness of his imagination led him into certain notions which, although in appearance very unaccountable, were not without their mysteries and their meanings, nor wanted followers to countenance and improve them. I shall therefore be extremely careful and exact in recounting such material passages of this nature as I have been able to collect either from undoubted tradition or indefatigable reading, and shall describe them as graphically as it is possible, and as far as notions of that height and latitude can be brought within the compass of a pen. Nor do I at all question but they will furnish plenty of noble matter for such whose converting imaginations dispose them to reduce all things into types, who can make shadows—no thanks to the sun—and then mould them into substances—no thanks to philosophy—whose peculiar talent lies in fixing tropes and allegories to the letter, and refining what is literal into figure and mystery.

Jack had provided a fair copy of his father's will, engrossed in form upon a large skin of parchment, and resolving to act the part of a most dutiful son, he became the fondest creature of it imaginable. For although, as I have often told the reader, it consisted wholly in certain plain, easy directions about the management and wearing of their coats, with legacies and penalties in case of obedience or neglect, yet he began to entertain a fancy that the matter was deeper and darker, and therefore must needs have a great deal more of mystery at the bottom. "Gentlemen," said he, "I will prove this very skin of parchment to be meat, drink, and cloth, to be the philosopher's stone and the universal medicine." In consequence of which raptures he resolved to make use of it in the most necessary as well as the most paltry occasions of life. He had a way of working it into any shape he pleased, so that it served him for a nightcap when he went to bed, and for an umbrella in rainy weather. He would lap a piece of it about a sore toe; or, when he had fits, burn two inches under his nose; or, if anything lay heavy on his stomach, scrape off and swallow as much of the powder as would lie on a silver penny—they were all infallible remedies. With analogy to these refinements, his common talk and conversa-

tion ran wholly in the praise of his Will, and he circumscribed the utmost of his eloquence within that compass, not daring to let slip a syllable without authority from thence. Once at a strange house he was suddenly taken short upon an urgent juncture, whereon it may not be allowed too particularly to dilate, and being not able to call to mind, with that suddenness the occasion required, an authentic phrase for demanding the way to the back, he chose rather, as the more prudent course, to incur the penalty in such cases usually annexed; neither was it possible for the united rhetoric of mankind to prevail with him to make himself clean again, because, having consulted the will upon this emergency, he met with a passage near the bottom (whether foisted in by the transcriber is not known) which seemed to forbid it<sup>68</sup>.

He made it a part of his religion never to say grace to his meat, nor could all the world persuade him, as the common phrase is, to eat his victuals like a Christian<sup>69</sup>.

He bore a strange kind of appetite to snap-dragon and to the livid snuffs of a burning candle<sup>70</sup>, which he would catch and swallow with an agility wonderful to conceive; and by this procedure maintained a perpetual flame in his belly, which issuing in a glowing steam from both his eyes, as well as his nostrils and his mouth, made his head appear in a dark night like the skull of an ass wherein a roguish boy hath conveyed a farthing-candle, to the terror of his Majesty's liege subjects. Therefore he made use of no other expedient to light himself home, but was wont to say that a wise man was his own lantern.

He would shut his eyes as he walked along the streets, and if he happened to bounce his head against a post or fall into the kennel (as he seldom missed either to do one or both), he would tell the gibing apprentices who looked on that he submitted with entire resignation, as to a trip or a blow of fate, with whom he found by long experience how vain it was either to wrestle or to cuff, and whoever durst undertake to do either would be sure to come off with a swingeing fall or a bloody nose. "It was ordained," said he<sup>71</sup>, "some few days before the creation, that my nose and this very post should have a rencounter, and therefore Providence

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<sup>68</sup> Revelations xxii. 11: "He which is filthy, let him be filthy still;" "phrase of the will," being Scripture phrase, of either Testament, applied to every occasion, and often in the most unbecoming manner.

<sup>69</sup> He did not kneel when he received the Sacrament.

<sup>70</sup> His inward lights.

<sup>71</sup> Predestination.

thought fit to send us both into the world in the same age, and to make us countrymen and fellow-citizens. Now, had my eyes been open, it is very likely the business might have been a great deal worse, for how many a confounded slip is daily got by man with all his foresight about him. Besides, the eyes of the understanding see best when those of the senses are out of the way, and therefore blind men are observed to tread their steps with much more caution, and conduct, and judgment than those who rely with too much confidence upon the virtue of the visual nerve, which every little accident shakes out of order, and a drop or a film can wholly disconcert; like a lanthorn among a pack of roaring bullies when they scour the streets, exposing its owner and itself to outward kicks and buffets, which both might have escaped if the vanity of appearing would have suffered them to walk in the dark. But further, if we examine the conduct of these boasted lights, it will prove yet a great deal worse than their fortune. It is true I have broke my nose against this post, because Providence either forgot, or did not think it convenient, to twitch me by the elbow and give me notice to avoid it. But let not this encourage either the present age of posterity to trust their noses unto the keeping of their eyes, which may prove the fairest way of losing them for good and all. For, O ye eyes, ye blind guides, miserable guardians are ye of our frail noses; ye, I say, who fasten upon the first precipice in view, and then tow our wretched willing bodies after you to the very brink of destruction. But alas! that brink is rotten, our feet slip, and we tumble down prone into a gulf, without one hospitable shrub in the way to break the fall—a fall to which not any nose of mortal make is equal, except that of the giant Laurcalco<sup>72</sup>, who was Lord of the Silver Bridge. Most properly, therefore, O eyes, and with great justice, may you be compared to those foolish lights which conduct men through dirt and darkness till they fall into a deep pit or a noisome bog.”

This I have produced as a scantling of Jack’s great eloquence and the force of his reasoning upon such abstruse matters.

He was, besides, a person of great design and improvement in affairs of devotion, having introduced a new deity, who has since met with a vast number of worshippers, by some called Babel, by others Chaos, who had an ancient temple of Gothic structure upon Salisbury plain, famous for its shrine and celebration by pilgrims.

When he had some roguish trick to play, he would down with his knees, up with his eyes, and fall to prayers though in the midst of the kennel.

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<sup>72</sup> Vide Don Quixote.—S.

Then it was that those who understood his pranks would be sure to get far enough out of his way; and whenever curiosity attracted strangers to laugh or to listen, he would of a sudden bespatter them with mud.

In winter he went always loose and unbuttoned, and clad as thin as possible to let in the ambient heat, and in summer lapped himself close and thick to keep it out<sup>73</sup>.

In all revolutions of government, he would make his court for the office of hangman-general, and in the exercise of that dignity, wherein he was very dexterous, would make use of no other vizard than a long prayer.

He had a tongue so musculous and subtile, that he could twist it up into his nose and deliver a strange kind of speech from thence. He was also the first in these kingdoms who began to improve the Spanish accomplishment of braying; and having large ears perpetually exposed and erected, he carried his art to such a perfection, that it was a point of great difficulty to distinguish either by the view or the sound between the original and the copy.

He was troubled with a disease the reverse to that called the stinging of the tarantula, and would run dog-mad at the noise of music, especially a pair of bagpipes<sup>74</sup>. But he would cure himself again by taking two or three turns in Westminster Hall, or Billingsgate, or in a boarding-school, or the Royal Exchange, or a state coffee-house.

He was a person that feared no colours, but mortally hated all, and upon that account bore a cruel aversion to painters, insomuch that in his paroxysms as he walked the streets, he would have his pockets loaded with stones to pelt at the signs<sup>75</sup>.

Having from his manner of living frequent occasions to wash himself, he would often leap over head and ears into the water, though it were in the midst of the winter, but was always observed to come out again much dirtier, if possible, than he went in<sup>76</sup>.

He was the first that ever found out the secret of contriving a soporiferous medicine to be conveyed in at the ears<sup>77</sup>. It was a compound of sulphur and balm of Gilead, with a little pilgrim's salve.

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<sup>73</sup> Swift borrowed this from the customs of Moronia—Fool's Land—in Joseph Hall's *Mundus Alter et Idem*.

<sup>74</sup> The Presbyterians objected to church-music, and had no organs in their meeting-houses.

<sup>75</sup> Opposed to the decoration of church walls.

<sup>76</sup> Baptism by immersion.

<sup>77</sup> Preaching.

He wore a large plaister of artificial caustics on his stomach, with the fervour of which he could set himself a groaning like the famous board upon application of a red-hot iron.

He would stand in the turning of a street, and calling to those who passed by, would cry to one, "Worthy sir, do me the honour of a good slap in the chaps;" to another, "Honest friend, pray favour me with a handsome kick in the rear;" "Madam, shall I entreat a small box in the ear from your ladyship's fair hands?" "Noble captain, lend a reasonable thwack, for the love of God, with that cane of yours over these poor shoulders." And when he had by such earnest solicitations made a shift to procure a basting sufficient to swell up his fancy and his sides, he would return home extremely comforted, and full of terrible accounts of what he had undergone for the public good. "Observe this stroke," said he, showing his bare shoulders; "a plaguy janissary gave it me this very morning at seven o'clock, as, with much ado, I was driving off the Great Turk. Neighbours mine, this broken head deserves a plaister; had poor Jack been tender of his noddle, you would have seen the Pope and the French King long before this time of day among your wives and your warehouses. Dear Christians, the Great Moghul was come as far as Whitechapel, and you may thank these poor sides that he hath not—God bless us—already swallowed up man, woman, and child."

It was highly worth observing the singular effects of that aversion or antipathy which Jack and his brother Peter seemed, even to affectation, to bear towards each other. Peter had lately done some rogueries that forced him to abscond, and he seldom ventured to stir out before night for fear of bailiffs. Their lodgings were at the two most distant parts of the town from each other, and whenever their occasions or humours called them abroad, they would make choice of the oddest, unlikely times, and most uncouth rounds that they could invent, that they might be sure to avoid one another. Yet, after all this, it was their perpetual fortune to meet, the reason of which is easy enough to apprehend, for the frenzy and the spleen of both having the same foundation, we may look upon them as two pair of compasses equally extended, and the fixed foot of each remaining in the same centre, which, though moving contrary ways at first, will be sure to encounter somewhere or other in the circumference. Besides, it was among the great misfortunes of Jack to bear a huge personal resemblance with his brother Peter. Their humour and dispositions were not only the same, but there was a close analogy in their shape, their size, and their mien; insomuch as nothing was more frequent than for a bailiff to seize Jack by the shoulders and cry, "Mr. Peter, you are the king's prisoner;" or,

at other times, for one of Peter's nearest friends to accost Jack with open arms: "Dear Peter, I am glad to see thee; pray send me one of your best medicines for the worms." This, we may suppose, was a mortifying return of those pains and proceedings Jack had laboured in so long, and finding how directly opposite all his endeavours had answered to the sole end and intention which he had proposed to himself, how could it avoid having terrible effects upon a head and heart so furnished as his? However, the poor remainders of his coat bore all the punishment. The orient sun never entered upon his diurnal progress without missing a piece of it. He hired a tailor to stitch up the collar so close that it was ready to choke him, and squeezed out his eyes at such a rate as one could see nothing but the white. What little was left of the main substance of the coat he rubbed every day for two hours against a rough-cast wall, in order to grind away the remnants of lace and embroidery, but at the same time went on with so much violence that he proceeded a heathen philosopher. Yet after all he could do of this kind, the success continued still to disappoint his expectation, for as it is the nature of rags to bear a kind of mock resemblance to finery, there being a sort of fluttering appearance in both, which is not to be distinguished at a distance in the dark or by short-sighted eyes, so in those junctures it fared with Jack and his tatters, that they offered to the first view a ridiculous flaunting, which, assisting the resemblance in person and air, thwarted all his projects of separation, and left so near a similitude between them as frequently deceived the very disciples and followers of both ... Desunt nonnulla, ...

The old Sclavonian proverb said well that it is with men as with asses; whoever would keep them fast must find a very good hold at their ears. Yet I think we may affirm, and it hath been verified by repeated experience, that—

"Effugiet tamen haec sceleratus vincula Proteus."<sup>78</sup>

It is good, therefore, to read the maxims of our ancestors with great allowances to times and persons; for if we look into primitive records we shall find that no revolutions have been so great or so frequent as those of human ears. In former days there was a curious invention to catch and keep them, which I think we may justly reckon among the artes perditae; and how can it be otherwise, when in these latter centuries the very species is not only diminished to a very lamentable degree, but the poor remain-

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<sup>78</sup> "This wicked Proteus shall escape the chain."—Francis's Horace.



der is also degenerated so far as to mock our skilfullest tenure? For if only the slitting of one ear in a stag hath been found sufficient to propagate the defect through a whole forest, why should we wonder at the greatest consequences, from so many loppings and mutilations to which the ears of our fathers and our own have been of late so much exposed? It is true, indeed, that while this island of ours was under the dominion of grace, many endeavours were made to improve the growth of ears once more among us. The proportion of largeness was not only looked upon as an ornament of the outward man, but as a type of grace in the inward. Besides, it is held by naturalists that if there be a protuberancy of parts in the superior region of the body, as in the ears and nose, there must be a parity also in the inferior; and therefore in that truly pious age the males in every assembly, according as they were gifted, appeared very forward in exposing their ears to view, and the regions about them; because Hippocrates<sup>79</sup> tells us that when the vein behind the ear happens to be cut, a man becomes a eunuch, and the females were nothing backwarder in beholding and edifying by them; whereof those who had already used the means looked about them with great concern, in hopes of conceiving a suitable offspring by such a prospect; others, who stood candidates for benevolence, found there a plentiful choice, and were sure to fix upon such as discovered the largest ears, that the breed might not dwindle between them. Lastly, the devouter sisters, who looked upon all extraordinary dilatations of that member as protrusions of zeal, or spiritual excrescences, were sure to honour every head they sat upon as if they had been cloven tongues, but especially that of the preacher, whose ears were usually of the prime magnitude, which upon that account he was very frequent and exact in exposing with all advantages to the people in his rhetorical paroxysms, turning sometimes to hold forth the one, and sometimes to hold forth the other; from which custom the whole operation of preaching is to this very day among their professors styled by the phrase of holding forth.

Such was the progress of the saints for advancing the size of that member, and it is thought the success would have been every way answerable, if in process of time a cruel king had not arose, who raised a bloody persecution against all ears above a certain standard<sup>80</sup>; upon which some were glad to hide their flourishing sprouts in a black border, others crept wholly

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<sup>79</sup> Lib. de Aere, Locis, et Aquis.—S.

<sup>80</sup> Charles II., by the Act of Uniformity, which drove two thousand ministers of religion, including some of the most devout, in one day out of the Church of England.

under a periwig; some were slit, others cropped, and a great number sliced off to the stumps. But of this more hereafter in my general "History of Ears," which I design very speedily to bestow upon the public.

From this brief survey of the falling state of ears in the last age, and the small care had to advance their ancient growth in the present, it is manifest how little reason we can have to rely upon a hold so short, so weak, and so slippery; and that whoever desires to catch mankind fast must have recourse to some other methods. Now he that will examine human nature with circumspection enough may discover several handles, whereof the six<sup>81</sup> senses afford one apiece, beside a great number that are screwed to the passions, and some few riveted to the intellect. Among these last, curiosity is one, and of all others affords the firmest grasp; curiosity, that spur in the side, that bridle in the mouth, that ring in the nose of a lazy, an impatient, and a grunting reader. By this handle it is that an author should seize upon his readers; which as soon as he hath once compassed, all resistance and struggling are in vain, and they become his prisoners as close as he pleases, till weariness or dulness force him to let go his grip.

And therefore I, the author of this miraculous treatise, having hitherto, beyond expectation, maintained by the aforesaid handle a firm hold upon my gentle readers, it is with great reluctance that I am at length compelled to remit my grasp, leaving them in the perusal of what remains to that natural oscitancy inherent in the tribe. I can only assure thee, courteous reader, for both our comforts, that my concern is altogether equal to thine, for my unhappiness in losing or mislaying among my papers the remaining part of these memoirs, which consisted of accidents, turns, and adventures, both new, agreeable, and surprising, and therefore calculated in all due points to the delicate taste of this our noble age. But alas! with my utmost endeavours I have been able only to retain a few of the heads. Under which there was a full account how Peter got a protection out of the King's Bench, and of a reconciliation between Jack and him, upon a design they had in a certain rainy night to trepan brother Martin into a spunging-house, and there strip him to the skin. How Martin, with much ado, showed them both a fair pair of heels. How a new warrant came out

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<sup>81</sup> "Including Scaliger's," is Swift's note in the margin. The sixth sense was the "common sense" which united and conveyed to the mind as one whole the information brought in by the other five. Common sense did not originally mean the kind of sense common among the people generally. A person wanting in common sense was one whose brain did not properly combine impressions brought into it by the eye, the ear, &c.

against Peter, upon which Jack left him in the lurch, stole his protection, and made use of it himself. How Jack's tatters came into fashion in court and city; how he got upon a great horse and ate custard<sup>82</sup>. But the particulars of all these, with several others which have now slid out of my memory, are lost beyond all hopes of recovery. For which misfortune, leaving my readers to condole with each other as far as they shall find it to agree with their several constitutions, but conjuring them by all the friendship that has passed between us, from the title-page to this, not to proceed so far as to injure their healths for an accident past remedy, I now go on to the ceremonial part of an accomplished writer, and therefore by a courtly modern least of all others to be omitted.

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82 Reference here is to the exercise by James II. of a dispensing power which illegally protected Roman Catholics, and incidentally Dissenters also; to the consequent growth of feeling against the Roman Catholics. "Jack on a great horse and eating custard" represents what was termed the occasional conformity of men who "blasphemed custard through the nose," but complied with the law that required them to take Sacrament in the Church of England as qualification for becoming a Lord Mayor or holding any office of public authority.

## THE CONCLUSION.

Going too long is a cause of abortion as effectual, though not so frequent, as going too short, and holds true especially in the labours of the brain. Well fare the heart of that noble Jesuit<sup>83</sup> who first adventured to confess in print that books must be suited to their several seasons, like dress, and diet, and diversions; and better fare our noble notion for refining upon this among other French modes. I am living fast to see the time when a book that misses its tide shall be neglected as the moon by day, or like mackerel a week after the season. No man has more nicely observed our climate than the bookseller who bought the copy of this work. He knows to a tittle what subjects will best go off in a dry year, and which it is proper to expose foremost when the weather-glass is fallen to much rain. When he had seen this treatise and consulted his almanac upon it, he gave me to understand that he had manifestly considered the two principal things, which were the bulk and the subject, and found it would never take but after a long vacation, and then only in case it should happen to be a hard year for turnips. Upon which I desired to know, considering my urgent necessities, what he thought might be acceptable this month. He looked westward and said, "I doubt we shall have a bit of bad weather. However, if you could prepare some pretty little banter (but not in verse), or a small treatise upon the it would run like wildfire. But if it hold up, I have already hired an author to write something against Dr. Bentley, which I am sure will turn to account."

At length we agreed upon this expedient, that when a customer comes for one of these, and desires in confidence to know the author, he will tell him very privately as a friend, naming whichever of the wits shall happen to be that week in the vogue, and if Durfey's last play should be in course, I had as lieve he may be the person as Congreve. This I mention, because I am wonderfully well acquainted with the present relish of courteous readers, and have often observed, with singular pleasure, that a fly driven

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<sup>83</sup> Pere d'Orleans.—S.

from a honey-pot will immediately, with very good appetite, alight and finish his meal on an excrement.

I have one word to say upon the subject of profound writers, who are grown very numerous of late, and I know very well the judicious world is resolved to list me in that number. I conceive, therefore, as to the business of being profound, that it is with writers as with wells. A person with good eyes can see to the bottom of the deepest, provided any water be there; and that often when there is nothing in the world at the bottom besides dryness and dirt, though it be but a yard and half under ground, it shall pass, however, for wondrous deep, upon no wiser a reason than because it is wondrous dark.

I am now trying an experiment very frequent among modern authors, which is to write upon nothing, when the subject is utterly exhausted to let the pen still move on; by some called the ghost of wit, delighting to walk after the death of its body. And to say the truth, there seems to be no part of knowledge in fewer hands than that of discerning when to have done. By the time that an author has written out a book, he and his readers are become old acquaintance, and grow very loathe to part; so that I have sometimes known it to be in writing as in visiting, where the ceremony of taking leave has employed more time than the whole conversation before. The conclusion of a treatise resembles the conclusion of human life, which has sometimes been compared to the end of a feast, where few are satisfied to depart *ut plenus vitae conviva*. For men will sit down after the fullest meal, though it be only to dose or to sleep out the rest of the day. But in this latter I differ extremely from other writers, and shall be too proud if, by all my labours, I can have any ways contributed to the repose of mankind in times so turbulent and unquiet as these. Neither do I think such an employment so very alien from the office of a wit as some would suppose; for among a very polite nation in Greece<sup>84</sup> there were the same temples built and consecrated to Sleep and the Muses, between which two deities they believed the strictest friendship was established.

I have one concluding favour to request of my reader, that he will not expect to be equally diverted and informed by every line or every page of this discourse, but give some allowance to the author's spleen and short fits or intervals of dulness, as well as his own, and lay it seriously to his conscience whether, if he were walking the streets in dirty weather or a rainy day, he would allow it fair dealing in folks at their ease from a window, to criticise his gate and ridicule his dress at such a juncture.

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<sup>84</sup> Trazenii, Pausan. L. 2.—S.

In my dispose of employments of the brain, I have thought fit to make invention the master, and to give method and reason the office of its lackeys. The cause of this distribution was from observing it my peculiar case to be often under a temptation of being witty upon occasion where I could be neither wise nor sound, nor anything to the matter in hand. And I am too much a servant of the modern way to neglect any such opportunities, whatever pains or improprieties I may be at to introduce them. For I have observed that from a laborious collection of seven hundred and thirty-eight flowers and shining hints of the best modern authors, digested with great reading into my book of common places, I have not been able after five years to draw, hook, or force into common conversation any more than a dozen. Of which dozen the one moiety failed of success by being dropped among unsuitable company, and the other cost me so many strains, and traps, and ambages to introduce, that I at length resolved to give it over. Now this disappointment (to discover a secret), I must own, gave me the first hint of setting up for an author, and I have since found among some particular friends that it is become a very general complaint, and has produced the same effects upon many others. For I have remarked many a towardly word to be wholly neglected or despised in discourse, which hath passed very smoothly with some consideration and esteem after its preferment and sanction in print. But now, since, by the liberty and encouragement of the press, I am grown absolute master of the occasions and opportunities to expose the talents I have acquired, I already discover that the issues of my observanda begin to grow too large for the receipts. Therefore I shall here pause awhile, till I find, by feeling the world's pulse and my own, that it will be of absolute necessity for us both to resume my pen.

[In some early editions of “The Tale of a Tub,” Swift added, under the title of “What Follows after Section IX.,” the following sketch for a “History of Martin.”]

## THE HISTORY OF MARTIN

GIVING AN ACCOUNT of his departure from Jack, and their setting up for themselves, on which account they were obliged to travel, and meet many disasters; finding no shelter near Peter’s habitation, Martin succeeds in the North; Peter thunders against Martin for the loss of the large revenue he used to receive from thence; Harry Huff sent Marlin a challenge in fight, which he received; Peter rewards Harry for the pretended victory, which encouraged Harry to huff Peter also; with many other extraordinary adventures of the said Martin in several places with many considerable persons.

With a digression concerning the nature, usefulness, and necessity of wars and quarrels.

How Jack and Martin, being parted, set up each for himself. How they travelled over hills and dales, met many disasters, suffered much from the good cause, and struggled with difficulties and wants, not having where to lay their head; by all which they afterwards proved themselves to be right father’s sons, and Peter to be spurious. Finding no shelter near Peter’s habitation, Martin travelled northwards, and finding the Thuringians, a neighbouring people, disposed to change, he set up his stage first among them, where, making it his business to cry down Peter’s powders, plasters, salves, and drugs, which he had sold a long time at a dear rate, allowing Martin none of the profit, though he had been often employed in recommending and putting them off, the good people, willing to save their pence, began to hearken to Martin’s speeches. How several great lords took the hint, and on the same account declared for Martin; particularly one who, not having had enough of one wife, wanted to marry a second, and knowing Peter used not to grant such licenses but at a swingeing price, he struck up a bargain with Martin, whom he found more trac-

table, and who assured him he had the same power to allow such things. How most of the other Northern lords, for their own private ends, withdrew themselves and their dependants from Peter's authority, and closed in with Martin. How Peter, enraged at the loss of such large territories, and consequently of so much revenue, thundered against Martin, and sent out the strongest and most terrible of his bulls to devour him; but this having no effect, and Martin defending himself boldly and dexterously, Peter at last put forth proclamations declaring Martin and all his adherents rebels and traitors, ordaining and requiring all his loving subjects to take up arms, and to kill, burn, and destroy all and every one of them, promising large rewards, &c., upon which ensued bloody wars and desolation.

How Harry Huff<sup>85</sup>, lord of Albion, one of the greatest bullies of those days, sent a cartel to Martin to fight him on a stage at Cudgels, quarter-staff, backsword, &c. Hence the origin of that genteel custom of prize-fighting so well known and practised to this day among those polite islanders, though unknown everywhere else. How Martin, being a bold, blustering fellow, accepted the challenge; how they met and fought, to the great diversion of the spectators; and, after giving one another broken heads and many bloody wounds and bruises, how they both drew off victorious, in which their example has been frequently imitated by great clerks and others since that time. How Martin's friends applauded his victory, and how Lord Harry's friends complimented him on the same score, and particularly Lord Peter, who sent him a fine feather for his cap<sup>86</sup>, to be worn by him and his successors as a perpetual mark for his bold defence of Lord Peter's cause. How Harry, flushed with his pretended victory over Martin, began to huff Peter also, and at last downright quarrelled with him about a wench. How some of Lord Harry's tenants, ever fond of changes, began to talk kindly of Martin, for which he mauled them soundly, as he did also those that adhered to Peter. How he turned some out of house and hold, others he hanged or burnt, &c.

How Harry Huff, after a deal of blustering, wenching, and bullying, died, and was succeeded by a good-natured boy<sup>87</sup>, who, giving way to the general bent of his tenants, allowed Martin's notions to spread everywhere, and take deep root in Ambition. How, after his death, the farm fell into the hands of a lady<sup>88</sup>, who was violently in love with Lord Peter. How she

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<sup>85</sup> Henry VIII.

<sup>86</sup> "Fidei Defensor."

<sup>87</sup> Edward VI.

<sup>88</sup> Queen Mary.



purged the whole country with fire and sword, resolved not to leave the name or remembrance of Martin. How Peter triumphed, and set up shops again for selling his own powders, plasters, and salves, which were now declared the only true ones, Martin's being all declared counterfeit. How great numbers of Martin's friends left the country, and, travelling up and down in foreign parts, grew acquainted with many of Jack's followers, and took a liking to many of their notions and ways, which they afterwards brought back into ambition, now under another landlady<sup>89</sup>, more moderate and more cunning than the former. How she endeavoured to keep friendship both with Peter and Martin, and trimmed for some time between the two, not without countenancing and assisting at the same time many of Jack's followers; but finding, no possibility of reconciling all the three brothers, because each would be master, and allow no other salves, powders, or plasters to be used but his own, she discarded all three, and set up a shop for those of her own farm, well furnished with powders, plasters, salves, and all other drugs necessary, all right and true, composed according to receipts made by physicians and apothecaries of her own creating, which they extracted out of Peter's, and Martin's, and Jack's receipt-books, and of this medley or hodge-podge made up a dispensatory of their own, strictly forbidding any other to be used, and particularly Peter's, from which the greatest part of this new dispensatory was stolen. How the lady, farther to confirm this change, wisely imitating her father, degraded Peter from the rank he pretended as eldest brother, and set up herself in his place as head of the family, and ever after wore her father's old cap with the fine feather he had got from Peter for standing his friend, which has likewise been worn with no small ostentation to this day by all her successors, though declared enemies to Peter. How Lady Bess and her physicians, being told of many defects and imperfections in their new medley dispensatory, resolve on a further alteration, to purge it from a great deal of Peter's trash that still remained in it, but were prevented by her death. How she was succeeded by a North-Country farmer<sup>90</sup>, who pretended great skill in the managing of farms, though he could never govern his own poor little farm, nor yet this large new one after he got it. How this new landlord, to show his valour and dexterity, fought against enchanters, weeds, giants, and windmills, and claimed great honour for his victories. How his successor, no wiser than he, occasioned great disorders by the new methods he took to manage his farms. How he attempted

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<sup>89</sup> Queen Elizabeth.

<sup>90</sup> James I.

to establish in his Northern farm the same dispensatory<sup>91</sup> used in the Southern, but miscarried, because Jack's powders, pills, salves, and plasters were there in great vogue.

How the author finds himself embarrassed for having introduced into his history a new sect different from the three he had undertaken to treat of; and how his inviolable respect to the sacred number three obliges him to reduce these four, as he intends to do all other things, to that number; and for that end to drop the former Martin and to substitute in his place Lady Bess's institution, which is to pass under the name of Martin in the sequel of this true history. This weighty point being cleared, the author goes on and describes mighty quarrels and squabbles between Jack and Martin; how sometimes the one had the better and sometimes the other, to the great desolation of both farms, till at last both sides concur to hang up the landlord<sup>92</sup>, who pretended to die a martyr for Martin, though he had been true to neither side, and was suspected by many to have a great affection for Peter.

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<sup>91</sup> Episcopacy.

<sup>92</sup> Charles I.

A DIGRESSION ON THE NATURE,  
USEFULNESS, AND NECESSITY OF WARS AND  
QUARRELS.

This being a matter of great consequence, the author intends to treat it methodically and at large in a treatise apart, and here to give only some hints of what his large treatise contains. The state of war, natural to all creatures. War is an attempt to take by violence from others a part of what they have and we want. Every man, fully sensible of his own merit, and finding it not duly regarded by others, has a natural right to take from them all that he thinks due to himself; and every creature, finding its own wants more than those of others, has the same right to take everything its nature requires. Brutes, much more modest in their pretensions this way than men, and mean men more than great ones. The higher one raises his pretensions this way, the more bustle he makes about them, and the more success he has, the greater hero. Thus greater souls, in proportion to their superior merit, claim a greater right to take everything from meaner folks. This the true foundation of grandeur and heroism, and of the distinction of degrees among men. War, therefore, necessary to establish subordination, and to found cities, kingdoms, &c., as also to purge bodies politic of gross humours. Wise princes find it necessary to have wars abroad to keep peace at home. War, famine, and pestilence, the usual cures for corruption in bodies politic. A comparison of these three—the author is to write a panegyric on each of them. The greatest part of mankind loves war more than peace. They are but few and mean-spirited that live in peace with all men. The modest and meek of all kinds always a prey to those of more noble or stronger appetites. The inclination to war universal; those that cannot or dare not make war in person employ others to do it for them. This maintains bullies, bravoos, cut-throats, lawyers, soldiers, &c. Most professions would be useless if all were peaceable. Hence brutes want neither smiths nor lawyers, magistrates nor joiners, soldiers or surgeons. Brutes having but narrow appetites, are incapable of carrying on or perpetuating war against their own species, or of being led out in troops and multitudes to destroy one another. These prerogatives proper to man alone. The ex-

*A Tale of a Tub*

cellency of human nature demonstrated by the vast train of appetites, passions, wants, &c., that attend it. This matter to be more fully treated in the author's panegyric on mankind.

THE HISTORY OF MARTIN—Continued.

How Jack, having got rid of the old landlord, set up another to his mind, quarrelled with Martin, and turned him out of doors. How he pillaged all his shops, and abolished his whole dispensatory. How the new landlord<sup>93</sup> laid about him, mauled Peter, worried Martin, and made the whole neighbourhood tremble. How Jack's friends fell out among themselves, split into a thousand parties, turned all things topsy-turvy, till everybody grew weary of them; and at last, the blustering landlord dying, Jack was kicked out of doors, a new landlord<sup>94</sup> brought in, and Martin re-established. How this new landlord let Martin do what he pleased, and Martin agreed to everything his pious landlord desired, provided Jack might be kept low. Of several efforts Jack made to raise up his head, but all in vain; till at last the landlord died, and was succeeded by one<sup>95</sup> who was a great friend to Peter, who, to humble Martin, gave Jack some liberty. How Martin grew enraged at this, called in a foreigner<sup>96</sup> and turned out the landlord; in which Jack concurred with Martin, because this landlord was entirely devoted to Peter, into whose arms he threw himself, and left his country. How the new landlord secured Martin in the full possession of his former rights, but would not allow him to destroy Jack, who had always been his friend. How Jack got up his head in the North, and put himself in possession of a whole canton, to the great discontent of Martin, who finding also that some of Jack's friends were allowed to live and get their bread in the south parts of the country, grew highly discontented with the new landlord he had called in to his assistance. How this landlord kept Martin in order, upon which he fell into a raging fever, and swore he would hang himself or join in with Peter, unless Jack's children were all turned out to starve. Of several attempts to cure Martin, and make peace between him and Jack, that they might unite against Peter; but all made ineffectual by

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93 Cromwell.

94 Charles II.

95 James II.

96 William III.

the great address of a number of Peter's friends, that herded among Martin's, and appeared the most zealous for his interest. How Martin, getting abroad in this mad fit, looked so like Peter in his air and dress, and talked so like him, that many of the neighbours could not distinguish the one from the other; especially when Martin went up and down strutting in Peter's armour, which he had borrowed to fight Jack<sup>97</sup>. What remedies were used to cure Martin's distemper ...

Here the author being seized with a fit of dulness, to which he is very subject, after having read a poetical epistle addressed to ... it entirely composed his senses, so that he has not writ a line since.

N.B.—Some things that follow after this are not in the MS., but seem to have been written since, to fill up the place of what was not thought convenient then to print.

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<sup>97</sup> High Church against Dissent.

## A PROJECT FOR THE UNIVERSAL BENEFIT OF MANKIND.

The author, having laboured so long and done so much to serve and instruct the public, without any advantage to himself, has at last thought of a project which will tend to the great benefit of all mankind, and produce a handsome revenue to the author. He intends to print by subscription, in ninety-six large volumes in folio, an exact description of Terra Australis incognita, collected with great care, and prints from 999 learned and pious authors of undoubted veracity. The whole work, illustrated with maps and cuts agreeable to the subject, and done by the best masters, will cost but one guinea each volume to subscribers, one guinea to be paid in advance, and afterwards a guinea on receiving each volume, except the last. This work will be of great use for all men, and necessary for all families, because it contains exact accounts of all the provinces, colonies, and mansions of that spacious country, where, by a general doom, all transgressors of the law are to be transported; and every one having this work may choose out the fittest and best place for himself, there being enough for all, so as every one shall be fully satisfied.

The author supposes that one copy of this work will be bought at the public charge, or out of the parish rates, for every parish church in the three kingdoms, and in all the dominions thereunto belonging. And that every family that can command 10 pounds per annum, even though retrenched from less necessary expenses, will subscribe for one. He does not think of giving out above nine volumes nearly; and considering the number requisite, he intends to print at least 100,000 for the first edition. He is to print proposals against next term, with a specimen, and a curious map of the capital city with its twelve gates, from a known author, who took an exact survey of it in a dream. Considering the great care and pains of the author, and the usefulness of the work, he hopes every one will be ready, for their own good as well as his, to contribute cheerfully to it, and not grudge him the profit he may have by it, especially if he comes to a third or fourth edition, as he expects it will very soon.

He doubts not but it will be translated into foreign languages by most

nations of Europe, as well as Asia and Africa, being of as great use to all those nations as to his own; for this reason he designs to procure patents and privileges for securing the whole benefit to himself from all those different princes and states, and hopes to see many millions of this great work printed in those different countries and languages before his death.

After this business is pretty well established, he has promised to put a friend on another project almost as good as this, by establishing insurance offices everywhere for securing people from shipwreck and several other accidents in their voyage to this country; and these officers shall furnish, at a certain rate, pilots well versed in the route, and that know all the rocks, shelves, quicksands, &c., that such pilgrims and travellers may be exposed to. Of these he knows a great number ready instructed in most countries; but the whole scheme of this matter he is to draw up at large and communicate to his friend.

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