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Representative English Comedies

VOLUME FOUR

DRYDEN AND HIS CONTEMPORARIES:

COWLEY TO FARQUHAR



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REPRESENTATIVE ENGLISH COMEDIES /

WITH INTRODUCTORY ESSAYS, A MONOGRAPH,
AND NOTES

UNDER THE GENERAL EDITORSHIP OF

CHARLES MILLS GAYLEY, LITT.D., LL.D.,

*Late Professor of the English Language and Literature
in the University of California*

AND

ALWIN THALER, PH.D.,

*Professor of English in the
University of Tennessee*

VOLUME IV

DRYDEN AND HIS CONTEMPORARIES:
COWLEY TO FARQUHAR

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1936

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To the Memory of
CHARLES MILLS GAYLEY

PREFACE

THIS volume brings to a close the series of *Representative English Comedies* begun by Charles Mills Gayley thirty-three years ago. The objectives of this series are familiar to readers of its earlier volumes. But such readers—and those especially who, having been privileged to know the scholar and the man behind these books, delight in honoring his memory—will be glad, with the newer generation of students, to recall Professor Gayley's own statement of his purposes, here summarized from the prefaces of his first two volumes:

To indicate the development of English comedy by a selection of its representative specimens, arranged, when possible, in the order of their production and accompanied by critical and historical studies, . . . some . . . special, such as those dealing with the several authors and plays, [and the] occasional monographs . . . intended to represent minor dramatists; . . . some general, the monographs upon groups or movements, and the sketch introductory to the volume. . . .

While the various contributors to the enterprise have exercised their individual preferences in matters of literary treatment, judgment, and style, the general editor has attempted to secure the requisite degree of uniformity by requesting each to conform to a common but elastic outline of method previously prepared. If the attempt has succeeded, there has been gained something of continuity and scientific value for the series. The presence, at the same time, of an occasional personal element in the several articles of this history will enhance its value for our dear friend, the good old-fashioned reader, who sets no store by literary science, but judges books by his liking, and likes to read such judgments of them.

In June, 1914, just before the outbreak of the Great War, Professor Gayley concluded his Preface to the last preceding volume

by referring to the work then in progress on the volume now published, almost four years after his death: "The next volume of this series, now well under way, will present the comedy of the Restoration." The hope of early publication implied in this statement was frustrated by many causes. The pressure of other tasks at first, and later the grievous distractions of war and troubled peace, had already wrought (in Mr. Gayley's own words) "serious but inevitable" delays when, in 1923, he invited the writer to collaborate with him in the general editorship. At that time a good half of the manuscript was in hand. The rest was soon commissioned, and completed during the next two or three years. Unhappily the difficulties already mentioned had still to be reckoned with, and there were others. The editors had to work far apart in the measure of miles; death swept away several distinguished contributors to the volume; and the relentless passing of time increased the urgency and difficulty of the editors' task of revising the accumulated materials for the press. In the summer of 1928 they were able to work together in California and virtually to complete this part of their task up to that date. The senior editor retained the manuscript for final review and for the preparation of his introductory sketch, but ill health stilled his vigorous pen. Not so, however, his desire—emphatically reiterated before his death in July, 1932—to have this series, in the earlier volumes of which he had taken just pride, brought to a fitting conclusion by the publication of this volume. To this end, a final revision was promptly undertaken. The unparalleled economic disturbances of recent times delayed publication once more; less seriously, however, than might have been the case but for the coöperation of contributors and publishers, and the generously effective aid of Mrs. Gayley.

Earlier readers of this series will be sorry to miss here the pro-

posed introductory sketch. Unhappily, Professor Gayley did not live to write it, and the bulk of this volume as it stands left entirely insufficient room for even an attempt at a substitute by another hand. Readers will find some compensation for the loss, however, in the well-considered studies of general aspects of Restoration comedy included in several of the critical essays here printed,—for example, in Sir A. W. Ward's discussion of "Dryden's Place in English Comedy," and in Professor G. R. Noyes's analysis of "The Development of English Comedy of Manners." These and other critical studies here presented will still be welcomed, it is hoped, though none was written yesterday and not all could have the benefit of final revision by their authors.

For the rest, this volume, obviously, is not another anthology of Restoration drama in general. It is an attempt to provide, within limits, a representative case history of Restoration comedy, adequately set forth and documented. It presents careful critical editions such as in the case of some of these plays—notably the most famous of them all, *The Way of the World*—have not hitherto been available. Again, it prints some significant plays not always easily obtainable by the general reader: Cowley's *Cutter of Coleman-Street*, for example (here reprinted for the first time in thirty years), and others, such as *The Provok'd Wife* and *The Recruiting Officer*, which have not often found their way into modern collections.

Generally speaking, the texts of these comedies, as stated in the Preface to Volume I,

are, to the best ability of their respective editors, faithful reprints of the best originals; where possible, those published during their authors' lives. Spelling and language have been preserved as they were; but for the convenience of readers, the punctuation and the style of capitals and letters, such as *i, j, u, v, s*, have been, unless otherwise specified, conformed to the modern custom.

Preface

Here as elsewhere in the series, however, one or two of the contributing editors have departed from the norm in some particulars, Sir A. W. Ward (as indicated in his essay) having chosen, in general, to modernize, and Professor Beljame, occasionally, to normalize spelling in their respective texts. The proofsheets of all texts have been collated with the original editions for errors of the press. It is not to be hoped that all error has been banished from this volume, but no pains have been spared to make it reliable in itself and worthy of its tradition.

In this endeavor I have had invaluable help from friends and coworkers. I am especially indebted to the library authorities of Harvard, Yale, and the University of California; to Professor Tucker Brooke, for aid in collating certain portions of text and in other matters; to Professor G. R. Noyes, for wise counsel and steadfast coöperation in times of stress; and to my wife, for bearing a full and equal share in the work of seeing this book through the press.

ALWIN THALER.

UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE,
January 2, 1936.

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Abraham Cowley

CUTTER OF COLEMAN-STREET

*Edited with Critical Essay and
Notes by the late Henry A.
Beers, Professor in Yale
University*

CRITICAL ESSAY

Life.—Abraham Cowley was born in London in 1618, the posthumous son of Thomas Cowley, a stationer. He was educated at Westminster School, and at Trinity College, Cambridge, where he resided from 1636 to 1643-4. Having taken the King's side in the Civil War, he was ejected from his fellowship in Trinity and repaired to the royal headquarters at Oxford, where he continued his studies at St. John's College. He became secretary to Jermyn, afterwards Earl of St. Albans; and, by 1646, had followed the Queen to Paris. There he was employed in conducting the correspondence, carried on in cipher, between the King and Queen; and was sent upon several confidential missions on behalf of the royal family into Scotland, Jersey, and the Low Countries. In 1654, though ostensibly unchanged in his allegiance, he was commissioned by Cromwell to return to England, apparently as a secret agent. Both sides, however, distrusted him—perhaps not altogether unjustly—¹ and in 1655 he was arrested in London, imprisoned for a time, and finally released under bonds of £1000. In 1657 he was permitted to take the degree of M.D. from Oxford. Some time after Cromwell's death in 1658, he returned to Paris and remained there till the Restoration. His fortunes were somewhat improved by that event, though he was disappointed of the mastership of the Savoy which had been promised him. But he managed to have himself reinstated in his Trinity fellowship, and got from D'Avenant, in reward for *Cutter of Coleman-Street* and for general services as "literary adviser" at the Duke's Theatre, a one-thirtieth interest in that playhouse.² Best of all, he obtained, through the favour of the Duke of Buckingham and the Earl of St. Albans, a lease of the Queen's lands which enabled him to live in comfort in rural retirement first at Barn Elms and afterwards at Chertsey, where he died July 28, 1667. He was buried in Westminster Abbey near Chaucer and Spenser.

Cowley was a remarkable example of literary precocity, his first volume, *Poetical Blossoms*, 1633, having been published in his fifteenth year. His collection of love verses, *The Mistress*, 1647, is cold and artificial. Several of his elegies have very noble passages. He introduced the irregular

¹ Cf. A. H. Nethercot, *Abraham Cowley*, pp. 143 ff.—*Gen. Eds.*

² Cf. Hotson, *Commonwealth and Restoration Stage*, pp. 207, 221; Nethercot, *op. cit.*, p. 201.—*Gen. Eds.*

pseudo-pindaric ode into English verse, and began an epic poem, *Dauidis*, of which only four books were written. His *Anacreontiques*, simpler in style than his original odes, are still current; and his *Several Discourses by way of Essays in prose and verse* have remained favorites. He was an early member of the Royal Society, and his interest in botany found expression in his Latin poem *Plantarum*. The first collection of his works in prose and verse appeared in 1668 in one volume folio, with the well-known life of the poet by Sprat.

Cowley's Earlier Plays.—Cowley was not a professional playwright: *Cutter* was his solitary contribution to the public stage. But like other clever youths at the universities, he followed the literary bias of the age and made amateur experiments in drama. The first of these was *Love's Riddle*, a pastoral comedy composed by 1636, when the author was still a Westminster school-boy, and printed in 1638. There is no evidence that it was ever exhibited.¹ *Love's Riddle* belongs to that class of academic prolusions which includes the *Amyntas* and *The Jealous Lovers* of Thomas Randolph, also like Cowley a Westminster scholar and a student and fellow of Trinity. Gosse saw in the piece a "distinct following, without imitation, of Randolph's *Jealous Lovers*," but Cowley's indebtedness to Randolph does not appear to be heavy, and he is closer if anything to *Amyntas* than to the *Lovers*. The following lines (*Riddle*, III, i, 108-18), are of some interest as anticipations of the "sharking" militaries in *Cutter*.

A pox of forlorne captaines, pittifull things
Whom you mistake for souldiers only by
Their sounding oathes, and a buffe jerkin, and
Some histories which they have learn'd by roate,
Of battailes fought in Persia or Polonia . . .

In the same scene there is a gird at a "holy brother," one of the Puritans, who furnish the satire-motive in *Cutter*.

Cowley's Latin play, *Naufragium Jocularè*, was acted in the hall of Trinity College, in February, 1639.² This was a Plautine comedy

¹ Except by way of a girls' boarding school adaptation in 1723 (cf. A. H. Nethercot, *Cowley as Dramatist*, *Rev. of Engl. Studies*, IV, 6-7).—*Gen. Eds.*

² Genest, X, 34, gives the date as 2nd Feb., 1638 (Candlemas). Others have dated it the 10th or 4th of Feb., 1638-9. The title page of the printed play is dated "4. Nonas Feb. An. Dom. 1638" (cf. G. C. Moore Smith, *College Plays in the University of Cambridge*).

of the familiar university type. The stock characters of the Latin theatre are present in force: the pedagogue, the *servus* and *ancilla*, the merchant father, the lost heir and supposititious son, the male and female captive with their master, the "Thraso" or "Miles Gloriosus"—in this instance named Bombardomachides. This last figure, already domesticated on the English stage in Jonson's Bobadil,¹ appears again, of course with a difference, in the Cutter and Worm of Cowley's later play. The *Naufragium Joculare* abounds in Cambridge slang, textbook quotations, local allusions, and "gag." It was freely translated into English by Charles Johnson in 1705 under the title *Fortune in Her Wits*.

First Form of Cutter: The Guardian.—Cowley's one addition to the repertoire of the London playhouses was also academic in origin. *The Guardian* was hastily put together for the entertainment of Prince Charles as he passed through Cambridge on his way to York, and was acted at Trinity College, March 12, 1642. This was less than six months before the royal standard was raised at Nottingham, the first overt act of the Civil War. The prologue speaks of "the fury of these days," of the "Roundheads" and of "Master Prin" of *Histrionastix* fame. *The Guardian* was printed in 1650 without the author's leave and while he was out of the country. According to the preface to *Cutter*, it had been acted privately several times during "the troubles" and "lately too at Dublin."

Stage History of Cutter.—Soon before or after the Restoration, Cowley recast the play, and on Dec. 16, 1661, it was put on at the Duke's Theatre, where it ran for a week with a full audience. Pepys, who was present at the first performance, pronounces it a very good play "made² in the year 1658, with reflections much upon the late times." We know, however, by Cowley's preface that the piece was censured as a satire on the Royal party: Dryden told Dennis³ that it was roughly handled on the stage; and Downes⁴

¹ For more detailed discussion of the classical and Elizabethan background of the play, cf. Nethercot, *op. cit.*—*Gen. Eds.*

² The date (1658) which follows may be that of the *action* ("The Scene London in the Year 1658") rather than of the *making* of the play. See, however, A. R. Waller, *Cowley, Essays and Plays*, p. VI, and Nethercot, *Cowley*, pp. 182 ff.—*Gen. Eds.*

³ Preface to *Comical Gallant*.

⁴ *Roscius Anglicanus*.

acknowledges that it was "not a little injurious to the Cavalier indigent officers, especially the characters of Cutter and Worm."¹ Even so, the play was not unsuccessful. It was presented at Court, and revived at Lincoln's Inn Fields, in 1668 and 1702; again at Drury Lane, August 1, 1712, with a new prologue spoken by Pack; and at Lincoln's Inn Fields in January and November, 1723, when it was acted eight times.

Position in the History of English Comedy.—Historically *Cutter of Coleman-Street* holds an interesting rather than an influential place in the evolution of English comedy. In its earlier form, *The Guardian*, it was one of the last plays represented at the universities before the Long Parliament laid a heavy hand upon theatrical performances everywhere. In its later form it was one of the first plays put upon the boards of the new playhouses. It was constructed upon the lines of old English comedy, and when revised for the Duke's Theatre, the revision was made in the interest of the satirical and political features of the piece, and with the aim of utilizing the fresh comic material afforded by the history of the past twenty years. No effort was made to adapt the play to new dramatic models. Though in some sense a transition comedy, it is hardly a link between the Elizabethan and Restoration theatres. Molière had come to Paris in 1658, about the time of Cowley's return to the French capital, bringing with him the renown which *L'Étourdi* and *Le Dépit Amoureux* had won in the provinces. It is possible that Cowley may have witnessed some of Molière's plays in France, as well as the comedies of Scarron and Corneille. But such resemblances as might be detected between situations or characters in *Cutter* and the French drama are merely the commonplaces of all comedy and are not due to imitation.²

¹ Savoy-missing Cowley came into the court, Making apologies for his bad play. (*Sessions of the Poets.*)

² Cowley observes the unities. The duration of the play is one day. The time indications are more precise than those of place; but in spite of the absence of stage-directions, the scene appears to remain always in Jolly's house or its immediate neighbourhood. The period of the action is in 1658, before Cromwell's death in September of that year. On the other hand Cowley follows the romantic tradition in making his lovers speak blank verse, a practice which survived the Restoration for some years in the more elevated scenes of comedy, even of the new comedy of manners. See Etherege's *Comical Revenge*.

Cutter himself is not borrowed from the Captain Matamore of the *Illusion Comique*. He is simply an English version, as Scarron's hero is a French version, of a well-worn comic type. Cowley's play does not belong to the new school of "Society" comedy, "artificial" comedy, or comedy of "manners," represented by Etherege, Wycherley, etc.; and bears no such relation to Molière and Dancourt as do *The Plain Dealer*, and Vanbrugh's *Confederacy*. It belongs with the group of politico-satirical pieces that includes Sir Robert Howard's *The Committee* and Mrs. Behn's *The Roundheads, or the Distressed Cavaliers*. In a less degree, it carries on the Jonsonian humour comedy, like the contemporary plays of Wilson and Shadwell. Old Truman's testiness, Puny's similitudes, and the Guinea merchant's loss of memory are "humour" touches. The original of Worm in *The Guardian* was a humour character; viz., Dogrel, a "sharking poetaster" whose idiosyncrasy was a damnable iteration of verse-scrap.

The Guardian and Cutter Compared.—The unfolding of the comic conception in this play may be most easily exhibited by a comparison between its first and second forms. In *The Guardian*, as the title implies, the central figure and the titular hero are identical. Captain Blade (Colonel Jolly of *Cutter*) is a hard-drinking old spendthrift, whose property has fallen into the hands of a usurer, now defunct. The usurer's relict, who figures simply as "Widow" (Mistress Barebottle of *Cutter*) is also landlady to Cutter and Worm, and is described as an "old Puritan." Her daughter Tabitha is a young Puritan, but with nothing to distinguish her particular stripe of fanaticism from the mother's. The other characters are much the same as in the revised version, though Jane and Soaker were later additions. The plot is the same in essentials, but the *motivierung* of Aurelia, the intrigante, is somewhat clearer in *The Guardian*, where a soliloquy (I, viii) informs the reader that envy of her cousin and a baffled passion for young Truman prompt her schemes: a circumstance of which the reader of *Cutter* is not informed until about the end of the fourth act. In *The Guardian*, Lucia, suspecting that Aurelia is the agent of her disgrace, disguises herself as a waiting-maid and under the name of Jane takes service with her cousin, who unwittingly contrives her

marriage with Truman in her assumed character of soubrette. This device is rather neater and more forcible, though not less improbable, than the method used in *Cutter*. It secures a moment of dramatic irony, by making Aurelia active in her own confusion, instead of leaving her plot to be thwarted by the accident of Jane's vanity. At the last revival of the play in 1723, Jane was dropped out, and the older arrangement presumably restored.

Satiric Motive.—There is plenty of satire upon the Puritans in *The Guardian*, and this indeed was nothing new in English comedy. Tribulation Wholesome of *The Alchemist* (1610) and Zeal-of-the-land Busy of *Bartholomew Fair* (1624) were already familiar types: to say nothing of plays like Middleton's *Family of Love* and the very inferior *Puritan*, sometimes attributed to Middleton; and of the scoffs scattered broadcast through scores of early comedies. But between 1642 and 1661 religious, as well as political, history had been making rapidly, and there was present to Cowley's hand a rich store of fresh humours: the same of which Butler took brilliant advantage in *Hudibras*. Besides the earlier Brownists and Anabaptists, the religious patchwork was variegated with fantastic sects like the Ranters, Levelers, Quakers, and Fifth Monarchy men, with the prophesyings of Venner and the apocalyptic utterances of Theauro John.

Cowley accordingly availed himself of this new material to elaborate the satiric picture of contemporary manners. He turned his hero from a common victim of extravagance into a royalist gentleman whose estate had been sequestered during the troubles. In fact he shifted the emphasis from Jolly to Cutter, from the plot-hero to the comedy-hero, and renamed the play to indicate the change.¹ In *Cutter and Worm* he brought forward a new *dramatis persona*—the disreputable adventurer who hung about London, under the Commonwealth, preying on the charity of the King's friends: a variety of the *miles gloriosus* quite distinct from Bobadil or Parolles. Cowley must have seen such when, as secretary to the Queen in Paris, he befriended Crashaw and other loyalist refugees.

¹ Cowley may possibly have been influenced in this change of name by the circumstance that Massinger's comedy *The Guardian*, licensed in 1633, was printed in 1655. There is nothing in common between the two plays save the title.

He may have been solicited by them when he lay *perdu* in London, or went at large under bonds as a suspect. At all events the type has verisimilitude and historical importance.

The Characters.—Of the other persons of the play, Young Truman and Lucia are conventional. They are the *jeune premier* and leading lady of universal comedy, and their love intrigue is sufficiently insipid. Aurelia is a fairly clever intrigante and has just enough character to provide machinery for the carrying out of the plot. In her lewdness and malice she foretells the Marwoods of Restoration comedy, but she lacks the brilliant wit and cynicism of Congreve's bad women. The lines of her dramatic personality are not deeply cut and she is rather faintly motivated. Puny is a transition character, midway between the spruce, affecting courtiers, the Jack Daws and Amorous La Fooles of the old comedy, and the Tattles and Foppingtons of the new. His humour of making similitudes looks forward to the same affectation in Witwoud of *The Way of the World*. Old Truman, too, in his dialogues with his son, is a diverting anticipation of Sir Sampson Legend and Sir Anthony Absolute. (See especially IV, iv.) The atmosphere and manners of the play are not those of Society Comedy, but of old-fashioned bourgeois comedy, such as *The Shoemaker's Holiday*, *A Chaste Maid in Cheapside*, *A Trick to Catch the Old One*, and *Bartholomew Fair*.

The Plot.—Though there is no duplication of plot in the Elizabethan fashion, the comic problem is twofold: to marry the lovers and to restore Colonel Jolly's property. The double solution of the dilemma is mediated through the false report of Lucia's marriage to Puny, which seems to work a forfeiture of her £5000 in favour of her guardian, and thereby enables the latter to marry the widow. The love intrigue is then solved by accident, and Jolly, being already provided for, allows his niece to keep her fortune. The main situation here—guardian and ward—is of frequent occurrence in comedy. Sometimes the guardian tries to exploit his ward's fortune by marrying her himself, sometimes by marrying her to a creature of his own upon whom he levies a commission. Sometimes he winks at or secretly promotes her marrying without his consent, and thereby sacrificing her portion. To get the lady

without losing the dowry is the task of the lover, which sometimes he accomplishes through cleverness and sometimes through luck. (See Molière, *Le Sicilien*, *L'École des Femmes*; Mrs. Centlivre, *The Busybody*, *The Man's Bewitched*; Congreve, *The Way of the World*; Goldsmith, *She Stoops to Conquer*; etc.)

The Underplot.—The secondary plot—which in the revised *Cutter* becomes the main one—is fresher. It might be entitled *The Wedding of Vice and Hypocrisy*. Hypocrisy, as in *Tartuffe*, is a comedy motive of a universal kind. But Cowley's presentation of it derives individuality and local color from the contrast afforded by a temporary phase in English manners—the contrast between Roundhead and Cavalier. As a member of the under party, he makes the sinners turn the tables upon the saints—by marrying them. The mock conversion of Cutter is set off with lively effect against the real perversion of Tabitha (V, vi).¹

Dramatic Construction.—Structurally this play leaves much to be desired on the score of probability: not so much on the score of ingenuity and variety. As to the first point, it will not do to cross-question any of our old comedies too closely. But the scruple of conscience which makes Lucia appear to her lover in a veil and communicate with him in writing is uncommonly far-fetched. On this weak hinge the plot is made to turn. The development of the action is successive rather than cumulative. As is usual in Congreve, there is here a series of abortive designs, rather than a single plan which evolves from start to finish. Thus, when Lucia refuses Cutter and Worm, Jolly is thrown back upon his other alternative—to marry Mistress Barebottle. The conspiracy of the lovers to frighten Jolly into consent by dosing him with physic (a violent device) miscarries and has little consequence, except to bring old Truman to Jolly's house in search of his son, who has been locked up as a poisoner. Old Truman's first intention to marry young Truman to Tabitha comes to nothing and he easily changes it for Jolly's proposal to mate him with Aurelia. Aurelia herself is an opportunist. She has an air of resourcefulness, and meets each new emergency as it arises. But her schemes all spring

¹That this scene was the favorite upon the stage may be inferred from the engraved frontispiece to *Cutter* in the 1707 edition of Cowley's works.

from the thought of the moment and have no foreseen results. Thus if her forged letter to young Truman was meant to secure herself the pleasure of his embraces (which she afterwards denies: V, xiii), it fails, and is left hanging in the air, without any influence upon the progress of the action, except to make Lucia's reported marriage with Puny more credible to her disgusted lover. This latter trick itself, like Valentine's madness in *Love for Love*, is a mere expedient to gain time. In the nature of things, the secret could not be kept long, nor could Aurelia anticipate the sudden turn of affairs which gave her a chance to make the temporary separation of the lovers permanent. Meanwhile by her own marriage to Puny she puts it out of her power to gain Truman, when as an unexpected consequence of her own action, the opportunity offers. This again may pass as an instance of dramatic irony, though probably an unconscious one. These rapid changes of combination give a superficial appearance of bustle and complexity to the plot, but they are very different from the organic plot-involution of a really artistic playwright like Sheridan. They are jerky, *staccato*, without sequence or natural development of situation from situation. Each new device is a special creation, rather than a product of evolution.

The Situations.—The dramatic machinery in *Cutter* is of the kind common to old comedy and new: the disguise, the substitution, and the impersonation. For the marriage in the dark, for example, compare *Measure for Measure* and *All's Well that Ends Well*. With the wedding of Young Truman and Lucia compare the manner in which Tattle and Mrs. Frail are unwittingly coupled through Valentine's seemingly insane proposal that Angelica and he should be married in the habit of a nun and a friar. The impersonation by Worm and Puny of the absent-minded merchant and his man John is a bit of comedy business easily paralleled. (See for familiar examples *The Taming of the Shrew*, *The Relapse*, etc.) But Cowley gives it an original turn by the counter-imposture of the two servants, which affords a capital farce scene.

There is more natural gaiety in the drinking and catch-singing passages between Jolly and his boon companions (II, viii) and in the scene where Cutter and Worm describe each other to Lucia

(I, vi) than the artificial wit of Cowley's undramatic verse would lead the reader to expect.

The Ethical Result.—The ethical result of the play is not very edifying. The wicked are amusingly triumphant and the good are saved by chance. In the general pairing off which is a convention of old comedy, even Worm gets his share and comes in for the hand of the soubrette. There is an air of good-nature which covers up the shallow morality; and as in all Restoration comedy it is diamond cut diamond.

Previous Editions and the Present Text.—The first edition of *Cutter* was the quarto of 1663 (Q). A second quarto appeared in 1693. Though not included in the earliest collections of Cowley's *Works* (1668, etc.; cf. *Camb. Hist. Engl. Lit.* VII, 407), *Cutter* had certainly won its place therein by 1693 (8th ed.), and it remained in subsequent editions of the *Works* (9th, 1700; 10th, 1707; 11th, 1710). The play has been reprinted by Grosart (*Complete Works of Abraham Cowley*, Chertsey Worthies) in 1881, and by A. R. Waller (*English Writings of Abraham Cowley*) in 1906. [Mr. A. H. Nethercot's "Abraham Cowley as Dramatist" (*Rev. of Engl. Stud.*, Jan., 1928), summarizes early and recent critical discussion, and, together with his biography, *Abraham Cowley* (Oxford, 1931), provides fresh information which the General Editors have taken into account in preparing this essay for the press.] The present text is printed from Mr. Henry A. Plomer's Ms. transcription (A) of the British Museum copy of Q, collated with Grosart's text (Gr.)—which is also based upon Q,—and with Tonson's (1707) edition of the *Works* (T.).¹ [The proofs of this text have been collated with the Harvard University Library copy of Q.—*Gen. Eds.*] Variant readings of any justification are mentioned in the footnotes.

HENRY A. BEERS.

¹ The General Editors are responsible for changes—according to the rule of this series, the minimum required to approximate modern usage—in punctuation, the style of capitals, italics; and of letters such as *i*, *j*, *u*, *v*. Ornamental borders of Q have not been reproduced.

CUTTER
OF
COLEMAN-STREET.
A COMEDY.

The Scene *LONDON*,
in the year 1658

Written by
ABRAHAM COWLEY.

LONDON,
Printed for *Henry Herringman* at the Sign of the
Anchor in the Lower walk in the New-Exchange.
Anno Dom. 1663.

PREFACE

A Comedy, called the Guardian, and made by me when I was very Young, was Acted formerly at Camebridge, and several times after privately during the troubles, as I am told, with good approbation, as it has been lately too at Dublin. There being many things in it which I disliked, and finding my self for some dayes idle, and alone in the Countrey, I fell upon the changing of it almost wholly, as now it is, and as it was play'd since at his Royal Highness's Theatre under this New name. It met at the first representation with no favourable reception, and I think there was something of Faction against it, by the early appearance of some men's disapprobation before they had seen enough of it to build their dislike upon their Judgment. Afterwards it got some ground, and found Friends as well as Adversarys. In which condition I should willingly let it dye, if the main imputations under which it suffered, had been shot only against my Wit or Art in these matters, and not directed against the tenderest parts of human reputation, good Nature, good Manners, and Piety itself. The first clamour which some malicious persons raised, and made a great noise with, was, That it was a piece intended for abuse and Satyre against the King's party. Good God! Against the King's party? After having served it twenty years during all the time of their misfortunes and afflictions, I must be a very rash and imprudent person if I chose out that of their Restitution to begin a Quarrel with them. I must be too much a Madman to be trusted with such an Edg'd Tool as Comedy. But first, why should either the whole party (as it was once distinguisht by that name, which I hope is abolisht now by Universal Loyallty) or any man of virtue or honour in it, believe themselves injured or at all concerned, by the representation of the faults and follies of a few who in the General division of the Nation had crowded in among them? In all mixt numbers (which is the case of parties) nay, in the most entire and continued Bodies there are often some degenerate and corrupted parts, which may be cast away from that, and even cut off from this Unity, without any infection of scandal to the remaining Body. The Church of Rome with all her arrogance, and her wide pretences of certainty in all Truths, and exemption from all Errors, does not clap on this enchanted Armour of Infallibility upon all her particular Subjects, nor is offended at the reproof even of her greatest Doctors. We are not, I hope, become such Puritans our selves as to assume the Name of the Congregation of the Spotless. It is hard for any Party to be so Ill as that no Good, Impossible to be so Good as

Cutter of Coleman-Street

that no Ill should be found among them. And it has been the perpetual privilege of Satyre and Comedy to pluck their vices and follies though not their Persons out of the Sanctuary of any Title. A Cowardly ranting Souldier, an Ignorant Charlatanical Doctor, a foolish Cheating Lawyer, a silly Pedantical Scholar, have alwayes been, and still are the Principal Subjects of all Comedye without any scandal given to those Honourable Professions, or ever taken by their severest Professors; and, if any good Physician or Divine should be offended with me here for inveighing against a Quack, or for finding Deacon Soaker too often in the Butteryes, my respect and reverence to their callings would make me troubled at their displeasure, but I could not abstain from taking them for very Cholerique and Quarrelsome persons. What does this therefore amount to, if it were true which is objected? But it is far from being so; for the representation of two Sharks about the Town (fellows merry and Ingenious enough, and therefore admitted into better companyes than they deserve, yet withall too very scoundrels, which is no infrequent Character at London) the representation, I say, of these as Pretended Officers of the Royal Army, was made for no other purpose but to show the World, that the vices and extravagancies imputed vulgarly to the Cavaliers, were really committed by Aliens who only usurped that name, and endeavoured to cover the reproach of their Indigency or Infamy of their Actions with so honourable a Title. So that the business was not here to correct or cut off any natural branches, though never so corrupted or Luxuriant, but to separate and cast away that vermine which by sticking so close to them had done great and considerable prejudice both to the Beauty and Fertility of the Tree; and this is as plainly said, and as often inculcated as if one should write round about a Signe, This is a Dog, this is a Dog, out of over-much caution lest some might happen to mistake it for a Lyon. Therefore when this Calumny could not hold (for the case is cleer, and will take no colour) some others sought out a subtler hint to traduce me upon the same score, and were angry that the person whom I made a true Gentleman, and one both of considerable Quality and sufferings in the Royal party, should not have a fair and noble Character throughout, but should submit in his great extremities to wrong his Niece for his own Relief. This is a refined exception, such as I little foresaw, nor should with the dulness of my usual Charity, have found out against another man in twenty years. The truth is, I did not intend the Character of a Hero, one of exemplary virtue, and as Homer often terms such men, Unblameable, but an ordinary jovial Gentleman, commonly called a Good Fellow, one not so conscientious as to starve rather than do the least Injury, and yet endowed with so much sense of Honour as to refuse when that necessity was removed, the gain of five thousand pounds which he might have taken from his Niece by the rigour of a Forfeiture; and let the frankness of this latter generosity so expiate for the former frailty, as may

make us not ashamed of his Company, for if his true Metal be but equal to his Alloy, it will not indeed render him one of the Finest sorts of men, but it will make him Current, for ought I know, in any party that ever yet was in the World. If you be to choose parts for a Comedy out of any noble or elevated rank of persons, the most proper for that work are the worst of that kind. Comedy is humble of her Nature, and has always been bred low, so that she knows not how to behave herself with the great or the accomplisht. She does not pretend to the brisk and bold Qualities of Wine, but to the Stomachal Acidity of Vinegar, and therefore is best placed among that sort of people which the Romans call the Lees of Romulus. If I had designed here the celebration of the Virtues of our Friends, I would have made the Scene nobler where I intended to erect their Statues. They should have stood in Odes, and Tragedies, and Epique Poems, (neither have I totally omitted those greater testimonies of my esteem of them) Sed nunc non erat his Locus, &c. And so much for this little spiny objection which a man cannot see without a Magnifying Glass. The next is enough to knock a man down, and accuses me of no less than Prophaness. Prophane, to deride the Hypocrisie of those men whose skulls are not yet bare upon the Gates¹ since the publike and just punishment of it? But there is some imitation of Scripture Phrases. God forbid; there is no representation of the true face of Scripture, but only of that Vizard which these Hypocrites (that is, by interpretation Actors with a Vizard) draw upon it. Is it Prophane to speak of Harrison's² return to Life again, when some of his friends really profest their belief of it, and he himself had been said to promise it? A man may be so imprudently scrupulous as to find prophaness in any thing either said or written by applying it under some simillitude or other to some expressions in Scripture. This nicety is both vain and endless. But I call God to witness, that rather than one tittle should remain among all my writings which according to my severest judgment should be found guilty of the crime objected, I would myself burn and extinguish them all together. Nothing is so detestably lewd and reckless as the derision of things sacred, and would be in me more unpardonable than any man else, who have endeavoured to root out the ordinary weeds of Poetry, and to plant it almost wholly with Divinity. I am so far from allowing any loose or irreverent expressions in matters of that Religion which I believe, that I am very tender in this point even for the grossest errors of Conscientious persons: they are the properest

¹ The heads of Cromwell, Bradshaw, and Ireton, and of the Regicides executed after the Restoration, were exposed upon Westminster Hall, London Bridge, and other public places.

² Major-General Thomas Harrison, Regicide, executed at Charing Cross, October 13, 1660, was venerated as a martyr by the Fifth Monarchy Men, who held that he would return to life and restore the Kingdom of the Saints.

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object (*me thinks*) both of our *Pitty* and *Charity* too; they are the innocent and white *Sectaries*, in comparison of another kind who engraft *Pride* upon *Ignorance*, *Tyranny* upon *Liberty*, and upon all their *Heresies*, *Treason* and *Rebellion*. These are Principles so destructive to the *Peace* and *Society* of *Mankind* that they deserve to be persued by our serious *Hatred*, and the putting a *Mask* of *Sanctity* upon such *Devils* is so *Ridiculous*, that it ought to be exposed to *contempt* and *laughter*. They are indeed *Prophane*, who counterfeit the softness of the voyce of *Holiness* to disguise the roughness of the hands of *Impiety*, and not they who with reverence to the thing which the others dissemble, deride nothing but their *Dissimulation*. If some piece of an admirable *Artist* should be ill *Copied* even to ridiculousness by an ignorant hand, and another *Painter* should undertake to draw that *Copy*, and make it yet more ridiculous, to shew apparently the difference of the two works, and deformity of the latter, will not every man see plainly that the abuse is intended to the foolish *Imitation*, and not to the *Excellent Original*? I might say much more to confute and confound this very false and malicious accusation, but this is enough, I hope, to cleer the matter, and is, I am afraid, too much for a *Preface* to a work of so little consideration. As for all other objections which have been or may be made against the *Invention* or ¹ *Elocution*, or anything else which comes under the *Critical Jurisdiction*, let it stand or fall as it can answer for itself, for I do not lay the great stress of my *Reputation* upon a *Structure* of this *Nature*, much less upon the slight *Reparations* only of an *Old* and *unfashionable Building*. There is no writer but may fail sometimes in point of *Wit*, and it is no less frequent for the *Auditors* to fail in point of *Judgment*. I perceive plainly by dayly experience that *Fortune* is *Mistris* of the *Theatre*, as *Tully* sayes it is of all popular *Assemblies*. No man can tell sometimes from whence the *Invisible winds* arise that move them. There are a multitude of people who are truly and onely *Spectators* at a play, without any use of their understanding, and these carry it sometimes by the strength of their *Number*. There are others who use their understanding too much, who think it a sign of weakness or stupidity to let anything pass by them unattacked, and that the *Honour* of their *Judgment* (as some *Brutals* imagine of their *Courage*) consists in *Quarrelling* with every thing. We are therefore wonderfull wise men, and have a fine business of it, we who spend our time in *Poetry*! I do sometimes laugh, and am often angry with myself when I think on it, and if I had a *Son* inclined by *Nature* to the same folly, I believe I should bind him from it, by the strictest conjurations of a *Paternal Blessing*. For what can be more ridiculous than to labour to give men delight, whilst they labour in their part more earnestly to take offence? To expose ones self

¹ So Gr. and T.;—A, "of."

voluntarily and frankly to all the dangers of that narrow passage to unprofitable Fame, which is defended by rude multitudes of the Ignorant, and by armed Troops of the Malitious? If we do ill many discover it and all despise us; if we do well but few men find it out, and fewer entertain it kindly. If we commit errors there is no pardon; if we could do wonders there would be but little thanks, and that too extorted from unwilling Givers. But some perhaps may say, was it not alwayes thus? Do you expect a particular privilege that was never yet enjoyed by any Poet? Were the ancient Græcian, or noble Roman Authors, was Virgil himself exempt from this Possibility, Qui melior multis quam tu fuit, Improbe, rebus, Who was in many things thy better far, thou impudent Pretender? As was said by Lucretius to a person who took it ill that he was to Dye, though he had seen so many do it before him who better deserved Immortality; and this is to repine at the natural condition of a Living Poet, as he did at that of a Living Mortal. I do not only acknowledge the Præeminence of Virgil (whose Footsteps I adore) but submit to many of his Roman Brethren, and I confess that even they in their own times were not secure from the assaults of Detraction (though Horace brags at last, Jam dente minus mordeor invido) but then the Barkings of a few were drown'd in the Applause of all the rest of the World, and the Poison of their Bitings extinguisht by the Antidote of great rewards, and great encouragements, which is a way of curing now out of use, and I really profess that I neither expect, nor think I deserve it. Indolency would serve my turn instead of Pleasure; but the case is not so well;¹ for though I comfort my self with some assurance of the favour and affection of very many candid and good natured (and yet too judicious and even Critical) persons, yet this I do affirm, that from all which I have written I never received the least benefit, or the least advantage, but on the contrary have felt sometimes the effects of Malice and Misfortune.

¹ Gr. and Waller, omit "but the case is not so well."

The Prologue

As when the Midland Sea is no where clear
From dreadfull Fleets of Tunis and Argier,¹
Which coast about, to all they meet with Foes,
And upon which nought can be got but Blowes,
The Merchand Ships so much their passage doubt, 5
That, though full-freighted, none dares venture out,
And Trade decays, and Scarcity ensues;
Just so the timerous Wits of late refuse,
Though laded, to put forth upon the Stage,
Affrighted by the Critiques of this Age. 10
It is a Party numerous, watchfull, bold;
They can from nought which sailes in sight with-hold.
Nor doe their cheap, though mortal, Thunder spare;
They shoot, alas, with Wind-gunns, charg'd with Air.
But yet, Gentlemen Critiques of Argier, 15
For your own int'rest I'de advise ye here
To let this little Forlorn Hope goe by
Safe and untoucht. That must not be (you'l cry)
If ye be wise, it must; I'le tell yee why.
There are Seven, Eight, Nine, . . . stay . . . there are behind 20
Ten Playes at least, which wait but for a Wind,
And the glad News that we the Enemy miss,
And those are all your own, if you spare This.
Some are but new trim'd up, others quite new,
Some by known Shipwrights built, and others too 25
By that great Author made, who ere he be,
That stiles himself Person of Qualitie.
All these, if we miscarry here today,
Will rather till they Rot in th'Harbour stay;

¹The Barbary pirates, who infested the Mediterranean until the nineteenth century.

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Nay, they will back again, though they were come, 30
Ev'n to their last safe Rode, the Tying room.
Therefore again I say, if you be wise,
Let this for once pass free; let it suffice
That we your Soveraig power here to avow,
Th'us humbly ere we pass, strike sail to You. 35

Added at Court

Stay Gentlemen; what I have said, was all
But forc'd submission, which I now recall.
Ye're all but Pirats now again; for here
Does the true Soveraign of the Seas appear.
The Soveraign of these Narrow Seas of wit; 5
'Tis his own Thames; he knows and Governs it.
'Tis his Dominion, and Domain; as Hee
Pleases, 'tis either Shut to us or Free.
Not onely, if his Pasport we obtain,
We fear no little Rovers of the Main, 10
But if our Neptune his calm visage show,
No Wave shall dare to Rise or Wind to Blow.

The Persons

COLONEL JOLLY.	{	<i>A Gentleman whose Estate was confiscated in the late troubles.</i>
MISTRIS AURELIA.		<i>His Daughter.</i>
MISTRIS LUCIA.	{	<i>His Niece, left to his Tuition.</i>
CUTTER. ¹		<i>A merry sharking fellow about the Town, pretending to have been a Colonel in the Kings Army.</i>
WORM.	{	<i>His Companion, and such another fellow, pretending to have been a Captain.</i>
MR. PUNY.		<i>A young, rich, brisk Fop, pretending to extraordinary wit, Suter to MISTRIS LUCIA.</i>
MR. TRUMAN SENIOR.	{	<i>An old, testy, Covetous Gentleman.</i>
MR. TRUMAN JUNIOR.		<i>His Son, in love with MISTRIS LUCIA.</i>
MISTRIS BAREBOTTLE. ²	{	<i>A Sopeboylers widdow, who had bought JOLLYS Estate, A pretended Saint.</i>
MISTRIS TABITHA.		<i>Her Daughter.</i>
MISTRIS JANE.	{	<i>MISTRIS LUCIAS Maid, a little laughing Fop.</i>
MR. SOAKER.		<i>A little Fudling Deacon.</i>
Several Servants.		

[THE SCENE: LONDON, in the year 1658.]

¹ A cant term for bully, swashbuckler, sharper, and thief. Cf. pp. 30, 100.

² This name (see also Fear-the-Lord Barebottle, p. 28) was evidently suggested by Praisegod Barebone, a leather merchant of Fleet Street, who sat in the Little Parliament, derisively nicknamed "Barebone's Parliament," in 1653.

CUTTER OF COLEMAN-STREET

Act I. Scene I.

TRUMAN JUNIOR.

How hard, alas, is that young Lover's fate,
Who has a father Covetous and Cholérique!
What has he made me swear?—
I dare not think upon the Oath, lest I should keep it.—
Never to see my Mistris more, or hear her speak. 5
Without his leave; and farewel then the use
Of Eyes and Ears:—
And all this Wickedness I submitted to,
For fear of being Disinherited;
For fear of losing Durt and Dross, I lose 10
My Mistris—There's a Lover! Fitter much
For Hell than thousand perjuries could make him,
Fit to be made th'Example which all Women
Should reproach Men with, when themselves grow false;
Yet she, the good and charitable Lucia, 15
With such a bounty as has onely been
Practis'd by Heaven, and Kings ¹ inspir'd from thence,
Forgives still, and still loves her perjur'd Rebel.
I'le to my father strait, and swear to him
Ten thousand Oathes ne'r to observe that wicked one 20
Which he has extorted from me—Here he comes,

¹ A reference to Charles II's Act of Oblivion of 1660.

And my weak heart, already us'd to falshood,
Begins to waver.

[Act I.] Scene 2.

TRUMAN SENIOR, TRUMAN JUNIOR.

Trum. Sen. Well, Dick, you know what you swore to me yesterday, and solemnly.

I ha' been considering, and considering all Night, Dick, for your good, and me-thinks, supposing I were a young man again, and the case my own (for I love to be just in all things) me-thinks 'tis hard for a young man, I say, who has been a Lover so long as you ha' been, to break off on a suddain. Am I in the right or no, Dick? Do you mark me? 8

Trum. Jun. Hard, Sir, 'tis harder much than any death Prolong'd by Tortures. 10

Trum. Sen. Why so I thought; and therefore out o' my care for your case, I have hit upon an Expedient that I think will salve the matter!

Trum. Jun. And I will thank you for it more, Sir, Than for the life you gave me. 15

Trum. Sen. Why! well said Dick, and I'me glad with all my Heart, I thought upon't; in brief, 'tis this Dick; I ha' found out another Mistris for you.

Trum. Jun. Another? Heaven forbid, Sir!

Trum. Sen. I; another, Good-man Jack Sawce; marry come up; Wo'nt one o' my choosing serve your turn, as well 21
As one o' your own? Sure I'me the older man,
Jack Sawce, and should be the Wiser!

Trum. Jun. But nature, Sir, that's wiser than all Mankind, Is Mistris in the choice of our affections, 25
Affections are not rais'd from outward Reasons,
But inward Sympathies.

Trum. Sen. Very well, Dick, if you be a dutiful son to me, you shall have a good Estate, and so has she. There's Sympathy for you now; but I perceive you'r hankring still after Mrs. Lucy. Do, do! forswear your self; do, damn your self, and be a beggar

too; sure I would never undo my self, by perjury; if I had a mind to go to hell, Cromwel should make me a Lord for't! I, and one of his Councel¹ too, I'de never be damn'd for nothing, for a Whim-wham in a Coif. But to be short, the person I design for you is Mrs. Tabith Baarebottle, our neighbour the Widow's daughter. What do you start at, Sirra? I, Sirra, Jack-an-apes, if you start when your father speaks to you. 38

Trum. Jun. You did not think her father once, I'me sure, A person fit for your Alliance, when he plundered your House in Hartfordshire, and took away the very Hoppoles,² pretending they were Arms too. 42

Trum. Sen. He was a very Rogue, that's the Truth on't, as to the business between man and man; but as to God-ward he was always counted an Upright man, and very devout. But that's all one; I'me sure h'as rais'd a fine Estate out o' nothing by his Industry in these Times: An' I had not been a Beast too—But Heaven's will be done, I could not ha' don't with a good conscience. Well, Dick, I'll go talk with her mother about this matter, and examine fully what her Estate is, for unless it prove a good one, I tell you true, Dick, I'me o' your Opinion, not to marry such a Rogues daughter. 52

Trum. Jun. I beseech you, Sir— [Exit TRUM. SEN.
It is in vain to speak to him—
Though I to save this Dung-hill, an Estate, 55
Have done a Crime like theirs
Who have abjur'd their King for the same cause,
I will not yet, like them, persue the guilt,
And in thy place, Lucia, my lawful Soverain,
Set up a low and scandalous Usurper! 60

Enter Servant.

Serv. 'Tis well the old man's just gone. There's a Gentlewoman without, Sir, desires to speak one word with you.

¹ The executive Council of State, forty-one persons, with Cromwell as President, was first chosen by the Long Parliament, February 13, 1649.

² A hit at the alleged plundering of the estates of Cavalier country gentlemen, under the pretence of searching for concealed arms. See letters of Secretary Thurloe in 1654-55 in Vaughan's *Protectorate of Oliver Cromwell*.

Trum. Jun. With me? Who is't?

Serv. It should be Mrs. Lucia by her voice, Sir, but she's veil'd all over. Will you please to see her, Sir? 65

Trum. Jun. Will I see her, Blockhead? Yes, go out and kneel to her and pray her to come in. [Exit *Serv.*]

[Act I.] Scene 3.

LUCIA (*veil'd*). TRUMAN [Junior].

Trum. This is a favour, Madam!
That I as little hop'd, as I am able
To thank you for it—But why all this muffling?
Why a disguise, my Dearest, between us?
Unless to increase my desire first, and then my joy to see thee 5
Thou cast this subtil night before thy beauty.
And now like one scorch'd with some raging Feaver,
Upon whose flames no dew of sleep has fal'n,
I do begin to quarrel with the Darkness,
And blame the sloathful rising of the Morn, 10
And with more joy shall welcome it, than they
Whose Icy dwellings the cold Bear o're-looks,
When after half the years Winter and Night,
Day and the Spring at once salutes their sight!
Thus it appears, thus like thy matchless beauty, 15
[Offers to pull off the Veil.]

When this black Cloud is vanish'd.
Why d'e you shrink back, my Dearest?
I prethee let me look a little on thee:
'Tis all the pleasure Love has yet allow'd me,
And more than Nature does in all things else. 20
At least speak to me; well may I call it Night
When Silence too thus joyns it self with Darkness.
Ha! I had quite forgot the cursed Oath I made—
Fish! what's an Oath forc'd from a Lover's Tongue?
'Tis not recorded in Heaven's dreadful book, 25
But scatter'd loosely by the breath that made it,

Away with it; to make it was but a Rashness,
To keep it were a Sin—Dear Madam—

[*Offers agen, but she refuses, and gives him a Note.*

Ha! let's see this, then, first!

[*He reads.*

You know I have forgiven your unkind Oath to your Father, and shall never suffer you to be perjur'd. I come onely to let you know, that the Physician and the 'Pothecary will do this morning what we propos'd. Be ready at hand, if there should be occasion for your presence. I dare not stay one minute. Farewel.

Now thousand Angels wait upon thee Lucia,

35

And thousand Blessings upon all thou do'st.

Let me but kiss your hand, and I'll dismiss you.

Ah cruel father, when thou mad'st the Oath,

Thou little thought'st that thou had'st left

Such blessings for me out of it.

[*Exeunt.*

[Act I.] Scene 4.

COLONEL JOLLY, WILL (*his Man*).

[*COL. JOLLY in an Indian Gown and Night-cap.*

Joll. Give me the Pills; what said the Doctor, Will?

Will. He said a great deal, Sir, but I was not Doctor enough to understand half of it.

Joll. A man may drink, he says, for all these Bawbles?

Will. He's ill advised if he give your Worship drinking Pills, for when you were drinking last together, a Fit took you to beat the Doctor, which your Worship told him was a new Disease. 7

Joll. He was drunk then himself first, and spoke False Latin, which becomes a Doctor worse than a beating. But he does not remember that, I hope, now? 10

Will. I think he does, Sir, for he says the Pills are to purge Black Choler!

Joll. I, Melancholy; I shall ha' need of them then, for my old Purger of Melancholy, Canary, will grow too dear for me shortly; my own Estate was sold for being with the King at Oxford.¹ A

¹ Headquarters of Charles I and his royalist parliament, 1642-46.

Curse upon an old Dunce that needs must be going to Oxford at my years! My good Neighbor, I thank him, Collonel Fear-the-Lord-Barebottle, a Saint and a Sope-boyley, bought it; but he's dead, and boiling now himself, that's the best o't; there's a Cavalier's comfort! If his damnable Wife now would marry me, it would return again, as I hope all things will at last; and even that too were as hard a Composition for ones own, as ever was made at Habberdashers Hall.¹ But hang her, she'l ha' none o' me, unless I were True Rich and Counterfeit Godly; let her go to her [*takes a Pill*—husband; (so much for that—It does not go down so glib as an Egg in Muskadine). Now when my Nieces Portion too goes out o' my hands, which I can keep but till a handsome Wench of eighteen pleases to marry (a pitiful slender Tenure, that's the truth on't) I ha' nothing to do but to live by Plots for the King, or at least to be hang'd by 'em. [*Takes the two other Pills*.—(So, go thou too.) Well, something must be done, unless a man could get true Gems² by drinking, or like a Mouse in a Cheese, make himself a house by eating. 33

Will, did you send for Colonel Cutter and Captain Worm, to come and keep me company this morning that I take Physick? They'l be loth to come to-day, there's so little hope o' drinking here. 37

Will. They said they would be here, Sir, before this time; Some Morning's draught, I believe, has intercepted 'em.

Joll. I could Repent now heartily, but that 'twould look as if I were compell'd to 't, and besides, if it should draw me to Amendment, 'twould undo me now, till I ha' gotten something. 'Tis a hard case to wrong my pretty Niece; but unless I get this wicked Widow, I and my daughter must starve else; and that's harder yet. Necessity is, as I take it, Fatality, and that will excuse all things. O! Here they are! 46

¹ The hall of the Merchant-Haberdashers, which, with ten almshouses, was in Maiden Lane. The reference is perhaps to the recovery of stolen or confiscated goods through a payment to the master and wardens.

² Instead of the "carbuncles" or eruptions produced by excessive drinking.

[Act I.] Scene 5.

COLONEL JOLLY, COLONEL CUTTER, CAPTAIN WORM.

Joll. Welcome! Men o' War, what news abroad in Town?*Cut.* Brave news I faith! It arriv'd but yesterday by an Irish Priest, that came over in the habit of a Fish-wife, a cunning fellow, and a man o' business. He's to lie Leiger here for a whole Irish College beyond Sea, and do all their Affairs of State. The Captain spoke with him last night at the Blew Anchor! ¹ 6*Joll.* Well, and what is't?*Worm.* Why, Business is afloat again; the King has muster'd five and twenty thousand men in Flanders, as tall Fellows as any are in Christendom. 10*Joll.* A pox upon you for a couple of gross Cheats! I wonder from what fools in what blind corners you get a dinner for this stuff.*Cut.* Nay, there's another News that's stranger yet, but for that let the Captain answer. 15*Worm.* I confess I should ha' thought it very ridiculous, but that I saw it from a good hand beyond Sea, under Black and White, and all in Cypher.*Joll.* Oh! It cann't miss then; what may it be, pray?*Worm.* Why, that the Emperor of Muscovy has promis'd to land ten thousand Bears in England to over-run the Country. 21*Joll.* Oh! that's in revenge of the late barbarous Murder ² of their brethren here, I warrant you!*Cut.* Why, Colonel, things will come about again! We shall have another 'bout for't! 25*Joll.* Why all this to a friend that knows you? Where were

¹ In 1656 Charles II had made a treaty with Spain for the invasion of England from Flanders, in which country four regiments of English Royalists had been raised. Missionaries, sent to foment a rising in England, lurked in various disguises in London taverns, like the Blue Anchor. Twelve of them were arrested in September. *Leiger*, Ambassador.

² Col. John Hewson, the Regicide, had recently marched his regiment into London and killed the bears kept for the popular sport of bear-baiting at places like old Paris Garden in Southwark and the bear-gardens on the Bank-Side. See *Hudibras*, I, 709-12; Hotson, *Commonwealth and Restoration Stage*, p. 70.

thy former Bouts, I prethee, Cutter? Where didst thou ever serve the King, or when?

Cut. Why every where; and the last time at Worcester.¹ If I never serv'd him since, the faults not mine; an there had been any Action— 31

Joll. At Worcester, Cutter? Prethee how got's thou thither?

Cut. Why as you and all other Gentlemen should ha' done; I carri'd him in a Troop of Reformado² Officers; most of them had been under my command before! 35

Joll. I'le be sworn they were Reformado Tapsters then, but prethee how gots thou off?

Cut. Why as the King himself, and all the rest of the great ones; in a disguise, if you'l needs know't.

Worm. He's very cautious, Colonel; h'as kept it ever since. 40

Joll. That's too long 'ifaith, Cutter; prethee take one disguise now more at last, and put thyself into the habit of a Gentleman.

Cut. I'le answer no more Prethees. Is this the Mornings-draught you sent for me to?

Joll. No, I ha' better news for ye both, than ever ye had from a good Irish hand. The truth is I have a Plot for yee, which if it take, ye shall no more make monstrous Tales from Bruges³ to revive your sinking Credits in Loyal Ale-Houses, nor inveigle into Taverns young Foremen of the Shop, or little beardless Blades of the Inns of Court, to drink to the Royal Family Parabolically,⁴ and with bouncing Oathes like Cannon at every Health; nor upon unlucky failing afternoons take melancholy turns in the Temple Walks,⁵ and when you meet acquaintance, cry, You wonder why your Lawyer stays so long, with a pox to him! 54

¹ Where, Sept. 3, 1651, Charles II (recently so crowned in Scotland) and his Scottish army were defeated by Cromwell. Charles fled in disguise and after many romantic adventures escaped to the Continent.

² Broken or disbanded officers from Charles I's army; or possibly from the old parliamentary army displaced by the "New Model."

³ After the outbreak of the Dutch war (1652), the Netherlands became the rallying point for Royalist intrigues. Charles and many other leaders of the opposition were at Bruges in 1653.

⁴ As, e.g., to "the royal traveller" (see p. 51); or to drink to "the King across the water," by passing the wine-glass over a water-bottle, etc.

⁵ In Temple Garden, haunted by pretended litigants.

Worm. This Physick has stirr'd ill humors in the Colonel. Would they were once well purg'd, and we a Drinking again lovingly together as we were wont to do! 57

Joll. Nor make headless quarrels about the Reckoning time, and leave the house in confusion; nor when you go to bed produce ten several snuffs to make up one poor Pipe o' Tobacco! 60

Cut. Would I had one here now; I ha'n't had my morning Smoak yet, by this day!

Joll. Nor change your names and lodgings as often as a Whore: for as yet if ye liv'd like Tartars in a Cart (as I fear ye must die in one ¹) your home could not be more uncertain. To-day at Wapping, and to-morrow you appear again upon Mill-bank ² (like a Duck that dives at this end of the Pond, and rises unexpectedly at the other). I do not think Pythagoras ³ his Soul e're chang'd so many dwellings as you ha' done within these two years. 70

Cut. Why, what then, Colonel? Soldiers must remove their Tents sometimes. Alexander the Great did it a thousand times.

Worm. Nine hundred, Cutter, you'r but a Dunce in Story; But what's all this to th' matter, Noble Colonel? You run a Wool-gathering like a zealous Teacher; 75 Where's the use of Consolation that you promis'd us?

Joll. Why thou shalt have it, little Worm, for these Damn'd Pills begin to make me horrible sick, and are not like to allow of long Digressions. Thus briefly, then, as befits a man in my case! When my brother the Merchant went into Afrique, to follow his great Trade there— 81

Worm. How o' Devil could he follow it? Why he had quite lost his memory; I knew him when he was fain to carry his own Name in writing about him for fear lest he should forget it.

Joll. Oh his man John, you know, did all; yet still he would go about with old John, and thought if he did go, he did his business himself. Well, when he went he left his Daughter with a Portion o' five thousand pounds to my Tuition, and if she married without

¹ Malefactors guilty of capital crimes were taken to Tyburn in a cart with a coffin, and hanged over the cart.

² Landing places along the Thames.

³ An allusion to the doctrine of Metempsychosis.

my consent, she was to have but a thousand of it. When he was gon two years, he dy'd. 90

Worm. He did a little forget himself me-thinks, when he left the Estate in your hands, Collonel.

Joll. Hold your tongue, Captain Coxcomb! Now the case is this: ye shall give me a thousand pounds for my interest and favour in this business, settle the rest upon her, and her children, or me and mine, if she ha' none (d'ee mark me? For I will not have one penny of the Principal pass through such glewy Fingers!) Upon these terms I'll marry her to one of you; always provided though, that he whom she shall choose (for she shall have as fair a choice as can be between two such fellows) shall give me good assurances of living afterwards like a Gentleman, as befits her husband, and cast off the t'others company! 102

Cut. The Conditions may be admitted of, though if I have her, she'll ha' no ill bargain on't when the King comes home; but how, Colonel, if she should prove a foolish fantastical Wench, and refuse to marry either of us? 106

Joll. Why! then she shall never ha' my consent to marry any body; and she'll be hang'd, I think, first in the Friar's Rope,¹ ere she turn Nun.

Worm. I'll be a Carthusian an she do! 110

Joll. If 'twere not for Chastity and Obedience thou mightest be so; their t'other Vow of never carrying any mony about them, thou hast kept from thy youth upwards.

Worm. I'll have her; I'me the better Scholar; and we're both equal Soldiers, I'me sure. 115

Cut. Thou, Captain Bobadil?² what with that Ember-week³ face o' thine? That Razor o' thy Nose? Thou look'st as if thou had'st never been fed since thou suck'st thy mothers milk. Thy cheeks begin to fall into thy mouth, that thou mightest eat them. Why thou very Lath, with a thing cut like a face at Top, and a slit at bottom! I am a man ha' serv'd my King and Country, a person of Honor, Dogbolt,⁴ and a Colonel. 122

¹ The rope-girdle worn by the Franciscans.

² The cowardly, swaggering cast captain in Jonson's *Every Man in his Humour*.

³ Hunger-stricken. (The weeks in which fell the four ember—or special fast—days of the four seasons, were called ember weeks.)

⁴ base fellow.

Worm. Yes, as Priests ¹ are made now a daies, a Colonel made by thine own self. I must confess thus much of thy good parts, thou'rt beholding to no body but thy self for what thou art. Thou a Soldier? Did not I see thee once in a quarrel at Nine-Pins behind Sodom-lane disarm'd with one o' the pins? Alas, good Cutter! there's difference, as I take it, betwixt the clattering o' Swords and Quart-pots, the effusion of Blood and Claret-wine—

Cut. (What a Barking little Curr's this?) 130

Worm. The smoak o' Guns and Tobacco. Nor can you, Cutter, fight the better, because you ha' beat an old Bawd or a Drawer; besides, what parts hast thou? Hast thou Scholarship enough to make a Brewers Clark? Canst thou read the Bible? I'me sure thou hast not; canst thou write more than thine own name, and that in such vile Characters, that most men take 'em ² for Arabian Pot-hooks! ³ Dost thou not live, Cutter, in the Chymærian darkness of Ignorance?

Joll. Cymmerian, Captain, prethee let it be Cymmerian!

Worm. I; I know some will have it so; but by this light I always call't Chymærian! 141

Cut. O brave Scholar! Has the Colonel caught you in false Latin, you dunce you? You'd e'en as good stick to your Captainship; and that you may thank me for, you ingrateful Pimp you! Was not I the first that ever call'd you so, and said you had serv'd stoutly in my Regiment at Newberry? ⁴ 146

Joll. Thy Regiment?—Well! leave your quarrelling, Baboons, and try your fortunes fairly. I begin to be very very sick: I'll leave you, and send in my Niece to intertain you. Upon my life, if you quarrel any more, as great Soldiers as you are, I'll ha' you Cashier'd for ever out o' this Garrison o' mine.—Look to't. 151

[Exit COL. JOLL.]

Worm. Come, Cutter, wee'd e'en better play fair with one an-

¹ Unordained field preachers of various sects—ranters, anabaptists, etc.—held forth of their own motion.

² Gr., "them."

³ Written characters intricately curved, as in arabesque work. "Arabic scrawls and pot-hooks"—Dryden.

⁴ Where two battles were fought during the Civil War: Sept. 20, 1643, and Oct. 27, 1644, between the parliamentary forces and the King. In both actions the advantage was slightly with the Parliament.

other, than lose all to a third. Let's draw Cuts who shall accost her first when she comes in, and the t'other void the room for a little while.

155

Cut. Agreed! you may thank the Colonel for comming off so easily; you know well enough I dare not offend him at such a time as this!

Worm. The longest first.—

[*Draw Lots.*

Cut. Mine! Od's my life! Here she is already!

160

[Act 1.] Scene 6.

LUCIA, CUTTER, WORM.

Luc. Not choose amiss? Indeed I must do, Uncle,

[*To her self at her Entrance.*

If I should choose again, especially

If I should do't out of your drinking company.

Though I have seen these fellows here, I think

A hundred times, yet I so much despise 'em,

5

I never askt their names: But I must speak to 'em, now.

My Uncle, Gentlemen, will wait upon you presently again, and sent me hither to desire your patience!

Cut. Patience, Madam, will be no Virtue requisite for us, whilst you are pleas'd to stay here.—Ha, ha! Cutter! that lit pretty pat i'faith for a beginning?

[*WORM goes out.*

Luc. Is your friend going, Sir?

12

Cut. Friend, Madam?—(I hope I shall be even with him presently!) He's a merry fellow that your Uncle and I divert our selves withall.

15

Luc. What is he? pray, Sir.

Cut. That's something difficult to tell you, Madam; but he has been all things. He was a Scholar once, and since a Merchant, but broke the first half year; after that he serv'd a Justice o' Peace, and from thence turn'd a kind o' solicitor at Goldsmiths-hall.¹ H'as a pretty Smattering too in Poetry, and would ha'

¹ In Aldersgate where the officers of the Goldsmiths' Company sat as a court, to settle disputes between members and to fine offenders. Suitors were allowed to employ solicitors.

been my Lady Protectress's ¹ Poet: he writ once a Copy in praise of her Beauty, but her Highness gave him for it but an old Half-crown piece in Gold, which she had hoorded up before these troubles, and that discourag'd him from any further applications to the Court. Since that h'as been a little Agitator for the Cavalier party, and drew in one of the 'Prentices that were hang'd lately.² He's a good ingenious fellow, that's the truth on't, and a pleasant Droll when h'as got a cup o' Wine in his pate, which your Uncle and I supply him with; but for matters that concern the King neither of us trust him. Not that I can say h'as betraid anybody, but he's so indigent a Varlet, that I'm afraid he would sell his soul to Oliver for a Noble. But Madam, what a pox should we talk any more o' that Mole-catcher? (Now I'm out again—I am so us'd onely to ranting Whores, that an honest Gentlewoman puts me to a Non-plus!)

36

Luc. Why, my Uncle recommended him to me, Sir, as a Person of Quality, and of the same Condition with your self, onely that you had been a Collonel o' Foot, and he a Captain of Horse in his Majesty's Service.

40

Cut. You know your Uncle's Drolling humor, Madam; he thought there was no danger in the Raillerie, and that you'd quickly find out what he ³ was.—Here he [*Enter WORM*—comes again. I'll leave him with you, Madam, for a Minute, and wait upon you immediately. (I am at a loss, and must recover my self!)]—Captain, I ha' dealt better by you than you deserv'd, and given you a high Character to her; see you do me right too, if there be occasion—I'll make bold though to hearken whether you do or no.

[*Exit CUTTER, and stands at the dore.*]

Worm. Madam, my Noble friend your Uncle has been pleas'd to honor me so far with his good Opinion, as to allow me the liberty to kiss your hands.

52

¹ Elizabeth Cromwell, nicknamed "Joan" (cf. Tatham's *The Rump*), was a homely, frugal housewife, not likely to lavish gifts on poets.

² The numerous Royalist plots to assassinate Cromwell and seize strategic points were mostly hatched in London taverns and relied upon a rising of the apprentices. The particular conspiracy referred to here was probably the projected rising of "Royalist apprentices" on May 15, 1658. The ringleaders were seized at the Mermaid in Cheapside, and three of them put to death.

³ T., "who he."

Luc. You'r welcome, Sir; but pray, Sir, give me leave,
Before you enter into farther Complement
To ask one question of you. 55

Worm. I shall resolve you, Madam, with that truth which
may, I hope, invite you to believe me in what I'me to say after-
wards.

Luc. 'Tis to tell me your friends Name, Sir, and his Quality,
which, though I've seen him oft, I am yet ignorant of: I suppose
him to be some honorable person, who has eminently serv'd
the King in the late Wars. 62

Cut. [at the door]. 'Tis a shrewd discerning Wench, she has
hit me right already!

Worm. They call him Collonel Cutter, but to deal faithfully
with you, Madam, he's no more a Colonel than you'r a Major
General. 67

Cut. Ha! sure I mistake the Rogue!

Worm. He never serv'd his King, not he; no more than he
does his Maker. 'Tis true, h'as drunk his Health as often as any
man, upon other mens charges; and he was for a little while, I
think, a kind of Hector, 'till he was soundly beaten one day, and
dragg'd about the room, like old Hector o' Troy about the Town.

Cut. What does this Dog mean, trow? 74

Worm. Once indeed he was very low for almost a twelve-
month; and had neither mony enough to hire a Barber, nor buy
Sizars, and then he wore a Beard (he said) for King Charles; ¹
he's now in pretty good cloathes, but would you saw the furniture
of his Chamber! Marry, half a chair, an Earthen Chamberpot
without an Ear, and the bottom of an Ink-horn for a Candle-
stick; the rest is broken foul Tobacco pipes, and a dozen o' Gally-
pots with Sawse in 'em. 82

Cut. Was there ever such a cursed Villain!

Worm. H'as been a known Cheat about the Town these twenty
years. 85

Luc. What does my Uncle mean to keep him company, if he
be such a one?

¹ Alluding to the customary vow of loyal Cavaliers not to shave until the King was restored. Q, "Charls."

Worm. Why he's infatuated, I think! I ha' warn'd him on't a thousand times; he has some wit (to give the devil his due) and that 'tis makes us endure him. But, however, I'd advise your Uncle to be a little more cautious how he talks before him o' State matters, for he's shrewdly wrong'd if he be n't Cromwel's Agent for all the Taverns between Kings-street and the Devil¹ at Temple-bar—indeed he's a kind o' Resident in 'em. 94

Cut. Flesh and blood can bear no longer.—Worm, you'r a stinking, lying, perjurd, damn'd Villain; and if I do not bring you, Madam, his Nose and both his Ears, and lay 'em at your feet here before night, may the Pillory and the Pox take mine; till then, suspend your judgment. [*Exit* CUTTER.

Luc. Nay, you'r both even; just such an excellent Character did he bestow on you. Why, thou vile Wretch, 101
Go to the stews, the Gaol, and there make love,
Thou'lt find none there but such as will scorn thee!

Worm. Why here's brave work i'faith! I ha' carri'd it swimmingly! I'le e'en go steal away and drink a dozen before I venture to think one thought o' the business. [*Exit.*

Luc. Go cursed race, which stick your loathsome crimes
Upon the Honorable Cause and Party;
And to the Noble Loyal Sufferers
A worser suffering add of Hate and Infamy. 110
Go to the Robbers and the Parricides,
And fix your Spots upon their Painted Vizards,
Not on the Native face of Innocence.
'Tis you retard that industry by which
Our Country would recover from this sickness, 115
Which, whilst it fears th'eruption of such Ulcers,
Keeps a Disease tormenting it within.
But if kind Heav'n please to restore our Health,
When once the great Physician² shall return,
He quickly will, I hope, restore our Beauty. [*Exit.*

¹The famous tavern (pulled down in 1787) where the Apollo Club, established and presided over by Ben Jonson, used to meet.

²Charles II.

Act 2. Scene I.

AURELIA.

I see 'tis no small part of policy

To keep some little spies in an Enemies quarters:

The Parliament ¹ had reason—

I would not for five hundred pounds but ha' corrupted my Cousin Lucia's Maid; and yet it costs me nothing but Sack-possets, and Wine, and Sugar when her Mistris is a bed, and tawd'ry Ribbons, or fine Trimm'd Gloves sometimes, and once I think a pair of Counterfeit Rubie Pendants that cost me half a Crown. The poor Wench loves Dy'd Glass like any Indian; for a Diamond Bob,² I'd have her Madenhead if I were a Man and she a Maid. If her Mistris did but talk in her sleep sometimes, o' my conscience she'd sit up all night and watch her, onely to tell me in the morning what she said! 'Tis the prettiest diligent Wretch in her Calling, now she has undertaken't. Her intelligence just now was very good, and may be o' consequence: that young Truman is stoln up the back way into my Cousin's Chamber. These are your grave Maids that study Romances, and will be all Mandanas and Cassandras,³ and never spit but by the Rules of Honor.—Oh, here she comes,—I hope, with fresh intelligence from the Foe's Rendevouz.

20

[Act 2.] Scene 2.

AURELIA, JANE.

Jane. Ha, ha, ha! for the love of goodness hold me, or I shall fall down with laughing, ha, ha, ha! 'Tis the best humor—no—I can't tell it you for laughing—ha, ha, ha! the prettiest sport, ha, ha, ha!

¹ The Parliament (as Cowley had personally discovered—cf. Nethercot, *Cowley*, ch. X) had an efficient secret service, both in England and among the Royalist refugees abroad.

² a knot or cluster of brilliants.

³ The heroine of Scudéri's romance, *Le Grand Cyrus*, and of Calprenède's *Cassandre*.

Aur. Why, thou hast not seen him lie with her, hast thou? The Wench is mad; prethee what is't? 6

Jane. Why (hee, hei, ha!) My Mistris sits by her Servant in a long Veil that covers her from Top to Toe, and says not one word to him, because of the Oath you know that the old man forc'd his son to take after your Father had forbid him the house, and he talks half an hour, like an Ass as he is, all alone, and looks upon her hand all the while, and kisses it. But that which makes me die with laughing at the conceit (ha, ha, ha!) is, that when he asks her anything, she goes to the Table, and writes her answer. You never saw such an innocent Puppet-play! 15

Aur. Dear Jane (kiss me, Jane), how shall I do to see 'em?

Jane. Why, Madam, I'll go look the key of my Mistris Closet above, that looks into her Chamber, where you may see all, and not be seen.

Aur. Why that's as good as the trick o' the Veil; do, dear Jane, quickly, 'twill make us excellent sport at night, and we'll fuddle our Noses together, shall we, dear Jane? 22

Jane. I, dear Madam! I'll go seek out the key. [Exit JANE.]

Aur. 'Tis strange, if this trick o' my Cousins should beget no trick o' mine: that would be pittiful dul doings. 25

[Act 2.] Scene 3.

AURELIA, MR. PUNY.

Aur. Here comes another of her Servants; a young, rich, fantastical Fop, that would be a Wit, and has got a new way of being so; he scorns to speak any thing that's common, and finds out some impertinent similitude for every thing. The Devil, I think, can't find out one for him. This Coxcomb has so little Brains too, as to make me the Confident of his Amours. I'll thank him for his Confidence ere I ha' done with him. 7

Pun. Whose here? O Madam! Is your father out of his Metaphorical Grave yet? You understand my meaning, my dear Confident? You'r a Wit! 10

Aur. Like what, Mr. Puny?

Pun. Why—like—me!

Aur. That's right your way, Mr. Puny, its an odd similitude.

Pun. But where's your father, little Queen o' Diamonds? Is he extant? I long like a Woman big with Twins to speak with him! 16

Aur. You can't now possibly. There was never any Creature so sick with a disease as he is with Physick, to day,—the Doctor and the 'Pothecarie's with him, and will let no body come in. But, Mr. Puny, I have words o' comfort for you! 20

Pun. What, my dear Queen o' Sheba! And I have Ophir for thee if thou hast.

Aur. Why your Rival is forbid our house, and has sworn to his father never to see or hear your Mistris more.

Pun. I knew that yesterday as well as I knew my Credo, but I'm the very Jew of Malta ¹ if she did not use me since that worse than I'de use a rotten Apple. 27

Aur. Why that can't be, Brother Wit; why that were uncivilly done of her!

Pun. O hang her, Queen of Fairies (I'm all for Queens to-day I think!) She cares much for that; no that Assyrian Crocodile Truman is still swimming in her præcordiums,—but I'le so ferret him out! I'l beat him as a Bloomsbury Whore beats Hemp,² I'l spoil his Grave Dominical Postures, I'l make him sneak, and look like a door off the hinges. 35

Aur. That's hard! but he deserves it truly, if he strive to Annihilate.

Pun. Why well said, Sister Wit, now thou speak'st oddly too!

Aur. Well, without wit or foolery, Mr. Puny, what will you give me, if this night, this very improbable night, I make you Marry my Cousin Lucia? 41

Pun. Thou talk'st like Medusa's head! Thou astonishest me!

Aur. Well, in plain language as befits a Bargain: there's Pen and Inck in the next Chamber,—give but a Bill under your hand to pay me five hundred pounds in Gold (upon forfeiture of a thousand if you fail) within an hour after the business is done, and

¹ Barabas, in Marlowe's *Jew of Malta*.

² At the "cage" or house of correction in Bloomsbury, prostitutes were imprisoned at hard labour.

I'l be bound Body for Body my Cousin Lucia shall be your Wife this night. If I deceive you, your Bond will do you no hurt; if, I do not, consider a little before-hand, whether the Work deserves the Reward, and do as you think fit. 50

Pun. There shall be no more considering than in ¹ a Hasty Pudding: I'l write it, an' you will, in Short-hand, to dispatch immediately, and presently go put five hundred Mari-golds in a purse for you. Come away like an Arrow out of a Scythian Bow.

Aur. I'l do your business for you, I'l warrant you; *Allons Mon Cher.* [Exeunt.]

[Act 2.] Scene 4.

CUTTER, WORM.

Cut. Now I ha' thee at the place, where thou affronted'st me, here will I cut thy throat.

Worm. You'l be hang'd first.

Cut. No, by this light.

Worm. You'l be hang'd after then. 5

Cut. Not so neither; for I'l hew thee into so many morsels, that the Crowner shall not be able to give his Verdict whether 'twas the Body of a Man or of a Beast, as thou art. Thou shalt be mince-meat, Worm, within this hour.

Worm. He was a Coward once, nor have I ever heard one syllable since of his Reformation; he shall not daunt me. [*Aside.*]

Cut. Come on; I'l send thee presently to Erebus— [*Draws*— without either Bail or Main-prize.

Worm. Have at you, Cutter, an' thou hadst as many lives as are in Plutarch, I'd make an end of 'em all. 15

Cut. Come on, Miscreant.

Worm. Do, do! strike an' thou dar'st.

Cut. Coward! I'l give thee the advantage of the first push, Coward.

Worm. I scorn to take anything o' thee, Jew. 20

Cut. If thou dar'st not strike first, thou submitt'st, and I give thee thy life.

¹Gr. omits "in."

Worm. Remember, Cutter, you were treacherous first to me, and therefore must begin. Come, pox upon't, this quarrel will cost us quarts o' Wine a piece before the Treaty o' Peace be ended.

Cut. Here's company coming in. I'l hear o' no Treaties, Worm; we'l fight it out. 27

[Act 2.] Scene 5.

AURELIA, PUNY, CUTTER, WORM.

Aur. Five hundred neat Gentlemen-like twenty-shilling pieces, though never wash'd nor barb'd—¹ [*Reading.* A curse upon him, cann't he write a Bond without these sotteries?]

Pun. Why how now Panims? Fighting like two Sea-fish in the Map? ² Why how now my little Gallimaufry, my Oleopodrida of Arts and Arms; hold the feirce Gudgings! 6

Aur. 'Ods my life, Puny, let's go in again; that's the onely way to part 'em.

Pun. Do, do! kill one another and be hang'd like Ropes of Onyons. 10

Cut. At your command? No, Puny! I'le be forc'd by no man; put up, Worm; we'l fight for no man's pleasure but our own.

Worm. Agreed! I won't make sport with murdering any man, an' he were a Turk.

Pun. Why now ye speak like the Pacifique Sea; we'l to the King's Pole anon,³ and drink all into Pyladas again; we'l drink up a whole Vessel there to Redintegration, and that so big, that the Tun of Heidelberg ⁴ shall seem but a Barel of Pickled Oisters to 't! Meantime, thou pretty little Smith o' my good fortune, beat hard upon the Anvil of your Plot. I'l go and provide the Spankers.⁵ [*Exit* PUNY.]

¹ barbered.

² In old maps, like Speed's, the oceans are embellished with pictures of spouting whales and nondescript sea-monsters.

³ Waller, "Poleanon."

⁴ The famous monster cask in the cellar of the *Friedrichs-Bau* in Heidelberg Castle. See Baedeker.

⁵ Gold coins (*N.E.D.*). Probably the twenty shilling pieces referred to at the beginning of the scene.

Cut. Your Cousin, Mrs. Aurelia, has abus'd us most irreverently.

Aur. Why what's the matter?

Cut. Your father recommended us two as Suters to her. 25

Aur. And she'd ha' none of you? What a foolish Girl 'tis, to stand in her own light so?

Worm. Nay, that's not all, but she us'd us worse than if we'd been the veriest Rogues upon the face of the whole Earth.

Aur. That's a little thought too much, but 'twas safer erring o' that hand. 31

Cut. I, we'r like to get much, I see, by complaining to you.

Enter JANE.

Jane. Ha, ha, ha! Here's the key o' the Closet: go up softly, Madam, ha, ha, ha! And make no noise, dear Madam. I must be gone. [*Exit.*]

Aur. Why does this little Foppitee laugh always? 'Tis such a Ninny that she betrays her Mistris, and thinks she does no hurt at all,—no, not she! Well, wretched Lovers, come along with me now, (but softly upon your lives, as you would steal to a Mistris through her Mothers Chamber) and I'l shew you this severe Penelope, lockt up alone in a Chamber with your Rival. 41

Cut. As softly as Snow falls.

Worm. Or Vapors rise.

Aur. What are you Punish¹ too with your Similitudes? Mum—not a word—pull off your shoes at bottom of the stairs, and follow me. 46

[Act 2.] Scene 6.

Enter TRUMAN JUNIOR.

And presently AURELIA, CUTTER, and WORM appear at a little Window.

Trum. Why should her cruel Uncle seek t'oppose
A Love in all respects so good and equal?

¹ I.e., Punyish—like Puny.

He has some wicked end in't, and deserves
To be deceiv'd!

Cut. Deceiv'd? pray mark that Madam. 5

Trum. She is gone in to see if things be ripe yet
To make our last attempt upon her Uncle;
If our Plot fail—

Aur. A Plot 'ifaith, and I shall Counter-plot ye.

Trum. In spite of our worst Enemies, our kindred, 10
And a rash Oath that's cancell'd in the making,
We will pursue our Loves to the last point,
And buy that Paradise though't be with Martyrdom!

[Act 2.] Scene 7.

Enter LUCIA.

She goes to the Table and Writes whilst he Speaks, and gives him the Paper.

Trum. She's come! Me-thinks I see her through her Veil;
She's naked in my heart with all her Beauties.

Worm. Thou hast a Bawdy heart, I'le warrant thee.

Cut. Hold your peace, Coxcomb.

Trum. That has, I think taken an Oath 5
Quite contrary to mine, never to see
Any thing else. [*Reads a paper given him by* LUCIA.

*He's extreme sick, and thinks he shall die. The Doctor and 'Pothecary have acted very well. I'le be with him presently; go into my little Oratory, and pray for the success—*¹ I'll pray with as much zeal as any sinner, converted just upon the point of death, prays his short time out. [*Exeunt* TRUMAN and LUCIA.

Aur. What can this mean? [*They cry within—and the cry within there? Pray let's go down and see what's the matter.*

Enter WILL and RALPH *crying.*

Will. Ah, Lord! My poor Master! Mrs. Aurelia, Mrs. Aurelia!

Aur. Here, what's the business? 16

¹ Gr. and T. add a stage direction,—“A cry within—Mrs. Aurelia.”

Ralph. Oh Lord! The saddest accident.

Aur. For the love of Heaven speak quickly.

Will. I cannot speak for weeping; my poor Master's poison'd.

Aur. Poison'd? how, prethee, and by whom? 20

Will. Why by the strangest Accident, Mistris. The Doctor prescrib'd one what dee' call it, with a hard name, and that careless Rogue the 'Pothecaries man (mistaking one Glass for another that stood by it) put in another what dee' call it, that is a mortal poison. 25

Aur. Oh then 'tis plain, this was the Plot they talk'd of; ye heard Gentlemen, what they said; pray follow me and bear witness. [*Exit AURELIA.*]

Cut. Undoubtedly they had a hand in't; we shall be brought to swear against them, Worm. 30

Worm. I'l swear what I heard and what I heard not, but I'l hang 'em. I see I shall be revenged o' that proud Tit; but it grieves me for the Colonel.

[Act 2.] Scene 8.

COLONEL JOLLY (*brought in a Chair*). AURELIA, CUTTER, WORM,
WILL, RALPH, *other* Servants.

Joll. Oh! I ha' vomited out all my guts, and all my entrails—

Aur. Oh my dear Father!

Joll. I'm going, daughter.—Ha ye sent the pocky Doctor and the plaguy 'Pothecary to a Justice o' Peace to be examin'd?

Will. Yes, Sir, your Worship's Steward and the Constable are gone with 'em. Does your Worship think they did it out o' Malice, and not by a mistake? If I had thought they did, I'd a hang'd 'em presently, that you might ha' seen it done before you dy'd. 8

Joll. Huh, huh, huh! I think that Rogue the Doctor did it, because I beat him t'other day in our drinking! Huh, huh, huh!

Aur. No, Sir, (O my dear father)—no, Sir, you little think who were the Contrivers of your murder: e'en my Cousin Luce and her Gallant—Oh Lord—'tis discover'd by a miraculous providence—they'r both together in her Chamber now, and there we

overheard 'em as it pleas'd—these two Gentlemen heard 'em as well as I— 16

Joll. Can they be such Monsters? Oh! I'm as hot as Lucifer—
Oh—Oh!—What did you hear 'em say?—Oh my stomach!

Cut. Why that they had a Plot—

Cur. And that the Doctor and 'Pothecary had done it very well. 21

Worm. I, and your Niece ask'd if he thought the Poison were strong enough.

Aur. There never was such an Impudence!

Will. How murder will out! I always thought, fellow Ralph, your mistris Lucia was naught with that young smooth-fac'd Varlet; do you remember, Ralph, what I told you in the But-teries once? 28

Aur. Here she comes! O Impudence! [Enter LUCIA.]

Joll. Oh! Oh! Oh!—Go all aside a little, and let me speak with her alone. Come hither, Niece—Oh! Oh!—you see by what accident 't has pleas'd—huh—huh—huh—to take away your loving Uncle, Niece! huh— 33

Luc. I see't, Sir, with that grief which your misfortune and mine in the loss of you does require. [JOLL. and LUC. talk together.]

Cut. There's a devil for you; but Captain, did you hear her speak o' poison, and whether it were strong enough! 37

Worm. No, but I love to strike home when I do a business. I'm for through-stich; I'm through pac'd: what a pox should a man stand mincing? 40

Luc. I hope, Sir, and have faith, that you'l recover!
But, Sir, because the danger's too apparent,
And who (alas) knows how Heaven may dispose of you? before
it grow too late (after your blessing) I humbly beg one Boon
upon my knees. 45

Joll. What is't? (Rise up, Niece.) Oh—I can deny you nothing at this time, sure!

Luc. It is (I wo't not rise, Sir, till you grant it)
That since the love 'twixt Truman and myself
Has been so fixt, and like our fortunes equal, 50
Ye would be pleas'd to sign before your death,

The confirmation of that Love, our Contract,
 And when your Soul shall meet above, my fathers,
 As soon as he has bid you welcome thither,
 He'll thank you for this goodness to his daughter. 55

I do conjure you, Sir, by his memory!

By all your hopes of happiness hereafter

In a better world, and all your dearest wishes of happiness for
 those whom ye love most, and leave behind you here!

Joll. You ha' deserv'd so well o' me Niece, that 'tis impossible
 to deny you anything. Where's gentle Mr. Truman? 61

Luc. In the next room, Sir, waiting on your will
 As on the Sentence of his life and death too.

Joll. Oh—I'm very sick—pray bring him in.

Luc. A thousand Angels guard your life, Sir! 65

Or if you die, carry you up to heaven. [*Exit.*]

Worm. Was there ever such a young dissembling Witch?

Cut. Here's Woman in perfection!

The Devil's in their tails and in their tongues!

Their ¹ possest both ways! 70

Joll. Will, Ralph,—is Jeremy there too? Be ready when I
 speak to you.

Enter TRUMAN, LUCIA (veil'd).

Trum. Our prayers are heard: 'tis as we wish'd, dear Lucia.
 Oh this blest hour!

Joll. Take him and carry him up to the Green Chamber—Oh
 my belly—lock him in sure there, till you see what becomes of
 me; if I do die, he and his Mistris shall have but an ill Match of
 it at Tyburn.² Oh my Guts!—Lock up Luce, too, in her Chamber.

Trum. What do ye mean, Gentlemen? Are ye mad? 79

Will. We mean to lock you up safe, Sir, for a great Jewel as
 you are!

Luc. Pray hear me all.

Joll. Away with 'em.

[*Exit all the Servants, with TRUMAN and LUCIA several ways.*]

¹ I. e., They're.

² See p. 31, n. 1.

Aur. How do you, Sir? I hope you may o're come it; your Nature's strong, Sir. 85

Joll. No, 'tis impossible; and yet I find a little ease, but 'tis but a flash—Aurelia—Oh there it wrings me again—Fetch me the Cordial-glass in the Cabinet window, and the little Prayer-book: I would fain repent, but it comes so hardly!—I am very unfit to die, if it would please Heaven—so, set down the Glass—there—give me— 91

Aur. The Prayer-book, Sir, 's all mouldy; I must wipe it first.

Joll. Lay it down too—so—it begins t'asswage a little—There, lay down the book; 'twill but trouble my Brains now I'm a dying. 95

Enter WILL.

Will. Here's the Widow, Sir, without, and Mrs. Tabitha her daughter; they have heard o' your misfortune, and ha' brought Mr. Knock-down to comfort you. 98

Joll. How? everlasting Knock-down! Will they trouble a Man thus when he's a dying? Sirrah! Blockhead! Let in Joseph Knock-down, and I'l send thee to Heaven afore me! I have but an hour or two to live, perhaps, and that's not enough for him, I'm sure, to preach in! 103

Will. Shall Mrs. Barebottle come in, Sir?

Joll. That's a She Knock-down too.—Well, let her come in—Huh! huh! huh! I must bear all things patiently now; but Sirrah, Rogue!—Take heed o' Joseph Knock-down: Thou shalt not live with ears if Joseph Knock-down enter. 108

Enter WIDOW, TABITHA.

Wid. How de' you Neighbour Colonel? How is't? Take comfort. 110

Joll. Cut off in the flower o' my age, Widow.

Wid. Why, Man's life is but a Flower, Mr. Jolly, and the Flower withers, and Man withers, as Mr. Knock-down observed last Sabbath day at Evening Exercise. But, Neighbour, you'r past the Flower, you'r grown old as well as I— 115

Joll. I' the very flower; that damn'd Quack-salver—

Tabith. Me-thoughts he was the ugliest fellow, Mother, and they say he's a Papish too, forsooth.

Wid. I never liked a Doctor with a Red Nose; my Husband was wont to say—How do you, Mrs. Aurelia? Comfort yourself; we must all die sooner or later: to day here, to morrow gone. 121

Joll. Oh the torture of such a tongue! Would I were dead already, and this my funeral Sermon!

Wid. Alas poor man! His tongue I warrant yee is hot as passes; you have a better memory than I, Tabitha; tell him what Mr. Knock-down said was a Saints duty in tormenting sicknesses, (now Poison's a great tormentor.) 127

Joll. Oh! Oh!—This additional Poison will certainly make an end of me!

Wid. Why seek for spiritual Incomes,¹ Mr. Colonel; I'll tell you what my Husband Barebottle was wont to observe (and he was a Colonel too)—he never sought for Incomes but he had some Blessing followed immediately: once he sought for 'em in Hartfordshire, and the next day he took as many Horses and Arms in the County as serv'd to raise three Troops; another time he sought for 'em in Bucklersbury,² and three days after a friend of his, that he owed five hundred pounds too, was hang'd for a Malignant, and the Debt forgiven him by the Parliament; a third time he sought for 'em in Hartfordshire— 139

Tabith. No, Mother, 'twas in Worcester-shire, forsooth.

Wid. I, Child, it was indeed in Worcester-shire; and within two months after the Dean of Worcester's Estate fell to him.

Joll. He sought for 'em once out o' my Estate too, I thank him; Oh my head!

Wid. Why truly, Neighbour Colonel, he had that but for his Penny, and would have had but a hard Bargain of it, if he had not by a friends means of the Council hook'd in two thousand pounds of his Arrears. 148

Cut. For shame let's relieve him!—Colonel, you said you had

¹ Puritan cant for "inspiration," ridiculed in *Hudibras*. Jeremy Taylor speaks of "incomes of spiritual propositions and arguments of the Spirit."

² A street, lying partly in Cheap, inhabited largely by grocers and apothecaries.

a mind to settle some affairs of your Estate with me, and Captain Worm here.

Wid. I'll leave you then for a while. Pray send for me, Neighbor, when you have a mind to't. Heaven strengthen you: come Tabitha. 154

Joll. Aurelia, go out with them, and leave us three together for half an hour. [Exit WID. TAB. AUR.]

Stay you, Will, and reach me the Cordial; I begin to hope that my extreme Violent fit of Vomiting and Purging has wrought out all the Poison, and sav'd my life—My Pain's almost quite gone, but I'm so sore and faint—Give me the Glass. 160

Worm. What d'you mean, Colonel? You will not doat, I hope, now you'r dying? Drink I know not what there, made by a Doctor and a 'Pothecary. Drink a cup o' Sack, Man, healing Sack,—you'l find your old Antidote best.

Cut. H'as reason, Colonel, it agrees best with your nature; 'tis good to recover your strength—As for the danger, that's past, I'm confident, already. 167

Joll. Dost thou think so, honest Cutter? Fetch him a Bottle o' Sack, Will, for that news; I'le drink a little my self, one little Beer-glass. 170

Cut. Poor creature! He would try all ways to live!

Joll. Why if I do die, Cutter, a Glass o' Sack will do me no hurt I hope; I do not intend to die the whining way, like a Girl that's afraid to lead Apes in Hell—¹

Enter WILL, with a bottle and great Glass.

So, give it me; a little fuller,—yet—it warms exceedingly—and is very Cordial—So—fill to the Gentlemen. 176

Worm. [*Sings*—Let's drink, let's drink, whilst breath we have; You'l find but cold, but cold drinking in the Grave.

Cut. A Catch 'ifaith! Boy, go down, Boy, go down
And fill us t'other quart, 180
That we may drink the Colonel's health,

¹“to die a virgin.” [On the history of this proverbial phrase before and after Shakespeare, cf. Ernest Kuhl, *Stud. in Phil.*, Oct., 1925.—*Gen. Eds.*]

- Worm.* That we may drink the Colonel's health,
Both. Before that we do part.
Worm. Why dost thou frown, thou arrant Clown?
 Hey boyes—Tope.—¹ 185
Joll. Why this is very cheerly! Pray let's ha' the Catch that
 we made t'other night against the Doctor.
Worm. Away with't, Cutter; hum—
 Come fill us the Glass o' Sack.
Cut. What Health do we lack? 190
Worm. Confusion to the Quack.
Both. Confound him, confound him,
 Diseases all around him.
Cut. And fill again the Sack,
Worm. That no man may Lack, 195
Cut. Confusion to the Quack,
Both. Confusion to the Quack,
 Confound him, confound him,
 Diseases all around him.
Worm. He's a kind of Grave-maker, 200
Cut. A Urinal Shaker,
Worm. A wretched Groat-taker,
Cut. A stinking close-stool raker,
Worm. He's a Quack that's worse than a Quaker.
Both. He's a Quack, *etc.* 205
Worm. Hey, Boys—*Gingo*—
Joll. Give me the Glass, Will, Ile venture once more what e're
 come on't. Here's a Health to the Royal Travailer,² and so
Finis Coronat.
Worm. Come on Boys, *Vivat*; have at you agen then. 210
 Now a Pox on the Poll, of old Politique Noll.³
Both. Wee'l drink till we bring,
 In Triumph back the King.
Worm. May he Live, till he see,
 Old Noll upon a tree. 215
Worm. And many such as he.
Both. May he live till, *etc.*

¹ drink.² Charles II.³ Cromwell.

Joll. I'me very Sick again. Will, help me into my Bed; rest you merry, Gentlemen.

Cut. Nay, we'l go in with him; Captain, he shall not die this bout. 221

Worm. It's pity but he should, he dos't so bravely. Come along then, kiss me, Cutter: is not this better than quarrelling?

Both. May he live till he see, *etc.*
Hey for Fidlers now!

[*Exeunt.*]

Act 3. Scene 1.

JOLLY, AURELIA.

Joll. 'Tis true, Aurelia, the Story they all agree in; 'twas nothing but a simple Plot o' the two Lovers to put me in fear o' death, in hope to work then upon my good Nature, or my Conscience; and Quack conspired with them out o' revenge. 'Twas a cursed Rogue though to give me such an unmerciful Dose of Scammony! It might ha' prov'd but an ill jest; but however, I will not be a loser by the business, ere I ha' done with't. 7

Aur. Me-thinks there might be something extracted out of it.

Joll. Why so there shall; I'le pretend, Aurelia, to be still desperately sick, and that I was really poison'd. No man will blame me after that, for whatsoever I do with my Niece. But that's not all: I will be mightily troubled in Conscience, send for the Widow, and be converted by her; that will win her heart, joyn'd with the hopes of my swallowing Lucia's portion. 14

Aur. For that point I'l assist you. Sir, assure her that my Cousin Lucia is married privately this after-noon to Mr. Puny.

Joll. I would she were, Wench, (for thine and my sake); her Portion would be forfeited then indeed, and she would ha' no great need of't, for that Fop's very rich. 19

Aur. Well, Sir, I'l bring sufficient proofs of that, to satisfie the Widow, and that's all you require. Be pleas'd to let the secret of the business rest with me yet a while; to-morrow you shall know't. But for my own part, Sir, if I were in your place, I'd rather patiently lose my estate for ever, than take't again with her. 25

Joll. Oh! hold your self contented, good frank-hearted Aurelia. Would I were to marry such a one every week these two years; see how we differ now.

Aur. Bless us! What humming and hawing will be i' this house! What preaching, and houling, and fasting, and eating among the Saints! Their first pious work will be to banish Fletcher and Ben Johnson out o' the Parlour, and bring in their rooms Martin Mar-Prelate, and Posies of Holy Hony-suckles, and a Saws-box for a Wounded Conscience, and a Bundle of Grapes from Canaan.¹ I can't abide 'em; but I'll break my sister Tabitha's heart within a month one way or other. But, Sir, suppose the King should come in again, (as I hope he will for all these Villains) and you have your own again o' course, you'd be very proud of a Soap-boylers widow then in Hide-park,² Sir.

39

Joll. Oh! then the Bishops will come in too, and she'l away to New-England.³ Well, this does not do my business; I'l about it, and send for her.

[*Exit.*

Enter RALPH.

Aur. And I'l about mine. Ralph, did you speak to Mr. Puny to meet me an hour hence at the back-dore in the Garden? He must not know the estate the house is in yet.

45

Ralph. Yes, forsooth, he bad me tell you, he'd no more fail you than the sun fails Barnaby-day.⁴ I know not what he means by't, but he charg'd me to tell you so, and he would bring (forsooth) his Regiment of five hundred. He's a mad-man, I think.

Aur. Well, did you speak to Mr. Soaker to stay within too,—the little Deacon that uses to drink with Will and you?

51

¹ A celebrated series of anti-episcopal tracts by uncertain authors, issued under the name of Martin Marprelate, mainly in the years 1588-90. Puritan tracts abounded in fantastic titles. The last mentioned is perhaps J. Owen's *Eschol; a Cluster of the Fruit of Canaan* (1648).

² Hyde Park Circus or "the Ring" was the fashionable promenade. On the occasion of its opening to the public, in 1632, Shirley's comedy, *Hyde Park*, was produced.

³ The Puritan emigration to New England, which had almost ceased, during the years 1642-60, began again after the Restoration. The Regicides Goffe, Whalley, and Dixwell found refuge in New England.

⁴ St. Barnabas Day, the summer solstice, June 11 (O.S.).

Ralph. Yes, forsooth, he's in the Buttery.

Aur. Pray Heaven he don't forget my Instructions there! But first I have a little trick for my Lovers to begin withall; they shall ha' twenty more before I ha' done with 'em. [Exit.]

[Act 3.] Scene 2.

Enter TRUMAN JUNIOR.

Trum. The Veil of this mistake will soon be cast away. I would I could remove Lucia's as easily, and see her face again, as fair as shortly our Innocence will appear.

But if my angry father come to know our late Intelligence in this unlucky business, though we ha' fulfill'd the Letter of his Will, that which can satisfie a Lover's Conscience will hardly do so to an old man's Passion. Ye Heavenly Powers, or take away my life, or give me quickly that for which I onely am content to keep it! 9

[Act 3.] Scene 3.

Enter AURELIA (veil'd).

Ha! I did but speak just now of Heavenly powers,
And my blest Angel enters; sure they have
Heard me, and promise what I prayed for.
My dear Lucia, I thought you'd been a kind of prisoner too.

[She gives him a Paper and embraces him.]

She's kinder too than she was wont to be; 5
My prayers are heard and granted, I'm confirm'd in't. *[Reads.]*
*By my Maid's means I have gotten Keys both of my own Chamber
and yours; we may escape if you please; but that I fear would ruine
you. We lie both now in the same house, a good fortune that is not
like to continue. Since I have the engagement of your faith, I account
myself your Wife already, and shall put my honor into your hands;
about Midnight I shall steal to you. If I were to speak this I should
blush, but I know whom I trust.*

13

Yours, Lucia.

Trum. [*Aside*—Thou dost not know me, Lucia,
And hast forgot thy self: I am amaz'd.—
Stay, here's a Postscript:—

Burn this Paper as soon as you have read it.

Burn it? Yes, would I had don't before. [*Burns it at the Candle.*
May all remembrance of thee perish with thee, 20
Unhappy paper!

Thy very ashes sure will not be innocent,
But flie about and hurt some chast man's eyes,
As they do mine.

[*Weeps.*

Oh, Lucia, this I thought of all misfortunes

25

Would never have befallen me, to see thee

Forget the ways of Virtue and of Honor.

I little thought to see upon our love,

That flourish'd with so sweet and fresh a Beauty,

The slimy traces of that Serpent, Lust.

30

What Devil has poison'd her? I know not what to say to her.

Go, Lucia, retire, prethee, to thy Chamber,

And call thy wandring Virtue home again,

It is not yet far gone, but call it quickly,

'Tis in a dangerous way! I will forget thy error, 35

And spend this night in prayers that Heaven may do so.

[*Exit* AUR.

Would she have had me been mine own Adulterer?

Before my Marriage?—Oh lust!—Oh frailty!—

Where in all human nature shall we miss

The ulcerous fermentations of thy heat,

40

When thus (alas) we find thee breaking out

Upon the comli'st Visage of perfection?

[*Exit.*

[Act 3.] Scene 4.

AURELIA.

Aur. Pray Heaven, I ha'nt made my foolish Wit stay for me;
if he talk with others of the house before me, I'm undone. Stay,
have I my Paper ready? [*Pulls out a paper.*—Oh! that's well! My
Hand I'm sure's as like hers as the Left is to the Right; we were

taught by the same Master, pure Italian; there's her A's and her G's, I'll swear—Oh! are you come? That's well. 6

[Act 3.] Scene 5.

Enter PUNY.

'Tis almost four o'clock and that's the precious hour.

Pun. My little Heliogabalus; ¹ here I am, Presto!

Aur. You'r always calling me names, Mr. Puny; that's unkindly done to one that's labouring for you, as I am.

Pun. I ha' made more haste hither than a Parson does to a living o' three hundred and fifty pounds a year. 6

Aur. Puny, you'r not a man o' business, I see. That's not the style o' business. Well, I ha' done, I think, the work for you; 'tis as odd a Plot as ever you heard.

Pun. I like it better; I love odd things. 10

Aur. Why thus then: you know Mr. Truman took an Oath to his father never to see my Cousin more without his leave?

Pun. Pish, do I know that a Lawyer loves to take mony in Michaelmas Term?

Aur. A pies ² upon you! Well, my father has made Lucy swear too, never to see Truman without his consent. 16

Pun. Good, there will be a good Bo-peep love.

Aur. For all this, thy'r resolv'd to marry this after-noon, (nay don't interrupt me with your Fopperies, or I'll be gon) and to save their Oathes (like cunning Casuists, as all Lovers are) they'll be married in a dark room (do you mark me?) The Minister, Mr. Soaker, is to marry them without Book; and because their bound not to speak to one another (for that I forgat to tell you) they'r to signifie their consent, when he asks 'em, "Will you such a one?"—by reverences, and giving their hands. You never heard of such a humor, but their ³ both mad— 26

Pun. Ha! ha! ha! Rare, as Fantastical as a Whirl-gig—but

¹ A Roman emperor (d. 222) famous for his caprices. He declared himself a woman and assumed the dress of an empress.

² A petty curse of unknown derivation.

³ I. e., they are.

how come you to know all this, my little pretty Witch of Lancashire? ¹

Aur. Why that I'me coming to; her Maid you must know is my Pensioner, and betrays all Counsels. And to confirm all this to you, here's her last Letter to Truman about the business, which my Intelligencer ha's Deliver'd to me instead of him. You know her hand. Read it all over to your self. 34

Pun. Ile swear by her Foot, this is her Hand—hum—[*Reads:* *My uncles sick, and no Body will be at this side o' the House,—the matted Chamber—hum—In at the Back door which shall be left only put to—(ha, ha, ha!) Mr. Soaker with you—Just at four—you must not stay long with me—(ha, ha, ha!) when 'tis done, and past recovery they'l release us of our Oaths—hum—I shall not fail—Yours. L. (Ha, ha, ha!)* 41

Aur. Now he knows nothing o' the time, for that he should ha' known by this Letter; and you conceive my design, I hope? You'r not a Wit for nothing.

Pun. My dear Pythagorean, that I should go in and Marry her instead of him? 46

Aur. Right! thou'st a shrewd reach.

Pun. But where's old Soaker all this while?

Aur. Why, I ha' told all this to him, only naming you in all things instead of Truman; and that 'twas my Contrivance all for my Cosens and your sake. He's within at a Call; I'll send for him. Whose there? Mary? Call hither Mr. Soaker.—I ha' given him five Pounds, and for so much more he'l Marry you to another to-morrow, if you will. 54

Pun. I adore thee, Queen Solomon! I had rather be Marri'd by such a Plot as this, than be Nephew to Prester John ²—I'll mak't a thousand Spankers.

¹Traditionally ill-reputed for its witches. [In the Lancashire witchcraft trials of 1612, ten of the nineteen persons indicted were hanged (Kittredge, *Witchcraft in Old and New England*, p. 285). See also Thomas Heywood's play, *The Late Lancashire Witches*, and Shadwell's, of the same title.—*Gen. Eds.*]

²A mythical Christian emperor and priest (presbyter) whose dominions, according to mediaeval belief, were supposed to lie somewhere in the interior of Asia.

Enter MR. SOAKER.

Aur. Oh come, 'tis time Mr. Soaker; as soon as you ha' done leave the Marri'd couple together. Ile lock this Door upon you; go out at the to'ther, where shee'l come in to you. 60

Pun. 'Tis as dark as the Devil's conscience; but the best is, the Parson ha's a good *Fieri Facies*,¹ like a Holiday, that will give some Light.

Aur. No! there's Light enough to keep you from Stumbling within. Oh! I forgot to tell you, break a piece of Gold,² and give her half, for a proof of the—do you understand me? 66

Pun. 'Tis well thought on; but, *Domine Doctoribus*, can you say the Service without Book are you sure?

Soaker. I warrant you, Sir; can you Lye with her without Book afterwards? 70

Pun. Hee's a Wit too, by Juno; all are Wits that have a finger in this Venison pasty.

Aur. Shee'l come immediately. Go in; do not stay above half an hour, Mr. Puny; my Cozen will be mist else, and all spoil'd.

Pun. Ile warrant you, let's in; dear Learning, lead the way.

[*They go in, and AURELIA locks the Door o' the outside.*]

Aur. So, all's sure this way; Ile be with you straight. [*Exit.*]

[Act 3.] Scene 6.

Enter JOLLY, CUTTER.

Joll. So, now the Widdow's gone, I may breathe a little. I believe really that true Devotion is a great Pleasure, but 'tis a damn'd constraint and drudgery me-thinks, this Dissimulation of it. I wonder how the new Saints can endure it, to be always at the work, Day and Night Acting. But great Gain makes every thing seem easie; and they have, I suppose, good Lusty Recreations in private. She's gone, the Little Holy thing, as proud as Lucifer,

¹ A rather obvious pun upon the writ (properly *Fieri facias*) directing the sheriff to convert the goods of a judgment debtor into the sum required to satisfy the debt.

² A customary love pledge, the two halves of the coin, when matched, serving as a kind of indenture to prove possession.

with the Imagination of having been the Chosen Instrument of my Conversion from Popery, Prelacy, and Cavalerism; she's gone to bragg o't to Joseph Knock-down, and bring him to Confirm me. But Cutter, thine was the best Humor that ever was begot in a Rogues Noddle, to be Converted in an instant, the Inspiration way, by my example! It may hap to get thee Tabitha. 13

Cut. Nay, and I hit just pat upon her way, for though the Mother be a kind of Brownist¹ (I know not what the Devil she is indeed), yet Tabitha is o' the Fifth Monarchy Faith, and was wont to go every Sunday a-foot over the Bridge, to hear Mr. Feak,² when he was Prisoner in Lambeth house. She has had a Vision too, her self, of Horns, and strange things. 19

Joll. Pish! Cutter, for the way that's not material, so there be but enough of Nonsense and Hypocrisie. But Cutter, you must reform your Habit too, a little: off with that Sword and Buff and greasie Plume o' Ribbons in your Hat. They'l be back here presently; do't quickly. 24

Cut. Ile be chang'd in an instant, like a Scene, and then I'll fetch 'em to you. [*Exit.*]

[Act 3.] Scene 7.

Enter TRUMAN SENIOR.

Trum. Sen. I, there goes one of his Swaggerers; I could ha' Swaggered with him once—Oh! Colonel, you'r finely Poison'd; are you not? Would I had the Poisoning o' you—Where's my Son Dick? What ha' you done with him?

Joll. Mr. Truman— 5

Trum. Sen. True me no more than I true you—Come—Colonel you'r but a Swaggering—Ile ha' the Law to Swagger with you, that I will.

¹ Independents (modern Congregationalists), so called from Robert Brown (d. 1630), who taught that each separate church, or organized congregation, was complete and independent in itself.

² A Fifth Monarchy fanatic (cf. p. 72, n. 1), preached continually at Blackfriars against Cromwell. He was arrested Jan. 28, 1654, and confined in Windsor Castle. *Lambeth House*, the town residence of the Archbishop of Canterbury, on the southern side of the Thames.

Joll. First leave your Raging; though you should rage like Tamerlain ¹ at the Bull, 'twould do no good here. 10

Trum. Sen. Do you call me names too? I'll have an Action o' *Scandalum*. Well, Colonel, since you provoke me the Protector shall know what you are, and what you would have had me done for the King in the time of the last rising.

Joll. Mr. Truman, I took you for a Person of Honour, and a Friend to His Majesty; I little thought to hear you speak of betraying a Gentleman to the Protector. 17

Trum. Sen. Betraying? No Sir, I scorn it as much as you, but I'll let him know what you are, and so forth, an' you keep my Son from me. 20

Joll. Mr. Truman, if you'll but hear me patiently, I shall propose a thing that will, I hope, be good and acceptable both to your Son and you.

Trum. Sen. Say you so, Sir? Well; but I won't be call'd Tamerlain. 25

Joll. My Niece, not only by her wicked design to Poison me, but by Marrying her self without my consent this day to Puny, has (as you know very well, for you were a witness Sir to my Brother's will) lost all the right she had to a plentiful Portion. Aurelia shall have that and my Estate (which now within few days I shall recover) after my Death; she's not I think Unhandsome, and all that know her will confess she wants no wit. With these Qualities, and this Fortune, if your Son like her (for though h'as injur'd me, Sir, I forget that, and attribute it only to the Enchantments of my Niece), I do so well approve both of his Birth and Parts, and of that Fortune, which you, I think, will please to make him, that I should be extremely glad of the Alliance. 37

Trum. Sen. Good Colonel, you were always a kind Neighbour and loving Friend to our Family, and so were we to you, and had respects for you; you know I would have had Dick marry your Niece, till you declar'd he should ha' no Portion with her. 41

Joll. For that I had a particular reason, Sir. Your Son's above

¹The ranting hero of Marlowe's *Tamburlaine the Great* (1590). The Red Bull was a public theatre, like the Globe and the Curtain, and was occupied by successive companies, till the closing of the playhouses in 1642, and for a brief period after the Restoration (see J. Q. Adams, *Shakespearean Playhouses*, pp. 307 ff.).

in my House; shall I call him, Sir, that we may know his mind? I would not have him forc'd.

Trum. Sen. Pray send for him, good Colonel. Forc'd? No, I'll make him do't, Ile warrant you. Boys must not be their own choosers, Colonel, they must not 'ifaith; they have their Sympathies and Fiddle-come-faddles in their Brain, and know not what they would ha' themselves. 49

[Act 3.] Scene 8.

Enter LUCIA.

Joll. Why how now, Lucia? how come you from your Chamber?

Luc. I hope you did not mean me a Prisoner, Sir, since now you'r satisfy'd sufficiently that you'r not Poison'd?

Joll. I am not dead, that's true. But I may thank Heaven, and a strong Constitution for't: you did your weak endeavours. However, for the honour of our Family, and for your Father's sake, I'll speak no more o' that, but I could wish, for the security of my Life hereafter, that you would go home to your Husband, for they say you'r marri'd, Niece, this day without my knowledge—Nay,—I'm content—go home to him when you please; you shall ha' your thousand Pounds. 12

Trum. Sen. Hearn you, Colonel, she should not have a groat of 'em, not a groat. She can't recover't by Law; I know the Will.

Luc. I marry'd Sir? 'Tis the first news I've heard of't. 15

[Act 3.] Scene 9.

Enter TRUM. JUN.

[LUCIA goes to put on her Veil.

Joll. Nay, leave your pretty Jesuitical Love-tricks to salve an Oath. Mr. Truman, you may let your Son see her now.

Trum. Sen. I, Dick you may see her as much as you please; she's marri'd.

Trum. Jun. Marri'd?

Trum. Sen. I, marri'd, so I say. Marri'd this after-noon to Mr. Puny.

Luc. What do they mean?

Trum. Sen. And Dick, I ha' got a Wife too for you. You shall ha' pretty Mrs. Aurelia. 10

Trum. Jun. Lucia marri'd?

Trum. Sen. Her Father and I are agreed of all things. Hearn you Dick, she has a brave Fortune now.

Trum. Jun. Marri'd to Puny?

Trum. Sen. You shall have her presently. 15

Trum. Jun. This after-noon?

Trum. Sen. Come, Dick; there's a Wife for you, Dick.

Trum. Jun. I wo'nt marry, Sir.

Trum. Sen. What do you say, Sir?

Trum. Jun. I wo'not marry, Sir. 20

Trum. Sen. Get you out o' my sight, you Rebel.

Joll. Nay, good Mr. Truman.

Trum. Sen. Ile ne're acknowledge him for my Son again! I tell you, Colonel, he's always thus with his wo'nots and his Cannots.

[Act 3.] Scene 10.

Enter PUNY.

Pun. We ha' made short work on't; t'was a brave quick Parsonides. The little Skittish Philly got away from me I know not how, like an Eele out of a Basket.

Joll. Give him a little time, Mr. Truman, he's troubl'd yet at my Nieces marriage; t'will over quickly. 5

Trum. Sen. Give my Son time, Mr. Jolly? Marry come up—.

[Act 3.] Scene 11.

Enter AURELIA, (after PUNY.)

Aur. What ha' you done already? You'r a sweet Husband indeed.

Pun. Oh! my little Pimp of honour! Here, here's the five hun-

dred Marigolds: hold thy hand Dido—Yonders my Wife, by Satan! How a Devil did that little Mephistophilus get hither before me? 6

Aur. To her Puny; never conceal the mystery any longer; 'tis too good a Jest to be kept close.

Trum. Sen. For your sake I will then, Colonel. Come prethee, Dick, be cheerfull. 10

Trum. Jun. I beseech you—Sir—

Trum. Sen. Look you there, Colonel, now he should do what I would have him, now hee's a beseeching—'Tis the proudest stubbornst Coxcomb—

Pun. [to JOLLY]. And now my noble Uncle—Nay, never be angry at a Marriage i'the way of wit—My fair Egyptian Queen, come to thine Antony. 17

Luc. What would this rude fellow have?

Trum. Jun. I am drown'd in wonder!

Pun. 'Twas I, my dear Philoclea,¹ that marri'd thee e'en now in the dark room, like an amorous Cat; you may remember the Damask Bed by a better Token of Two than a bow'd Philip and Mary.² 23

Luc. I call Heaven to witness,
Which will protect and justify the Innocent, 25
I understand not the least word he utters,
But as I took him always for a Fool,
I now do for a Mad-man.

Aur. She's angry yet to have mistook her Man.

[To JOLLY.—'Tis true, Sir, all that Mr. Puny says,—I mean for the Marriage; for the rest, she's best able to answer for her self. 31

Luc. True, Cousin! Then I see 'tis some conspiracy t'ensnare my Honor and my Innocence.

Aur. The Parson, Mr. Soaker, that married 'em, is still within.

Will. He's i'th'Buttery. Shall I call him, Sir? 35

Joll. I, quickly.

¹The name under which Sir Philip Sidney celebrated Lady Penelope Devereux in his *Arcadia*.

²The bent gold piece of Philip and Mary's coinage (see p. 58, n. 2), kept as a token of consummation.

Trum. Jun. 'Tis the sight of me, no doubt, confounds her with a shame to confess any thing. It seems that sudden fit of raging lust, that brought her to my Chamber, could not rest till it was satisfi'd; it seems I know not what! 40

Enter MR. SOAKER.

Joll. Mr. Soaker, did you marry my Niece this after-noon to Mr. Puny, in the Matted Chamber?

Soak. Yes, Sir, I hope your Worship wo'nt be angry. Marriage, your Worship knows, is honorable.

Luc. Hast thou no conscience neither? 45

[Act 3.] Scene 12.

Enter WIDOW, TABITHA, CUTTER in a Puritanical habit.

Joll. Niece, go in a little, I'l come to you presently and examine this matter further. Mr. Puny, lead in your wife, for shame!

Luc. Villain, come not near me,
I'l sooner touch a Scorpion or a Viper. [Exit.]

Pun. She's as humerous as a Bel-rope; she need not be so chole-rique, I'm sure I behav'd my self like *Propria quæ maribus*.¹ 6

Aur. Come in with me, Mr. Puny; I'l teach you how you shall handle her. [Exeunt AUR. PUN.]

Joll. Mr. Truman, pray take your son home, and see how you can work upon him there; speak fairly to him. 10

Trum. Sen. Speak fairly to my son? I'l see him buried first!

Joll. I mean perswade him—

Trum. Sen. Oh! that's another matter. I will perswade him, Colonel, but if ever I speak fair to him till he mends his manners— Come along with me, Jack-sawce; come home. 15

Trum. Jun. I, Sir, any whither.

[Exeunt TRUM. SEN. TRUM. JUN.]

Wid. What's the matter, brother Colonel; are there any broils here?

¹ Things peculiar to males: from the lists of words of masculine gender in the old Latin grammars.

Joll. Why, Sister, my Niece has married without my consent; and so it pleases, it e'en pleases Heaven to bestow her Estate upon me. 21

Wid. Why, brother, there's a Blessing now already. If you had been a wicked Cavalier still, she'd ha' done her duty, I warrant you, and defrauded you of the whole Estate. My brother Cutter here is grown the Heavenliest man o' the sudden, 'tis his work.

Cut. Sister Barebottle, I must not be called Cutter any more. That is a name of Cavalero darkness: the Devil was a Cutter from the beginning. My name is now Abednego. I had a Vision which whisper'd to me through a Key-hole, Go call thy self Abednego.¹

Tab. The wonderful Vocation of some Vessels! 30

Cut. It is a name that signifies Fiery Furnaces, and Tribulation, and Martyrdom. I know I am to suffer for the Truth.

Tab. Not as to Death, Brother, if it be his will.

Cut. As to death, Sister; but I shall gloriously return.

Joll. What, Brother, after death? That were miraculous. 35

Cut. Why the wonder of it is, that it is to be miraculous.

Joll. But Miracles are ceas'd, Brother, in this wicked Age of Cavalerism.

Cut. They are not ceas'd, Brother, nor shall they cease till the Monarchy be establish'd. 40

I say again I am to return, and to return upon a Purple Dromadary, which signifies Magistracy, with an Ax in my hand that is called Reformation; and I am to strike with that Ax upon the Gate of Westminster-hall,² and cry, Down Babylon; and the Building called Westminster-hall is to run away and cast it self into the River; and then Major General Harrison is to come in Green sleeves from the North upon a Sky-colour'd Mule, which signifies heavenly Instruction. 48

Tab. Oh the Father! He's as full of Mysteries as an Egg is full of meat. 50

Cut. And he is to have a Trumpet in his mouth as big as a

¹ Cf. *Daniel*, chap. III.

² On Saturday, Dec. 30, 1654, a fanatic—"seemingly a kind of Quaker" who called himself Theauro John "knocked loud at the door of the Parliament House and laid about him with a drawn sword." He was committed to prison in the Gatehouse at Westminster.

Steeple, and at the sounding of that Trumpet all the Churches in London are to fall down.

Wid. O strange! What times shall we see here in poor England!

Cut. And then Venner¹ shall march up to us from the West in the figure of a Wave of the Sea, holding in his hand a Ship that shall be call'd the Ark of the Reform'd. 57

Joll. But when must this be, Brother Abednego?

Cut. Why all these things are to be when the Cat of the North has o're-come the Lion of the South, and when the Mouse of the West has slain the Elephant of the East. I do hear a silent Voice within me, that bids me rise up presently and declare these things to the Congregation of the Lovely in Coleman-street.² Tabitha, Tabitha, Tabitha, I call thee thrice: come along with me, Tabitha.

[*Exit.*

Tab. There was something of this, as I remember, in my last Vision of Horns the other day. Holy man! I follow thee. Farewell, forsooth, Mother, till anon. 67

Joll. Come, let's go in too, Sister.

[*Exeunt.*

Act 4. Scene 1.

TRUMAN JUNIOR.

What shall I think hence-forth of Womankind?

When I know Lucia was the best of it,

And see her what she is? What are they made of?

Their Love, their Faith, their Souls enslav'd to passion!

Nothing at their command, beside their Tears, 5

And we, vain men, whom such Heat-drops deceive!

Hereafter I will set my self at Liberty,

¹ A Fifth Monarchy Man—a wine-cooper by trade—who gathered a company of adherents at Mile End Green in 1657 to protest against Cromwell's being made King. The Protector's men arrested Venner and other ring-leaders, and seized arms, a flag (with a figure of the Lion of the Tribe of Judah), etc. Venner was subsequently released, but in consequence of a similar uprising shortly after Charles II's return, he and some twenty of his followers were put to death. Their place of meeting was in Coleman Street.

² North of Lothbury: "a fair and large street" (Stow, *Survey of London*); by Cowley's time, apparently, the quarter of the lower class of sectaries. Cf. J. Vickers, *The Coleman Street Conclave Visited* (1648).

And if I sigh or grieve, it shall not be
For love of One, but Pity of all the Sex.

[Act 4.] Scene 2.

Enter LUCIA.

Ha! she will not let me see her sure;
If ever, Lucia, a Veil befitted thee,
'Tis now, that thou maist hide thy guilty blushes.

Luc. If all their malice yet
Have not prevail'd on Truman's Constancy, 5
They'l miss their wicked end, and I shall live still.
I'l go and speak to him.

Trum. Forbear, Lucia, for I have made a second Oath, which I
shall keep, I hope, with lesser trouble: never to see thy face more.

Luc. You were wont, Sir, 10
To say, you could not live without the sight of't.

Trum. I; 'twas a good one then.

Luc. Has one day spoil'd it?

Trum. O yes, more than a hundred years of time, made as much
more by sorrow, and by sickness, could e're have done. 15

Luc. Pray hear me Truman;
For never innocent Maid was wrong'd as I am;
Believe what I shall say to you, and confirm
By all the holiest Vows that can bind Souls.

Trum. I have believ'd those Female tricks too long; 20
I know thou canst speak winningly, but thy Words
Are not what Nature meant them, thy Minds Picture;
I'l believe now what represents it better,
Thine own Hand, and the proof of mine own Eyes.

Luc. I know not what you mean; believe my Tears. 25

Trum. They'r idle empty Bubbles.
Rais'd by the Agitation of thy Passions,
And hollow as thy heart; there is no weight in 'em.
Go thou once, Lucia; Farewel,
Thou that wer't dearer to me once, than all 30
The outward things of all the World beside,

Or my own Soul within me, farewell for ever;
Go to thine Husband, and love him better than
Thou didst thy Lover.

I ne're will see the[e] more, nor shall, I fear, 35
Ere see my self again.

Luc. He[a]re me but once. [Kneels.]

Trum. No, 'tis enough; Heaven hear thee when thou kneel'st
to it. [Exit.]

Luc. Will he? He's gone; now all the world has left me, [Rises.] 40
And I am desolately miserable.

'Tis done unkindly, most unkindly, Truman!

Had a blest Angel come to me and said

That thou wert false, I should have sworn it li'd,

And thought that rather faln than thee.

Go, dear, false man, go seek out a new Mistris; 45

But when you ha' talk'd, and lov'd, and vow'd, and sworn

A little while, take heed of using her

As you do me. No, may your love to her

Be such as mine to you, which all thy injuries

Shall never change, nor death itself abolish. 50

May she be worthier of your bed than I,

And when the happy course of many years

Shall make you appear old to all but her,

May you in the fair Glass of your fresh Issue

See your own youth again; but I would have 'em 55

True in their Loves, and kill no innocent Maids.

For me it is no matter; when I am dead,

My busie soul shall flutter still about him:

'Twill not be else in Heaven. It shall watch

Over his sleeps, and drive away all dreams 60

That come not with a soft and downy wing;

If any dangers threaten, it shall beckon

And call his spirit away, till they be past,

And be more diligent than his Guardian Angel;

And when just Heaven, as I'm assur'd it will, 65

Shall clear my Honor and my Innocence,

He'l sigh, I know, and pity my misfortunes,

And blame himself, and curse my false Accusers,
 And weep upon my Grave
 For my wrong'd Virtue, and mistaken Truth,
 And unjust Death: I ask no more.

70
 [Exit.

[Act 4.] Scene 3.

Enter TRUMAN JUNIOR.

'Twas barbarously done to leave her so;
 Kneeling and weeping to me; 'twas inhuman;
 I'l back and take my leave more civilly,
 So as befits one who was once her Worshipper.

[Goes over the Stage, and comes back.

She's gone; why let her go! I feel her still; 5
 I feel the root of her, labouring within
 To sprout afresh, but I will pluck it up,
 Or tear my heart with't.

[Act 4.] Scene 4.

Enter JOLLY, TRUMAN SENIOR.

Joll. He's there, Sir, pray let him now resolve you positively
 what he means to do.

Trum. Sen. What he means to do, Colonel? that were fine
 'ifaith; if he be my son he shall mean nothing.

Boys must not have their meanings, Colonel: 5
 Let him mean what I mean with a Wennion.¹

Trum. Jun. I shall be prest, I see, by 'em, upon the hateful
 Subject of a Marriage;

And to fill up the measure of Affliction,
 Now I have lost that which I lov'd, compell'd
 To take that which I hate. 10

Trum. Sen. I will not be troubled, Colonel, with his meanings!
 If he do not marry her this very evening (for I'le ha' none of his
 Flim-flams and his May-be's) I'l send for my son Tom from

¹ with a plague to you.

St. John's College (he's a pretty Scholar, I can tell you, Colonel; I have heard him syllogize it with Mr. Soaker in Mood and Figure ¹) and settle my estate upon him with her. If he have his Meanings too, and his Sympathies, I'll disinherit 'em both, and marry the Maid my self, if she can like me. I have one tooth yet left, Colonel, and that's a Colt's one.

Trum. Jun. Did I submit to lose the sight of Lucia 20
 Onely to save my unfortunate Inheritance,
 And can there be impos'd a harder Article
 For me to boggle at?
 Would I had been born some wretched Peasants son,
 And never known what Love or Riches were. 25
 Ha—I'll marry her—why should I not? if I
 Must marry some body,
 And hold my Estate by such a slavish Tenure,
 Why not her as well as any else?
 All Women are alike I see by Lucia, 30
 'Tis but resolving to be miserable,
 And that is resolv'd for me by my Destiny.

Joll. Well, try him, pray, but do it kindly, Sir, and artificially.²

Trum Sen. I warrant you! Dick, I'll ha' you marry Mrs. Aurelia to-night. 35

Trum. Jun. To-night? The warning's short, sir, and it may be—

Trum Sen. Why look you, Colonel, he's at's old lock; he's at's May-bees again!

Trum Jun. I know not, Sir— 40

Trum Sen. I, and his Know-nots: you shall have him at his Wo'nots presently. Sirra—I will have you know, Sir—

Joll. Nay, good Mr. Truman,—you know not yet what answer he intends to make you.

Trum Jun. Be pleas'd Sir, to consider— 45

Trum Sen. Look you, Sir, I must consider now; he upbraids his father with the want of consideration, like a Varlet as he is.

¹ The various forms of the syllogism in mediæval Aristotelian logic,—part of the university curriculum long after Charles I's time.

² skilfully.

Trum. Jun. What shall I do? Why should not I do anything, Since all things are indifferent?

Joll. I beseech you, Mr. Truman, have but a little patience—
Your Father, Sir, desires to know— 51

Trum. Sen. I do not desire him, Colonel, nor never will desire him: I command him upon the duty of a Child—

Joll. Whether you can dispose your self to love and marry my daughter Aurelia; and if you can, for several reasons we desire it may be presently consummated. 56

Trum. Jun. Out with it, stubborn Tongue;
I shall obey my father, Sir, in all things.

Trum. Sen. Ha! what dee' you say, Sir?

Joll. This old testy Fool is angry, I think, to have no more occasion given him of being so. 61

Trum. Jun. I shall obey you, Sir.

Joll. You speak, Sir, like a virtuous Gentleman. The same obedience and resignation to a father's will, I found in my Aurelia, and where two such persons meet, the issue cannot chuse but be successful. 66

Trum. Sen. Ah Dick, my son Dick, he was always the best natur'd Boy—he was like his father in that—he makes me weep with tenderness, like an old fool as I am—Thou shalt have all my Estate, Dick; I'll put my self to a pension rather than thou shalt want—Go spruse up thy self a little presently; thou art not merry 'ifaith, Dick. Prethee be merry, Dick, and fetch fine Mrs. Aurelia presently to the little Church behind the Colonel's Garden. Mr. Soaker shall be there immediately and wait for you at the Porch (we'll have it instantly, Colonel, done, lest the young fool should relapse!) Come, dear Dick, let's go cheerily on with the business. 77

Trum. Jun. What have I said? What am I doing? The best is, it is no matter what I say or do.

Joll. I'll see Aurelia shall be ready, and all things on my part within this half-hour. 81

Trum. Sen. Good, honest, noble Colonel, let me shake you by the hand. Come, dear Dick, we lose time. [Exeunt.

[Act 4.] Scene 5.

Enter CUTTER, TABITHA, a Boy.

Cut. And the Vision told me, sister Tabitha, that this same day, the first of the seventh month, in the year of Grace 1658, and of Revelation, and Confusion of Carnal Monarchies the tenth,¹ that we two, who are both holy Vessels, should by an holy Man be joynd together in the holy Bond of sanctifi'd Matrimony. 6

Tab. I, brother Abednego, but our friends consents—

Cut. Heaven is our friend, and, Sister, Heaven puts this into our thoughts; it is, no doubt, for propagation of the great Mystery; there shall arise from our two bodies, a great Confounder of Gogmagog, who shall be called the Pestle of Antichrist, and his children shall inherit the Grapes of Canaan. 12

Tab. My mother will be angry, I'm afraid.

Cut. Your Mother will rejoyce; the Vision says so, sister. The Vision says your Mother will rejoyce; how will it rejoyce her righteous heart to see you, Tabitha, riding behind me upon the Purple Dromedary? I would not for the world that you should do it, but that we are commanded from above; for to do things without the aforesaid Command is like unto the building of a Fire without the Bottom-cake.² 20

Tab. I, I, that it is; he knows.

Cut. Now to confirm to you the truth of this Vision, there is to meet us at a zealous Shoomaker's habitation hard by here, by the command of a Vision too, our Brother Zephaniah Fats, an Opener of Revelations to the Worthy in Mary White-chapel,³ and he is the chosen Vessel to joyn our hands. 26

¹The Fifth Monarchy Men believed that the four universal monarchies of history were to be succeeded by a fifth, during which Christ would rule on earth for a thousand years (the millennium). According to this belief "carnal" monarchy had come to an end with the execution of Charles I in 1649 and the Kingdom of the Saints was now at hand.

²The foundation on which the coals were raised.

³The ancient church of St. Mary Whitechapel, wherein Richard Brandon, the reputed executioner of Charles I, was buried.

Tab. I would my Mother knew't; but if that holy man come too by a Vision, I shall have grace, I hope, not to resist.

Cut. Sister, let me speak one word of Instruction to yonder Babe. 30

Tab. Oh how my bowels yern!

Cut. Sirra, is my little Doctor already staying for me at Tom Underleather my Shoemaker's house?

Boy. Yes, Sir, but he's in so strange a Habit, that Mr. Underleather's Boy Franck and I were ready to die with laughing at him. 36

Cut. Oh so much the better; go, you little piece of a Rogue, and get everything ready against I come back. [*Exit Boy*—Sister, that Babe you saw me speaking to is predestinated to Spiritual Mightiness, and is to be the restorer of the Mystical Tribe of Gad— 41

Tab. Oh the Wonderous—but, brother Abednego, will you not pronounce this Evening tide before the Congregation of the Spotless in Coleman-Street?

Cut. The will of the latter Vision is to be fulfilled first, as a Preparatory Vision; let us not make the Messenger of Mystery, who is sent by a Vision so far as from Mary White-chapel for our sakes, to stay too long from his lawful Vocation of Basket-making. Come, Sister Tabitha. 49

Tab. Hei, ho! but I will not resist. [*Exeunt.*]

[Act 4.] Scene 6.

Enter JOLLY, PUNY, WORM.

Joll. Mr. Puny, since you threaten me, I tell you plainly, I think my Niece has undone herself by marrying thee, for though thou hast a fair Estate at present, I'm hainously mistaken if thou beest not cheated of it all within these three years by such Rabbit-suckers¹ as these, that keep thee company, and like¹ lying sons o' the Devil as they are, cry thee up for a Wit, when there's nothing so unlike, no not any of thy own Similitudes, thy odious Comparisons.

¹ "Cony catchers," who fleece young gulls.

Pun. The Colonel's raging mad, like a Baker in the Subburbs, when his Oven's over-heated. 10

Worm. Good, very good i'faith.

Joll. I, that was one of 'em; as for her Portion, I thought to ha' given her a thousand pounds, but—

Pun. O magnanimous Colonel! What a Portion for a Toothpick-maker's daughter! 15

Worm. Good, shoot him thick with similes like Hail-shot.

Joll. But now thou shalt not have a groat with her.

Pun. What, not a poor old Harry-Groat¹ that looks as thin as a Poet's Cloak? But however, my noble Mountain hearted Uncle, I ha' made her Maiden-head a Crack'd Groat already, and if I ha' nothing more from her, she shall ha' nothing more from me; no, she shall foot Stokins in a Stall for me, or make Childrens Caps in a Garret fifteen stories high. 23

Joll. For that matter (for though thou speak'st no sense I guess thy brutish meaning) the Law will allow her honorable Alimony out o' your Foolship's Fortune. 26

Pun. And the law will allow me her Portion too, good Colonel Uncle; you'r not too big to be brought into Westminster-hall. Nay, Captain, his Niece uses me worse too; she will not let me touch the Nail of her little finger, and rails at me like a Flounder-mouth'd Fish-woman with a face like Billingsgate.² 31

Joll. What flesh can support such an affected Widgeon, who ha's not a design to cheat him of something as that Vermin ha's? Well, I shall be able to Live now, I hope, as befits a Gentleman, and therefore I'll endure the company of Fopps and Knaves no longer. 36

Worm. Come, Colonel, let's go in, and dispute the difference conscientiously over a Bottle o' Sack.

Joll. I keep no Tavern, Worm; or if I did, thy whole Estate would hardly reach to a Gill. 40

Worm. Colonel, thou art grown unkind, and art Drunk this afternoon without me.

Joll. Without thee, Buffoon? Why I tell thee, thou shall never

¹ Of Henry VIII's coinage, and bearing his head.

² The London fish market and the proverbial foul language of its fish-wives.

shew that Odd, Pimping, Cheating face o' thine within my Doors agen. I'le turn away any man o' mine that shall disparage himself to drink with such a fellow as thou art. 46

Worm. As I? Why what am I, pray, Mighty Colonel?

Joll. Thou art or hast been everything that's ill; there is no Scandalous way of Living, no Vocation of the Devil, that thou hast not set up in at one time or other. Fortune ha's Whipp'd thee about through all her streets. Thou'rt one that Lives like a Raven, by Providence and Rapin; now thou'rt feeding upon that raw young fellow, and doest Devour and Kaw ¹ him. Thou'rt one that if thou should'st by chance go to Bed sober, would'st write it down in thy Almanack, for an Unlucky day; sleep is not the Image of Death to thee, unless thou bee'st Dead drunk. Thou art—I know not what—Thou'rt anything, and shall be to me hereafter nothing. 58

Pun. This Colonel pisses Vinegar to day.

Worm. This is uncivil Language, Colonel, to an old Camerade, and one of your own party. 61

Joll. My Comrade? O' my party thou? Or any but the party of the Pick-purses!

Pun. This bouncing Bear of a Colonel will break the back o' my little Whelp of a Captain, unless I take him off. Come away, Captain; I'le firk his back with two Bum-baylies, till he spew up every Stiver of her Portion. 67

Joll. Fare-ye-well, Gentlemen, come not near these Doors if you love your own Leather! I'l ha' my Scullions batter you with Bones and Turneps, and the Maids drown you with Piss-pots, if you do but approach the Windows! These are sawcy Knaves indeed, to come to me for Pounds and Portions! [*Exit.*]

Worm. Poverty, the Pox, an ill Wife, and the Devil go with thee, Colonel.

Pun. I vex'd him to the Gills, Worm, when I put that bitter Bob o' the Baker upon him. 76

Worm. I! I'st e'n so? Not come to your House? By Jove, I'l turn him out of it himself by a trick that I have.

¹ croak over him.

Pun. Pish! thou talk'st as Ravingly as a Costermonger in a Feaver. 80

Worm. I'l do't, by Jove.

Pun. How, prethee, Captain? What does thy Pericranium mean?

Worm. Why here I ha't, by Jove. I'm ravish'd with the fancy of it; let me see—let me see—his Brother went seven years ago to Guiny— 86

Pun. I, but the Merchants say he's Dead long since, and gon to the Blackamores below.

Worm. The more Knaves they; he Lives, and I'm the man.

Pun. Ha! ha! ha! Thou talk'st like a Sowc'd Hoggs-face. 90

Worm. I knew him very well, and am pretty like him, liker than any of your Similitudes, Puny. By long Conversation with him, and the Colonel, I know all passages betwixt 'em, and what his Humor and his Estate was, much better than he himself, when he was Alive; he was a Stranger thing than any Monster in Afrique where he Traded. 96

Pun. How, prethee, Captain? I love these Odd fantastical things as an Alderman loves Lobsters.

Worm. Why, you must know, he had quite lost his memory, totally, and yet thought himself an able man for business, and that he did himself all that was done by his man John, who went always along with him; like a Dog with a Blind man. 102

Pun. Ha! ha! ha! Sublimely fantastical.

Worm. He carry'd a Scrawl about him of Memorandums, even of his Daughters and his Brothers names, and where his house stood; for as I told you, he remembered nothing; and where his Scrawl failed, John was his remembrancer: we were wont to call him Remembrancer John. 108

Pun. Ha, ha, ha! Rarely exotique! I'l Act that apple John, never was such a John as I; not John o' Gant, or John o' Nokes! ¹ I will turn Remembrancer John, as round as a Wedding Ring, ha, ha, ha! 112

Worm. Well said! But you must lay aside conceits for a while,

¹ An apple that kept two years and withered up instead of decaying. Cf. *Henry IV*, III, ii, 348.

and remote fancies. I'll teach you his humor instantly; now will I and my man John swarthy our faces over as if that Country's heat had made 'em so, (which will Disguise us sufficiently) and attire our selves in some strange Habits o' those Parts, (I know not how yet, but we shall see it in Speed's Mapps)¹ and come and take Possession of our House and Estate.

Pun. Dear Ovid, let's about thy Metamorphosis. 120

Worm. 'Twill be discover'd perhaps at last, but however, for the present 'twill break off his match with the Widdow, (which makes him so Proud now) and therefore it must be done in the twinkling of an Eye; for they say he's to marry her this Night. If all fail, 'twill be at least a merry 'bout for an hour, and a mask to the Wedding. 126

Pun. Quick, dear Rogue! Quick as Precipitation.

Worm. I know where we can ha' Cloaths, hard by here; give me ten Pounds to hire 'em, and come away, but of all things, man John, take heed of being witty. 130

Pun. I, that's the Devil on't! Well, go; I'll follow you behind like a long Rapier. [*Exeunt.*]

[Act 4.] Scene 7.

AURELIA.

Aur. If they would allow me but a little time, I could play such a trick with Mr. Truman, as should smart sorely for the rest of his Life, and be reveng'd abundantly on my Cozen, for getting of him from me, when I was such a foolish Girl three year ago as to be in Love with him. But they would have us marri'd instantly; the Parson stays for us at Church. I know not what to do—all must out—Odds my life, he's coming to fetch me here to Church already. 8

¹ John Speed's *Prospect of the Most Famous Parts of the World* (see p. 42, n. 2) has marginal decorations of men and women of all countries in national dress. The map of Asia has a "tartarian" with huge moustache and braided hair.

[Act 4.] Scene 8.

Enter TRUMAN JUNIOR.

Trum. Jun. I must go through with it now; I'll marry her,
And live with her according to the forms,
But I will never touch her as a Woman.
She stays for me—Madam—

Aur. Sir.

5

Trum. Jun. I cannot out with it—Madam.*Aur.* Sir.*Trum. Jun.* Must we go marry, Madam?*Aur.* Our friends will have it so, it seems.

Trum. Why will you marry me? What is there in me
That can deserve your liking? I shall be
The most untoward and ill-favour'd Husband
That ever took a melting Maid t' his Bed;
The faculties of my Soul are all untuned,
And every Glory of my Springing youth
Is faln into a strange and sudden Winter,
You cannot Love me, sure.

10

15

Aur. Not to Distraction, Sir.

Trum. No, nor I you; why should we marry then?
It were a folly, were it not, Aurelia?

20

Aur. Why they say, 'tis the best marriage, when like is Joyn'd
to like; now we shall make a very even match, for neither you
Love me, nor I Love you, and 'tis to be hop'd we may get Children
that will Love neither of us.

Trum. Nay, by my soul I love you, but alas,
Not in that way that Husbands should their Wives;
I cannot Toy, nor Kiss, nor do I know not what,
And yet I was a Lover, as true a Lover—

25

Aur. Alack a day!

Trum. 'Twas then (me-thoughts) the only happiness,
To sit and talk, and look upon my Mistriss,
Or if she was not by, to think upon her;
Then every Morning, next to my Devotion,

30

Nay often too (forgive me Heaven) before it,
 She slipt into my fancy, and I took it 35
 As a good Omen for the following day;
 It was a pretty foolish kind of Life,
 An honest, harmless vanity; but now
 The fairest Face moves me no more than Snow
 Or Lilies when I see 'em and pass by; 40
 And I as soon should deeply fall in Love
 With the fresh Scarlet of an Eastern Cloud,
 As the Red Lips and Cheeks of any Woman.
 I do confess, Aurelia, thou art fair,
 And very Witty, and (I think) Well-natur'd, 45
 But thou'rt a Woman still.

Aur. The sight of you, Sir,
 Makes me not repent at all my being so.

Trum. And prethee now, Aurelia, tell me truly,
 Are any Women constant in their Vows? 50
 Can they continue a whole Month, a Week,
 And never change their faith? Oh! if they could,
 They would be excellent things! Nay, ne're dissemble;
 Are not their Lusts unruly, and to them
 Such Tyrants as their Beauties are to us? 55
 Are their tears true, and solid when they weep?

Aur. Sure Mr. Truman you ha'nt slept of late,
 If we should be marry'd to Night, what would you do for Sleep?

Trum. Why? Do not marry'd people sleep o' Nights? 60

Aur. Yes! yes! alas, good innocence.
Trum. They have a scurvy Life on't if they don't;
 But wee'l not Live as other people do,
 Wee'l find out some new handsome way of Love,
 Some way of Love that few shall imitate,
 Yet all admire; for 'tis a sordid thing, 65
 That Lust should dare t'insinuate itself
 Into the Marriage-bed; wee'l get no Children,
 The worst of Men and Women can do that;
 Besides too, if our Issue should be Female,
 They would all Learn to flatter and dissemble, 70

They would deceive with Promises and Vows
Some simple men, and then prove False and Kill 'em,
Would they not do't, Aurelia?

Aur. I, any thing Mr. Truman; but what shall we do, Sir, when
we are marry'd, pray? 75

Trum. Why! wee'l live very Lovingly together,
Sometimes wee'l sit and talk of excellent things,
And laugh at all the Nonsense of the world;
Sometimes wee'l walk together,
Sometimes wee'l read, and sometimes eat, and sometimes sleep; 80
And sometimes pray, and then at last, wee'l dye,
And go to Heaven together; 'twill be rare!

Aur. We may do all this (me-thinks) and never marry for the
matter.

Trum. 'Tis true, we may so! 85
But since our Parents are resolv'd upon it,
In such a Circumstance let 'em have their humor.
My father sent me in to Complement,
And keep a Prating here, and play the Fool;
I cannot do 't, what should I say, Aurelia? 90
What do they use to say?

Aur. I believe you knew, Sir, when you Woo'd my Cozen.

Trum. I, but those Days are past; they'r gon for ever,
And nothing else, but Nights are to succeed 'em;
Gone like the faith and truth of Women kind, 95
And never to be seen again! O Lucia!
Thou wast a wondrous Angel in those days of thy blest state of
Innocence.

There was a Cheek! a Fore-head! And an Eye!—
Did you observe her eye, Aurelia?

Aur. O yes Sir! There were very pretty Babies in't. 100

Trum. It was as glorious as the Eye of Heaven;
Like the soul's Eye it peirc'd through everything;
And then her Hands—her Hands of Liquid Ivory!
Did she but touch her Lute (the pleasing'st Harmony then upon
Earth when she her self was silent.)
The subtil motion of her Flying fingers 105

Taught Musique a New art, to take the Sight, as well as Ear.

Aur. I, Sir, I! You'd best go look her out, and marry her; she has but one Husband yet.

Trum. Nay, prethee, good Aurelia be not angry,
For I will never Love or See her more. 110

I do not say she was more Fair than thou art,
Yet if I did? No, but I wo'not say so!

Only allow me this one short last remembrance
Of one I lov'd so long.—And now I think on't, I'l beg a favour of
you. You will Laugh at me I know, when you have heard it, but
prethee grant it; 'tis that you would be Veil'd as Lucia was of late,
for this one day; I would fain marry thee so;
'Tis an odd foolish fancy, I confess,
But Love and Grief may be allow'd sometimes
A little Innocent folly. 120

Aur. Good! This Fool will help me, I see, to cheat himself;
At a dead lift, a little hint will serve me.
I'l do't for him to the Life.

Trum. Will you Aurelia?

Aur. That's but a small Compliance; you'l ha' power anon to
Command me greater things. 126

Trum. We shall be marry'd very privately;
None but our selves; and that's e'en best, Aurelia.
Why do I stick here at a Fatal step
That must be made? Aurelia are you ready? 130
The Minister stays for us.

Aur. I'l but go in and take my Veil, as you command me Sir.
Walk but a few turns in the Garden; in less than half an hour
I'l come to you, ha, ha, ha! [Exit.

Trum. I go; I am Condemn'd, and must Obey; 135
The Executioner stays for me at Church. [Exit.

Act 5. Scene 1.

COLONEL JOLLY, WILL.

Joll. So, I have her at last, and honest Joseph Knock-down
married us, me-thinks, with convenient brevity; I have some hold

now upon my Estate again (though she, I confess, be a clog upon it worse than a Mort-gage). That my good neighbour Barebottle left wholly to his wife; almost all the rest of the Incomes upon his seeking, go to his daughter Tabitha, whom Cutter has got by this time, and promises me to live like an honest Gentleman hereafter; now he may do so comfortably and merrily. She marri'd me thus suddenly, like a good Houswife, purely to save charges; however though, we'l have a good Supper for her, and her eating Tribe. Will, is the Cook a doing according to my directions? 11

Will. Yes, Sir, he's very hard at his business; he's swearing and cursing in the Kitchin, that your Worship may hear him hither. He'l fright my new old Mistris out of the house.

Joll. 'Tis such an over-roasted Coxcomb—bid him be sure to season well the Venison that came in luckily to day. 16

Will. Troth, Sir, I dare not speak to him now, unless I should put on your Worship's Armour that lies hid in the Barel below. He'd like to ha' spitted me just now, like a Goose as I was, for telling him he look'd like the Ox that's roasted whole in St. James's Fair.¹ Who's there? 21

Joll. See who's at door. I shall ha' some plundred Plate, I hope, to entertain my friends with, when we come to Visit the Truncks with Iron hoops.—Who is't?

Will. Nay, Heaven knows, Sir; two Fiends, I think, to take away the Cook for swearing. They ha' thrust in after me. 26

[Act 5.] Scene 2.

Enter WORM and PUNY disguised like the Merchant and JOHN.

Worm. They'l hardly know us at first in these forein habits.

Pun. I Sir, and as the Sun has us'd us in those hot Countries.

Worm. Why, this is my old house here, John, ha, ha! Little thought I to see my old house upon Tower-hill again. Where's my brother Jolly? 5

Joll. They call me Colonel Jolly.

Worm. Ha! let me see. [*Looks on his Note.*—*A burly man of a*

¹ Apparently a feature of the fair held on St. James' day (July 24), as roast pig was of Bartholomew Fair.

moderate stature—a beard a little greyish—ha! a quick Eye, and a Nose inclining to red—

Pun. Nay, 'tis my Master's Worship, Sir! Would we were no more alter'd since our Travels. 11

Worm. It agrees very well—save you, good brother, you little thought to see me here again, though I dare say you wish'd it. Stay, let me see, how many years, John, is't since we went from hence? 15

Pun. 'Tis now seven years, Sir.

Worm. Seven? Me-thinks I was here but yesterday! How the what de-ye-call-it runs? How do you call it?

Pun. The Time, Sir.

Worm. I, I, the time, John; what was I saying? I was telling you, brother, that I had quite forgot you; was I not telling him so, John? 22

Joll. Faith, we'r both quits then. I'l swear I ha' forgot you; why you were dead five years ago.

Worm. Was I? I ha' quite forgot it; John, was I dead five years ago? My memory fails me very much of late. 26

Pun. We were worse than dead, Sir; we were taken by a barbarous Nation, and there made slaves. John, quoth he? I was poor John ¹ I'm sure. They kept us three whole years with nothing but Water and Acorns, till we look'd like Wicker bottles. 30

Worm. What, Sirrah, did your Master look like? I'l teach you to say your Master look'd like what de-ye-call-'ums.

Joll. Where did they take you prisoners?

Worm. Nay, ask John; he can tell you, I warrant you; 'twas in—tell him, John, where it was. 35

Pun. In Guiny.

Joll. By what Country-men were you taken?

Worm. Why they were called—I ha' forgot what they call 'em, 'twas an odd kind o' name, but John can tell you.

Pun. Who I, Sir? Do you think I can remember all things? 40

Worm. 'Tis i' my Book here; I remember well. [*Aside to PUNY.*] Name any Nation under the Sun.

¹ Poor John, a kind of dried and salted fish, hake or ling.

Pun. I know the name, Sir, well enough; but I onely try'd my Master's memory. 'Twas the Tartarians.

Worm. I, I, those were the men. 45

Joll. How, John? why all the world, man, lies betwixt 'em; they live up in the North.

Pun. The North?

Joll. I, the very North, John.

Pun. That's true indeed, but these were another Nation of Tartarians that liv'd in the South; they came antiently from the others. 52

Joll. How got you from 'em, John, at last?

Pun. Why faith, Sir, by a Ladie's means, who, to tell you the truth, fell in love with me; my Master has it all in his Book; 'tis a brave story. 56

Joll. In what Ship came you back?

Pun. A plague of't, that question will be our ruine.

Worm. What ship? 'twas called a thing that swims, what dee you call't? 60

Joll. The *Mermaid*?

Worm. No, no, let me see.

Joll. The *Triton*?

Worm. No, no, a thing that in the water does—it swims in the water— 65

Joll. What is't? The *Dolphin*?

Worm. No, no, I ha' quite forgot the name on't, but 'tis no matter, it swims—

Joll. What say you, John?

Pun. I, Sir, my Master knows well enough; you cann't conceive the misery we endur'd, Sir. 71

Joll. Well, Brother, I'l but ask you one question more, where did you leave your Will?

Pun. 'Life, now he's pos'd again—we shall never carry't through. 75

Worm. I'l tell you presently, Brother—let me see,

[*Reads in his Scrowl.*

Memorandums about my Will; left to my Brother the whole charge

of my Estate—hum—hum—five thousand pounds—hum—What did you ask me, brother?

Joll. In what place you left your Will? 8c

Worm. I, that was it indeed—that was the very thing you ask'd me; what a treacherous memory have I? My memory is so short—

Joll. This is no Answer to my Question yet.

Worm. 'Tis true indeed; what was your Question, brother? 85

Joll. Where you left your Will?

Worm. Good Lord, that I should forget you ask'd me that! I had forgot it, i'faith, law, that I had. You'l pardon, I hope, my Infirmary, for I alas—alas—I ha' forgot what I was going to say to you, but I was saying something, that I was. 90

Joll. Well, Gentlemen, I'm now in haste. Walk but a while into the Parlour there; I'l come to you presently.

Worm. But where's my daughter—

Pun. Lucia, Sir?

Worm. I, Lucia—put me in mind to ask for her (a plague o' your Tartarians!) 96

Pun. And o' your What-dee-ye-call-'ems!

Worm. 'Life, Tartarians! [*Exeunt WORM, PUNY.*]

Joll. If these be Rogues (as Rogues they seem to be), I will so exercise my Rogues, the tyranny of a new Beadle over a Beggar shall be nothing to't. What think'st thou of 'em, Will? 101

Will. Faith, Sir, I know not—H'as just my Masters Nose, and Upper-lip; but if you think it be not he, Sir, I'l beat 'em worse than the Tartarians did.

Joll. No, let's try 'em first—trick for trick—Thou wert wont to be a precious Knave, and a great Actor too, a very Roscius; did'st not thou play once the Clown in *Mucedorus*?¹ 107

Will. No, but I plaid the Bear, Sir.

Joll. The Bear! Why that's as good a Part. Thou'rt an Actor then, I'l warrant thee. The Bear's a well-penn'd Part,—and you

¹ *Mucedorus* (1598) a very popular comedy, frequently performed at Christmas by strolling players, even during the suppression of the theatres. The hero rescues Princess Amadine from a bear; and the clown, Mouse, was a favorite buffoon with the groundlings.

remember my Brother's humor, don't you? They have almost hit it. 112

Will. I, Sir, I knew the shortness of his memory: he would always forget to pay me my Wages, till he was put in mind of't. 115

Joll. Well said! I'll dress thee within, and all the Servants shall acknowledge thee. You conceive the Design? Be confident, and thou ca[n]st not miss; but who shall do trusty John?

Will. Oh, Ralph the Butler, Sir, 's an excellent try'd Actor: he play'd a King once; I ha' heard him speak a Play *extempore* in the Butteries. 121

Joll. O excellent Ralph! Incomparable Ralph against the World! Come away, William. I'll give you instructions within; it must be done in a moment. [*Exeunt.*]

[Act 5.] Scene 3.

Enter AURELIA, JANE.

Jane. Ha, ha, ha! This is the best Plot o' yours, dear Madam, to marry me to Mr. Truman in a Veil instead of your self. I can't chuse but laugh at the very conceit of't; 'twill make excellent sport: My Mistris will be so mad when she knows that I have got her Servant from her, ha, ha, ha! 5

Aur. Well, are you ready? Veil yourself all over, and never speak one word to him, what ever he says (he'l ha' no mind to talk much), but give him your hand, and go along with him to Church; and when you come to, *I take thee*—mumble it over that he mayn't distinguish the voice. 10

Jane. Ha, ha, ha! I can't speak for laughing—Dear hony Madam, let me but go in and put on a couple o' Patches; you can't imagine how much prettier I look with a lozenge under the Left Eye, and a Half Moon o' this cheek; and then I'le but slip on the Silver lac'd Shoes that you gave me, and be with him in a trice. 16

Aur. Don't stay; he's a fantastical fellow: if the whimsey take him he'l be gone. [*Exeunt.*]

[Act 5.] Scene 4.

LUCIA.

They say he's to pass instantly this way
 To lead his Bride to Church; ingrateful Man!
 I'll stand here to upbraid his guilty Conscience,
 And in that black attire in which he saw me
 When he spoke the last kind words to me; 5
 'Twill now befit my sorrow, and the Widow-hood of my Love.—
 He comes alone, what can that mean?

[Act 5.] Scene 5.

Enter TRUMAN JUNIOR.

Trum. Come, Madam, the Priest stays for us too long;
 I ask your pardon for my dull delay,
 And am asham'd of it.

Luc. What does he mean? I'll go with him what e'er it mean.
 [Exeunt.]

[Act 5.] Scene 6.

Enter CUTTER, TABITHA, Boy.

Cut. Come to my bed, my dear, my dear, [Sings.
 My dear come to my bed,
 For the pleasant pain, and the loss with gain
 Is the loss of a Maidenhead.
 For the pleasant, &c. 5

Tab. Is that a Psalm, brother Husband, which you sing?

Cut. No, Sister Wife, a short Ejaculation onely. [Boy *brings a Hat and Feather, Sword and Belt, broad lac'd Band, and Periwig.*
 Well said, Boy, bring in the things—

Tab. What do you mean, Brother Abednego? You will not
 turn Cavalier, I hope, again? You will not open before Sion in
 the dressings of Babylon? 11

Cut. What, do these cloathes befit Queen Tabitha's husband upon her day o' Nuptials? This Hat with a high black chimney for a crown, and a brim no broader than a Hatband? Shall I, who am to ride the Purple Dromedary, go drest like Revelation Fats the Basketmaker? Give me the Peruique, Boy! Shall Empress Tabitha's husband go as if his head were scalded, or wear the Seam of a shirt here for a Band? Shall I, who am zealous even to slaying, walk in the streets without a Sword, and not dare to thrust men from the wall, if any shall presume to take't of Empress Tabitha? Are the Fidlers coming, Boy? 21

Tab. Pish, I cannot abide these doings! Are you mad? There come no prophane Fidlers here.

Cut. Be peaceable, gentle Tabitha; they will not bring the Organs¹ with them hither. I say be peaceable, and conform to Revelations; it was the Vision bad me do this. Wil't thou resist the Vision? 27

Tab. An' these be your Visions! Little did I think I wusse²— O what shall I do? Is this your Conversion? Which of all the Prophets wore such a Map about their Ears, or such a sheet about their Necks? Oh! my Mother! What shall I do? I'm undone. 31

Cut. What shalt thou do? Why, thou shalt Dance, and Sing, and Drink, and be Merry; thou shalt go with thy Hair Curl'd, and thy Brests Open; thou shalt wear fine black Stars upon thy Face, and Bobs in thy Ears bigger than bouncing Pears! Nay, if thou do'st begin but to look rustily—I'l ha' thee Paint thy self, like the Whore o' Babylon. 37

Tab. Oh! That ever I was Born to see this day—

Cut. What, dost thou weep, Queen Dido? Thou shalt ha' Sack to drive away thy Sorrows: bring in the bottle, Boy! I'l be a Loving Husband. The Vision must be Obey'd. Sing, Tabitha! Weep o' thy Wedding day? 'Tis ominous. 42

Come to my Bed my Dear, &c.

Oh, art thou come Boy? Fill a Brimmer; nay fuller yet, yet a little fuller! Here Lady Spouse, here's to our sport at Night. 45

¹The stricter Puritans objected to organ music in churches.

²M.E. *ywis*, indeed.

Tab. Drink it your self, an you will; I'l not touch it, not I.

Cut. By this hand thou shal't pledge me, seeing the Vision said so. Drink, or I'l take a Coach, and carry thee to the Opera ¹ immediately.

Tab. Oh Lord, I can't abide it— [Drinks off.

Cut. Why, this will chear thy Heart! Sack, and a Husband? Both comfortable things; have at you agen.

Tab. I'l pledge you no more, not I.

Cut. Here take the Glass, and take it off—off every drop, or I'l swear a hundred Oaths in a breathing time. 55

Tab. Well! you'r the strangest man— [Drink.

Cut. Why, this is right! Nay, off with't; so—but the Vision said, that if we left our Drink behind us we should be Hang'd, as many other Honest men ha' been, only by a little negligence in the like case. Here's to you, Tabitha, once agen; we must fulfill the Vision to a Tittle. 61

Tab. What, must I drink agen? Well! you are such another Brother—Husband.

Cut. Bravely done, Tabitha! Now thou Obey'st the Vision, thou wil't ha' Revelations presently. 65

Tab. Oh! Lord! My head's giddy—nay, Brother, Husband, the Boy's taking away the Bottle, and there's another Glass or two in it still.

Cut. O Villainous Boy! Fill out, you Bastard, and squeeze out the last drop. 70

Tab. I'l drink to you now, my Dear; 'tis not handsome for you to begin always—[Drinks—Come to my Bed my Dear—and how wast? 'Twas a pretty Song, methoughts.

Cut. O Divine Tabitha! Here come the Fidlers, too. Strike up, ye Rogues. 75

Tab. What, must we Dance too? Is that the Fashion? I could ha' Danc'd the Curranto ² when I was a Girl; the Curranto's a curious Dance.

¹ Stage plays were still forbidden in 1658, but by 1656 Davenant had obtained leave to produce at Rutland House, Aldersgate, his so-called "entertainments" and "operas," among them *The Siege of Rhodes*.

² Coranto, a French dance with a swift movement.

Cut. We'l out-dance the Dancing disease!¹ But Tabitha, there's one poor Health left still to be drunk with Musique. 80

Tab. Let me begin't; here, Duck, here's to all that [*Drinks*—Love us.

Cut. A Health, ye Eternal Scrapers; sound a Health! Rarely done, Tabitha; what think'st thou now o' thy Mother?

Tab. A fig for my Mother; I'l be a Mother my self shortly. Come, Duckling, shall we go home? 86

Cut. Go home? The Bride-groom and his Spouse go home? No, we'l Dance home; afore us, Squeakers, that way, and be Hang'd, you Sempiternal Rakers! O brave! Queen Tabitha! Excellent Empress Tabitha! On, ye Rogues. [*Exeunt.*

[Act 5.] Scene 7.

Enter JOLLY, WORM, PUNY.

Worm. But where's my what dee ye call her, Brother?

Joll. What, Sir?

Worm [*Reads.* My Daughter—Lucia, a pretty fair Complexioned Girl, with a Black Eye, a Round Chin, a little Dimpled, and a Mole upon—I would fain see my Daughter—Brother. 5

Joll. Why, you shall, Sir, presently; she's very well. What Noise is that? How now? What's the matter?

Enter Servant.

Serv. Ho! My old Master! My old Masters come; he's Lighted just now at the door with his man John; he's asking for you; he longs to see you; my Master, my old Master! 10

Joll. This fellow's Mad.

Serv. If you wo'nt believe me, go but in and see, Sir: he's not so much alter'd, but you'l quickly know him. I knew him before he was Lighted! Pray, go in, Sir.

Joll. Why, this is strange—There was indeed some weeks since a report at the Exchange that he was Alive still, which was brought

¹ A nervous affection called the *tarantismus*, supposed to be caused by the bite of the tarantula, and producing an uncontrollable desire for dancing.

by a ship that came from Barbary; but that he should be Split in two after his Death, and Live agen in both, is wonderfull to me. I'll go see what's the matter. [*Exeunt* JOLLY, Servant.

Pun. I begin to shake like a Plum-tree Leaf. 20

Worm. 'Tis a meer Plot o' the Devils to have us beaten, if he send him in just at this Nick.

[Act 5.] Scene 8.

Enter RALPH (*as* JOHN) *and two or three* Servants.

1. *Serv.* Ah, Rogue, art thou come at last?

2. *Serv.* Why, you'l not look upon your Old friends? Give me your Golls,¹ John!

Ral. Thank ye all heartily for your Love: thank you with all my Heart. My old Bed-fellow, Robin, and how does little Ginny do? 6

3. *Serv.* A murren take you; you'l ne're leave your Waggerly.

Pun. A murren take ye all! I shall be paid the Portion here with a witness.

Ral. And how does Ralph? Good honest Ralph? There is not an honest Fellow in Christendome, though I say't myself that should not say't. 12

2. *Serv.* Ha, ha, ha! Why Ralph, the Rogue's well still. Come, let's go to him into the Buttery; he'l be Over-joy'd to see thee and give us a Cup o' the best Stingo there. 15

Ral. Well said. Steel to the back still, Robin; that was your word, you know. My Master's coming in! Go, go; I'll follow you.

1. *Serv.* Make haste, good John!

Ral. Here's a Company of as honest Fellow-servants—I'm glad, I'm come among 'em agen. 20

Worm. And would I were got out from 'em, as honest as they are! That Robin has a thrashing hand.

Pun. John with a Pox to him! Would I were hid like a Maggot in a Pescod!

¹ hands.

[Act 5.] Scene 9.

*Enter JOLLY, WILLIAM.**Joll.* Me-thinks you'r not return'd, but born to us anew.*Will.* Thank you good Brother; truly, we ha' past through many dangers. My man John shall tell you all; I'm Old and Crazie.*Enter Servant.**4. Serv.* Sir, the Widdow (my Mistriss, I should say) is coming in here with Mr. Knock-down, and four or five more. 5*Joll.* O'ds my Life! This farce is neither of Doctrine nor Use to them! Keep 'em here, John, till I come back. [*Exit JOLLY.*]*Worm.* I'm glad the Colonel's gone! Now will I sneak away as if I had stoln a Silver spoon.*Will.* Who are those, John? By your leave, Sir, would you speak with any body here? 11*Worm.* The Colonel, Sir, but I'l take some other time to wait upon him; my occasions call me now.*Will.* Pray stay, Sir; who did you say you would ha' spoken with? 15*Worm.* The Colonel, Sir; but another time will serve; he has business now.*Will.* Whom would he speak with, John? I forget still.*Ral.* The Colonel, Sir.*Will.* Colonel! What Colonel? 20*Worm.* Your brother, I suppose he is, Sir, but another time—*Will.* 'Tis true indeed; I had forgot, Ifaith, my Brother was a Colonel. I cry you mercy, Sir; he'l be here presently. Ye seem to be Foreiners by your habits, Gentlemen.*Worm.* No Sir, we are English-men. 25*Will.* English-men? Law you there now! Would you ha' spoke with me, Sir?*Worm.* No Sir, your Brother; but my business requires no haste, and therefore—*Will.* You'r not in haste you say; pray Sir, sit down then. May I crave your name, Sir? 31

Worm. My name's not worth the knowing, Sir—

Will. This Gentleman?

Worm. 'Tis my man, Sir; his name's John.

Pun. I'll be John no more, not I; I'll be Jackanapes first. No, my name's Timothy, Sir. 36

Will. Mr. John Timothy. Very well, Sir; ye seem to be Travel-
lers.

Worm. We are just now as you see, arriv'd out of Afrique, Sir, and therefore have some business that requires— 40

Will. Of Afrique? Law ye there now; what Country, pray?

Worm. Prester-John's Country.¹ Fare you well, Sir, for the present; I must be excus'd.

Will. Marry, God forbid! What, come from Prester-John, and we not Drink a Cup o' Sack together? 45

*Worm.*² What shall I do? Friend, shall I trouble you to shew me a private place? I'll wait upon you presently agen, Sir.

Will. You'l stay here, Master?—

Pun. I'll only make a little Maids water Sir, and come back to you immediately. 50

Ral. The door's lock'd, Sir; the Colonel ha's lock'd us in here— Why do you shake, Sir?

Pun. Nothing—only I have extreme list to make water. Here's the Colonel; I'l sneak behind the Hangings.

[Act 5.] Scene 10.

Enter JOLLY, WIDDOW.

Joll. We'l leave those Gentlemen within a while upon the point of Reprobation; but, Sweet heart, I ha' two Brothers here, newly arriv'd, which you must be acquainted with.

Wid. Marry, Heaven fore-shield! Not the Merchant, I hope?

Joll. No, brethren in Love, only—How dee you, Brother? 5

Worm. I your Brother? What de 'e mean?

Joll. Why, are not you my brother Jolly, that was taken Prisoner by the Southern Tartars?

¹ See p. 57, n. 2.

² Waller gives this speech to Puny.

Worm. I Brother? I by Tartars?

Joll. What an impudent Slave is this? Sirra, Monster, did'st thou not come with thy man John? 11

Worm. I my man John? Here's no such person here; you see you'r mistaken.

Joll. Sirra, I'll strike thee Dead.

Worm. Hold, hold, Sir; I do remember now I was the Merchant Jolly, but when you ask'd me I had quite forgot it. Alas, I'm very Crasie. 17

Joll. That's not amiss; but since thou art not he, I must know who thou art.

Worm. Why, do'nt you know me? I'm Captain Worm, and Puny was my man John. 21

Joll. Where's that fool, Puny? Is he slip't away?

Pun. Yes, and no fool for't neither, for ought I know yet.

Worm. Why, we hit upon this frolique, Colonel, only for a kind o' Mask (de' ye conceive me, Colonel?) to celebrate your Nuptials. Mr. Puny had a mind to reconcile himself with you in a merry way o' Drollery, and so had I too, though I hope you were not in earnest with me. 28

Joll. Oh! Is that all? Well said, Will, bravely done Will, Ifaith. I told thee, Will, what 'twas to have Acted a Bear; and Ralph was an excellent John too. 31

Worm. How's this? Then I'm an Ass agen; this damn'd Punies fearfulness spoil'd all.

Pun. This cursed Coward Worm! I thought they were not the right ones. 35

Joll. Here's something for you to drink. Go look to Supper; this is your Cue of Exit. [Ex. WILL and RALPH.]

Wid. What need you, Love, ha' given 'em any thing? In truth, Love, you'r too lavish.

Worm. 'Twas wittily put off o' me however. 40

[Act 5.] Scene 11.

Enter CUTTER, TABITHA, with Fidlers.

Joll. Here are more Maskers too, I think. This Masking is a Heavenly entertainment for the Widow, who ne'er saw any Shew yet but the Puppet-play o' Ninive.¹

Cut. Stay without, Scrapers.

Tab. Oh Lord, I'm as weary with Dancing as passes— Husband, husband, yonders my Mother! O mother, what do you think I ha' been doing to day? 7

Wid. Why what, Child? No hurt, I hope.

Tab. Nay, nothing; I have onely been married a little, and my husband Abednego and I have so danc'd it since! 10

Cut. Brave Tabitha still! Never be angry, Mother; you know where Marriages are made. Your Daughters and your own were made in the same place, I warrant you, they'r so like.

Wid. Well, his will be done—there's—no resisting Providence—but how, son Abednego, come you into that roaring habit of Perdition? 16

Cut. Mother, I was commanded by the Vision. There is some great end for it of Edification, which you shall know by the sequel.

[Act 5.] Scene 12.

Enter TRUMAN SENIOR, TRUMAN JUNIOR, LUCIA veil'd.

Trum. Sen. Come, Dick, bring in your wife to your t'other father, and ask him² blessing handsomely. Welcome, dear daughter; off with your Veil. [*LUC. unveils*—Heaven bless ye both.

Joll. Ha! What's this? More masking? Why how now, Mr. Truman? You ha' not married my Niece, I hope, instead o' my daughter? 6

¹ Street motions, or puppet-plays, frequently represented Scripture histories such as the Destruction of Nineveh, and so might be witnessed by a Puritan who would have thought attendance at a public playhouse sinful.

² So Q and T.; Gr. "his"; Waller, "hi[s]."

Trum. Jun. I onely did, Sir, as I was appointed,
And am amaz'd as much as you.

Trum. Sen. Villain! Rebel! Traitor! Out o' my sight, you
son of a — 10

Joll. Nay, hold him! Patience, good Mr. Truman! Let's
understand the matter a little—

Trum. Sen. I wo'not understand, no, that I wo'not; I wo'not
understand a word, whilst he and his Whore are in my sight.

Joll. Nay, good sir—Why, what, Niece? Two husbands in
one afternoon? That's too much o' conscience. 16

Luc. Two, Sir? I know of none but this,
And how I came by him too, that I know not.

Joll. This is Ridle me ridle me—Where's my Daughter? Ho!
Aurelia! 20

[Act 5.] Scene 13.

Enter AURELIA.

Aur. Here, Sir, I was just coming in.

Joll. Ha' not you married young Mr. Truman?

Aur. No, Sir.

Joll. Why, who then has he marri'd?

Aur. Nay that, Sir, he may answer for himself, if he be of age
to marry. 6

Joll. But did not you promise me you'd marry him this after-
noon, and go to Church with him presently to do't?

Aur. But, Sir, my Husband forbad the Banes.

Joll. They're all mad; your Husband? 10

Aur. I Sir, the truth o' the matter, Sir, is this (for it must out,
I see) 'twas I that was married this afternoon in the Matted
Chamber to Mr. Puny, instead o' my Cousin Lucia.

Joll. Stranger and stranger! What, and he not know't?

Aur. No, nor the Parson, Sir, himself. 15

Joll. Hey day!

Aur. 'Twas done in the dark, Sir, and I veil'd like my Cousin:
'twas a very clandestine marriage, I confess, but there are suffi-

cient proofs of it; and for one, here's half the Piece of Gold he broke with me, which he'll know when he sees. 20

Pun. O rare! By Hymen, I'm glad o' the change! 'Tis a pretty Sorceress by my troath! Wit to Wit, quoth the Devil to the Lawyer. I'l out amongst 'em presently; 't has sav'd me a beating too, which perhaps is all her Portion.

Joll. You turn my Head; you dizzie me! But wouldst thou marrie him without either knowing my mind, or so much as his? 27

Aur. His, Sir? He gave me five hundred pieces in Gold to make the Match. Look, they are here still, Sir.

Joll. Thou hast lost thy senses, Wench, and wilt make me do so too. 31

Aur. Briefly the truth is this, Sir. He gave me these five hundred Pieces to marry him by a Trick to my Cousin Lucia, and by another Trick I took the money and married him my self. The manner, Sir, you shall know anon at leisure; onely your pardon, Sir, for the omission of my duty to you, I beg upon my knees. 37

Joll. Nay, Wench, there's no hurt done: fifteen hundred pounds a year is no ill match for the daughter of a Sequestred Cavalier—

Aur. I thought so, Sir. 40

Joll. If we could but cure him of some sottish affectations,—but that must be thy task.

Aur. My life on't, Sir.

Pun. I'l out! Uncle Father, your Blessing—My little Matchivil, I knew well enough 'twas you. What, did you think I knew not Cross from Pile? ¹ 46

Aur. Did you i'faith?

Pun. I, by this kiss of Amber-grees, or I'm a Cabbage!

Aur. Why then you out-witted me, and I'm content.

Pun. A pox upon you, Merchant Jolly, are you there? 50

Joll. But stay, how come you, Niece, to be marri'd to Mr. Truman?

Luc. I know not, Sir, as I was walking in the Garden—

¹ Heads from tails. From the old game of toss-penny. *Cross*, the obverse of the coin; *pile*, the reverse.

Trum. Jun. I thought 't had been—but blest be the mistake,
 What ever prove the Consequence to all 55
 The less important fortunes of my life.

Joll. Nay, there's no hurt done here neither—

Trum. Sen. No hurt, Colonel? I'll see him hang'd at my door
 before he shall have a beggarly —.

Joll. Hark you, Mr. Truman, one word aside [*Talk aside—*
 (for it is not necessary yet my wife should know so much.) 61

Aur. This foolish Jane (as I perceive by the story) has lost a
 Husband by staying for a Black patch.

Joll. Though I in rigour by my brothers Will might claim the
 forfeiture of her Estate, yet I assure you she shall have it all to
 the utmost farthing; in a day like this, when Heaven bestows on
 me and on my daughter so unexpected and so fair a fortune, it
 were an ill return to rob an Orphan committed to my Charge. 68

Aur. My father's in the right.

And as he clears her Fortune, so will I 70
 Her Honor. Hark you, Sir.

Trum. Sen. Why you speak, Sir, like a Vertuous Noble Gentle-
 man, and do just as I should do my self in the same case; it is—

Aur. 'Twas I, upon my credit, in a Veil; [*To TRUM. JUN.—*
 I'll tell, if you please, all that you said, when you had read the
 Letter. But d'you hear, Mr. Truman, do not you believe now
 that I had a design to lie with you (if you had consented to my
 coming at mid-night) for upon my faith I had not, but did it
 purely to try upon what terms your two Romantique Loves
 stood. 80

Cut. Ha, ha, ha! But your Farce was not right, me-thinks, at
 the end.

Pun. Why how, pray?

Cut. Why there should ha' been a Beating, a lusty Cudgeling
 to make it come off smartly with a twang at the tail. 85

Worm. Say you so? H'as got a set of damnable brawny Serving-
 men.

Cut. At least John Pudding here should ha' been basted.

Worm. A curse upon him, he sav'd himself like a Rat behind
 the Hangings. 90

Trum. Jun. O Lucia, how shall I beg thy pardon
For my unjust suspicions of thy Virtue?
Can you forgive a very Repentant sinner?
Will a whole life of Penitence absolve me?

Trum. Sen. 'Tis enough, good noble Colonel; I'm satisf'd.
Come, Dick, I see 'twas Heaven's will, and she's a very worthy
virtuous Gentlewoman. I'm old and testy, but 'tis quickly over;
my blessing upon you both. 98

Cut. Why so, all's well of all sides then; let me see, here's a
brave Coupling day; onely poor Worm must lead a Monkish life
of't. 101

Aur. I'l have a Wife for him too, if you will,—fine Mrs. Jane
within. [*Aside*—I'le undertake for her; I ha' set her a gog to day
for a husband; the first comer has her sure.

Worm. I, but what Portion has she, Mrs. Puny? For we Cap-
tains o' the King's side ha' no need o' Wives with nothing. 106

Aur. Why Lozenges, and Half-moons, and a pair of Silver-
lac'd Shoes; but that Tropes lost to you. Well, we'l see among us
what may be done for her.

Joll. Come, let's go in to Supper. There never was such a day of
Intrigues as this in one Family. If my true Brother had come in at
last too after his being five years dead, 'twould ha' been a very
Play. [*Exeunt.*

FINIS

EPILOGUE

Spoken by

CUTTER.

[Without his Peruique.

*Me-thinks a Vision bids me silence break,
And some words to this Congregation speak;
So great and gay a one I ne'er did meet
At the Fifth-Monarch's Court in Coleman-Street.
But yet I wonder much not to espy a
Brother in all this Court call'd Zephaniah. 5
Bless me! where are we? What may this place be?
For I begin by Vision now to see
That this is a meer Theater; well then,
If't be e'en so, I'l Cutter be again. 10*

[Puts on his Peruique.

*Not Cutter the pretended Cavaleer,
For to confess ingenuously here
To you who always of that Party were,
I never was of any; up and down
I rowld, a very Rakehell of this Town. 15
But now my Follies and my Faults are ended,
My Fortune and my Mind are both amended,
And if we may believe one who has fail'd before,
Our Author says He'l mend, that is, He'l write no more.*

EPILOGUE

At Court.

*The Madness of your People, and the Rage,
You've seen too long upon the Publique Stage;
'Tis time at last (great Sir) 'tis time to see
Their Tragique Follies brought to Comedy.*
If any blame the Lowness of our Scene, 5
*We humbly think some Persons there have been
On the World's Theatre not long ago,
Much more too High, than here they are too Low.
And well we know that Comedy of old,
Did her Plebeian rank with so much Honour hold,* 10
*That it appear'd not then too Base or Light,
For the Great Scipio's Conquering hand to Write.
How e're, if such mean Persons seem too rude,
When into Royal presence they intrude,
Yet we shall hope a pardon to receive* 15
*From you, a Prince so practis'd to forgive;
A Prince, who with th'applause of Earth and Heaven,
The rudeness of the Vulgar has Forgiven.*

FINIS

John Dryden

THE SPANISH FRYAR

*Edited with Critical Essay and
Notes by the late Sir Adolphus
William Ward, Litt.D., LL.D.,
F.B.A., Master of Peterhouse,
Cambridge*

CRITICAL ESSAY

Life.—John Dryden was born presumably on August 9th, 1631, at Aldwinkle All Saints in Northamptonshire, and educated at Westminster School and Trinity College, Cambridge. In early manhood he gradually abandoned the Puritan principles of both his parents. In 1663 he married Lady Elizabeth Howard, eldest daughter of the Earl of Berkshire and sister of Sir Robert Howard, the dramatist. Obligated to turn his literary gifts to the best material account, he began in 1663 a connection with the stage which lasted till near the end of his life; altogether he was sole or joint author of 28 plays. He may be said to have reached the height of his dramatic activity with *The Conquest of Granada* in 1670/1; but it was by no means ended by the appearance of *The Rehearsal* in the following year. By 1668 he had acquired a share in the profits of the King's House. In 1670 he was appointed poet laureate and historiographer-royal. It was not, however, till 1681—two years after the shameful "Rose-Alley ambushade" had been instigated against him by Rochester—that Dryden by the publication of *Absalom and Achitophel*, Part I, declared himself a political satirist in the service of the Court. Much about the same time *The Spanish Friar* first crossed the stage; but henceforth Dryden wrote few plays, and though the great epic of his dreams was never produced, the satiric and didactic masterpieces of the next seven years became the chief foundations of his fame.

Within the same cycle of years took place Dryden's conversion to the Church of Rome, of which *The Hind and the Panther* (1687) remains the enduring manifesto. That his interests in this matter pointed the same way as his sympathies and antipathies—for his bent was in favour of authority, and his spirit kicked against deferring to the choice of the greatest number—by no means proves his conduct to have been insincere. But at bottom his nature lacked the reverence which is the root of all true religion, and to him conversion from one form of faith to another was, as "Cousin Swift" might have put it, in the main a question of coats. Yet it was at the most the prospect of his conversion which obtained for him the *quid pro quo* of an income already his due; and he loyally adhered to the Church of Rome when soon afterwards adversity again befell her, though he found in her a rather stern mother.

The Revolution of 1688 deprived Dryden of both place and pension,

and he once more chiefly depended for his livelihood upon his pen. Except for his few later plays, his writings were now chiefly in prose. In prose-composition he had already shown himself a master by the critical essays prefacing several of his plays. Of these the *Essay of Dramatic Poesy* (1668) is the best known and perhaps the most characteristic; taken together, they possess a unique value for the history of English literary criticism in general, and for that of dramatic criticism in particular. Although it cannot be denied that "the fault of Dryden's prefaces is that they make one disappointed"¹ with the plays they introduce, these plays may at least claim to have given rise to the earliest masterpieces of modern English prose. Before his literary career closed, Dryden in his *Fables* (March, 1700), once more returned to verse; but the prose epistle prefixed to these adaptations of Chaucer and Boccaccio is itself one of his most delightful productions. He died on May 1st, 1700, and was buried with some pomp in Westminster Abbey.

Dryden's Place in English Comedy.—In whatever proportions Dryden, when he became a writer for the stage, had gain and glory—or at least profitable applause—in view, he never pretended to have been naturally drawn to dramatic composition. Neither the satisfaction with which he regarded some of his plays, nor the just consciousness of his position in the English world of letters and his scant respect for many of his fellow playwrights, prevented him from roundly declaring that his genius never inclined him for the stage. As for comedy in particular, he once confessed himself lacking in the gaiety of humour required therein, though he had then come to hold comedy in high regard; at a rather earlier date he speaks disdainfully of a reputation gained from it, and mis-states it to be chiefly intended for "divertisement and delight." On the present occasion it would be inappropriate to review the censure—unusually severe as applied to an author of his rank—which has descended upon his plays, except insofar as it bears on those among them which can fairly be classed as comedies. Since in this list Dryden's tragicomedies (among them *The Spanish Friar*) must be included, and since into these again the element of the heroic drama largely enters, the theory and practice of this *genre*, which owed its life on the English stage to Dryden, might seem to fall legitimately within my purview. I shall, however, merely glance at this part of the subject.

Though Dryden is said to have formed his first dramatic project in the very year of the Restoration, his earliest acted play, the comedy of *The Wild Gallant*, bears the date of 1663. Up to that time English comedy had made no advance on the models which had continued in favour till

¹ *Essays of John Dryden*, ed. W. P. Ker (Oxford, 1900), p. xx.

that suppression of the theatres which in the opinion of honest Dennis had prevented a gradual reformation of our drama, and thus led to the perversions of the Restoration period. The purposes and methods of Jonson still ruled supreme, although it was but a thinner vein of inventive power, of knowledge of men and books, and of Catholic humour, which had passed from him to any of his "sons." St.-Évremond, who came over to England in 1661, afterwards described English comedy as he found it at the time of his first arrival. He says that, unlike the French comic dramatists, who find it difficult to enter into their subject, the English never seem to know how to find their way out of it; and he politely attributes this result to the fact that as a rule Englishmen think too much and Frenchmen too little, though the latter are apt to be gifted by way of compensation with more facility of speech. Having virtually abandoned any pretence of adhering to unity of action, in order that the "hero" may amuse by being placed in a variety of situations, English comedy indulges in a further license by letting him stand aside, so as to exhibit a number of personages amidst everyday surroundings. In short, the Jonsonian comedy of character had become almost ready to turn itself into a comedy of manners. At the same time, the influence of Spanish plays and—more particularly—prose fiction, had, in the choice and construction of plots, and in the devising and arranging of incidents and situations, remained very active before and after the closing of the theatres. On the other hand, there is hardly an indication that at the time of Dryden's earliest appearance as a dramatist English comedy had as yet directed its attention to French examples; nor was it till 1664 that an acted English play, Etherege's *Comical Revenge*, first revealed the influence of Molière, whose name Dryden later saluted as "the greatest in modern comedy," and to whom he became far more largely indebted than it has been usual to suppose. But Etherege had for some years before the production of his play, lived much in France. Of those choice spirits with whom early in the reign St.-Évremond was wont to hold colloquy concerning the condition of the English as compared with that of the French drama, Louis d'Aubigny was more than half a Frenchman, and Buckingham was, as we know, everything in turn. King Charles II and his courtiers, though their contact with French plays had widened the range of their preferences and in some respects refined their taste, were at first quite willing to put up at home with the *réchauffés* of the laureate D'Avenant and of "the King's fool," Tom Killigrew. Moreover, French comedy itself had not yet become quite emancipated from a fondness for "fool and farce," due in part to the long-enduring hospitality of France to the Italian *commedia dell' arte*; hence even in 1668 Dryden was fain to ascribe the farcical

tendency of English comedy to its imitation of French examples, which seem to cover their defects with ridiculous figures and grimaces.

Thus Dryden's first comedy, *The Wild Gallant*, is nothing but a comedy of manners of the Jonsonian type (indeed, its most humorous scene is conveyed direct from the Master), and, moreover, to borrow a phrase from the Epilogue to the play on its revival, a "regalio" made out of very "common meat." Whatever the source of the play, which if actually Spanish was probably adapted into English through a French channel, it is only a licentious farce long drawn out, of the sort which has held up a mirror to its patrons from the days of Aphra Behn to those of the *Palais Royal*. In the first Prologue to *The Wild Gallant* Dryden candidly confessed that he could have "wished it better"; and his second acted play, the tragicomedy of *The Rival Ladies* (1664) certainly marks an advance upon its predecessor. The plot—unmistakeably of Spanish origin—is, indeed, more intricate than interesting; and while in the contest of the two ladies in doublet and hose for Gonsalvo's love the comic element predominates and the instinct of refinement is wanting, Gonsalvo himself is in every respect a character of the "heroic" type. Thus in this (notwithstanding its defects) brilliant *tour de force*, Dryden's taste was already approaching his later ideals; and it was natural that he should have in a tentative fashion introduced into this play (dedicated to Lord Orrery, with whose "heroic" tragedies he was doubtless acquainted in MS.), the use of rime, so strongly commending itself to his own artistic faculty. In the dedication, the earliest of his critical manifestos, Dryden after a rather reckless fashion defended this use; in the play itself, however, it is all but confined to a scene which furnishes the first example of the kind of amorous dialogue ridiculed by Butler in his *Repartees between Cat and Puss*.

Before the production of Dryden's next comedy, the success of *The Indian Queen* (1664), in which he had assisted his brother-in-law Sir Robert Howard, had encouraged him to bring out, composed like it in heroic couplets, *The Indian Emperor* (1665)—which tragedy permanently established his reputation as a playwright. He had now discovered a *genre* of dramatic composition which suited him and with which so long as he chose he would be able to delight his public. But before the consciousness of this led him to put forth the first elaborate pronouncement of his opinions on the acting drama at large, he courted popularity in the theatre by more than one endeavour to amuse the town. The tragicomedy of *Secret Love, or The Maiden Queen* (1667) is, so far as its main action is concerned, a heroic play, founded on two of the most celebrated of the *romans de longue haleine*, and doing honour to its theme by the use in

Candiope's love-scenes of the heroic couplet, while the Maiden Queen herself remains mistress of the blank verse, and the sprightly Florimel and her congenial admirer Celadon carry on their delightful discourse in prose. It was no doubt this comic admixture to which *Secret Love* owed the honour of being called "his play" by King Charles II, and which caused the author himself to value it "above the rest of his follies of this kind." It is true that in the very witty prologue he claims credit for both the ingredients of the play, and declares that it presents

The unities of action, place and time,
The scenes unbroken,¹ and a mingled chime
Of Jonson's humour, and Corneille's rhyme.

Still, though the serious portion of the action has been in my opinion unjustly censured both before and since Dryden's self-defence, the chief merit of the piece is to be sought in its comic by-plot—the most successful example (though a falling-off is noticeable in the last two acts) of the Restoration variety of the electrical love-making of Benedick and Beatrice. The character of Florimel must have fitted "Nelly" like a glove, and in truth rises to the height of what Dryden was capable of achieving in female dramatic portraiture.

In the same year 1667 was produced the comedy of *Sir Martin Mar-All, or The Feigned Innocence*, an adaptation by Dryden of the Duke of Newcastle's version (now lost) of Molière's *L'Étourdi*, with the addition of at least one scene taken over from Quinault's *L'Amant Indiscret ou Le Maître Étourdi*. The English piece directly follows Molière's only in the last three acts, but its general indebtedness is such as to deprive it of any claim to originality.² The great success of this comedy is due to the theatrical effectiveness of the humours or foibles of the central character, which though of French invention are worked out with English thoroughness. The inferiority of the English execution of the whole play has rightly been held ascribable in part to the strong stage-effects and diction required by the English public; few of Dryden's comedies are livelier than this, and few more unrefined. It must always possess interest as the first instance of a close connexion between his labours for the English stage and standard French comedy; for even in *Secret Love* there was little indication of any influence of Molière, unless perhaps in an occasional phrase or two. To the same year 1667 belongs another effort of literary piety towards an English contemporary,—but not to-

¹ *La liaison des scènes.*

² The unpleasing *dénouement* differs from its original, but not to its own advantage.

wards the genius for whom they alike professed veneration—Dryden's co-operation with D'Avenant in their miserable adaptation of *The Tempest*.

Thus Dryden was as a dramatist still oscillating between different styles,—or rather he was still (more freely than he afterwards thought fit) taking from various styles and schools what best suited his own creative or adaptative moods, when in 1668 he published his *Essay of Dramatic Poesy*, written about 1665. Apart from its special purpose, the general drift of this most readable as well as reasonable of modern dialogues may be said to have been to vindicate to the English stage the continued exercise of that practical freedom which had hitherto chiefly distinguished it from the French. Though his arguments and their unpedantic style alike owed much to Corneille, it was the great masters of the English drama, true to the essential spirit of their art rather than obedient to formulated rules, whom he thought their successors called upon to follow. His plea for the employment of rime, though of very great importance to himself individually as a writer, is merely incidental to the main theme of the discussion. Dryden had resolved to push his successful use of this brilliant vehicle; but for the present he had no objection to consulting his interests by pursuing the accustomed paths. This year, 1668, his prose comedy of *An Evening's Love, or The Mock Astrologer* was first performed. In an elaborate preface to the first edition (1671) Dryden defended himself against a charge which had already been freely brought against him, and which Langbaine afterwards stereotyped in the censure that the borrowing of plots had been practised by Dryden "more than by any poet that he knew." Of course the poet's appeal to the wish expressed by King Charles that the accusers would always steal him plays like his laureate's is a mere evasion; but his substantially veracious counter-plea, that he never failed to change what he borrowed, is good and sufficient. The epilogue makes the same defence of this particular comedy, and shows that borrowing plays from the French was still not very common. *An Evening's Love* is founded on a French version (by the younger Corneille) of a Spanish original, and from the third act onwards shows considerable indebtedness to Molière's *Le Dépit Amoureux*, and incidentally to one or two others of his comedies. It is therefore characteristic of Dryden's audacity, that in the preface to this play he should have made a violent attack upon French influence as inclining English dramatists to the production of low comedy or farce. While confessing that his protest against caricature is by no means supported by the example of his present play, he excuses himself as being ungifted with Jonsonian humour, and inclined towards a species of comedy in which this kind of humour is blended with the wit of Fletcher or Shakspeare;—towards a species that is not "all adventure"

as with Fletcher, nor "all cheat" as in *Volpone* and *The Alchemist*. Probably, Dryden underestimated his own gift of humour, without which his superlative power of drawing character¹ is inconceivable; but, notwithstanding the great debt which *An Evening's Love* owes to French comedy, and the large admixture in its very diction of French words in fashionable use, it is a signal example of a comedy of the Spanish type. Even of the *gracioso*—a comic figure holding an intermediate position between *dramatis persona* and spectator—some though not all of the features are recognisable in the valet Maskall. Dryden claims as his own invention the two most amusing characters in the play, Jacinta and Wildblood, a (to my mind rather inferior) *replica* of Florimel and Celadon; and the claim is good, though the greater part of the scene,—the best in the play—between these fantastic lovers is taken from Molière.

Dryden for a few years after the production of this comedy devoted himself to the composition of heroic plays; and his critical or apologetic pen—if defiant self-consciousness like that of the *Defence of the Epilogue* (1672) is to be technically called apology—championed a species of dramatic literature which owed its brief heyday to himself alone. Thus he cannot be said to have been wronged in being ultimately chosen as their chief victim by the satirists who fastened on the new heroic variety of the English drama as the main object of their ridicule. Yet *The Rehearsal*, which after a long incubation was at last produced in 1671, illustrated its diverse lines of attack from one or two of Dryden's comedies² as well as from his heroic plays proper, besides all sorts of references to other writers, from the sententious Quarles down to the frank Astræa. Dryden, with much dignity, upheld his main position, and vindicated the heroic drama as the true-born descendant of that heroic epos which was his own literary ideal. But, with not less of common-sense, he as an actual writer for the stage listened to the adjunction of the Epilogue to *The Rehearsal*, that this might "prove a year of prose and sense"; and in 1672 he put on the stage two comedies, of which one was written in a mixture of prose, blank verse and rime, and the other in prose and blank verse only. The former was extremely successful; while the latter was, not less deservedly, damned. *Marriage à la Mode* calls itself a tragicomedy; and the nature of its serious plot as well as the admixture of rime, perhaps support Scott's conjecture that it had been originally designed as a heroic play, but that the popular success of *The Rehearsal* induced Dryden to remodel the embryo,³ and

¹ In this connection, however, cf. G. R. Noyes, *Selected Dramas of John Dryden*, p. xxx.—*Gen. Eds.*

² *The Wild Gallant* and *Secret Love*. The apparent allusion to a passage in *The Asignation* must have been inserted later.

³ See, however, Noyes, *op. cit.*, p. xxxiv.—*Gen. Eds.*

to put his strength into what can no longer be called the *under-plot*. The comic action—again, perhaps, with an eye to the censure of *The Rehearsal*, which had derided the defectiveness of Mr. Bayes' "intrigos"—is extremely bright and brisk, and well worked into the serious, without the crude contrasts so common in tragicomedy. Yet the author's gaiety has not always quite a true ring. At least, Doralice and Palamede with all their wit and fun, fall short of the *Sprudel* of Florimel and Celadon. Scott, moreover, is surely right in regarding as ecstatic the praise bestowed by Colley Cibber upon Melantha as the best of female fops. Still, in Melantha Dryden came nearest to perfecting that *soufflé* of wit and love, with a *fond* of humour furnished by one strongly-drawn character, which was his avowed ideal in English comedy. For suggestions in this connexion he was in some measure indebted to *Les Précieuses Ridicules*, and to other comedies in which Molière satirises the artificiality or the essential falsehood of the type; but the English play cannot be said to copy or reproduce any personage or passage in the great foreign dramatiser or to imitate any other known prototype in French literature. Least of all has his conception any of the bitterness of St.-Évremond's "fausses délicates," the Jansenists of love.

According to Dryden's own statement, *The Assignation, or Love in a Nunnery* (1672) was driven off the stage "against the opinion of the best judges"; but the popular verdict can hardly have been unconnected with the scandalous nature of the theme of the play. The days of the Popish Plot were still far off; the Duke of York had only just professed himself a member of the Church of Rome; but the censure incurred by this early insult to her and her friends remains surprising. Though the attack is in different ways both irreverent and malevolent, one would hardly have thought that the public at large would have been more squeamish than Sir Charles Sedley, to whom the play is dedicated. In the last act there is a sort of attempt to raise the situation to a higher moral level, and the blank verse of this passage is fine; but the whole piece is in the vein of *Marriage à la Mode*, with the usual couple of humorous lovers, and a foolish serving-man who is a kind of *Étourdi* in his own station of life:—indeed, Molière's comedy must, either directly or indirectly, have been present to Dryden when writing this undeniably bright and enlivening play.

The "opera" of *The State of Innocence* (printed 1677?) was not intended for the stage,¹ and therefore calls for no notice here. After Dryden had in the dedication to *Aureng-Zebe* (1676) declared himself weary of "low comedy," and in the famous prologue to that tragedy proclaimed his

¹ See, however, Thaler, *Shakspeare's Silences*, pp. 222-23.—*Gen. Eds.*

farewell to rime and his admiration of Shakspeare, he essayed in 1677, with remarkable success, an independent tragic treatment of a Shakspearean theme. But in the same year in which he published *All for Love* (1678), he at last returned to the comic drama, sinking to a low depth in the comedy of *Limberham, or the Kind Keeper*, which was withdrawn from the stage after three performances. In the Dedication Dryden compares the stoppage of his play to the prohibition of *Tartuffe*, which piece, together with *Les Fâcheux*, unmistakably influenced *Limberham*. He confesses that the realistic depiction of vice in the play gave offence; but, as Johnson points out, even Langbaine imputes its condemnation to the resentment of the representations of the particular social evil attacked in it. Notwithstanding traditions to the contrary, Dryden seems to be essentially veracious in repudiating any intention of personal satire; and he deserves credit for courageously turning the shafts of ridicule against a shameful form of vice which no weapon could have done more to repress. But unlike some curiously analogous efforts of the French drama in the age of the Second Empire, Dryden's comedy is a mere photograph of manners, devoid of all higher purpose or sentiment beneath the flippant truthfulness of the theatrical moralist. This piece, wholly pedestrian in form, manner and spirit, is a true type of Restoration comedy proper: it holds the mirror up to the times, in compliance with their own demand; and if any excuse be held to lie in the fact that demand is usually followed by supply, the playwright may be allowed the benefit of it.

Dryden's adaptation of *Troilus and Cressida* (publ. 1679), brought forth another critical preface elaborating upon the distinctive excellences of the masterpieces of the English drama. For our present purpose his somewhat paradoxical observations on Shakspeare and Fletcher are of importance, as showing that he had come to recognise more and more clearly the value of characterisation as rising above a mere depiction of manners or the effective arrangement of incident and situation. And in the "tragic-comedy" of *The Spanish Friar* (1680) he beyond dispute achieved his own greatest success in this direction,—curiously enough in the sphere of "low" comedy, which he had so ostentatiously condemned.

With this play, to be discussed at greater length below, Dryden bade a long, although not a final, farewell to the comic stage. When, long after the epoch had passed by of his participation in the political conflicts of his times and in the great religious controversy which so largely underlay them, he in his later days once more returned to dramatic composition, the spirit of literary enterprise, and the glorious courage of his genius, moved him to match himself with Plautus and Molière in a comedy which owed much to both, but much also to his own splendid audacity.

Amphitryon (1690) was not, like its French model, designed to pander to the prerogative of a king's lust; but it would not be easy to add any other plea in its favour from an ethical point of view. There can be no doubt as to the magnificent *élan* of style in the early part of this comedy (or extravaganza?); nor as to the felicity of Dryden's additions both to the *dramatis personæ* and to the scheme of action of his predecessors. At the same time, *Amphitryon*—written in prose and blank verse, with an interfusion of lyrics, as is common with Dryden—exhibits together with his characteristic recklessness in pressing whatever is effective into the service of his immediate purpose, his not less habitual irreverence for all relations divine and human *per se*, and a brilliant play of wit and fancy which for the moment takes hold (to use a simile which Dryden perhaps would not have scorned) of any kind of fish except that kind which will rise to no such bait. The most indulgent criticism cannot however this time excuse the revels of Thalia as a picture of the actual vices of the age; the theory of their unreality has to be called in, which however in no wise fits any of Dryden's dramatic dogmas.

Amphitryon was followed in 1693 by the tragicomedy of *Love Triumphant*, which generally follows the scheme of *Marriage à la Mode* and *The Spanish Friar*, but was apparently wholly unsuccessful. Its comic action, in which certain resemblances have been pointed out to that of *Monsieur de Pourceaugnac*, is neither natural nor probable; the more impassioned portions of the heroic dialogue are once more in rime.

Whatever Dryden might say or think of his natural shortcomings as a comic dramatist, it was inevitable that even on a branch of dramatic composition to which his devotion was but half-hearted some impress should be left by a literary genius so commanding as his. Of Dryden's tragedies only those have any direct significance for his labours in the field of the comic drama which belong to the species in his time called heroic—of which, though not the inventor, he was the champion and will always remain the representative. Since he frequently combined heroic play and comedy in an amalgam to which he gave the time-honoured name of tragicomedy, the distinctive features of the former species ought not to be overlooked in dealing with his productions in the latter. *The Spanish Friar*, however, so adequately illustrates in its serious portions the features in question, that it is needless to say more about them here. The action of heroic plays, whether founded on recent French prose romance, or recalling the stupendous achievements and the vast aspirations of the protagonists of the Italian romantic epos, is invariably monopolised by love and honour; of the conflicts between these opposing elements love-at-first-sight is usually the starting-point, while the "point

of honour" is that on which the crisis of the interest turns. In these and other matters of form to be touched on immediately there is no difference between the serious portions of Dryden's tragicomedies and the most outstanding of his heroic plays.

Few dramatists have written more about the construction of plays than Dryden, partly in response to the stimulus of French discussion of dramatic principles, partly because of his own love of reasoning, and of effective expression thereof, on any topic of interest to his circle. But notwithstanding his appreciation of much of Corneille's teaching, and perhaps of the discourse of St.-Évremond, Sedley, and other authorities,—it cannot be said that the construction of Dryden's comedies or tragicomedies is open to no just criticism. The pattern which he preferred, and which he followed in *The Spanish Friar* (so much extolled for its plot management), has been roundly condemned by other critics.¹ Nor can it be gainsaid that, notable as is the difference between the unity of action in Molière and the convergence of interests which Dryden seeks to consummate, a far deeper gulf separates his comedies from those in which the art of Shakspeare moves sympathy and delight in harmonious concert. (It was Dryden's misfortune more than his fault that the romantic manners of the personages in the serious plot were not always very easily transplanted into the midst of Restoration society out of the *Grand Cyrus* or the *Orlando Furioso*; idealism and realism only meet like cousins from a distance.) Custom was largely responsible for the excess of plot which (as Dryden was fully aware) had come to be demanded by the English as well as the Spanish theatrical public; hence, the eager resort of the Restoration as well as of the Elizabethan drama to the Spanish novelists, who had superseded the Italian as the favourite purveyors of this kind of literary entertainment. On the other hand, there seems no reason for supposing Dryden (any more than Fletcher before him) to have except on occasion resorted for material directly to Spanish plays. To French comedy he was largely indebted, but on the whole for incidental touches of character, situation, or dialogue rather than for the main themes of his own comedies;² and from whomsoever he borrowed, it was with a free consciousness of what is and what is not plagiarism, as unintelligible to the useful pedantry of a Langbaine as to the envenomed spite of a Lauder.

Dryden's ideal of comedy, though it only mediocresly interested his imaginative powers, was a combination of Jonson's creative humour with the wit of an age to which the sphere of action of Jonson's characters had inevitably come to seem gross, and their manner of discourse tedious.

¹ See *The Retrospective Review*, vol. I (1820).

² *Sir Martin Mar-All* is only an apparent exception.

This was, in a word, high comedy,—as understood if not by the polite mob at King Charles' Court, at least by its *élite*. Nor should the large *residuum* of grossness (and of worse) in the society of Whitehall—and of Versailles—be allowed to obscure the fact that a process of refinement, something more than an advance in lightness, was overtaking both the conversation and the literature in fashion. Dryden's dislike of "low comedy," and of all its more or less musty devices from "clenches" or puns upwards, was as strong as the temptation (to which the all but incomparable fertility and facility of his genius exposed him) towards surfeiting his audience with a banquet of "sheer-wit." "Thick-coming fancies" were ever upon him, and not specially (as has been cruelly said) "when his mind was elevated and excited by a sensual object"; nor was it an empty boast of Mr. Bayes in *The Rehearsal* that they come "in upon one another, snip snap, hit for hit, as fast as can be." Thus he came to excel in a species of comedy which exactly suited the spirit of his age, and of which he bequeathed the traditions to his most gifted successor, Congreve, the darling of a still more frivolous, though perhaps less licentious, phase of social idleness. But that as a rule he abstained from attempting creations proper to "low" comedy, was owing to want of will rather than to want of power; just as in his immortal satire the choicest portraits are not more perfect in their way than the counterfeits of Doeg and of Og in theirs.

But though, thanks to the wonderful versatility of Dryden's literary endowment, his comedies were constructed almost always with skill and at times with virtuosity;—though his vivid intelligence, good breeding, scholarly training and varied experience could reproduce on the stage the best or—when he chose—the worst manners of a too, too liberal age;—though his supreme power of satire, which only gradually arrived at a consciousness of its unique strength, impelled him even as a writer for the comic stage to characterisation of rare veracity as well as point;—it was here as elsewhere the gift of style, and no other, which made him, for a time at least, the acknowledged master of his scene. And the quality in his style as in that of most writers who have proved irresistible to their own generations was a perfect clearness of diction. His wide and various stores of information were at all times entirely under his command; while his naturally forensic—I had almost said casuistic—turn of mind impelled him invariably to use them to the best advantage. This very readiness of wit often occasioned those sudden descents to bathos which are at first sight so surprising in a writer of such extraordinary resourcefulness; his similes, to apply his own sarcasm, seem at times fagoted as they fall—"as for example at Brentford; for I love to quote

familiarly." Maybe he had caught this trick from Donne, of whom, as well as of Cowley, he was an early student.

An examination of the distinctive features of Dryden's dramatic versification would hardly be appropriate here. Its predilections and mannerisms,—the broken lines, distinct from the broken-up lines in which he also had a fancy to indulge; the Alexandrines, the triplets, in all of which the intending author of an *English Prosody* was fain to indulge,—are alike exemplified in the comedy here reprinted. For his prose diction, so far as it comes before us in his comedies, it will suffice to observe that its ease and elegance are not attributable to any desire on his part to emancipate himself from English models, in order to fall into subjection to French. He took good care not to incur the ridicule which he showered on those who imported French terms wholesale into English speech; but he was far from opposing an adamant front to all innovation of this sort, and his example no doubt contributed to a permanent enlargement of our vocabulary.

For the rest, Dryden, with an ease unusual in a great writer of so marked an individuality, conformed to the tastes and preferences of his age. There has happily been no reason for speaking here of his contributions to opera; but there are operatic features, so to speak, in his comedies and heroic plays, which, as Taine remarks, have just about the truth and naturalness of an opera-text. Several of Dryden's comedies, besides being in a general way full of "drums and trumpets," remind us that they were produced in a revolutionary epoch in which the English word *mob* is stated to have been evolved. Moreover, the comedies in particular are freely interspersed with songs and dances of light weight. Like every other kind of verse essayed by Dryden, these lyrics in his dramas often rise to excellence; but they are not less frequently disfigured by an extreme lasciviousness which justifies Jeremy Collier's plain description of them as "smutty songs." The same fault is to be found with the Prologues and Epilogues—the latter more especially—upon which Dryden lavished resources of a wealth and variety such as have rarely been employed in so concentrated a form. Of the two kinds of effective prologues between which Mr. Bayes distinguishes, Dryden, in his comedies, naturally inclined toward that "making use of some personal things, which may keep . . . censuring . . . tongues . . . from being too free"; but even here there is not wanting that saturnine self-consciousness—different from either pride or vanity—which forms part of Dryden's higher nature, and frequently finds vent in self-irony.¹

¹ See, for instance, the powerful Prologue to *Limberham*, in contrast with the insolently gross Epilogue.

Jeremy Collier, who inveighed in no measured terms against the license assumed by Dryden and his contemporaries in these addresses, found matter enough in his comedies themselves by which to illustrate, more copiously than from any other writer, the charges brought by him against the stage of the day. It is unnecessary to weigh Collier's charges against Dryden and his comedies in particular, of corrupting society by their immodesty and profanity, by their abuse of religion in the persons of its professed representatives, and by their endeavour to invert the moral order of things by honouring and "rewarding" vice. For early in his career the poet had already allowed a futile plea to be advanced on his behalf;¹ and afterwards he himself became prolific in excuses implying unintentional self-accusation. In the Epilogue to Fletcher's *Pilgrim* (on its revival in 1700), which was also Dryden's own last farewell to the stage, he sought to transfer the blame to the quarter where in truth it should in part fairly be allowed to rest,—viz. the age and society, and of course the Court above all, which were the real source of the stream of corruption. But this retort had been provoked by a special cause; and earlier in the same year, in the preface to his *Fables* he had refused to draw his pen in the defence of a bad cause when, as the old literary champion of throne and Churches proudly said, he had "so often drawn it in a good one." And many years before this he had as it were broken the weapon of offence over his own head in that wonderful lyric confession which for once shows to what pathos Dryden could be moved, when a rare sense of shame searched out his soul.²

In fine, the licentiousness of expression to which Collier justly takes exception—as well as the sarcastic tone persistently adopted by Dryden towards "the parson's" profession—might be paralleled from other ages of English literature; though, where the parallel deviated, this would rarely be in favour of the Restoration drama. The charge that the comedy of this period seeks to interest us in vicious personages, and rewards them at the end of the play, is not always as easy to meet as in the case of Lorenzo in *The Spanish Friar*, whom the dramatist allows a good point or two, but whom Fate at last balks of the success he most desires. No better general answer can be made to it than that butterflies are not the only *ephemeræ* whom it is profitless to break upon a wheel. But the intrinsic defect of Dryden's comic method goes deeper than all this. It has been hinted that he was in the main devoid of pathos; he was in truth also without that tenderness of heart from which true pathos springs,

¹ See the "Epilogue by a person of quality" to *Secret Love*, which urges that fancy and fun make wit harmless.

² See *The Hind and the Panther*, I, 72-77.

and of the reverence towards God and man which is only another word for true tenderness. Even were the purpose of comedy rightly defined as pleasure, how far short must that comedy fall of giving true pleasure which leaves the moral sympathies of its public unsatisfied! And where Dryden at times seems gayest, where he is often wittiest, and where he palpably strains with the greatest eagerness for the applause of pit and boxes, there this painful void makes itself the most surely felt.

The Spanish Friar, or The Double Discovery, which in the Dedication Dryden includes among his tragicomedies, was first acted in 1680, and published the next year in quarto (Q); second (Q₂), third (Q₃), and fourth (Q₄) quarto editions appeared in 1686, 1690, and 1695, respectively. Scott's statement that the satire (against the Roman Catholic priesthood) was still more severe "in the first edition, and was afterwards considerably softened," must refer to the original *acting* version; for the first quarto of 1681 exhibits no material differences from later texts. A passage of this kind cited by Jeremy Collier, which must have been afterwards struck out, is reproduced below.¹

The date of the earliest performance² of *The Spanish Friar* is of considerable significance, both as regards the choice of the Subject of the play, and the treatment adopted in it. Dryden must have passed within a short interval from the composition of *The Spanish Friar* to that of *Absalom and Achitophel*, which, according to Tonson,³ he "undertook . . . upon" the King's "desire" in 1680, and published in November, 1681. Now, in 1681 the excitement about the supposed Popish Plot was dying out, but not yet dead; while the agitation as to the passing of the Exclusion Bill rose to its height during the sittings of Parliament at Oxford (March-April), and was succeeded by a tumult of hopes and fears as to the fate of the imprisoned Shaftesbury (July-November). It is true that there had been signs of a reaction favourable to the Court even in London, although this was not to declare itself until some months after Shaftesbury's liberation.

¹ See note to III, ii; below, p. 178, n. 2.

² Since this was written, Professor Allardyce Nicoll (*Restoration Drama, 1923*, p. 311) has shown that the play had been acted by March 8, 1680.—*Gen. Eds.*

³ See G. R. Noyes, *Dryden's Poetical Works*, pp. 108, 137.—*Gen. Eds.*

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Under these circumstances, is there any strange or suspicious discrepancy to be found between the politico-religious colouring of *The Spanish Friar* and the principles so conspicuously upheld by Dryden throughout the period which followed, during which he hardly wrote at all for the stage? Is there a shadow of fact to support the charge that the poet-laureate of Shaftesbury had become the hireling of the Crown? Dryden had in 1680 been granted an additional pension of £100 a year by the King, which however was not paid to him till four years later. So much for the other accusation that he wrote *The Spanish Friar* ¹ in order to take vengeance for the loss of his pension. But, in truth, there is no bottom to the whole difficulty. Nothing could be clearer than that this comedy is far from being a partisan manifesto in disguise. So far as politics proper are concerned, it certainly shows a cordial contempt, altogether congenial to Dryden, for a city mob ² and a willingness to laugh at the city trainbands; ³ nor can there be any mistake as to the specific allusion to the agitation in London in favour of Monmouth. ⁴ Yet, even when to all this is added the fact that the Dedication of *The Spanish Friar*, addressed to a Protestant patron, describes it as a "Protestant play," it is impossible to escape the conclusion that when he adopted this epithet the author's tongue must have approached his cheek. As for politics, Dryden would not have scrupled then, any more than he hesitated some time later when assisting Lee in *The Duke of Guise*, to make his play "a parallel"; but while the situation, and the King's sympathies, were still uncertain, the laureate could hardly do more than show himself unprejudiced. And as for the larger religious issue, the Church of Rome was no more the real object of his satire in *The Spanish Friar* than in *The Assignation*. No doubt the comedy immediately under review contains an assault upon the monastic orders which might be described as brutal but that it savours of mediæval mustiness; ⁵ and elsewhere sarcasms against casuistical

¹ Acted early in March, 1680 (see above, p. 119, n. 2).—*Gen. Eds.*

² See III, iii.

³ See IV, ii.

⁴ See V, ii. *Per contra*, the fact of the suspicions against France alluded to in the Prologue, is attested by existing notes of a meeting of the Privy Council held in June, 1681.

⁵ III, i.

argument or its terminology might be held to have a specially Romanist application.¹ But the criticism would be blind indeed which should fail to perceive that it is in the first instance the clerical profession at large which is held up to scorn and ridicule in this comedy and by means of its eponymous character; and that Dryden followed at once the fashion of his age² and the bent of his own mind and temperament, in levying war upon everything sacerdotal. The "strokes" upon "churchmen"—a term consistently used in this play as equivalent to priests or clergymen—noticed by Collier, apply alike to ministers of all religions, in accordance with the opinion soon afterwards expressed in *Absolom and Achitophel*, that

priests of all religions are the same.³

The general tone of mockery and irreverence which pervades the play—the *persiflage* which spares no relation sanctioned by divine or human law, from filial piety to marital faith—is enhanced by repeated allusions to Holy Writ, especially the Old Testament, with which Dryden displays a notable familiarity.

Whatever may be thought of the controversial intentions of *The Spanish Friar*, there can be no doubt that it lent itself to controversial uses; nor can we wonder that while it was liked by Charles II, it was (according to a contemporary letter from the Earl of Nottingham) the only play prohibited by James II on his acces-

¹ II, iii; cf. IV, ii.

² Dryden's contemporary St.-Évremond, although a conforming opportunist in matters of religion, and pretending to hold up his hands at the current disrespect shown the church, rallies the priests of all the faiths very much in Dryden's vein.

³ "Take notice," says Friar Dominic with ironical humility of Gomez (V, ii), "how uncharitably he speaks of churchmen." The disreputable Friar himself is introduced as "a true son of the Church" (I, i); and the description is repeated when he proves himself a valiant toper (II, ii). Soon afterwards he tells a palpable lie "*in verbo sacerdotis*" (II, iii); and the Dominican or monastic habit is declared to have been in all ages "friendly to fornication" (III, i). In III, iii, there might seem to be a more special charge against the Romish clergy as prone to the "old church-trick" of being at the bottom of every plot, but saving their own necks at the expense of the laity; and in IV, i the wider accusation is made that they "bring in Heaven by hook or crook" into their quarrels, and that "the infallible church-remedies" are "lying impudently and swearing devoutly." Elsewhere (III, iii) they are accused of grossly cheating the rest of the world with the doctrine of free-will.

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sion to the throne. This unfortunately seemed reason enough for its being revived by royal command in June, 1689, when Queen Mary occupied the royal box in the centre of the house, and was confounded by a series of passages being applied to her by the audience.¹ And it can hardly be an accident that of the many later revivals of *The Spanish Friar*, which according to Genest did not come to an end till 1787, two, at two different London theatres, took place in 1780, the year of the Gordon riots.

The supposition that *The Spanish Friar* was a reproduction of Fletcher's *The Spanish Curate* (1622) is wholly incorrect. Dryden owes to Fletcher the hint of the first title of his comedy and certain general suggestions as to the underplot and its principal character, although neither of these can in any sense be regarded as a copy. The comic action and the figure of Lopez of *The Spanish Curate* are taken from Gonzalo de Céspedes y Meneses' *Poema trágico del Español Gerardo* (published in two parts at Madrid in 1615 and 1617), or rather from Leonard Digges' English translation of this Spanish novel, published in 1622. Of Dryden's comedy the scene is Spanish, but there is no reason for assuming that he in this instance had recourse to any immediate Spanish original;² nor has he made any serious attempt to transport the imagination of his audience far from the atmosphere of home. The honest Don Pedro's preference for the home-spun country clown who travels only to come back a fop³ is meant for English sentiment, and so is his attack on "smock-loyalty," i.e., the extravagant chivalrous sentiment of French romance.⁴ On the other hand, as is pointed out by a writer to whom all students of Dryden owe thanks for his admirable study of the influence exercised upon his comic dramas by Molière,⁵ *The Spanish Friar* too is not without traces, more or less marked, of this influence. They are particularly to be found in the character of Gomez—who is of the fraternity of Sganarelle

¹ See notes to I, i and IV, ii. Lord Nottingham reported that "twenty more things were said in the play, which faction applied to the Queen."

² Cf. Strunk (*Spanish Friar*, Belles-Lett. Ser., pp. xxxi-xxxv), who examines and dismisses other supposed originals.—*Gen. Eds.*

³ II, i.

⁴ *Id.*

⁵ See C. Hartmann's dissertation, *Der Einfluss Molière's auf Dryden's Komisch-dramatische Dichtungen* (Leipzig, 1885).

and George Dandin—and to the scenes in which he takes part.¹

The play has a great deal of dramatic life in it; and nothing could better show how Dryden had come to appreciate the vigorous action of the Elizabethan models which lay nearest to his hand. But he was afterwards fain to depreciate whatever share of the success of this “tragi-comedy” might be due to its “Gothic manner.” “Neither,” he wrote in 1695,² “can I defend my *Spanish Friar*, as fond as otherwise I am of it, from this imputation; for though the comical parts of it are diverting, and the serious moving, yet they are of an unnatural mingle; for mirth and gravity destroy each other, and are no more to be allowed for decent than a gay widow laughing in a mourning habit.” We need not return to the general subject of Dryden’s methods of dramatic construction, or dwell on the curious tendency to uniformity exhibited by his “tragi-comedies” in their combination of serious and comic actions.³ But Johnson, and Scott after him, have drawn attention to the construction of *The Spanish Friar* in particular, and indeed Dryden had himself, at the outset of the Dedication of the play, admitted his “more than ordinary” care in the management of its composite action. Scott, with his unflinching good-sense, tempers his praise by demurring to Dryden’s pretence of “the absolute necessity, for the sake of variety, of combining two actions in tragedy.” The combination in question was, no doubt, in the case of *The Spanish Friar* effected with unusual skill. “The sufficiently obvious connexion,” to borrow Scott’s words, which made the gay Lorenzo, the moving spirit of the comic underplot, “an officer of the conquering army, and attached to the person of Torrismond,” the hero of the serious action, is, *mutatis mutandis*, the device adopted in *Secret Love*. The notable felicity of the plot of *The Spanish Friar* lies, accordingly, not so much in the combination itself as in “the minutely artificial structure by which the reader is perpetually reminded of the dependence of one part of the play on the other.” And even this encomium may perhaps

¹ Cf. notes to IV, i, and V, ii.

² *A Parallel of Poetry and Painting* (Ker, II, 147).

³ Compare the paper, already cited, in *The Retrospective Review*.

be regarded as a trifle strained. To be sure, already amidst the martial stir of the opening care is taken to prepare attention for the personages of the by-plot as well as for the chief issue of the main. An amusing incidental description of Friar Dominic is succeeded by the actual appearance of Lorenzo as the bearer of the tidings of victory, and his speedy departure on (more or less) urgent private affairs. Then, however, the two plots run on alongside of one another without any obvious "organic" connexion. While the one cousin, Torrismond, is, as Pedro puts it, "honourably mad in love with her majesty, and is split upon a rock" the other, Lorenzo, engaged in an ignoble chase, is "sinking in the ocean." The two plots, or parts of the plot, never come into contact with one another until the first scene of the fourth act, when the wily Friar suggests that the inconvenient Gomez should be arrested as one of the "assassinates" of the old King Sancho. In the next scene the fusion is carried further by the proposal that Lorenzo, as the darling of the city-wives, should be engaged to support the legitimist cause in their sphere of influence; and in the last act he upholds Torrismond's side in the insurrection. But towards the close, before Bertran's announcement that King Sancho still lives has disentangled the "tragic" knot, the comic interest culminates in a scene of uproarious mirth. Charles II's objection—to the *dénouement* of *Secret Love*, in which "the Queen seems to stand idle, while the great action of the drama is still depending"—does not precisely apply, but there is a similar *sans gêne* in postponing the serious to the comic solution. In a word, although the two parts of the plot are well enough connected, there is no extraordinary completeness in the process.

The conduct of the serious action in itself can hardly be said to merit unreserved praise. Queen Leonora has inherited the throne from her father, who, soon after usurping it from old King Sancho, had enjoined her on his death-bed to marry Bertran, the son of a general who had supported him in his enterprise. Her refusal of the suit of a Moorish ruler has brought war upon her Kingdom, and in the course of it Bertran has been thrice worsted by the foe. At the moment when the play opens the fortune of the war is turned by a brilliant victory over the Moors gained by Torrismond, the

supposed son of Raymond, a loyal noble who has long been absent from the Court, but actually the son of the deposed and imprisoned King Sancho. Torrismond cherishes a passion for the beautiful young Queen, which on his return from the war the jealous Bertran easily surprises and resolves to use for ruining him. But an interview between the Queen and the victorious young general results in her falling ardently in love with him. Bertran, rendered suspicious by her coldness, endeavours to persuade her to identify her fortunes with his own by ordering the death of old King Sancho; and, in the hope that she may thus "secure her throne to Torrismond," and at the same time make Bertran odious to the people, she assents. But he in his turn guesses her motive, and while promising to obey her command, mutters to himself that he will "think again." The Queen confesses to Torrismond what order she has issued; he persuades her to revoke it; but Bertran sends word that it has been carried out. The rapture of their union drowns every other feeling in her lover as well as in herself. Here of course is a blot which a more sensitive morality than Dryden's could hardly have ignored, and which vitiates our interest in the hero even more than in the heroine. But, given the perpetration, it must be allowed to be cleverly carried out; and in more ways than one just enough light is let in to apprise an alert observer of the solution that is preparing itself. The rest of the serious action is effectively involved and unrolled. Raymond, Torrismond's reputed father, but himself possessed of the secret of his true paternity, returns, hears the tidings of the foul murder of King Sancho, and raises a rebellion against the young Queen. She, meanwhile, has quarrelled with Bertran, and angrily dismissed him. To effect his purpose, Raymond contrives to be appointed commander of the city trainbands, with a view to overthrowing Bertran's official authority; and then instructs his fellow-conspirators to inform the insurgents that he will bring forward the true heir to the throne. But the design is crossed; and when the secret of his birth is revealed to Torrismond, and he promises to avenge the murder of his father, he excepts from this menace the Queen—inasmuch as she is his wedded wife. But, as she confesses to her confidante in a scene which Jeremy Collier

reprehended for its impudicity, but which in truth is chiefly blameable for a certain triviality of thought and feeling—he now shuns her embraces, and her tears oblige him to reveal to her the fatal secret that must separate them for ever. When he desperately hurries forth to face the insurgents, and proclaims himself the legitimate King, Raymond in vain seeks to drown the announcement in clamour; the arrival of Lorenzo and his squadron decides the day in favour of Torrismond. At this moment the Queen comes on the scene, and the climax of the conflict between love and honour has been reached. The situation is theatrically effective; but here the exigencies of the double plot prove imperative, and Bertran's disclosure that he has prudently let Sancho live, is deferred till the fooling of Lorenzo and the Friar has put the audience in a condition of uproarious mirth which would tolerate an even more inadequate solution.

In this portion of the play love and honour, in the "heroic" sense of the terms, are of course the pivots of the interest. Torrismond who on his first appearance has announced himself as absolutely the servant of honour,¹ declares the royalty of the Queen with all its environments to be but "the train and trappings of her love."² After her eyes have once beheld him, there is for her "no other he";³ her being is absorbed in her passion, and her conscience is deadened by it. Torrismond, on the other hand, has to face the problem which his foster-father states almost in the words of the famous couplet, but to a very different purpose.⁴ The struggle that ensues is delineated with Dryden's characteristic dialectic skill; but no better example could be furnished of the difference between dialogue and drama than by this scene, in which the hero learns that he is King and "in a moment" wearies of the discovery. There is a direct attempt at the pathetic in Torrismond's earlier narrative of his meeting with the old King in his dungeon;⁵ but pathos proper is uncongenial to the heroic drama, and even in Leonora's vehement outburst at her husband's temporary desertion of her⁶ the true note is not struck, and her appeals in the following scene lack the melting tenderness which Beaumont and Fletcher would have infused into them.

¹ I, 1.² IV, ii.³ II, ii.⁴ IV, ii.⁵ III, iii.⁶ V, i.

On the other hand, the reverence exacted for princely authority is still of the heroic type; nor had Dryden yet reached the (post-Revolutionary) period when he is found, with his usual impressionableness, showing a disposition to free criticism or censure of governments. When Bertran, in words reminding us how Dryden was about to put the same doctrine into the mouth of the arch-traitor Achitophel, refers to the doctrine of the right of resistance, it is only to maintain that what is claimed by subjects cannot be denied to sovereigns.¹

The comic portions of this play are entirely in prose and make up nearly half of the whole. Their vigour and *verve* are not to be gainsaid, nor discounted by Dryden's assertion² that he not only held comedy in itself inferior to other kinds of dramatic writing, but had from motives of temperament rather than from reasons of judgment, a personal "disgust," i.e., distaste, for low comedy. It requires, he says by way of apology for this aversion, "much of conversation with the vulgar, and much of ill nature in the observation of their follies." Granting the soundness of a literary distinction based altogether on a social difference, one is inclined to ask why more of ill nature should be required to note the foibles of the one than those of the other class. But the comic scenes and characters in *The Spanish Friar* are quite sufficient to cut the personal ground from under its author's feet. The intrigue—or the *amour*, as Melantha might have preferred to call it—between the gay Lorenzo and the accommodating spouse of the old usurer Gomez is indeed of the ordinary low comedy—or *opéra bouffe*—species, and has no pretence to originality. In the present instance it may be supposed to have been directly suggested by the relations between the lawyer Bartolus, his pretty wife Amaranta and the young *roué* Leandro in *The Spanish Curate*; but the two designs are quite differently worked out—Fletcher's with much humour and gaiety and with a relatively small seasoning of grossness, while the curate Lopez is not degraded into a pandar to the young couple. Dryden's comic plot is carried through from beginning to end with most unmis-takeable relish, being seasoned with a low comedy salt of the

¹ IV, ii.

² See Preface to *An Evening's Love*.

most pungent savour by means of the personage from whom the whole play is named. Friar Dominic, be our judgment what it may of his morality, is a low comedy type of the true Falstaffian breed, to be appreciated dramatically according to its dramatic effect. This effect would, in the hands of a competent actor, be superlative at any time, and upon any stage. Like Falstaff—and like a select number of variants on the same humorous mixture of wit and wickedness—this Friar is in his way sure of a welcome, of which no moral indignation or contempt will blunt the spontaneity or diminish the warmth. What could be more delectable than the entry on the scene of the “huge fat religious gentleman,” with his delicate apology to the carousing Lorenzo: “I thought I had been sent for to a dying man, to have fitted him for another world”¹—unless it be his second (unobserved) entry, and his gentle query as to the phrasing of an offensive outburst against himself, on the part of the rude husband of his fair penitent?² But perhaps Dominic is at his best—which is also his worst—on his return to the lovers whom he had craftily left to go astray, with the playful exclamation, “Where is this naughty couple,” which he is obliged by the presence of the husband to adapt to him and his wife.³ The whole vein of the character differs from that of Fletcher’s Lopez, a parish priest whose main purpose of making money out of his parishioners is decently veiled; it is, in a word, richer and proportionately less innocent. Indeed, it is almost driven too far when Dominic calmly hints at making away with Gomez, and only falls back upon the plan of bearing false witness against him instead, when Lorenzo is revolted by the more criminal design.⁴ In the great farcical scene of the last act the Friar of course contributes his utmost to the process of bringing down the house. Dryden as an old theatrical hand knew that anything in the nature of a judicial proceeding with a touch of burlesque slightly exceeding the habitual experiences of the common law furnishes an unfailing stage effect. He made the most of this in the close of the comic action, which is a triumph of Aristophanic fun.⁵ From Scott’s account, it would almost appear that the ultimate penalty inflicted upon the Friar in the

¹ II, iii.² II, iv.³ III, ii.⁴ IV, i.⁵ V, ii.

original acting version had been more drastic than that of which either the first printed text, or Collier's censures, offer evidence.

As to the remaining personages of the comic action little need be added. Elvira is one of the "thin-shelled" ladies of the stage (condemned by Jeremy Collier) who "forget themselves extremely." She may be allowed the benefit of the excuse offered by St.-Évremond for her Spanish sisters, that "in the futility of the national life of" their "country, the passion of love alone gave movement to existence." Lorenzo stands low on the scale of characters where Mercutio is jostled by no immediate competitor; indeed, in the final scene of the play he frankly descends to the humble uses of the *gracioso* of Spanish comedy. Collier reprehends Lorenzo's unfilial treatment of his relation towards his father, in his not very witty imitation of Elizabethan self-colloquies on the stage;¹ unfortunately this particular kind of fashionable irreverence is not uncommon in Dryden. An unexpected end is provided for Lorenzo's love-making with Elvira by the discovery that they are brother and sister. Although, in view of what has gone before, this solution cannot be described as altogether pleasing, it has to serve; and at least it commends itself more than the converse *dénouement* of *Love Triumphant* (a piece in some respects rather closely modelled upon *The Spanish Friar*), where the loves of a supposed brother and sister prove to be free from any such guilt.

It must be allowed that Dryden's genius shows itself in the style of this play as well as in its plot construction and characterization. No writer was ever more distinctly possessed of the power of rising suddenly above his ordinary level. In the scene where the serious action of this play reaches its height,² occur passages which have a ring of early Elizabethan tragedy—almost of Marlowe. But on the whole the style is well sustained throughout this part of the action, and little disfigured by extravagance. It is, however, a conceit in Dryden's least natural manner, when Leonora compares the meeting of their souls in kisses to the

¹ V, i.

² IV, ii.

meetings of sovereigns on the borders of their territories.¹ This is one of Mr. Bayes' many "dainty" similes misapplied. Truly charming on the other hand is the Queen's comparison, in the same scene, of her soon slighted love to

a rose, just gathered from the stalk,
But only smelt, and cheaply thrown aside,
To wither on the ground.

The humour of Lorenzo's self-consultation² is Elizabethan in origin; and so is the sentiment of Leonora's appeal to her attendant to sing her the song of the deserted Olympia.³ The only peculiarity which I have noticed as pervading the diction of this play is a tendency to the clipping of words, on which however it would be pedantic too strongly to insist.⁴ In the versification this play illustrates the fashion for "broken lines" which Dryden carried to excess, and which Settle was of course eager to outdo. Though less offensive as followed here than where adopted in the midst of rimed couplets, it is apt to weary,⁵ and occasionally falls flat.⁶ In the earlier acts Dryden shows his fondness for trisyllabic endings. The lyrics in *The Spanish Friar*⁷ are not among his best in this kind.

The text of the play here printed is that of a copy of the first quarto (1681), in the Dyce Library at South Kensington, which is imperfect only in one or two places of no particular significance. Save where the original spelling is of historical or metrical interest I have modernized; occasionally, for metrical reasons, the arrangement of lines has been readjusted. Again, I have occasionally altered the position of the direction "aside," so as to make its meaning clearer. The stage-directions in general are mostly those of the quarto, which are remarkably lively and suggestive. The

¹ V, i. Compare also, in V, ii, Raymond's ugly simile applied to Torrismond, of a hooked fish.

² V, i.

³ V, i.

⁴ Among them are: gage = engage; joy = enjoy; boding = foreboding; peach = impeach; sotted = besotted.

⁵ See especially III, iii.

⁶ E.g., Torrismond's "O Leonora! Oh!" at a moment of deep dramatic interest (V, i).

⁷ I, i, and V, i.

play is there divided into acts and scenes; but the latter are not numbered. The indications of the localities of the several scenes have been for the most part supplied by myself. Scott's edition of this play is referred to in the notes as Sc.; Saintsbury's revision, as Sc.-Sa. The present edition was completed before the excellent editions of G. R. Noyes (*Selected Dramas of John Dryden*) and of W. Strunk, Jr. (*Belles Lettres*) appeared.¹

A. W. WARD.

¹ And before the recent edition of Montague Summers (*Dryden, The Dramatic Works*, vol. V), London, 1932.—*Gen. Eds.*

T H E
S P A N I S H
F R Y A R

O R

The Double Discovery.

Acted at the
Dukes Theatre.

*Ut melius possis fallere, sume togam——Ma.
———Alterna revisens
Lufit, & in solido rursus fortuna locavit. Vir.*

Written by *John Dryden*, Servant to
His MAJESTY.

L O N D O N,
Printed for *Richard Tonson* and *Jacob Tonson*, at *Grays-
inn gate*, in *Grays-inn Lane*, and at the *Judge's*
Head, in *Chancery-lane*, 1681.

The Latin mottoes are from:

Martial, *Epigramm.*, VIII, xlviij, 8. ("In order to thieve more securely, steal only an ordinary garment." But Dryden seems to have interpreted the last clause: "don the habit of peace.")

Virgil, *Æn.*, XI, 426-27:

“Many a man
Wave after wave of fortune hath by turns
Played with, and planted on firm ground again.”

To The
RIGHT HONOURABLE
JOHN,
LORD HAUGHTON.¹

MY LORD,

When I first designed this play, I found, or thought I found, somewhat so moving in the serious part of it, and so pleasant in the comic, as might deserve a more than ordinary care in both; accordingly, I used the best of my endeavour in the management of two plots,² so very different from each other that it was not perhaps the talent of every writer to have made them of a piece. Neither have I attempted other plays of the same nature, in my opinion, with the same judgment, though with like success. And though many poets may suspect themselves for the fondness and partiality of parents to their youngest children, yet I hope I may stand exempted from this rule; because I know myself too well to be ever satisfied with my own conceptions, which have seldom reached to those ideas that I had within me; ³ and, consequently, I may presume to have liberty to judge when I write more or less pardonably, as an ordinary marksman may know certainly when he shoots less wide at what he aims. Besides, the care and pains I have bestowed on this, beyond my other tragi-comedies, may reasonably make the world conclude, that either I can do nothing tolerably, or that this poem is not amiss. Few good pictures have been finished at one sitting; neither can a true, just play, which is to bear the

¹ John Holles Lord Haughton (1662-1711), was the eldest son of Gilbert Holles third Earl of Clare, one of the peers who petitioned for the continuance of the Parliament of 1679, and against the summoning of a Parliament at Oxford in 1681. The son upheld his father's Protestant and Whig principles, and was an active partisan of the accession of William and Mary to the throne. He became "one of the richest and most powerful men in the Kingdom" and in 1694 was created Duke of Newcastle (*D.N.B.*).

² Professor Ker (I, 320) notes Addison's comparison of the two plots in *The Spanish Friar* to the two stories in *Paradise Lost* (the fall of Man and the fall of the angels) in *The Spectator* No. 267; and the reference to Dryden's play in Johnson's introductory note to *The Merchant of Venice*; also Dryden's observations on underplots in the *Dedication of the Third Miscellany* and in the *Preface to Juvenal*.

³ Compare the Preface to *Secret Love* on this question.

test of ages, be produced at a heat,¹ or by the force of fancy, without the maturity of judgment. For my own part, I have both so just a diffidence of myself, and so great a reverence for my audience, that I dare venture nothing without a strict examination; and am as much ashamed to put a loose indigested play upon the public, as I should be to offer brass money in a payment; for though it should be taken (as it is too often on the stage), yet it will² be found³ in the second telling; and a judicious reader will discover in his closet that trashy stuff, whose glittering deceived him in the action. I have often heard the stationer sighing in his shop, and wishing for those hands to take off his melancholy bargain, which clapped its performance on the stage. In a playhouse, everything contributes to impose upon the judgment; the lights, the scenes, the habits and, above all, the grace of action, which is commonly the best where there is the most need of it, surprise the audience, and cast a mist upon their understandings; not unlike the cunning of a juggler, who is always staring us in the face, and overwhelming us with gibberish, only that he may gain the opportunity of making the cleaner conveyance of his trick. But these false beauties of the stage are no more lasting than a rainbow; when the actor ceases to shine upon them, when he gilds them no longer with his reflexion, they vanish in a twinkling. I have sometimes wondered, in the reading, what was become of those glaring colours which amazed me in "Bussy Dambois"⁴ upon the theatre; but when I had taken up what I supposed a fallen star, I found I had been cozened with a jelly;⁵ nothing but a cold, dull mass, which glittered no longer than it was shooting; a dwarfish thought dressed up in gigantic words; looseness of expression, and gross hyperboles; the sense of one line expanded prodigiously into ten; and, to sum up all, uncorrect English, and a hideous mingle of false poetry and true nonsense; or at best a scantling of wit, which lay gasping for life, and groaning beneath a heap of rubbish. A famous modern poet used to sacrifice every year a Statius to Virgil's manes;⁶ and I have in-

¹ Is Goethe's *Clavigo*, written within eight days, an instance to the contrary?

² Sc., "would."

³ found out.

⁴ Chapman's tragedy, first printed in 1607, was revived about 1675, Hart acting the hero. D'Urfey printed an adaptation of the play in 1691. Though the style of Chapman's *Bussy D'Ambois*, is very rhetorical, this, like his other tragedies, is full of matter as well as of poetic power.

⁵ According to Scott, the fancy of Hæmon in Dryden and Lee's *Œdipus*, II, i, that as the last day approaches, "the shooting stars end all in purple jellies," is based on the common belief, that falling stars are converted into a sort of jelly. See also Ker, I, 321, and *N.E.D.* on "jelly," and "nostoc,"—a plant which after rain swells into a jelly-like mass; hence called star-jelly and falling stars.

⁶ Scott (apparently following Malone) traces the following passage to the *Prolusi-*

dignation enough to burn a d'Ambois annually to the memory of Johnson.¹ But now, my Lord, I am sensible, perhaps too late, that I have gone too far; for I remember some verses of my own Maximin and Almanzor,² which cry vengeance upon me for their extravagance, and which I wish heartily in the same fire with Statius and Chapman. All I can say for those passages, which are, I hope, not many, is that I knew they were bad enough to please, even when I wrote them; but I repent of them among my sins, and, if any of their fellows intrude by chance into my present writings, I draw a stroke over all those Dalilahs of the theatre; and am resolved I will settle myself no reputation by the applause of fools. 'Tis not that I am mortified to all ambition; but I scorn as much to take it from half-witted judges, as I should to raise an estate by cheating of bubbles.³ Neither do I discommend the lofty style in tragedy, which is naturally pompous and magnificent; but nothing is truly sublime, that is not just and proper. If the ancients had judged by the same measure which a common reader takes, they had concluded Statius to have written higher than Virgil; for

Quæ superimposito moles geminata Colosso ⁴

carries a more thundering kind of sound than

Tityre, tu patula recubans sub tegmine fagi.⁵

Yet Virgil had all the majesty of a lawful prince, and Statius only the blustering of a tyrant. But when men affect a virtue which they cannot easily reach, they fall into a vice which bears the nearest resemblance to it. Thus, an injudicious poet who aims at loftiness runs easily into the swelling, puffy style, because it looks like greatness. I remember, when I was a boy, I thought inimitable Spencer⁶ a mean poet, in comparison

ones of Strada, where Andreas Naugerius is said to have annually sacrificed a copy of Martial (not of Statius) to the Muses and to the Manes of Virgil (Sc.-Sa., VI, 404-05). Malone also cites another anecdote from the *Prolusiones*, according to which Naugerius, when told on one occasion that his verses "had the air of" Statius, threw them into the fire. [See also Summers, *Dryden, The Dramatic Works*, V, 438-39.—*Gen. Eds.*]

¹ Jonson, the enemy of bad and bombastic poets, in such works as *Cynthia's Revels* and *The Poetaster*.

² *The Conquest of Granada*. Maximin, in *Tyrannic Love*.

³ dupes (Ker; see also Johnson's *Dictionary*).

⁴ Statius, *Sylb.* I, i, 1. Dryden again refers to this line in his *Parallel of Poetry and Painting* (Sc.-Sa., XVII, 330).

⁵ Virg. *Ecl.* I, 1.

⁶ Spenser.

The Spanish Fryar

of Sylvester's Du Bartas,¹ and was rapt² into an ecstasy when I read these lines:

Now when the winter's keener breath began
To chrystallize the Baltic ocean,
To glaze the lakes, to bridle up the floods,
And periwig with snow the bald-pate woods;—

I am much deceived if this be not abominable fustian,³ that is, thoughts and words ill-sorted, and without the least relation to each other; yet I dare not answer for an audience, that they would not clap it on the stage;—so little value there is to be given to the common cry, that nothing but madness can please madmen,⁴ and the poet must be of a piece with the spectators, to gain a reputation with them. But, as in a room contrived for state the height of the roof should bear a proportion to the area, so in the heightenings of poetry the strength and vehemence of figures should be suited to the occasion, the subject, and the persons. All beyond this is monstrous; 'tis out of nature, 'tis an excrescence, and not a living part of poetry. I had not said thus much, if some young gallants, who pretend to criticism, had not told me that this tragi-comedy wanted the dignity of style. But, as a man who is charged with a crime of which he is innocent, is apt to be too eager in his own defence, so, perhaps, I have vindicated my play with more partiality than I ought, or than such a trifle can deserve. Yet, whatever beauties it may want, 'tis free at least from the grossness of those faults I mentioned; what credit it has gained upon the stage, I value no farther than in reference to my profit, and the satisfaction I had, in seeing it represented with all the justness and gracefulness of action. But, as 'tis my interest to please my audience, so it is my ambition to be read. That I am sure is the more lasting and the nobler design; for the propriety of thoughts and words,⁵ which are the hidden beauties of a play, are but confusedly judged in the vehemence of action; all things are there beheld, as in a hasty motion,⁶

¹ Translation of Du Bartas, *Divine Weekes and Workes* (see *The Handicrafts*, Pt. 4, First Day, Second Week;—Ker), 1605–06. After the Restoration Sylvester was forgotten, nor was his poetic value again recognized until the romantic age.

² Scott, "wrapt."

³ "Fustian, or at least highly metaphorical" (Dryden, *Sc.-Sa.*, XVII, 290–91). This figurative use of the word is common in Elizabethan drama.

⁴ This recalls the line in the tragedy read in Dr. Johnson's presence: "Who rules o'er freemen should himself be free," and his celebrated parody of it.

⁵ Professor Ker points out that Dryden in his Apology prefixed to *The State of Innocence*, and elsewhere, defines wit as "the propriety of thoughts and words," following a passage in Aristotle's *Poetics*.

⁶ puppet-show.

where the objects only glide before the eye, and disappear. The most discerning critic can judge no more of these silent graces in the action, than he who rides post ¹ through an unknown country can distinguish the situation of places and the nature of the soil. The purity of phrase, the clearness of conception and expression, the boldness maintained to majesty,² the significancy and sound of words, not strained into bombast but justly elevated;—in short, those very words and thoughts which cannot be changed but for the worse, must of necessity escape our transient view upon the theatre; and yet, without all these, a play may take. For, if either the story move us, or the actor help the lameness of it with his performance, or now and then a glittering beam of wit or passion strike through the obscurity of the poem, any of these are sufficient to effect a present liking, but not to fix a lasting admiration; for nothing but truth can long continue, and time is the surest judge of truth. I am not vain enough to think that I have left no faults in this, which that touchstone will not discover; neither, indeed, is it possible to avoid them in a play of this nature. There are evidently two actions in it; but it will be clear to any judicious man, that with half the pains I could have raised a play from either of them; for this time I satisfied my humour, which was to tack two plays together, and to break a rule ³ for the pleasure of variety. The truth is, the audience are grown weary of continued melancholy scenes; and I dare venture to prophesy, that few tragedies except those in verse ⁴ shall succeed in this age, if they are not lightened with a course of mirth; for the feast is too dull and solemn without the fiddles. But how difficult a task this is, will soon be tried; for a several ⁵ genius is required to either way; and, without both of 'em, a man in my opinion is but half a poet for the stage. Neither is it so trivial an undertaking, to make a tragedy end happily; for 'tis more difficult to save than 'tis to kill. The dagger and the cup of poison ⁶ are always in readiness; but to bring the action to the last extremity, and then by probable means to recover all, will require the art and judgment of a writer, and cost him many a pang in the performance.

And now, my Lord, I must confess, that what I have written looks more like a Preface than a Dedication;⁷ and truly it was thus far my

¹ at full speed.

³ Viz., that of Unity of Action.

⁵ distinct.

⁶ See Pope's *Moral Essays*, II, 92: "Lucretia's dagger, Rosamonda's bowl," and cf. Addison's opera of *Rosamond*.

⁷ No uncommon instance of a natural tendency to expansion to which our literature is signally indebted.

² on the level of majesty.

⁴ In rimed verse?

The Spanish Fryar

design, that I might entertain you with somewhat in my own art, which might be more worthy of a noble mind than the stale, exploded tricks of fulsome panegyrics. 'Tis difficult to write justly on anything, but almost impossible in praise. I shall therefore waive so nice a subject, and can only tell you that in recommending a Protestant play to a Protestant patron, as I do myself an honour, so I do your noble family a right, who have been always eminent in the support and favour of our religion and liberties. And if the promises of your youth, your education at home, and your experience abroad, deceive me not, the principles you have embraced are such as will no way degenerate from your ancestors, but refresh their memory in the minds of all true Englishmen, and renew their lustre in your person; which, my Lord, is not more the wish than it is the constant expectation of

Your Lordship's
Most obedient,
Faithful servant
JOHN DRYDEN.

Prologue

Now, luck for us, and a kind hearty pit;
For he who pleases never fails of wit:
Honour is yours; ¹
And you, like kings at city-treats, ² bestow it;
The writer kneels, and is bid rise a poet. 5
But you are fickle sovereigns, to our sorrow;
You dub to day, and hang a man to morrow.
You cry the same sense up, and down again,
Just like brass-money once a year in Spain. ³
Take you i' th' mood, whate'er base metal come, 10
You coin as fast as groats at Bromingam; ⁴
Though 'tis no more like sense in ancient plays,
Than Rome's religion like St. Peter's days. ⁵
In short, so swift your judgments turn and wind,
You cast our fleetest wits a mile behind. 15
'Twere well your judgments but in plays did range;
But e'en your follies and debauches change
With such a whirl, the poets of our Age
Are tired, and cannot score them on the stage,
Unless each vice in short-hand they indite, 20
E'en as notcht prentices whole sermons write. ⁶
The heavy Hollanders no vices know
But what they used a hundred years ago;
Like honest plants, where they were stuck, they grow. }

¹ As to Dryden's broken lines cf. above, p. 130.

² Many notices of which appear in the Restoration diaries.

³ The financial distress of Spain never seemed more hopeless than at this time—when the incompetence of King Charles II had fully declared itself.

⁴ Birmingham,—notorious then and after for debased or counterfeit coins, especially "Brummagem [cf. *N.E.D.*] groats."

⁵ See above, pp. 120-21.

⁶ Notcht = indentured (Saintsbury). The apprentice of old had "not only to carry the family bible to church, but to take notes of the sermon for the edification of his master or mistress" (Scott).

The Spanish Fryar

They cheat, but still from cheating sires they come; 25
 They drink, but they were christ'ned first in mum.¹
 Their patrimonial sloth the Spaniards keep,
 And Philip first taught Philip how to sleep.
 The French and we still ² change; but—here's the curse—
 They change for better, and we change for worse; 30
 They take up our old trade of conquering,³
 And we are taking theirs, to dance and sing;
 Our fathers did, for change, to France repair,
 And they, for change, will try our English air.⁴
 As children, when they throw one toy away, 35
 Straight a more foolish gewgaw comes in play—
 So we, grown penitent on serious thinking,
 Leave whoring and devoutly fall to drinking.⁵
 Scowring the watch ⁶ grows out-of-fashion wit,
 Now we set up for tilting ⁷ in the pit; 40
 Where 'tis agreed by bullies chicken-hearted
 To fight the ladies first, and then be parted.
 A fair attempt has twice or thrice been made
 To hire night-murd'ers, and make death a trade.⁸
 When murder's out,⁹ what vice can we advance 45
 Unless the new-found pois'ning trick of France? ¹⁰
 And, when their art of ratsbane we have got,
 By way of thanks, we'll send 'em o'er our Plot.¹¹

¹ A strong ale, said to have derived its name from its inventor, Christian Mumme of Brunswick.

² constantly.

³ On October 1st 1681 the French occupied both Strassburg and Casale.

⁴ The allusion here seems to be to the French Protestant refugees, of whom the stream began in this year 1681, after Charles II's Order in Council in their favour.

⁵ This recalls a famous passage in *Hudibras*.

⁶ Scampering off after beating the watch.

⁷ An allusion to the uncritical uproar and disturbance familiar in the Restoration theatre. Cf. R.W. Lowe's *Thomas Betterton*, ch. II, and Nicoll, *Restoration Drama* (1923) pp. 17 ff.

⁸ Probably an allusion to the notorious "Rose-alley ambushade" against Dryden (Dec. 18, 1679), which was carried out at night.

⁹ out of fashion.

¹⁰ A series of sensational poisoning cases profoundly agitated French society between 1676 and 1682, and the "Chambre Ardente" had dealt with some of these cases in 1679-80. (Cf. F. Funck-Brentano, *Le Drame des Poisons*.)

¹¹ The Popish Plot agitation (1678) still exacted belated victims in 1680 and 1681.

Dramatis Personæ¹

LEONORA, <i>Queen of ARRAGON.</i>	<i>Mrs. Barry.</i>
TERESA, <i>Woman to LEONORA.</i>	<i>Mrs. Crofts.</i>
ELVIRA, <i>Wife to GOMEZ.</i>	<i>Mrs. Betterton.</i>
TORRISMOND.	<i>Mr. Betterton.</i>
BERTRAN.	<i>Mr. Williams.</i>
ALPHONSO.	<i>Mr. Wittsheir.²</i>
LORENZO, <i>his Son.</i>	<i>Mr. Smith.</i>
RAYMOND.	<i>Mr. Gillow.</i>
PEDRO.	<i>Mr. Underhill.</i>
GOMEZ.	<i>Mr. Nokes.</i>
DOMINIC, <i>the Spanish Friar.</i>	<i>Mr. Lee.³</i>

¹ The precedence given to the female characters is probably due not so much to general courtesy, as to the interest taken at this time in the new institution of actresses.

² Wiltshire.

³ Usually spelt Leigh. Betterton in his later years played the part of Dominic himself (see Lowe's *Betterton*).

The Spanish Fryar

Act I. [Scene I.—*Near the walls.*]

ALPHONSO [*and*] PEDRO *meet, with Soldiers on each side, drums, etc.*

Alph. Stand; give the word!

Ped. The Queen of Arragon.

Alph. Pedro?—How goes the night?

Ped. She wears apace.

Alph. Then, welcome, daylight! We shall have warm work on't.
The Moor will 'gage ¹

His utmost forces on this next assault, 5
To win a Queen and Kingdom.

Ped. Pox o' this lion-way of wooing, though!
Is the Queen stirring yet?

Alph. She has not been abed, but in her chapel 10
All night devoutly watched, and bribed the Saints
With vows for her deliv'rance.

Ped. Oh, Alphonso,
I fear they come too late! Her father's crimes
Sit heavy on her, and weigh down her prayers.
A crown usurped; a lawful King deposed,
In bondage held, debarred the common light; 15
His children murdered, and his friends destroyed;—
What can we less expect than what we feel,
And what we fear will follow?

Alph. Heaven avert it!

Ped. Then Heaven must not be Heaven. Judge th' event 20
By what has passed. Th' usurper 'joyed not long
His ill-got crown;—'tis true, he died in peace—
Unriddle that, ye powers!—but left his daughter,
Our present Queen, engaged, upon his deathbed,
To marry with young Bertran, whose cursed father
Had helped to make him great. 25

¹ As to the broken lines, and clipt words, see above, p. 130.

Hence, you well know, this fatal war arose;
 Because the Moor Abdalla, with whose troops
 Th' usurper gained the Kingdom, was refused,
 And, as an infidel, his love despised.

Alph. Well, we are soldiers, Pedro, and, like lawyers, 30
 Plead for our pay.

Ped. A good cause would do well, though!
 It gives my sword an edge. You see this Bertran
 Has now three times been beaten by the Moors;
 What hope we have, is in young Torrismond,
 Your brother's son.

Alph. He's a successful warrior, 35
 And has the soldiers' hearts. Upon the skirts
 Of Arragon our squandered ¹ troops he rallies.
 Our watchmen from the towers with longing eyes
 Expect his swift arrival.

Ped. It must be swift; or it will come too late. 40

Alph. No more.—Duke Bertran.

Enter BERTRAN attended.

Bert. Relieve the cent'rys ² that have watched all night!
 [To PED.] Now, collonel, ³ have you disposed your men,
 That you stand idle here?

Ped. Mine are drawn off,
 To take a short repose.

Bert. Short let it be; 45
 For from the Moorish camp this hour and more
 There has been heard a distant humming noise,
 Like bees disturbed, and arming in their hives.
 What courage in our soldiers? Speak; what hope?

Ped. As much as when physicians shake their heads, 50
 And bid their dying patient think of Heaven.

¹ Scattered. (Saintsbury notes the survival of this classical use in the turf phrase, of a horse "squandering the field.")

² sentries.

³ The Spanish spelling "coronel" doubtless accounts for our modern English pronunciation.

Our walls are thinly manned; our best men slain;
The rest, an heartless number, spent with watching,
And harassed out with duty.

Bert. Good-night all, then!

Ped. Nay, for my part, 'tis but a single life 55
I have to lose. I'll plant my colours down
In the mid-breach, and by 'em fix my foot;
Say a short soldier's prayer, to spare the trouble
Of my few friends above; and then expect
The next fair bullet. 60

Alph. Never was known a night of such distraction;
Noise so confused and dreadful; justling¹ crowds
That run, and know not whither; torches gliding,
Like meteors, by each other in the streets.

Ped. I met a rev'rend, fat, old, gouty friar,²— 65
With a paunch swoln so high, his double chin
Might rest upon't; a true son of the Church;
Fresh-coloured, and well thriven on his trade,—
Come puffing with his greasy bald-pate choir,³
And fumbling o'er his beads in such an agony, 70
He told them false for fear. About his neck
There hung a wench, the label of his function,
Whom he shook off, i-faith, methought, unkindly.
It seems the holy stallion durst not score
Another sin, before he left the world. 75

Enter a Captain.

Capt. To arms, my Lord, to arms!
From the Moors' camp the noise grows louder still;
Rattling of armour, trumpets, drums and ataballes;
And sometimes peals of shouts that rend the heavens,
Like victory; then groans again and howlings, 80

¹ jostling.

² Dryden here "recommends" an outstanding character to the preliminary "observation" of his audience by "a pleasant description before the person appears," an "artifice" he praises in Jonson (cf. *Of Dramatic Poesy*, cited by Strunk).—*Gen. Eds.*

³ Q, "quire."

Like those of vanquished men; but ev'ry echo
Goes fainter off, and dies in distant sounds.

Bert. Some false attack; expect ¹ on 'tother side!

One to the gunners on St. Jago's tower;

Bid them for shame ²

85

Level their cannon lower! On my soul,
They're all corrupted with the gold of Barbary,
To carry over, and not hurt, the Moor.

Enter a second Captain.

2d Capt. My Lord, here's fresh intelligence arrived.

Our army, led by valiant Torrismond,

90

Is now in hot engagement with the Moors,—

'Tis said, within their trenches.

Bert. I think all fortune is reserved for him!

He might have sent us word, though;

And then we could have favoured ³ his attempt

95

With rallies from the town.

Alph. It could not be;

We were so close blocked up, that none could peep

Upon the walls and live. But yet 'tis time.

Bert. No, 'tis too late; I will not hazard it;

On pain of death, let no man dare to sally!

100

Ped. [*aside*]. Oh, envy, envy, how it works within him!—

How now? What means this show?

Alph. 'Tis a procession.

The Queen is going to the great cathedral,

To pray for our success against the Moors.

Ped. Very good; she usurps the throne, keeps the old King
in prison, and at the same time is praying for a blessing.⁴ Oh,
religion and roguery, how they go together! 107

[*A Procession of Priests and Choristers in white, with tapers, followed by the QUEEN and Ladies, goes over the stage; the Choristers singing:*

¹ look out for the enemy.

³ supported.

² A broken line, tagged on to the preceding one in Q.

⁴ See above, p. 122, n. 1.

*Look down, ye Blessed above, look down;
Behold our weeping matrons' tears;
Behold our tender virgins' fears;* 110
And with success our armies crown!

*Look down, ye Blessed above, look down;
Oh, save us, save us, and our state restore;
For pity, pity, pity we implore;
For pity, pity, pity we implore.* 115

[*The Procession goes off; and shout within.*¹ *Then enter LORENZO, who kneels to ALPHONSO.*

Bert. [to ALPH.]. A joyful cry; and see, your son Lorenzo!
Good news, kind Heaven!

Alph. Oh, welcome, welcome! Is the gen'ral safe?
How near our army? When shall we be succoured?
Or, are we succoured? Are the Moors removed? 120
Answer these questions first, and then a thousand more;
Answer them all together!²

Lor. Yes, when I have a thousand tongues, I will.
The gen'ral's well; his army too is safe,
As victory can make 'em. The Moors' King 125
Is safe enough, I warrant him, for one.
At dawn of day our gen'ral cleft his pate,
Spite of his woollen night-cap³;—a slight wound;
Perhaps he may recover.

Alph. Thou reviv'st me.

Ped. By my computation now, the victory was gained before
the procession was made for it; and yet it will go hard but the
priests will make a miracle of it. 132

Lor. Yes, 'faith; we came like bold, intruding guests,
And took 'em unprepared to give us welcome.
Their scouts we killed, then found their body⁴ sleeping; 135
And, as they lay confused, we stumbled o'er them,
And took what joint came next,—arms, heads or legs,—

¹ I.e., behind the scenes.

² Cf. *As You Like It*, III, ii, 231-38.

³ His turban.

⁴ Their main body.

Somewhat undecently. But when men want light,
They make but bungling work.

Bert. I'll to the Queen,
And bear the news.

Ped. That's young Lorenzo's duty.¹ 140

Bert. I'll spare his trouble.—

[*Aside.*] This Torrismond begins to grow
too fast;

He must be mine, or ruined. [*Exit.*

Lor. Pedro, a word. [*They whisper.*]

Alph. How swift he shot away! I find it stung him,
In spite of his dissembling. 145

[*To LORENZO.*] How many of the enemy are slain?

Lor. Troth, sir, we were in haste, and could not stay
To score the men we killed; but there they lie.

Best send our women out to take the tale;²
There's circumcision in abundance for 'em.³ 150

[*Turns to PEDRO again.*

Alph. How far did you pursue 'em?

Lor. Some few miles.—

[*To PEDRO.*] Good store of harlots say you, and dog-cheap?

Pedro, they must be had, and speedily;

I've kept a tedious fast. [*They whisper again.*

Alph. When will he make his entry? He deserves 155

Such triumphs as were giv'n by ancient Rome;

Ha, boy, what say'st thou?

Lor. As you say, Sir, that Rome was very ancient.

[*To PEDRO.*] I leave the choice to you; fair, black, tall, low
Let her but have a nose; and you may tell her, 160

I'm rich in jewels, rings, and bobbing pearls,

Plucked from Moors' ears.

Alph. Lorenzo!

Lor. Somewhat busy

About affairs relating to the public.—

¹ As sent by Torrismond to report the victory.

² count.

³ A burlesque allusion to I Samuel, xviii, 25-27?

[To PEDRO.] A seasonable girl, just in the nick now—

[*Trumpets within.*

Ped. I hear the gen'ral's trumpet. Stand and mark 165
How he will be received;—I fear, but coldly.

There hung a cloud, methought, on Bertran's brow.

Lor. Then look to see a stone on Torrismond's;
Looks fright not men. The gen'ral has seen Moors
With as bad faces; no dispraise to Bertran's! 170

Ped. 'Twas rumoured in the camp, he loves the Queen.

Lor. He drinks her health devoutly.

Alph. That may breed
Bad blood 'twixt him and Bertran.¹

Ped. Yes, in private.
But Bertran has been taught the arts of Court,—
To gild a face with smiles, and leer a man 175
To ruin.²—Oh, here they come.

*Enter TORRISMOND and Officers on one side, BERTRAN attended
on the other; they embrace, BERTRAN bowing low.*

Just as I prophesied.—

Lor. Death and hell, he laughs at him—in his face too.

Ped. Oh, you mistake him; 'twas an humble grin,
The fawning joy of courtiers and of dogs.

Lor. Here are nothing but lies to be expected. [*Aside.*] I'll
e'en go lose myself in some blind alley, and try if any courteous
damsel will think me worth the finding. [*Exit.*

Alph. Now he begins to open.

Bert. Your country rescued, and your Queen relieved,—
A glorious conquest, noble Torrismond! 185

The people rend the skies with loud applause,
And Heav'n can hear no other name but yours.
The thronging crowds press on you as you pass,
And with their eager joy make triumph slow.

Torr. My Lord, I have no taste 190
Of popular applause; the noisy praise

¹ In Q Alphonso's speech forms a single line.

² Sc.-Sa. retain "to ruin" as part of the previous line.

Of giddy crowds, as changeable as winds,
 Still vehement, and still without a cause;
 Servant to chance, and blowing in the tide
 Of swoln success,—but, veering with the ebb, 195
 It leaves the channel dry.

Bert. So young a stoic! ¹

Torr. You wrong me, if you think I'll sell one drop
 Within these veins for pageants; but let honour
 Call for my blood, and sluice it into streams;
 Turn fortune loose again to my pursuit 200
 And let me hunt her through embattled foes
 In dusty plains, amidst the cannons' roar,—
 There will I be the first.²

Bert. [*aside*]. I'll try him further.
 Suppose the assembled states ³ of Arragon
 Decree a statue to you, thus inscribed: 205
 "To Torrismond, who freed his native land."

Alph. [*To PEDRO*]. Mark how he sounds and fathoms him, to
 find
 The shallows of his soul!

Bert. The just applause
 Of god-like senates is the stamp of virtue,⁴
 Which makes it pass unquestioned through the world. 210
 These honours you deserve; nor shall my suffrage
 Be last to fix them on you. If refused,
 You brand us all with black ingratitude;
 For times to come shall say: Our Spain, like Rome,
 Neglects her champions after noble acts, 215
 And lets their laurels wither on their heads.

Torr. A statue, for a battle blindly fought,
 When darkness and surprise made conquest cheap;
 Where virtue borrowed but the arms of chance,
 And struck a random blow!—'Twas Fortune's work, 220

¹ Alluding to the stoics' contempt for the degradation of the multitude.

² Obviously this sentiment, though characteristic of the heroic drama, might also be paralleled from *Henry IV* or other earlier plays.

³ Estates (*Cortes*).

⁴ Cf. Gray's *Elegy*, "The applause of listening senates."

And Fortune take the praise!

Bert. Yet happiness

Is the first fame. Virtue without success ¹

Is a fair picture shown by an ill light.

But lucky men are favourites of Heaven;

And whom should Kings esteem above Heav'n's darlings? 225

The praises of a young and beauteous Queen

Shall crown your glorious acts.

Ped. [To ALPHONSO]. There sprung the mine.

Torr. The Queen! That were a happiness too great!

Named you the Queen, my Lord?

Bert. Yes; you have seen her, and you must confess, 230

A praise, a smile, a look from her is worth

The shouts of thousand amphitheatres.

She, she shall praise you; for I can oblige her.²

Tomorrow will deliver all her charms

Into my arms, and make her mine for ever.— 235

Why stand you mute?

Torr. Alas! I cannot speak.

Bert. Not speak, my Lord! How were your thoughts employed?

Torr. Nor can I think, or I am lost in thought.

Bert. Thought of the Queen, perhaps?

Torr. Why, if it were,

Heav'n may be thought on, though too high to climb. 240

Bert. Oh, now I find where your ambition drives!

You ought not think of her.³

Torr. So I say too,

I ought not. Madmen ought not to be mad;

But who can help his frenzy?

Bert. Fond young man!

The wings of your ambition must be clipt. 245

Your shame-faced virtue shunned the people's praise

And senate's honours; but 'tis well we know

What price you hold yourself at. You have fought

With some success; and that has sealed your pardon.

¹ An unlucky chance rime.

² So Q; Sc.-Sa., "ought not to think."

³ dictate her action.

Torr. Pardon from thee!—Oh, give me patience, Heaven! 250
 Thrice vanquished Bertran, if thou dar'st, look out
 Upon yon slaughtered host, that field of blood;
 There seal my pardon, where thy fame was lost!

Ped. He's ruined past redemption.

Alph. [To TORRISMOND]. Learn respect
 To the first Prince o' th' blood!

Bert. Oh, let him rave! 255
 I'll not contend with madmen.

Torr. I have done.
 I know, 'twas madness to declare this truth;
 And yet, 'twere baseness to deny my love.
 'Tis true, my hopes are vanishing as clouds,
 Lighter than children's bubbles blown by winds; 260

My merit's but the rash results ¹ of chance,
 My birth unequal; all the stars against me;
 Pow'r, promise, choice, the living and the dead;
 Mankind my foes; and only love to friend;—
 But such a love, kept at such awful distance 265

As, what it loudly dares to tell a rival,²
 Shall fear to whisper there. Queens may be loved,
 And so may gods; else, why are altars raised?
 Why shines the sun, but that he may be viewed?
 But oh! When he's too bright, if then we gaze, 270
 'Tis but to weep, and close our eyes in darkness. [Exit.]

Bert. 'Tis well; the goddess shall be told, she shall,
 Of her new worshipper. [Exit.]

Ped. So! Here's fine work!
 He has supplied his only foe with arms
 For his destruction. Old Penelope's tale ³ 275
 Inverted; h' has unravelled all by day

That he has done by night. What, planet-struck!

Alph. I wish I were, to be past sense ⁴ of this!

Ped. Would I had but a lease of life so long,
 As till my flesh and blood rebelled this way 280

¹ So Q; Sc.-Sa., "result."

² Q, "dares to tell, a rival Shall fear."

³ The time-honoured story of Penelope's web.

⁴ feeling.

Against our Sov'reign Lady! Mad for a Queen—
With a globe in one hand, and a sceptre in 'tother!
A very pretty moppet!

Alph. Then, to declare his madness to his rival;—
His father absent on an embassy; 285
Himself a stranger almost, wholly friendless!

A torrent, rolling down a precipice,
Is easier to be stopt than is his ruin.

Ped. 'Tis fruitless to complain. Haste to the Court;
Improve your int'rest there for pardon from the Queen. 290

Alph. Weak remedies; but all must be attempted.¹ [*Exit.*]

[Act I. Scene II.—*A street, with GOMEZ' house at the corner.*]

Enter LORENZO.

Lor. Well, I am the most unlucky rogue! I have been ranging over half the town, but have sprung no game. Our women are worse infidels than the Moors; I told 'em I was one of the knight-errants that delivered 'em from ravishment; and I think in my conscience, that is their quarrel to me.²

Ped. Is this a time for fooling? Your cousin is run honourably³ mad in love with her Majesty; he is split upon a rock; and you, who are in chase of harlots, are sinking in the main ocean. I think, the devil's in the family. 9

Lor. [*solus*]. My cousin ruined, says he? Hum; not that I wish my kinsman's ruin; that were unchristian; but, if the general is ruined, I am heir; there's comfort for a Christian! Money I have, I thank the honest Moors for't; but I want a mistress. I am willing to be lewd; but the tempter is wanting on his part. 14

Enter ELVIRA, veiled.

Elv. Stranger! Cavalier!—Will you not hear me,—you Moor-killer, you Matador? ⁴

¹ So Q. Sc.-Sa. print Alphonso's last speech in two lines.

² with me.

³ Cf. the French *pour le bon motif*. ⁴ slayer in the bull-fight (*matar* = to kill).

Lor. Meaning me, Madam?

Elv. Face about, man! You a soldier, and afraid of the enemy?

Lor. [*aside*]. I must confess, I did not expect to have been charged first; I see souls will not be lost for want of diligence in this devil's reign.—Now, Madam Cynthia behind a cloud, your will and pleasure with me? 22

Elv. You have the appearance of a cavalier; and if you are as deserving as you seem, perhaps you may not repent of your adventure. If a lady like you well enough to hold discourse with you at first sight, you are gentleman enough, I hope, to help her out with an apology, and to lay the blame on stars, or destiny, or what you please, to excuse the frailty of a woman. 28

Lor. Oh, I love an easy woman! There's such a doe¹ to crack a thick-shelled mistress; we break our teeth, and find no kernel. 'Tis generous in you to take pity on a stranger, and not to suffer him to fall into ill hands at his first arrival. 32

Elv. You may have a better opinion of me than I deserve. You have not seen me yet; and, therefore, I am confident you are heart-whole. 35

Lor. Not absolutely slain, I must confess; but I am drawing on apace. You have a dangerous tongue in your head. I can tell you that; and if your eyes prove of as killing metal, there is but one way with me. Let me see you, for the safeguard of my honour; 'tis but decent the cannon should be drawn down upon me before I yield. 41

Elv. What a terrible similitude² have you made, colonel, to show that you are inclining to the wars! I could answer you with another in my profession. Suppose you were in want of money, would you not be glad to take a turn upon content³ in a sealed bag, without peeping?—But, however, I will not stand with you for a sample. [*Lifts up her veil.*]

Lor. What eyes were there! How keen their glances! You do

¹ *ado.*

² To his martial simile she retorts with one appropriate to herself as a usurer's wife.

³ Without examination. So Pope in the *Essay on Criticism*:

Their praise is still,—the style is excellent;
The sense they humbly take upon content.

well to keep 'em veiled; they are too sharp to be trusted out of the scabbard. 50

Elv. Perhaps, now, you may accuse my forwardness; but this day of jubilee is the only time of freedom I have had; and there is nothing so extravagant as a prisoner, when he gets loose a little, and is immediately to return into his fetters.

Lor. To confess freely to you, Madam, I was never in love with less than your whole sex before; but now I have seen you, I am in the direct road of languishing and sighing; and, if love goes on as it begins, for aught I know, by tomorrow morning you may hear of me in rhyme and sonnet. I tell you truly, I do not like these symptoms in myself. Perhaps I may go shufflingly at first; for I was never before walked in trammels;¹ yet I shall drudge and moil at constancy, till I have worn off the hitching in my pace. 63

Elv. Oh, Sir, there are arts to reclaim the wildest men, as there are to make spaniels fetch and carry: chide 'em often, and feed 'em seldom. Now I know your temper, you may thank yourself, if you are kept to hard meat. You are in for years, if you make love to me. 68

Lor. I hate a formal obligation with an *Anno Domini* at end on't; there may be an evil meaning in the word years, called matrimony. 71

Elv. I can easily rid you of that fear; I wish I could rid myself as easily of the bondage!

Lor. Then you are married?

Elv. If a covetous, and a jealous, and an old, man be a husband.

Lor. Three as good qualities for my purpose as I could wish; now love be praised! 77

Enter ELVIRA'S Duenna, and whispers to her.

Elv. [*aside*]. If I get not home before my husband, I shall be ruined. [*To LORENZO.*] I dare not stay to tell you where. Farewell!—Could I once more— [*Exit.*]

Lor. This is unconscionable dealing: to be made a slave, and know not whose livery I wear. Who have we yonder?

¹“Shackles in which horses are taught to pace” (Johnson).

Enter GOMEZ.

By that shambling in his walk, it should be my rich old banker, Gomez, whom I knew at Barcelona. As I live, 'tis he!—[*To GOMEZ.*] What, old Mammon here! 85

Gom. How! Young Beelzebub!

Lor. What devil has set his claws in thy haunches, and brought thee hither to Saragossa? ¹ Sure, he meant a farther journey with thee!

Gom. I always remove before the enemy. When the Moors are ready to besiege one town, I shift quarters to the next; I keep as far from the infidels as I can. 92

Lor. That's but a hair's breadth at farthest.

Gom. Well, you have got a famous victory; all true subjects are overjoyed at it. There are bonfires decreed; an' the times had not been hard, my billet should have burnt too. 96

Lor. I dare say for thee, thou hast such a respect for a single billet, thou wouldst almost have thrown on thyself to save it; thou art for saving everything but thy soul. 99

Gom. Well, well; you'll not believe me generous, till I carry you to the tavern, and crack half a pint with you at my own charges. 102

Lor. No; I'll keep thee from hanging thy self for such an extravagance; and, instead of it, thou shalt do me a mere verbal courtesy. I have just now seen a most incomparable young lady.² 106

Gom. Whereabouts did you see this most incomparable young lady?—[*Aside.*] My mind misgives me plaguily.

Lor. Here, man, just before this corner-house;—pray Heaven, it prove no bawdy-house! 110

Gom. [*aside*]. Pray Heaven, he does not make it one!

Lor. What dost thou mutter to thyself? Hast thou anything to say against the honesty of that house?

¹ An inversion of the favourite horse-play in the old miracles and moralities, where the Devil carries off on his back the Vice, by whom he is belaboured in return. See Greene's *Friar Bacon*.

² Hartmann compares with the humorous situation of this scene that in *L'École des Femmes* I, 6.

Gom. Not I, colonel; the walls are very honest stone, and the timber very honest wood, for ought I know; but for the woman, I cannot say, till I know her better.—Describe her person, and if she live in this quarter, I may give you tidings of her. 117

Lor. She is of a middle stature; dark-coloured hair; most bewitching leer with her eyes,—the most roguish cast! Her cheeks are dimpled when she smiles; and her smiles would tempt a hermit. 121

Gom. [*aside*]. I am dead; I am buried; I am damned.—Go on, colonel; have you no other marks of her?

Lor. Thou hast all her marks; but she has a husband—a jealous, covetous old hunks. Speak, canst thou tell me news of her? 125

Gom. Yes; this news, colonel, that you have seen your last of her.

Lor. If thou help'st me not to the knowledge of her, thou art a circumcised Jew.

Gom. Circumcise me no more than I circumcise you, Colonel Hernando! Once more, you have seen your last of her. 131

Lor. [*aside*]. I am glad he knows me only by that name of Hernando, by which I went at Barcelona; now he can tell no tales of me to my father. [*To him.*] Come, thou wert ever good-natured, when thou could'st get by't.—Look here, rogue; 'tis of the right damning colour. Thou art not proof against gold, sure? Do not I know thee for a covetous— 137

Gom. Jealous old hunks? Those were the marks of your mistress' husband, as I remember, colonel.

Lor. [*aside*]. Oh, the devil! What a rogue in understanding was I, not to find him out sooner! 141

Gom. Do, do; look sillily, good colonel; 'tis a decent melancholy, after an absolute defeat.

Lor. Faith, not for that, dear Gomez; but—

Gom. But—no pumping, my dear colonel! 145

Lor. Hang pumping! I was thinking a little upon a point of gratitude. We two have been long acquaintance; I know thy merits, and can make some interest.—Go to; thou wert born to authority; I'll make thee Alcaide,¹ Mayor of Saragossa.

¹ the judge appointed by the commune.

Gom. Satisfy yourself, you shall not make me what you think, colonel! 151

Lor. 'Faith, but I will; thou hast the face of a magistrate already.

Gom. And you would provide me with a magistrate's head to my magistrate's face? ¹ I thank you, colonel. 155

Lor. Come, thou art so suspicious upon an idle story! That woman I saw,—I mean that little, crooked, ugly woman—for 'tother was a lie—is no more thy wife;—as I'll go home with thee, and satisfy thee immediately, my dear friend.

Gom. I shall not put you to that trouble; no, not so much as an embassy by a civil old woman, nor a serenade of *twinkledum twinkledum* under my windows! Nay, I will advise you, out of my tenderness to your person, that you walk not near yon corner-house by night; for to my certain knowledge there are blunder-busses planted in every loop-hole, that go off constantly of their own accord at the squeaking of a fiddle, and the thrumming of a ghittar.² 167

Lor. Art thou so obstinate? Then I denounce open war against thee; I'll demolish thy citadel by force; or at least I'll bring my whole regiment upon thee,—my thousand red ³ locusts that shall devour thee in free quarter.⁴ Farewell, wrought night-cap! 171
[Exit LORENZO.]

Gom. Farewell, buff.⁵ Free quarter for a regiment of red-coat locusts? I hope to see 'em all in the Red Sea first! But oh, this Jezabel of mine! I'll get a physician that shall prescribe her an ounce of camphire⁶ every morning for her breakfast, to abate incontinency. She shall never peep abroad,—no, not to church for confession; and, for never going, she shall be condemned for a heretic. She shall have stripes by troy weight, and sustenance by

¹ The antler was a symbol of honour before it was supposed to be one of dishonour.

² guitar.

³ the Spanish colour in the Wars of the League.

⁴ Lorenzo's scheme—billeting his soldiers upon Gomez—exemplifies one of the grievances set forth in the Petition of Right.

⁵ fool; cf. "buffing" in *Ram Alley* (1611), Act V, and the modern colloquialism "old buffer."

⁶ camphor.

drachms and scruples.¹ Nay, I'll have a fasting almanac² printed
on purpose for her use, in which 180

No Carnival nor Christmass shall appear,
But Lents and Ember-weeks shall fill the year. [Exit.

Act II. Scene [I].—*The QUEEN'S Ante-chamber.*

Enter ALPHONSO and PEDRO.

Alph. When saw you my Lorenzo?

Ped. I had a glimpse of him; but he shot by me,
Like a young hound upon a burning scent.
He's gone a harlot-hunting.

Alph. His foreign breeding might have taught him better. 5

Ped. 'Tis that has taught him this.

What learn our youth abroad, but to refine
The homely vices of their native land?
Give me an honest, home-spun country clown
Of our own growth; his dulness is but plain, 10
But theirs embroidered. They are sent out fools,
And come back fops.³

Alph. You know what reasons urged me.

But, now I have accomplished my designs,
I should be glad he knew 'em. His wild riots
Disturb my soul; but they would sit more close, 15
Did not the threat'ned downfall of our house,
In Torrismond, o'erwhelm my private ills.

Enter BERTRAN, attended, and whispering with a Courtier aside.

Bert. I would not have her think he dared to love her;
If he presume to own it, she's so proud,
He tempts his certain ruin. 20

¹ Apothecaries compound their medicines by troy weight, but buy and sell their drugs by the more minute avoirdupois system of grains, scruples,¹ drachms, and ounces.

² An almanac marking all the Church fasts.

³ This rather cheap patriotic wisdom (cf. the Prologue) recalls many variants of a species of Fools never absent from the Ship.

Alph. [To PED.]. Mark, how disdainfully he throws his eyes on us.

Our old imprisoned King wore no such looks.

Ped. Oh! Would the general shake off his dotage
To the usurping Queen,
And re-enthroned good venerable Sancho, 25
I'll undertake, should Bertran sound his trumpets,
And Torrismond but whistle through his fingers,
He draws his army off.

Alph. I told him so;
But had an answer louder than a storm.

Ped. Now, plague and pox on his smock-loyalty! 30
I hate to see a brave, bold fellow sotted ¹
Made sour and senseless, turned to whey by love,
A drivelling hero, fit for a romance.—
Oh, here he comes! What will their greetings be?

Enter TORRISMOND, attended; BERTRAN and he meet and jostle.²

Bert. Make way, my Lords, and let the pageant pass! 35

Tor. I make my way, where'er I see my foe;
But you, my Lord, are good at a retreat.
I have no Moors behind me.

Bert. Death and hell!
Dare to speak thus, when you come out³ again!

Tor. Dare to provoke me thus, insulting man? 40

Enter TERESA.

Ter. My Lords, you are too loud so near the Queen.
You, Torrismond, have much offended her;
'Tis her command you instantly appear,
To answer your demeanour to the prince.

[*Exit* TERESA; BERTRAN, with his company, follows her.]

Tor. O Pedro, O Alphonso, pity me! 45
A grove of pikes,
Whose polished steel from far severely shines,
Are ⁴not so dreadful as this beauteous Queen.

¹ besotted. ² jostle. ³ out of the precincts of the Court. ⁴ A false concord.

Alph. Call up your courage timely to your aid,
 And like a lion, pressed upon the toils,¹ 50
 Leap on your hunters! Speak your actions boldly!
 There is a time when modest virtue is
 Allowed to praise itself.

Ped. Heart!² You were hot enough, too hot, but now;
 Your fury then boiled upward to a foam; 55
 But since this message came, you sink and settle,
 As if cold water had been poured upon you.

Tor. Alas! Thou know'st not what it is to love.
 When we behold an angel, not to fear
 Is to be impudent.—No; I'm resolved. 60
 Like a led victim, to my death I'll go,
 And, dying, bless the hand that gave the blow. [*Exeunt.*]

[Act II. Scene II.]

The Scene draws, and shows the QUEEN sitting in state; BERTRAN standing next to her; then TERESA, etc. She rises, and comes to the front.

Qu. [To BERTRAN]. I blame not you, my Lord; my father's will,
 Your own deserts, and all my people's voice,
 Have placed you in the view³ of sov'reign power.
 But I would learn the cause, why Torrismond
 Within my palace-walls, within my hearing,— 5
 Almost within my sight,—affronts a prince
 Who shortly shall command him.

Bert. He thinks you owe him more than you can pay,
 And looks as he were lord of human-kind.

Enter TORRISMOND, ALPHONSO, PEDRO. TORRISMOND bows low, then looks earnestly on the QUEEN, and keeps at distance.

Ter. Madam, the gen'ral.—

Qu. Let me view him well. 10

¹ Cf. the bombastic lines, Act III, *ad fin.*

² God's heart. (An oath.)

³ have placed before you the prospect.

My father sent him early to the frontiers;
 I have not often seen him; if I did,
 He passed unmarked by my unheeding eyes.—
 But where's the fierceness, the disdainful pride,
 The haughty port, the fiery arrogance?— 15
 By all these marks, this is not, sure, the man.

Bert. Yet this is he who filled your Court with tumult;
 Whose fierce demeanour, and whose insolence,
 The patience of a god could not support.

Qu. Name his offence, my Lord, and he shall have 20
 Immediate punishment.

Bert. 'Tis of so high a nature, should I speak it,
 That my presumption then would equal his.

Qu. Some one among you speak!

Ped. [*Aside*]. Now my tongue itches.

Qu. All dumb? On your allegiance, Torrismond, 25
 By all your hopes, I do command you; speak!

Tor. [*Kneeling*]. Oh, seek not to convince ¹ me of a crime
 Which I can ne'er repent, nor can you pardon;
 Or, if you needs will know it, think, oh think,
 That he who, thus commanded, dares to speak, 30
 Unless commanded, would have died in silence.
 But you adjured me, Madam, by my hopes!
 Hopes I have none, for I am all despair.

Friends I have none, for friendship follows favour;
 Desert I've none, for what I did was duty;— 35
 Oh, that it were,—that it were duty all!

Qu. Why do you pause? Proceed!

Tor. As one, condemned to leap a precipice,
 Who sees before his eyes the depth below,
 Stops short, and looks about for some kind shrub 40
 To break his dreadful fall,—so I—
 But whither am I going? If to death,
 He looks so lovely sweet in beauty's pomp,
 He draws me to his dart.—I dare no more.

Bert. He's mad, beyond the cure of hellebore.² 45

¹ convict.

² A commonplace as a cure for madness. (A chance rime.)

Whips, darkness, dungeons for this insolence!

Tor. Mad as I am, yet I know when to bear.

Qu. You're both too bold.—You, Torrismond, withdraw;
I'll teach you all what's owing to your Queen.—

[*To BERT.*] For you, my Lord,— 50

The priest tomorrow was to join our hands;

I'll try if I can live a day without you.—

So, both of you depart, and live in peace!

Alph. Who knows which way she points,
Doubling and turning like a hunted hare? 55

Find out the meaning of her mind who can!

Ped. Who ever found a woman's? Backward and forward,—
the whole sex in every word! In my conscience, when she was
getting, her mother was thinking of a riddle.

[*Exeunt all but the QUEEN and TERESA.*]

Qu. Haste, my Teresa, haste, and call him back! 60

Ter. Whom, Madam?

Qu. Him!

Ter. Prince Bertran?

Qu. Torrismond.

There is no other he.

Ter. [*Aside.*] A rising sun;

Or I am much deceived. [*Exit TERESA.*]

Qu. A change so swift what heart did ever feel!
It rushed upon me like a mighty stream, 65

And bore me, in a moment, far from shore.

I loved away myself; in one short hour

Already am I gone an age of passion.¹

Was it his youth, his valour, or success?
These might, perhaps, be found in other men;— 70

'Twas that respect, that awful homage, paid me;

That fearful love which trembled in his eyes,

And with a silent earthquake shook his soul.

But, when he spoke, what tender words he said,

So softly that, like flakes of feathered snow, 75

They melted as they fell!—

¹ Probably an intentional inelegancy.

Enter TERESA with TORRISMOND.

Ter. He waits your pleasure.

Qu. 'Tis well; retire!—[*Aside.*] O Heavens, that I must speak
So distant from my heart!

[*To TOR.*] How now! What boldness brings you back again?

Tor. I heard 'twas your command.

Qu. A fond ¹ mistake, 80
To credit so unlikely a command!
And you return, full of the same presumption,
T'affront me with your love?

Tor. If 'tis presumption, for a wretch condemned
To throw himself beneath his judge's feet; 85
A boldness more ² than this I never knew;
Or, if I did, 'twas only to your foes.

Qu. You would insinuate your past services;—
And those, I grant, were great; but you confess
A fault committed since, that cancels all. 90

Tor. And who could dare to disavow his crime,
When that, for which he is accused and seized,
He bears about him still! My eyes confess it;
My ev'ry action speaks my heart aloud.
But oh, the madness of my high attempt 95
Speaks louder yet, and all together cry,—
I love, and I despair.

Qu. Have you not heard,
My father, with his dying voice, bequeathed
My crown to me and Bertran? And dare you,
A private man, presume to love a Queen? 100

Tor. That, that's the wound! I see you set so high,
As no desert or services can reach.—
Good Heav'ns, why gave you me a monarch's soul,
And crusted it with base plebeian clay?
Why gave you me desires of such extent, 105
And such a span to grasp 'em? Sure, my lot
By some o'er-hasty angel was misplaced

¹ foolish.

² greater.

In Fate's eternal volume!—But I rave
 And, like a giddy bird in time of night,
 Fly round the fire that scorches me to death. 110

Qu. Yet, Torrismond, you've not so ill deserved,
 But I may give you counsel for your cure.

Tor. I cannot, nay, I wish not to be cured.¹

Qu. [*Aside*]. Nor I, Heav'n knows!

Tor. There is a pleasure, sure,
 In being mad, which none but madmen know! 115
 Let me indulge it; let me gaze for ever!
 And, since you are too great to be beloved,
 Be greater, greater yet, and be adored!

Qu. These are the words which I must only hear
 From Bertran's mouth; they should displease from you;— 120
 I say they should; but women are so vain
 To ² like the love though they despise the lover.
 Yet, that I may not send you from my sight
 In absolute despair,—I pity you.

Tor. Am I then pitied? I have lived enough. 125
 Death, take me in this moment of my joy;
 But, when my soul is plunged in long oblivion,
 Spare this one thought; let me remember pity,
 And, so deceived, think all my life was blessed.

Qu. What if I add a little to my alms? 130
 If that would help, I could cast in a tear
 To your misfortunes.

Tor. A tear! You have o'erbid all my past suff'rings,
 And all my future too!

Qu. Were I no Queen,
 Or you of royal blood— 135

Tor. What have I lost by my forefathers' fault!
 Why was not I the twenty'th by descent
 From a long restive ³ race of droning Kings?
 Love, what a poor omnipotence hast thou,
 When gold and titles buy thee!

¹ So Orlando,—“I would not be cured, youth.” (*As You Like It*, III, ii, 446.)

² as to.

³ slumberous; unwilling to stir.

Qu. [*Sighs*]. Oh, my torture!— 140

Tor. Might I presume,—but oh, I dare not hope
That sigh was added to your alms for me!

Qu. I give you leave to guess, and not forbid you
To make the best construction for your love.
Be secret and discreet; these fairy¹ favours 145

Are lost, when not concealed.²—Provoke not Bertran!—
Retire; I must no more but this,—Hope, Torrismond! [*Exit.*

Tor. She bids me hope; O Heav'ns, she pities me!
And pity still foreruns approaching love,
As lightning does the thunder.³ Tune your harps 150

Ye angels, to that sound; and thou, my heart,
Make room to entertain thy flowing joy!
Hence, all my griefs and ev'ry anxious care;
One word, and one kind glance, can cure despair. [*Exit.*

[Act II.] Scene [III].—*A Chamber [in LORENZO'S lodgings]. A Table and Wine set out.*

Enter LORENZO.

Lor. This may hit; 'tis more than barely possible; for friars have free admittance into every house. This jacobin,⁴ whom I have sent to, is her confessor; and who can suspect a man of such reverence for a pimp? I'll try for once; I'll bribe him high; for commonly none love money better than they who have made a vow of poverty. 6

Enter Servant.

Serv. There's a huge, fat, religious gentleman coming up, Sir. He says he's but a friar, but he's big enough to be a Pope; his

¹ Q, "Fayery."

² Alluding to the common superstition that the continuance of the favours of fairies depends upon the receiver's secrecy. Cf. *The Winter's Tale*, III, iii: "This is fairy gold, boy . . . Keep it close . . ." (Scott).

³ *N.B.*, this passage is earlier than the proverbial "Pity's akin to love"—in II, ii of Southerne's *Oroonoko* (1696).

⁴ The name borne by the Dominicans in France from the house in the Rue St. Jacques at Paris where they were settled in 1218.

gills are as rosy as a turkey cock; his great belly walks in state before him, like an harbinger; and his gouty legs come limping after it. Never was such a tun of devotion seen. 11

Lor. Bring him in, and vanish! [Exit Servant.]

Enter FATHER DOMINIC.

Lor. Welcome, father!

Dom. Peace be here! I thought I had been sent for to a dying man, to have fitted him for another world. 15

Lor. No, 'faith, father; I was never for taking such long journeys. Repose yourself, I beseech you, Sir, if those spindle legs of yours will carry you to the next chair.

Dom. I am old; I am infirm, I must confess, with fasting.

Lor. 'Tis a sign by your wan complexion, and your thin jowls, father.—Come, to our better acquaintance; here's a sovereign remedy for old age and sorrow. [Drinks.]

Dom. The looks of it are indeed alluring; I'll do you reason. [Drinks.]

Lor. Is it to your palate, father? 24

Dom. Second thoughts, they say, are best; I'll consider of it once again. [Drinks.] It has a most delicious flavour with it. Gad forgive me; I have forgotten to drink your health, son; I am not used to be so unmannerly. [Drinks again.]

Lor. No, I'll be sworn by what I see of you, you are not.—To the bottom! I warrant him a true churchman.—Now, father, to our business; 'tis agreeable to your calling; I intend to do an act of charity. 32

Dom. And I love to hear of charity; 'tis a comfortable subject.

Lor. Being, in the late battle, in great hazard of my life, I recommended my person to good Saint Dominic. 35

Dom. You could not have pitched upon a better; he's a sure card; I never knew him fail his votaries.

Lor. 'Troth, I e'en¹ made bold to strike up a bargain with him, that, if I 'scaped with life and plunder, I would present some brother of his Order with part of the booty taken from the infidels, to be employed in charitable uses. 41

¹ So Q; Sc.-Sa., "also."

Dom. There you hit him; Saint Dominic loves charity exceedingly; that argument never fails with him.

Lor. The spoils were mighty, and I scorn to wrong him of a farthing. To make short my story; I enquired among the Jacobins for an almoner, and the general fame has pointed out your reverence as the worthiest man. Here are fifty good pieces in this purse.

Dom. How, fifty pieces? 'Tis too much, too much in conscience!

Lor. Here, take them, father! 50

Dom. No, in troth, I dare not; do not tempt me to break my vow of poverty!

Lor. If you are modest, I must force you; for I am strongest.

Dom. Nay, if you compel me, there's no contending; but will you set your strength against a decrepit, poor old man? [*Takes the purse.*] As I said, 'tis too great a bounty; but Saint Dominic shall owe you another 'scape; I'll put him in mind of you. 57

Lor. If you please, father, we will not trouble him till the next battle. But you may do me a greater kindness, by conveying my prayers to a female Saint. 60

Dom. A female Saint! Good now,¹ good now, how your devotions jump with mine! I always loved the female Saints.

Lor. I mean, a female, mortal, married-woman Saint. Look upon the superscription of this note! [*Gives him a letter.*] You know Don Gomez's wife? 65

Dom. Who? Donna Elvira? I think I have some reason; I am her ghostly father.

Lor. I have some business of importance with her, which I have communicated in this paper; but her husband is so horribly given to be jealous,— 70

Dom. Ho, jealous? He's the very quintessence of jealousy; he keeps no male creature in his house; and from abroad he lets no man come near her.

Lor. Excepting you, father.

Dom. Me, I grant you; I am her director and her guide in spiritual affairs. But he has his humours with me too; for 'tother day he called me a false apostle. 77

¹ A vocative contraction common with the Elizabethans. (Cf. *Hamlet*, I, i, 70.)

Lor. Did he so? That reflects upon you all; on my word, father, that touches your copy-hold. If you would do a meritorious action, you might revenge the Church's quarrel.—My letter, father,—

Dom. Well, so far as a letter I will take upon me; for what can I refuse to a man so charitably given? 82

Lor. If you bring an answer back, that purse in your hand has a twin-brother, as like him as ever he can look; there are fifty pieces lie dormant in it, for more charities. 85

Dom. That must not be; not a farthing more, upon my priesthood!—But what may be the purport and meaning of this letter? That, I confess, a little troubles me.

Lor. No harm, I warrant you—

Dom. Well, you are a charitable man, and I'll take your word; my comfort is, I know not the contents; and so far I am blameless. But an answer you shall have; though not for the sake of your fifty pieces more. I have sworn not to take them; they shall not be altogether fifty. Your mistress—forgive me, that I should call her your mistress; I meant Elvira—lives but at next door. I'll visit her immediately; but not a word more of the nine-and-forty pieces! 97

Lor. Nay, I'll wait on you down stairs.—Fifty pounds for the postage of a letter! To send by the Church is certainly the dearest road in Christendom. [*Exeunt.*]

[Act II.] Scene [IV].—*A chamber [in GOMEZ's house].*

Enter GOMEZ and ELVIRA.

Gom. Henceforth I banish flesh and wine; I'll have none stirring within these walls these twelve months.

Elv. I care not; the sooner I am starved, the sooner I am rid of wedlock. I shall learn the knack to fast o' days; you have used me to fasting nights already— 5

Gom. How the gipsy answers me! Oh, 'tis a most notorious hilding! ¹

¹ from M. E. hinderling, a low wretch.

Elv. [*crying*]. But was ever a poor innocent creature so hardly dealt with, for a little harmless chat!

Gom. Oh, the impudence of this wicked sex! Lascivious dialogues are innocent with you! 11

Elv. Was it such a crime to enquire how the battle passed?

Gom. But that was not the business, gentlewoman. You were not asking news of a battle passed; you were engaging for a skirmish that was to come. 15

Elv. An honest woman would be glad to hear that her honour was safe, and her enemies were slain.

Gom. [*In her tone*]. And to ask if he were wounded in your defence; and, in case he were, to offer yourself to be his chirurgeon.—Then, you did not describe your husband to him for a covetous, jealous, rich old hunks. 21

Elv. No, I need not; he describes himself sufficiently. But in what dream did I do this?

Gom. You walked in your sleep, with your eyes broad open, at noon o'day; and dreamt you were talking to the 'foresaid purpose with one Colonel Hernando— 26

Elv. Who, dear husband, who?

Gom. What the devil have I said?—You would have further information, would you?

Elv. No; but, my dear little old man, tell me now, that I may avoid him for your sake! 31

Gom. Get you up into your chamber, cockatrice, and there immure yourself; be confined, I say, during our royal pleasure! But first, down on your marrow bones, upon your allegiance, and make an acknowledgment of all your offences; for I will have ample satisfaction. [*Pulls her down.*]

Elv. I have done you no injury, and therefore I'll make you no submission; but I'll complain to my ghostly father. 38

Gom. Ay, there's your remedy; when you receive condign punishment, you run with open mouth to your confessor,—that parcel of holy guts and garbage; he must chuckle¹ you and moan you. But I'll rid my hands of his ghostly authority one day,

¹ Q, "chucle." Moan = bemoan. (Jeremy Collier was moved to indignation by the preceding phrase.)

[*Enter DOMINIC*] and make him know he's the son of a—[*Sees him*]
So! No sooner conjure, but the devil's in the circle.¹

Dom. Son of a what, Don Gomez? 45

Gom. Why, a son of a church; I hope there's no harm in that, father?

Dom. I will lay up your words for you, till time shall serve, and tomorrow I enjoy you to fast, for penance.

Gom. There's no harm in that; [*Aside*] she shall fast too. Fasting saves money. 51

Dom. [*To ELVIRA*]. What was the reason I found you upon your knees, in that unseemly posture?

Gom. [*aside*]. O horrible! To find a woman upon her knees, he says, is an unseemly posture. There's a priest for you! 55

Elv. [*To DOM.*]. I wish, father, you would give me an opportunity of entertaining you in private; I have somewhat upon my spirits that presses me exceedingly.

Dom. [*Aside*]. This goes well.—Gomez, stand you at a distance,—further yet,—stand out of earshot; I have somewhat to say to your wife in private. 61

Gom. [*Aside*]. Was ever man thus priest-ridden? Would the steeple of his church were in his belly;—I am sure there's room for it!

Elv. I am ashamed to acknowledge my infirmities; but you have been always an indulgent father; and therefore I will venture to—and yet I dare not. 67

Dom. Nay, if you are bashful;—if you keep your wound from the knowledge of your surgeon,—

Elv. You know my husband is a man in years; but he's my husband, and therefore I shall be silent. But his humours are more intolerable than his age; he's grown so froward, so covetous, and so jealous, that he has turned my heart quite from him; and, if I durst confess it, has forced me to cast my affections on another man. 75

Dom. Good;—hold, hold; I meant, abominable.—[*Aside.*] Pray Heaven, this may be my colonel!

Elv. I have seen this man, father, and have encouraged his

¹ The magical circle. Cf. Marlowe's *Doctor Faustus*, sc. III.

addresses. He's a young gentleman, a soldier, of a most winning carriage; and what his courtship may produce at last, I know not; but I am afraid of my own frailty. 81

Dom. [*Aside*]. 'Tis he, for certain.—She has saved the credit of my function by speaking first; now must I take gravity upon me.

Gom. [*Aside*]. This whispering bodes me no good, for certain; but he has me so plaguily under the lash, that I dare not interrupt him. 86

Dom. Daughter, daughter, do you remember your matrimonial vow?

Elv. Yes, to my sorrow, father, I do remember it. A miserable woman it has made me; but you know, father, a marriage-vow is but a thing of course, which all women take when they would get a husband. 92

Dom. A vow is a very solemn thing, and 'tis good to keep it; but, notwithstanding, it may be broken upon some occasions. Have you striven with all your might against this frailty? 95

Elv. Yes, I have striven; but I found it was against the stream. Love, you know, father, is a great vow-maker; but he's a greater vow-breaker.

Dom. 'Tis your duty to strive always; but, notwithstanding, when we have done our utmost, it extenuates the sin. 100

Gom. I can hold no longer.—Now, gentlewoman, you are confessing your enormities; I know it, by that hypocritical, down-cast look.—Enjoin her to sit bare upon a bed of nettles, father; you can do no less in conscience.

Dom. Hold your peace; are you growing malapert? Will you force me to make use of my authority? Your wife's a well-disposed and a virtuous lady; I say it, *in verbo sacerdotis*. 107

Elv. I know not what to do, father. I find myself in a most desperate condition; and so is the colonel, for love of me.

Dom. The colonel, say you? I wish it be not the same young gentleman I know. 'Tis a gallant young man, I must confess, worthy of any lady's love in Christendom—in a lawful way, I mean;—of such a charming behaviour, so bewitching to a woman's eye; and, furthermore, so charitably given. By all good tokens, this must be my Colonel Hernando! 115

Elv. Ay, and my colonel too, father;—I am overjoyed! And are you then acquainted with him?

Dom. Acquainted with him? Why, he haunts me up and down; and, I am afraid, it is for love of you; for he pressed a letter upon me, within this hour, to deliver to you. I confess I received it, lest he should send it by some other; but with full resolution never to put it into your hands. 122

Elv. O dear father, let me have it; or I shall die!

Gom. Whispering still!¹ A pox of your close committee! I'll listen; I'm resolved. [*Steals nearer.*]

Dom. Nay, if you are obstinately bent to see it, use your discretion; but, for my part, I wash my hands on't—[*To GOMEZ.*] What make² you listening there? Get farther off; I preach not to thee, thou wicked eaves-dropper!

Elv. I'll kneel down, father, as if I were taking absolution, if you'll but please to stand before me. 131

Dom. At your peril be it then! I have told you the ill consequences, *et liberavi animam meam*. Your reputation is in danger, to say nothing of your soul. Notwithstanding, when the spiritual means have been applied, and fail, in that case the carnal may be used. You are a tender child, you are, and must not be put in despair; your heart is as soft and melting as your hand. 137

[*He strokes her face, takes her by the hand, and gives the letter.*]

Gom. Hold, hold, father; you go beyond your commission. Palming is always held foul play among gamesters.³

Dom. Thus good intentions are misconstrued by wicked men; you will never be warned till you are excommunicate. 141

Gom. Ah, devil on him; there's his hold! If there were no more in excommunication than the Church's censure, a wise man would lick his conscience whole with a wet finger;⁴ but, if I am excommunicate, I am outlawed, and then there is no calling in my money.⁵ 146

¹ Q blunderingly prints these words as a stage-direction.

² So Q; Sc.-Sa., "makes."

³ See note in Nares on "palming dice," and *The Compleat Gamester*.

⁴ I.e., easily "salve his conscience."

⁵ From the end of the sixth century onwards, civil disabilities of all sorts followed excommunication.

Elv. [*Rising*]. I have read the note, father, and will send him an answer immediately; for I know his lodgings by his letter.

Dom. I understand it not, for my part; but I wish your intentions be honest. Remember, that adultery, though it be a silent sin, yet it is a crying sin also. Nevertheless, if you believe absolutely he will die, unless you pity him;—to save a man's life is a point of charity, and actions of charity do alleviate, I may say, and take off from the mortality of the sin. Farewell, daughter! [*Going.*] Gomez, cherish your virtuous wife, and thereupon I give you my benediction. 156

Gom. Stay; I'll conduct you to the door;—that I may be sure you steal nothing by the way. Friars wear not their long sleeves for nothing.—Oh, 'tis a Judas Iscariot. [*Exit after the Friar.*]

Elv. This Friar is a comfortable man! He will understand nothing of the business, and yet does it all. 161

Pray, wives and virgins, at your time of need,
For a true guide, of my good father's breed. [*Exit.*]

Act III. Scene [I].—*The Street.*

Enter LORENZO in Friar's habit, meeting DOMINIC.

Lor. Father Dominic, father Dominic; why in such haste, man?

Dom. It should seem, a brother of our Order.

Lor. No, 'faith; I am only your brother in iniquity; my holiness, like yours, is mere outside.

Dom. What! My noble colonel in metamorphosis! On what occasion are you transformed? 6

Lor. Love, almighty love; that which turned Jupiter into a town-bull, has transformed me into a friar. I have had a letter from Elvira, in answer to that I sent by you—

Dom. You see I have delivered my message faithfully; I am a friar of honour, where I am engaged. 11

Lor. Oh, I understand your hint; the other fifty pieces are ready to be condemned to charity.

Dom. But this habit, son; this habit!

Lor. It is a habit that, in all ages, has been friendly to fornication.

tion; you have begun the design in this clothing, and I'll try to accomplish it. The husband is absent;—that evil counsellor is removed, and the sovereign is graciously disposed to hear my grievances. 19

Dom. Go to, go to; I find good counsel is but thrown away upon you. Fare you well, fare you well, son! Ah— 21

Lor. How! Will you turn recreant at the last cast? You must along to countenance my undertaking; we are at the door, man.

Dom. Well, I have thought on't, and I will not go.

Lor. You may stay, father;—but no fifty pounds without it! That was only promised in the bond: “But the condition of this obligation is such, that if the above-named father, father Dominic, do not well and faithfully perform”— 28

Dom. Now I better think on't I will bear you company; for the reverence of my presence may be a curb to your exorbitancies.

Lor. Lead up your myrmidon¹ and enter! [*Exeunt.*]

[Act III. Scene II.]—ELVIRA'S Chamber.

Enter ELVIRA.

Elv. He'll come, that's certain; young appetites are sharp, and seldom need twice bidding to such a banquet. Well, if I prove frail—as I hope I shall not till I have compassed my design—never woman had such a husband to provoke her, such a lover to allure her, or such a confessor to absolve her. Of what am I afraid, then? Not my conscience; that's safe enough; my ghostly father has given it a dose of church-opium, to lull it. Well, for soothing sin, I'll say that for him, he's a chaplain for any Court in Christendom.² 9

Enter LORENZO and DOMINIC.

O father Dominic, what news?—How! A companion with you? What game have you in hand, that you hunt in couples? 11

¹ So Q and Saintsbury, who points out that Scott's reading, “myrmidons,” introduces a needless obscurity. Lorenzo, of course, will play the Myrmidon to Dominic's Achilles.

² The history of seventeenth-century court-chaplains and confessors is full of instances which, rightly or wrongly, have been supposed to support this sarcasm on their functions.

Lor. [*Lifting up his hood*]. I'll show you that immediately.

Elv. O my love!

Lor. My life!

Elv. My soul!

[*They embrace.*]

Dom. I am taken on the sudden with a grievous swimming in my head, and such a mist before my eyes, that I can neither hear nor see. 18

Elv. Stay, and I'll fetch you some comfortable water.¹

Dom. No, no; nothing but the open air will do me good. I'll take a turn in your garden; but remember that I trust you both, and do not wrong my good opinion of you! [*Exit DOMINIC.*]

Elv. This is certainly the dust of gold which you have thrown in the good man's eyes, that on the sudden he cannot see; for my mind misgives me, this sickness of his is but apocryphal. 25

Lor. 'Tis no qualm of conscience, I'll be sworn. You see, Madam, 'tis interest governs all the world. He preaches against sin;—why? Because he gets by't. He holds his tongue;—why? Because so much the more is bidden for his silence.²

Elv. And so much for the Friar! 30

Lor. Oh, those eyes of yours reproach me justly, that I neglect the subject which brought me hither.

Elv. Do you consider the hazard I have run to see you here? If you do, methinks it should inform you, that I love not at a common rate. 35

Lor. Nay, if you talk of considering, let us consider, why we are alone? Do you think the Friar left us together to tell beads? Love is a kind of penurious god, very niggardly of his opportunities. He must be watched like a hard-hearted treasurer; for he bolts out on the sudden, and, if you take him not in the nick, he vanishes in a twinkling. 41

Elv. Why do you make such haste to have done loving me? You men are all like watches, wound up for striking twelve im-

¹ strong waters, cordial.

² The original acting version (quoted by Collier, *Short View*, ch. III) and Q3 Q4 here add the words: "'Tis but giving a man his price, and principles of Church are bought off as easily as they are in State. No man will be a rogue for nothing; but compensation must be made, so much gold for so much honesty; and then a churchman will break the rules of chess. For the black bishop will skip into the white, and the white into the black, without considering whether the remove be lawful."

mediately; but after you are satisfied, the very next that follows is the solitary sound of single one. 45

Lor. How, Madam! Do you invite me to a feast, and then preach abstinence?

Elv. No, I invite you to a feast when the dishes are served up in order; you are for making a hasty meal, and for chopping up your entertainment, like a hungry clown. Trust my management, good colonel, and call not for your dessert too soon! Believe me, that which comes last, as it is the sweetest, so it cloyes the soonest.

Lor. I perceive, Madam, by your holding me at this distance, that there is somewhat you expect from me. What am I to undertake, or suffer, ere I can be happy? 55

Elv. I must first be satisfied that you love me.

Lor. By all that's holy! By these dear eyes—

Elv. Spare your oaths and protestations; I know you gallants of the time have a mint at your tongues' end to coin them.

Lor. You know you cannot marry me; but, by Heavens, if you were in a condition— 61

Elv. Then you would not be so prodigal of your promises, but have the fear of matrimony before your eyes. In few words: if you love me, as you profess, deliver me from this bondage; take me out of Egypt, and I'll wander with you as far as earth and seas, and love, can carry us. 66

Lor. I never was out ¹ at a mad frolic, though this is the maddest I ever undertook. Have with you, lady mine; I take you at your word; and if you are for a merry jaunt, I'll try for once who can foot it furthest. There are hedges in summer, and barns in winter, to be found; I with my knapsack, and you with your bottle ² at your back; we will leave honour to madmen, and riches to knaves; ³ and travel till we come to the ridge of the world, ⁴ and then drop together into the next.

Elv. Give me your hand, and strike a bargain! 75
[*He takes her hand, and kisses it.*]

¹ at a loss.

² bundle; as in the old phrase "a bottle" (truss) "of hay."

³ Cf. Congreve, "leave business to idlers, and wisdom to fools . . . and let Father Time shake his glass" (*The Old Bachelor*, I, i).

⁴ Cf. Milton's "coast of Earth."

Lor. In sign and token whereof, the parties interchangeably, and so forth.—When should I be weary of sealing upon this soft wax?

Elv. O Heavens! I hear my husband's voice.

Enter GOMEZ.

Gom. Where are you, gentlewoman? There's something in the wind, I'm sure, because your woman would have run upstairs before me; but I have secured her below, with a gag in her chops.—Now, in the devil's name, what makes this friar here again? I do not like these frequent conjunctions of the flesh and spirit; they are boding.¹ 85

Elv. Go hence, good father; my husband, you see, is in an ill humour; and I would not have you witness of his folly.

[LORENZO going.]

Gom. [Running to the door]. By your reverence's favour, hold a little! I must examine you something better, before you go.—Hiday!² Who have we here? Father Dominic is shrunk in the wetting two yards and a half about the belly. What are become of those two timber logs that he used to wear for legs; that stood strutting like the two black posts³ before a door? I am afraid some bad body has been setting him over a fire in a great cauldron, and boiled him down half the quantity, for a recipe. This is no father Dominic, no huge overgrown abbey-lubber; this is but a diminutive sucking friar. As sure as a gun,⁴ now, Father Dominic has been spawning this young slender antichrist. 98

Elv. [Aside]. He will be found; there's no prevention.

Gom. Why does he not speak? What! Is the friar possessed with a dumb devil? If he be, I shall make bold to conjure him.

Elv. He is but a novice in his Order, and is enjoined silence for a penance.

Gom. A novice, quotha! You would make a novice of me, too,

¹ foreboding; ominous.

² heyday.

³ Apparently a familiar feature of London street-architecture; "blue posts" form a well-known tavern sign. (See below, p. 472.)

⁴ cock-sure (Summers)?—*Gen. Eds.*

if you could. But what was his business here? Answer me that, gentlewoman; answer me that! 106

Elv. What should it be, but to give me some spiritual instructions?

Gom. Very good; and you are like to edify much from a dumb preacher. This will not pass; I must examine the contents of him a little closer.—O thou confessor, confess who thou art; or thou art no friar of this world!¹ [*He comes to LORENZO, who struggles with him; his habit flies open, and discovers a sword; GOMEZ starts back.*—As I live, this is a manifest member of the Church militant. 114

Lor. [*Aside*]. I am discovered; now, impudence be my refuge!—Yes, 'faith, 'tis I, honest Gomez; thou seest I use thee like a friend; this is a familiar visit. 117

Gom. What! Colonel Hernando turned a friar! Who could have suspected you of so much godliness?

Lor. E'en as thou seest, I make bold here. 120

Gom. A very frank manner of proceeding; but I do not wonder at your visit, after so friendly an invitation as I made you. Marry, I hope you will excuse the blunderbusses for not being in readiness to salute you; but let me know your hour, and all shall be mended another time. 125

Lor. Hang it, I hate such ripping-up of old unkindness; I was upon the frolic this evening, and came to visit thee in masquerade.

Gom. Very likely; and, not finding me at home, you were forced to toy away an hour with my wife, or so.

Lor. Right; thou speakest my very soul. 130

Gom. Why, am not I a friend, then, to help thee out? You would have been fumbling half an hour for this excuse. But, as I remember, you promised to storm my citadel, and bring your regiment of red locusts upon me for free quarter. I find, colonel, by your habit, there are black locusts in the world, as well as red. 136

Elv. [*Aside*]. When comes my share of the reckoning to be called for?

¹ I will expedite you into the next.

Lor. Give me thy hand; thou art the honestest kind man!—I was resolved I would not out of thy house till I had seen thee.

Gom. No, in my conscience, if ¹ I had staid abroad till midnight!—But, colonel, you and I shall talk in another tone hereafter,—I mean, in cold friendship, at a bar before a judge, by the way of plaintiff and defendant. Your excuses want some grains ² to make them current; hum and ha will not do the business.—There's a modest lady of your acquaintance; she has so much grace to make none at all, but silently to confess the power of dame Nature working in her body to youthful appetite. 148

Elv. How he got in I know not, unless it were by virtue of his habit. 150

Gom. Ay, ay; ³ the virtues of that habit are known abundantly!

Elv. I could not hinder his entrance; for he took me unprovided—

Gom. To resist him.

Elv. I'm sure he has not been here above a quarter of an hour.

Gom. And a quarter of that time would have served the turn.—O thou epitome of thy virtuous sex! Madam Messalina the Second, retire to thy apartment; I have an assignation there to make with thee. 159

Elv. I am all obedience. [Exit ELVIRA.]

Lor. I find, Gomez, you are not the man I thought you. We may meet before we come to the bar, we may; and our differences may be decided by other weapons than by lawyers' tongues. In the meantime, no ill treatment of your wife, as you hope to die a natural death, and go to hell in your bed! Bilbo is the word; ⁴ remember that, and tremble!— [He is going out.]

Enter DOMINIC.

Dom. Where is this naughty couple? Where are you, in the name of goodness? My mind misgave me, and I durst trust you

¹ even if.

² Of truth, or weight.

³ Quarto [threnodically]: "Ai, ai."

⁴ A "Bilboa" blade was a fine Spanish blade; cf. Falstaff's expression, *The Merry Wives*, III, v, 112: "a good bilbo," and see *Limberham*, III, i and V, i: "Bilbo . . . will slice the slave."

no longer with yourselves. Here will be fine work, I'm afraid, at your next confession. 170

Lor. [*Aside*]. The devil is punctual, I see; he has paid me the shame he owed me; and now the friar is coming for his part too.

Dom. [*Seeing GOMEZ*]. Bless my eyes! What do I see?

Gom. Why, you see a cuckold of this honest gentleman's making; I thank him for his pains. 175

Dom. I confess, I am astonished!

Gom. What, at a cuckoldom of your own contrivance? Your head-piece, and his limbs, have done my business. Nay, do not look so strangely; remember your own words,—Here will be fine work at your next confession. What naughty couple were they whom you durst not trust together any longer;—when the hypocritical rogue had trusted 'em a full quarter of an hour! And, by the way, horns will sprout in less time than mushrooms— 183

Dom. Beware how you accuse one of my Order upon light suspicions! The naughty couple that I meant were your wife and you, whom I left together with great animosities on both sides. Now, that was the occasion,—mark me, Gomez,—that I thought it convenient to return again, and not to trust your enraged spirits too long together. You might have broken out into revilings and matrimonial warfare, which are sins; and new sins make work for new confessions. 191

Lor. Well said, i'faith, friar! [*Aside*.] Thou art come off thyself; but poor I am left in limbo.¹

Gom. Angle in some other ford, good father; you shall catch no gudgeons here. Look upon the prisoner at the bar, friar, and inform the Court what you know concerning him! He is arraigned here by the name of colonel Hernando. 197

Dom. What colonel do you mean, Gomez? I see no man but a reverend brother of our Order; whose profession I honour, but whose person I know not, as I hope for Paradise. 200

Gom. No, you're not acquainted with him, the more's the pity; you do not know him, under this disguise, for the greatest cuckold-maker in all Spain.

¹ The fringe of hell. See Mr. A. W. Verity's note on Milton's famous description of limbo in *Paradise Lost*, III, 440-96.

Dom. O impudence! O rogue! O villain! Nay, if he be such a man, my righteous spirit rises at him. Does he put on holy garments for a cover-shame of lewdness? 206

Gom. Yes, and he's in the right on't, father. When a swinging¹ sin is to be committed, nothing will cover it so close as a friar's hood; for there the devil plays at bo-peep;²—puts out his horns to do a mischief, and then shrinks 'em back for safety, like a snail into her shell. 211

Lor. [*Aside*]. It's best marching off, while I can retreat with honour. There's no trusting this friar's conscience; he has renounced me already more heartily than e'er he did the devil, and is in a fair way to prosecute me for putting on these holy robes. This is the old church-trick; the clergy is ever at the bottom of the plot; but they are wise enough to slip their own necks out of the collar,³ and leave the laity to be fairly hanged for it. [*Exit*.]

Gom. Follow your leader, friar; your colonel is trooped off; but he had not gone so easily, if I durst have trusted you in the house behind me. Gather up your gouty legs, I say, and rid my house of that huge body⁴ of divinity! 222

Dom. I expect some judgment should fall upon you, for your want of reverence to your spiritual director. Slander, covetousness and jealousy, will weigh thee down. 225

Gom. Put pride, hypocrisy and gluttony into your scale, father, and you shall weigh against me. Nay, an' sins come to be divided once,⁵ the clergy puts in for nine parts, and scarce leaves the laity a tithe.

Dom. How dar'st thou reproach the tribe of Levi? 230

Gom. Marry, because you make us laymen of the tribe of Issachar.⁶ You make asses of us, to bear your burthens. When we are young, you put paniers⁷ upon us with your church-discipline; and when we are grown up you load us with a wife;

¹ Q, "swinging."

² Cf. Marlowe's *Doctor Faustus*, sc. III:

Go, and return an old Franciscan friar;
That holy shape becomes the devil best.

³ Q, "coller."

⁴ *corpus*.

⁵ If it come to the apportionment of sins.

⁶ Cf. *Genesis*, XLIX, 14-15.

⁷ panniers.

after that, you procure for other men, and then you load our wives too. A fine phrase you have amongst you to draw us into marriage; you call it—settling of a man; just as when a fellow has got a sound knock upon the head, they say—he's settled. Marriage is a settling blow indeed. They say, everything in the world is good for something;—as, a toad to suck up the venom of the earth. But I never knew what a friar was good for, till your pimping showed me. 242

Dom. Thou shalt answer for this, thou slanderer; thy offences be upon thy head!

Gom. I believe there are some offences there of your planting. [*Exit DOMINIC.*] Lord, Lord, that men should have sense enough to set snares in their warrens to catch polecats and foxes, and yet—
Want wit a priest-trap at their door to lay 248
For holy vermin that in houses prey. [*Exit GOMEZ.*]

Act III. Scene [III]. *A Bedchamber [in the Palace].*

QUEEN and TERESA.

Ter. You are not what you were, since yesterday;
Your food forsakes you, and your needful rest;
You pine, you languish, love to be alone;
Think much, speak little, and in speaking sigh;
When you see Torrismond, you are unquiet; 5
But, when you see him not, you are in pain.

Qu. O let 'em never love who never tried!
They brought a paper to me to be signed;
Thinking on him, I quite forgot my name,
And writ, for Leonora, Torrismond. 10
I went to bed, and to myself I thought
That I would think on Torrismond no more;
Then shut my eyes, but could not shut out him.
I turned, and tried each corner of my bed
To find if sleep were there; but sleep was lost. 15
Fev'rish for want of rest, I rise, and walked,
And by the moonshine to the windows went;
There, thinking to exclude him from my thoughts,

I cast my eyes upon the neighb'ring fields,
 And, ere I was aware, sighed to myself,— 20
 There fought my Torrismond!

Ter. What hinders you to take the man you love?
 The people will be glad; the soldiers shout;
 And Bertran, though repining, will be awed.

Qu. I fear to try new love, 25
 As boys to venture on the unknown ice,
 That crackles underneath 'em while they slide.
 Oh, how shall I describe this growing ill!
 Betwixt my doubt and love, methinks, I stand
 Alt'ring like one that waits an ague-fit;— 30
 And yet, would this were all!

Ter. What fear you more?

Qu. I am ashamed to say; 'tis but a fancy.—
 At break of day,—when dreams, they say, are true¹—
 A drowsy slumber, rather than a sleep,
 Seized on my senses, with long watching worn. 35
 Methought, I stood on a wide river's bank,
 Which I must needs o'erpass, but knew not how,—
 When on a sudden Torrismond appeared;
 Gave me his hand, and led me lightly o'er,
 Leaping and bounding on the billows' heads, 40
 Till safely we had reached the further shore.

Ter. This dream portends some ill which you shall 'scape.
 Would you see fairer visions? Take this night
 Your Torrismond within your arms to sleep;
 And to that end invent some apt pretence 45
 To break with Bertran! 'Twould be better yet
 Could you provoke him to give you th'occasion,
 And then, to throw him off.

*Enter BERTRAN at a distance.*²

Qu. My stars have sent him;
 For, see, he comes. How gloomily he looks!

¹ Mr. Summers quotes Ben Jonson (*Love Restored*: "All the morning dreams are true") and other poets from Ovid to Shelley, to illustrate this old belief.—*Gen. Eds.*

² A good instance of the *liaison des scènes*.

If he, as I suspect, have found ¹ my love, 50
His jealousy will furnish him with fury,
And me with means to part.

Bert. [*Aside*]. Shall I upbraid her? Shall I call her false?
If she be false, 'tis what she most desires.

My genius ² whispers me,—Be cautious, Bertran! 55
Thou walk'st as on a narrow mountain's neck,—
A dreadful height, with scanty room to tread.

Qu. What bus'ness have you at the Court, my Lord?

Bert. What bus'ness, Madam?

Qu. Yes, my Lord, what bus'ness?
'Tis somewhat, sure, of weighty consequence, 60
That brings you here so often,—and unsent for.

Bert. [*Aside*]. 'Tis what I feared; her words are cold enough
To freeze a man to death.—May I presume
To speak, and to complain?

Qu. They who complain to princes, think 'em tame; 65
What bull dares bellow, or what sheep dares bleat,
Within the lion's den?

Bert. Yet men are suffered to put Heav'n in mind
Of promised blessings; for they then are debts.

Qu. My Lord, Heav'n knows its own time, when to give; 70
But you, it seems, charge me with breach of faith.

Bert. I hope I need not, Madam.
But as, when men in sickness ling'ring lie,
They count the tedious hours by months and years,—
So, ev'ry day deferred to dying lovers 75
Is a whole age of pain.

Qu. What if I ne'er consent to make you mine?
My father's promise ties me not to time;
And bonds without a date, they say, are void.

Bert. Far be it from me to believe you bound! 80
Love is the freest motion of our minds.

Oh, could you see into my secret soul,
There might you read your own dominion doubled,
Both as a Queen and mistress. If you leave me,

¹ found out.

² my good angel.

Know I can die, but dare not be displeas'd. 85

Qu. Sure, you affect stupidity, my Lord;
Or give me cause to think that, when you lost
Three battles to the Moors, you coldly stood
As unconcerned as now.

Bert. I did my best;
Fate was not in my power. 90

Qu. And with the like tame gravity you saw
A raw young warrior take your baffled work,
And end it at a blow—

Bert. I humbly take my leave; but they who blast
Your good opinion of me, may have cause 95
To know, I am no coward. [*He is going.*]

Qu. Bertram, stay!
[*Aside.*] This may produce some dismal consequence
To him, whom dearer than my life I love.
[*To BERTRAN.*] Have I not managed my contrivance well,
To try your love, and make you doubt of mine? 100

Bert. Then, was it but a trial?
Methinks, I start as from some dreadful dream,
And often ask myself if yet I wake—
[*Aside.*] This turn's too quick to be without design;
I'll sound the bottom of't, ere I believe. 105

Qu. I find ¹ your love, and would reward it too;
But anxious fears solicit ² my weak breast.
I fear my people's faith;—
That hot-mouth'd beast, that bears against the curb,³
Hard to be broken e'en by lawful Kings, 110
But harder by usurpers.
Judge then, my Lord, with all these cares opprest,
If I can think of love!

Bert. Believe me, Madam;
These jealousies, however large they spread,
Have but one root,—the old imprisoned King; 115

¹ Cf. p. 187, n. 1.

² See Introduction, and cf. *The Medal*, l. 119:

³ disturb (Latin *sollicitare*).

But this new Jehu spurs the hot-mouthed horse.

Whose lenity first pleased the gaping crowd;
 But, when long tried, and found supinely good,
 Like Æsop's Log,¹ they leapt upon his back.
 Your father knew them well; and, when he mounted,
 He reined 'em strongly, and he spurred them hard; 120
 And, but he durst not do it all at once,
 He had not left alive this patient saint,
 This anvil of affronts; but sent him hence
 To hold a peaceful branch of palm above,
 And hymn it in the quire. 125

Qu. You've hit upon the very string which, touched,
 Echoes the sound, and jars within my soul;—
 There lies my grief.

Bert. So long as there's a head,
 Thither will all the mounting spirits fly;
 Lop that but off, and then— 130

Qu. My virtue shrinks from such a horrid act.

Bert. This 'tis to have a virtue out of season.
 Mercy is good, a very good dull virtue;
 But Kings mistake its timing, and are mild,
 When manly courage bids them be severe. 135
 Better be cruel once, than anxious ever;
 Remove this threat'ning danger from your crown,
 And then securely take the man you love!

Qu. [*Walking aside*]. Ha! Let me think of that:—The man I love!
 'Tis true, this murder is the only means 140
 That can secure my throne to Torrismond;
 Nay more, this execution, done by Bertran,
 Makes him the object of the people's hate.

Bert. [*Aside*]. The more she thinks, 'twill work the stronger
 in her.

Qu. [*Aside*]. How eloquent is mischief to persuade! 145
 Few are so wicked as to take delight
 In crimes unprofitable; nor do I.
 If, then, I break divine and human laws,

¹ The mild king of the frogs in the fable.

No bribe but love could gain so bad a cause.¹

Bert. You answer nothing.

Qu. 'Tis of deep concernment, 150

And I a woman, ignorant and weak.

I leave it all to you; think, what you do,

You do for him I love.

Bert. [*Aside*]. For him she loves?

She named not me; that may be Torrismond,

Whom she has thrice in private seen this day. 155

Then I am fairly caught in my own snare!

I'll think again.—Madam, it shall be done;

And mine be all the blame! [*Exit.*]

Qu. O that it were! I would not do this crime;

And yet, like Heav'n, permit it to be done. 160

The priesthood grossly cheat us with free-will²—

Will to do what—but what Heav'n first decreed?

Our actions, then, are neither good nor ill,

Since from eternal causes they proceed;

Our passions—fear and anger, love and hate— 165

Mere senseless engines that are moved by fate,

Like ships on stormy seas, without a guide,

Tost by the winds and driven by the tide.

Enter TORRISMOND.

Tor. Am I not rudely bold, and press too often

Into your presence, Madam? If I am— 170

Qu. No more, lest I should chide you for your stay!

Where have you been; and how could you suppose

That I could live these two long hours without you?

Tor. O words, to charm an angel from his orb;

Welcome, as kindly show'rs to long-parched earth!— 175

But I have been in such a dismal place,

Where joy ne'er enters, which the sun ne'er cheers;

¹The rhyme here and in the Queen's subsequent speech marks a dramatic moment of special intensity.

²An effective reference (with Dryden's customary sneer at divines) to the everlasting problem which has occupied our poets from Chaucer to Milton (see *Troilus and Criseyde*, IV, 960 ff.; and *Paradise Lost*, III, 100 ff.).

Bound in with darkness, overspread with damps;
 Where I have seen (if I could say I saw)
 The good old King, majestic in his bonds, 180
 And 'midst his griefs most venerably great.
 By a dim, winking lamp, which feebly broke
 The gloomy vapours, he lay stretched along
 Upon th'unwholesome earth, his eyes fixed upward;
 And ever and anon a silent tear 185
 Stole down, and trickled from his hoary beard.

Qu. O Heaven, what have I done!—My gentle love,
 Here end thy sad discourse, and for my sake
 Cast off these fearful, melancholy thoughts!

Tor. My heart is withered at that piteous sight, 190
 As early blossoms are with eastern blasts.
 He sent for me, and, while I raised his head,
 He threw his aged arms about my neck;
 And, seeing that I wept, he pressed me close.
 So, leaning cheek to cheek, and eyes to eyes 195
 We mingled tears in a dumb scene of sorrow.

Qu. Forbear; you know not how you wound my soul.

Tor. Can you have grief, and not have pity too?
 He told me, when my father did return,
 He had a wond'rous secret to disclose; 200
 He kissed me, blessed me; nay, he called me son;
 He praised my courage; prayed for my success;
 He was so true a father of his country,
 To thank me for defending e'en his foes
 Because they were his subjects.

Qu. If they be, then what am I? ¹ 205

Tor. The sov'reign of my soul, my earthly Heaven.

Qu. And not your Queen?

Tor. You are so beautiful,
 So wond'rous fair, you justify rebellion; ²
 As if that faultless face could make no sin,

¹ This line is not easy to scan; but probably "what am I" should be read as a trisyllabic ending. The broken metre is effective as marking the speaker's agitation.

² Another sentiment which Jeremy Collier found highly unpalatable.

But Heav'n, with looking on it, must forgive. 210

Qu. The King must die;—he must, my Torrismond.
Though pity softly plead within my soul,
Yet he must die, that I may make you great
And give a crown in dowry with my love.

Tor. Perish that crown—on any head but yours! 215
O recollect your thoughts!

Shake not his hour-glass, when his hasty sand
Is ebbing to the last! ¹
A little longer,—yet a little longer,
And nature drops him down, without your sin, 220
Like mellow fruit without a winter storm.

Qu. Let me but do this one injustice more!
His doom is passed, and for your sake he dies.

Tor. Would you for me have done so ill an act,
And will not do a good one? 225

Now, by your joys on earth, your hopes in Heaven,
O spare this great, this good, this aged King;
And spare your soul the crime!

Qu. The crime's not mine;
'Twas first proposed, and must be done, by Bertran,
Fed with false hopes to gain my crown and me. 230
I, to inhanse his ruin, gave no leave;
But barely bade him think, and then resolve.

Tor. In not forbidding, you command the crime.
Think, timely think, on the last, dreadful day! ²
How will you tremble, there to stand exposed 235
And foremost, in the rank of guilty ghosts
That must be doomed for murder. Think on murder!
That troop is placed apart from common crimes;
The damned themselves start wide, and shun that band,
As far more black and more forlorn than they. 240

¹ For the hour-glass cf. *The Time's Whistle* (by R. C. 1614–15):

Another Faustus, hapless, hopeless man;
What wilt thou do, when as that little sand
Of thy soon emptied hour-glass is spent?

See also H. Logeman, *Faustus-Notes*, p. 122.

² *Dies ira, dies illa.*

Qu. 'Tis terrible; it shakes, it staggers me.
I knew this truth; but I repelled that thought.
Sure, there is none but fears a future state;
And when the most obdurate swear they do not,
Their trembling hearts belie their boasting tongues. 245

Enter TERESA.

Send speedily to Bertran; charge him strictly
Not to proceed, but wait my farther pleasure!

Ter. Madam, he sends to tell you: 'tis performed. [*Exit.*

Tor. Ten thousand plagues consume him! Furies drag him;
Fiends tear him! Blasted be the arm that struck, 250
The tongue that ordered;—only she be spared
That hindered not the deed! Oh, where was then
The Power that guards the sacred lives of Kings?
Why slept the lightning and the thunder-bolts,
Or bent their idle rage on fields and trees 255
When vengeance called 'em here?

Qu. Sleep that thought too!
'Tis done; and since 'tis done, 'tis past recall;
And since 'tis past recall, must be forgotten.¹

Tor. Oh, never, never shall it be forgotten!
High Heav'n will not forget it; after-ages 260
Shall with a fearful curse remember ours;
And blood shall never leave the nation more.

Qu. His body shall be royally interred,
And the last funeral-pomps adorn his hearse;
I will myself (as I have cause too just) 265
Be the chief mourner at his obsequies;
And yearly fix on the revolving day²
The solemn marks of mourning, to atone
And expiate my offences.

Tor. Nothing can,
But bloody vengeance on that traitor's head;— 270

¹ Cf. *Macbeth*, III, ii, 11-12; I, vii, 1.

² Compare in Michael Field's fine play of *Canute the Great* the watch of Canute by the grave of Edmund Ironsides at Glastonbury.

Which, dear departed spirit, here I vow.

Qu. Here end our sorrows, and begin our joys.
 Love calls, my Torrismond; though hate has raged
 And ruled the day, yet love will rule the night.
 The spiteful stars have shed their venom down, 275
 And now the peaceful planets take their turn.
 This deed of Bertran's has removed all fears,
 And giv'n me just occasion to refuse him.
 What hinders now, but that the holy priest
 In secret join our mutual vows? And then 280
 This night, this happy night, is yours and mine.

Tor. Be still, my sorrows, and be loud, my joys!
 Fly to the utmost circles of the sea,
 Thou furious tempest, that hast tossed my mind,
 And leave no thought but Leonora there!— 285
 What's this, I feel, a boding ¹ in my soul,
 As if this day were fatal?—Be it so;
 Fate shall but have the leavings of my love.
 My joys are gloomy, but withal are great.
 The lion, though he see ² the toils are set, 290
 Yet, pinched with raging hunger, scours away;
 Hunts in the face of danger all the day;
 At night, with sullen pleasure, grumbles o'er his prey³. } [*Exeunt.*]

Act IV. Scene [I].—*Before GOMEZ's door.*

Enter LORENZO, DOMINIC, and two Soldiers at a distance.

Dom. I'll not wag an ace further! The whole world shall not bribe me to't; for my conscience will digest these gross enormities no longer.

Lor. How, thy conscience not digest 'em? There's ne'er a friar

¹ Q, "aboding" [which is retained by other eds., and effectively defended by Professor G. R. Noyes.—*Gen. Eds.*].

² So Q; Sc.-Sa., "sees."

³ A most undeniable instance of the kind of simile which, like Cloris's of the Pine in *The Rehearsal* (II, iii), must be made "when you are surpris'd."

in Spain can show a conscience that comes near it for digestion. It digested pimping, when I sent thee with my letter; and it digested perjury, when thou swor'st thou didst not know me. I am sure it has digested me fifty pounds, of as hard gold as is in all Barbary.¹ Pr'ythee, why shouldst thou discourage fornication, when thou knowest thou lovest a sweet young girl? ² 10

Dom. Away, away; I do not love them;—faugh,³ no—[*Spits.*]—I do not love a pretty girl—you are so waggish—[*Spits again.*]⁴

Lor. Why, thy mouth waters at the very mention of them!

Dom. You take a mighty pleasure in defamation, colonel; but I wonder what you find in running restless up and down, breaking your brains, emptying your purse, and wearing out your body, with hunting after unlawful game. 17

Lor. Why, there's the satisfaction on't.

Dom. This incontinency may proceed to adultery, and adultery to murder, and murder to hanging; and there's the satisfaction on't. 21

Lor. I'll not hang alone, friar; I'm resolved to 'peach ⁵ thee before thy superiors for what thou hast done already.

Dom. I'm resolved to forswear it, if you do. Let me advise you better, colonel, than to accuse a church-man to a church-man; in the common cause we are all of a piece; we hang together. 26

Lor. [*Aside*]. If you don't, it were no matter if you did.

Dom. Nay, if you talk of 'peaching, I'll 'peach first, and see whose oath will be believed. I'll trounce you for offering to corrupt my honesty and bribe my conscience. You shall be summoned by an host of Paratours; ⁶ you shall be sentenced in the spiritual court; you shall be excommunicated; you shall be outlawed;—and— 33

¹ Cf. Mephistopheles in Goethe's *Faust*:

“Die Kirche hat einen guten Magen” etc.

² See the first mention of the Friar in I, i, *ante*.

³ So Saintsbury; Q, “phau”; Sc., “pah.”

⁴ Spitting, to avert threatened evil, is still common among Mohammedans, and perhaps nearer home.

⁵ impeach.

⁶ Apparitors. Cf. Shakspere, *Love's Labour's Lost*, III, i, 188: “trotting 'paritors.”

[Here LORENZO takes a purse, and plays with it, and at last lets the purse fall chinking on the ground, which the Friar eyes.¹

[In another tone.] I say, a man might do this now, if he were maliciously disposed, and had a mind to bring matters to extremity; but, considering that you are my friend, a person of honour, and a worthy, good, charitable man, I would rather die a thousand deaths than disoblige you. 38

[LORENZO takes up the purse, and pours it into the Friar's sleeve. Nay, good Sir;—nay, dear colonel;—O Lord, Sir, what are you doing now? I profess this must not be; without this, I would have served you to the uttermost; pray, command me!—A jealous, foul-mouthed rogue this Gomez is; I saw how he used you, and you marked how he used me too. Oh, he's a bitter man; but we'll join our forces; ah, shall we, colonel? We'll be revenged on him with a witness. 45

Lor. But how shall I send her word to be ready at the door? For I must reveal it in confession to you, that I mean to carry her away this evening, by the help of these two soldiers. I know Gomez suspects you, and you will hardly gain admittance.

Dom. Let me alone; I fear him not; I am armed with the authority of my clothing.² Yonder I see him keeping centry³ at his door;—have you never seen a citizen, in a cold morning, clapping his sides, and walking forward and backward, a mighty pace before his shop? But I'll gain the pass,⁴ in spite of his suspicion; stand you aside, and do but see how I accost him! 55

Lor. If he meet with a repulse, we must throw off the fox's skin, and put on the lion's.—Come, gentlemen, you'll stand by me?

Soldiers. Do not doubt us, colonel!

[They retire all three to a corner of the stage; DOMINIC goes to the door where GOMEZ stands.]

Dom. Good even, Gomez; how does your wife? 60

Gom. Just as you'd have her; thinking on nothing but her dear colonel, and conspiring cuckoldom against me.

¹ Hartmann compares with this passage a very similar turn in *Le Médecin malgré lui*, II. ix.

² I.e., his cloth.

³ sentry.

⁴ admittance.

Dom. I daresay, you wrong her; she is employing her thoughts how to cure you of your jealousy.

Gom. Yes, by certainty! ¹ 65

Dom. By your leave, Gomez; I have some spiritual advice to impart to her on that subject.

Gom. You may spare your instructions, if you please, father; she has no further need of 'em.

Dom. How, no need of 'em? Do you speak in riddles? 70

Gom. Since you will have me speak plainer,—she has profited so well already by your counsel, that she can say her lesson without your teaching. Do you understand me now?

Dom. I must not neglect my duty, for all that. Once again, Gomez, by your leave! 75

Gom. She's a little indisposed at present, and it will not be convenient to disturb her.

[DOMINIC offers to go by him; but 'tother stands before him.

Dom. Indisposed, say you? Oh, 'tis upon these occasions that a confessor is most necessary. I think it was my good angel that sent me hither so opportunely! 80

Gom. Ay; whose good angels ² sent you hither, that you best know, father.

Dom. A word or two of devotion will do her no harm, I'm sure.

Gom. A little sleep will do her more good, I'm sure. You know, she disburthened her conscience but this morning to you. 85

Dom. But, if she be ill this afternoon, she may have new occasion to confess.

Gom. Indeed, as you order matters with the colonel, she may have occasion of confessing herself every hour.

Dom. Pray, how long has she been sick? 90

Gom. Lord, you will force a man to speak! Why, ever since your last defeat.

Dom. This can be but some slight indisposition; it will not last, and I may see her.

Gom. How, not last? I say, it will last, and it shall last; she

¹ By turning suspicion into certainty.

² Ten shilling pieces. Jeremy Collier (see Introduction) reprehends this venerable "gingle upon the double-meaning of a word." Dryden himself, elsewhere, is very severe upon "clenches upon words."

shall be sick these seven or eight days, and perhaps longer, as I see occasion. What! I know the mind of her sickness a little better than you do. 98

Dom. I find, then, I must bring a doctor.

Gom. And he'll bring an apothecary, with a chargeable long bill of *ana's*; ¹ those of my family have the grace to die cheaper. In a word, Sir ² Dominic, we understand one another's business here; I am resolved to stand like the Swiss ³ of my own family, to defend the entrance; you may mumble over your *paternosters*, if you please, and try if you can make my doors fly open and batter down my walls with bell, book and candle; ⁴ but I am not of opinion, that you are holy enough to commit miracles. 107

Dom. Men of my Order are not to be treated after this manner!

Gom. I would treat the Pope and all his Cardinals in the same manner, if they offered to see my wife without my leave! ⁵ 110

Dom. I excommunicate thee from the Church, if thou dost not open; there's promulgation ⁶ coming out.

Gom. And I excommunicate you from my wife, if you go to that! There's promulgation for promulgation, and bull for bull; and so I leave you to recreate yourself with the end of an old song—⁷ "*And sorrow came to the old friar.*" [Exit.]

LORENZO comes to him.

Lor. I will not ask for your success; for I overheard part of it, and saw the conclusion. I find we are now put upon our last

¹ Sganarelle himself would have found no difficulty in illustrating this from the contemporary pharmacopœia.

² The well-known "addition" of a priest or clergyman.

³ Cf. *Hamlet*, IV, v, 97: "Where are my Switzers? Let them guard the door."

⁴ The solemn form of excommunication in the Church of Rome, according to which the bell was tolled, the service read from the office-book, and the candles were extinguished, passed into a proverbial expression.

⁵ This and the preceding speech—as Mr. Summers (*op. cit.*, V, III, 449) notes—contain a phrase or two apparently suggested by Bremond's *Le Pelerin* (ca. 1670); but Dryden's general indebtedness to this work is probably very slight, in spite of Langbaine's assertion to the contrary.—*Gen. Eds.*

⁶ the critical act of publication.

⁷ Not in the reprint of the Percy MS. or in Chappell's or Child's Collections. The ballad of the *Friar and the Boy* in Messrs. Furnivall and Hales' extra Percy volume (1867), however, might have appropriately ended thus.

trump; the fox is earthed, but I shall send my two terriers in after him. 120

Soldiers. I warrant you, colonel; we'll unkennel him.

Lor. And make what haste you can, to bring out the lady!—What say you, father? Burglary is but a venial sin among soldiers.

Dom. I shall absolve 'em; because he is an enemy of the church.—There is a proverb, I confess, which says that dead men tell no tales; but let your soldiers apply it at their own perils! 126

Lor. What! Take away a man's wife, and kill him too! The wickedness of this old villain startles me, and gives me a twinge for my own sin, though it comes far short of his.—Hark you, soldiers, be sure you use as little violence to him as is possible!

Dom. Hold a little; I have thought better how to secure him, with less danger to us. 132

Lor. O miracle, the friar is grown conscientious!

Dom. The old King, you know, is just murdered, and the persons that did it are unknown. Let the soldiers seize him for one of the assassines;¹ and let me alone to accuse him afterwards! 137

Lor. I cry thee mercy with all my heart, for suspecting a friar of the least good-nature. What; would you accuse him wrongfully?

Dom. I must confess, 'tis wrongful, *quoad hoc*, as to the fact itself; but 'tis rightful, *quoad hunc*, as to this heretical rogue, whom we must dispatch. He has railed against the Church; which is a fouler crime than the murder of a thousand Kings. *Omne majus continet in se minus.* He that is an enemy to the Church, is an enemy unto Heaven; and he that is an enemy to Heaven, would have killed the King, if he had been in the circumstances of doing it; so it is not wrongful to accuse him.² 147

Lor. I never knew a churchman, if he were personally offended, but he would bring in Heaven by hook or crook into his quarrel.—Soldiers, do as you were first ordered! [*Exeunt Soldiers.*]

Dom. What was't you ordered 'em? Are you sure 'tis safe, and not scandalous? 152

¹ assassins.

² These burlesque imitations of logical disputations are not infrequent in the Elizabethan drama. Dryden has something similar in *Amphitryon*, II, i.

Lor. Somewhat near your own design; but not altogether so mischievous. The people are infinitely discontented, as they have reason; and mutinies there are, or will be, against the Queen.—Now, I am content to put him thus far into the plot, that he should be secured as a traitor; but he shall only be prisoner at the soldiers' quarters; and when I am out of reach, he shall be released.

Dom. And what will become of me then? For, when he is free, he will infallibly accuse me. 160

Lor. Why then, father, you must have recourse to your infallible church-remedies. Lie impudently and swear devoutly; and, as you told me but now, let him try whose oath will be first believed! Retire; I hear him coming. [*They withdraw.*]

Enter the Soldiers, with GOMEZ struggling on their backs.

Gom. Help, good Christians! Help, neighbours! My house is broken open by force; and I am ravished, and like to be assassinated!—What do you mean, villains? Will you carry me away, like a pedlar's pack, upon your backs? Will you murder a man in plain daylight? 169

First Soldier. No; but we'll secure you for a traitor, and for being in a plot against the State.

Gom. Who? I in a plot? O Lord! O Lord! I never durst be in a plot.¹ Why, how can you in conscience suspect a rich citizen of so much wit as to make a plotter? There are none but poor rogues, and those that can't live without it, that are in plots. 175

Second Soldier. Away with him; away with him!

Gom. O my gold! My wife! My wife! My gold!² As I hope to be saved now, I know no more of the plot than they that made it! [*They carry him off, and exeunt.*]

Lor. Thus far we have sailed with a merry gale, and now we have the Cape of Good Hope in sight; the trade-wind is our own, if we can but double³ it. [*He looks out.—Aside.*] Ah! My father and Pedro stand at the corner of the street with company! There's no stirring, till they are past.

¹ Cf. Introduction.

² A reminiscence of Shylock, and possibly, of Marlowe's Barabas.

³ pass round the Cape.

Enter ELVIRA with a casket.

Elv. Am I come at last into your arms? 185

Lor. Fear nothing; the adventure's ended, and the knight may carry off the lady safely.

Elv. I'm so overjoyed, I can scarce believe I am at liberty; but stand panting, like a bird that has often beaten her wings in vain against her cage, and at last dares hardly venture out, though she sees it open. 191

Dom. Lose no time; but make haste, while the way is free for you! And thereon I give you my benediction.

Lor. 'Tis not so free as you suppose; for there's an old gentleman of my acquaintance, that blocks up the passage at the corner of the street. 196

Dom. What have you gotten there under your arm, daughter? Somewhat, I hope, that will bear your charges in your pilgrimage?

Lor. The friar has an hawk's eye to gold and jewels.

Elv. Here's that will make you dance without a fiddle, and provide better entertainment for us than hedges in summer, and barns in winter. Here's the very heart and soul and life-blood of Gomez,¹—pawns in abundance; old gold of widows, and new gold of prodigals; and pearls and diamonds of court ladies, till the next bribe helps their husbands to redeem 'em. 205

Dom. They are the spoils of the wicked, and the Church endows you with 'em.

Lor. And, 'faith, we'll drink the Church's health out of 'em! But all this while I stand on thorns. Pr'ythee, dear, look out; and see if the coast be free for our escape; for I dare not peep, for fear of being known. 211

[*ELVIRA goes to look, and GOMEZ comes running in upon her. She shrieks out.*

Gom. Thanks to my stars, I have recovered my own territories.—What do I see? I'm ruined! I'm undone! I'm betrayed!

Dom. [*Aside*]. What a hopeful enterprise is here spoiled!

Gom. Oh, colonel, are you there?—And you, friar? Nay, then, I find how the world goes. 216

¹ the pawn-broker.

Lor. Cheer up, man; thou art out of jeopardy. I heard thee crying out just now, and came running in full speed, with the wings of an eagle and the feet of a tiger, to thy rescue.

Gom. Ay; you are always at hand to do me a courtesy, with your eagle's feet and your tiger's wings.—And what were you here for, friar? 222

Dom. To interpose my spiritual authority in your behalf.

Gom. And why did you shriek out, gentlewoman?

Elv. 'Twas for joy at your return. 225

Gom. And that casket under your arm,—for what end and purpose?

Elv. Only to preserve it from the thieves.

Gom. And you came running out of doors—

Elv. Only to meet you, sweet husband. 230

Gom. A fine evidence summed up among you; thank you heartily, you are all my friends. The colonel was walking by accidentally and, hearing my voice came in to save me; the friar, who was hobbling the same way too—accidentally again, and not knowing of the colonel, I warrant you,—he comes in to pray for me; and my faithful wife runs out of doors to meet me, with all my jewels under her arm, and shrieks out for joy at my return. But if my father-in-law had not met your soldiers, colonel, and delivered me in the nick, I should neither have found a friend nor a friar here, and might have shrieked out for joy myself, for the loss of my jewels and my wife. 241

Dom. Art thou an infidel? Wilt thou not believe us?

Gom. Such churchmen as you would make any man an infidel.—Get you into your kennel, gentlewoman; I shall thank you within doors for your safe custody of my jewels and your own. 245

[He thrusts his wife off the stage.]

As for you, Colonel Huff-cap,² we shall try before a civil magistrate, who's the greater plotter of us two, I against the State, or you against the petticoat.

¹ This recalls Churchill's satire on Warburton.

² Swaggerer (*Clifford's Notes upon Dryden*, 1687:

"Prithee, was not this huff-cap once the Indian Emperor, and at another time . . . Maximine?"—Nares.)

Lor. Nay, if you will complain, you shall for something.

[*Beats him.*]

Gom. Murder, murder! I give up the ghost! I am destroyed! Help; murder, murder! 251

Dom. Away, colonel; let us fly for our lives! The neighbours are coming out with forks, and fire-shovels, and spits, and other domestic weapons; the militia of a whole alley is raised against us.

Lor. This is but the interest of my debt, master usurer; the principal shall be paid you at our next meeting. 256

Dom. Ah, if your soldiers had but dispatched him, his tongue had been laid asleep, colonel; but this comes of not following good counsel; ah! ¹ [*Exeunt LORENZO and Friar severally.*]

Gom. I'll be revenged of him, if I dare; but he's such a terrible fellow, that my mind misgives me; I shall tremble when I have him before the judge. All my misfortunes come together. I have been robbed, and cuckolded, and beaten, in one quarter of an hour; my poor limbs smart, and my poor head aches; ay, do, do; smart, limb; ache, head, and sprout, horns; but I'll be hanged before I'll pity you.² You must needs be married, must ye? There's for that! [*Beats his own head.*] And to a fine, young, modish lady, must ye? There's for that too! And at threescore, you old, doting cuckold? Take that remembrance;—a fine time of day for a man to be bound 'prentice, when he is past using of his trade; to set up an equipage of noise, when he has most need of quiet! Instead of her being under covert-baron,³—to be under covert-feme myself! To have my body disabled, and my head fortified; and, lastly, to be crowded into a narrow box with a shrill treble, 274

That with one blast through the whole house doth bound,

And first taught speaking-trumpets how to sound! [*Exit.*]

¹ Perhaps a missile from the alley has greeted the Friar?

² Dr. Hartmann compares with this soliloquy that of the hero of *George Dandin*, I, iii. But Elizabethan influences are almost equally perceptible.

³ A wife as protected by marriage under her husband; she is then herself said to be "*feme-covert.*"

[Act IV.] Scene [II].—*The Court.*

Enter RAYMOND, ALPHONSO, and PEDRO.

Raym. Are these, are these, ye Pow'rs, the promised joys
With which I flattered my long, tedious absence,
To find at my return my master murdered?
Oh, that I could but weep, to vent my passion!
But this dry sorrow burns up all my tears. 5

Alph. Mourn inward, brother! 'Tis observed at Court
Who weeps, and who wears black; ¹ and your return
Will fix all eyes on ev'ry act of yours,
To see how you resent King Sancho's death.

Raym. What gen'rous man can live with that constraint 10
Upon his soul, to bear, much less to flatter
A Court like this! Can I soothe tyranny;
Seem pleased to see my royal master murdered;
His crown usurped; a distaff in the throne;
A council made of such as dare not speak, 15
And could not if they durst; whence honest men
Banish themselves, for shame of being there;
A government that, knowing not true wisdom,
Is scorned abroad, and lives on tricks at home?

Alph. Virtue must be thrown off; 'tis a coarse garment, 20
Too heavy for the sunshine of a Court.

Raym. Well then, I will dissemble, for an end
So great, so pious as a just revenge.
You'll join with me?

Alph. No honest man but must.

Ped. What title has this Queen but lawless force? 25
And force must pull her down.

Alph. Truth is, I pity Leonora's case,
Forced for her safety to commit a crime,
Which most her soul abhors.

Raym. All she has done, or e'er can do, of good, 30

¹ This passage, Raymond's reply, and Pedro's first speech below, are said to have been particularly applied to Queen Mary's relation to her father, on the revival of the comedy in 1689. (See Introduction.)

This one black deed has damned.

Ped. You'll hardly gain your Son to our design.

Raym. Your reason for't?

Ped. I want time to unriddle it.—

Put on your 'tother face; the Queen approaches.

Enter QUEEN, BERTRAN *and* Attendants.

Raym. And that accursèd Bertran 35
Stalks close behind her, like a witch's fiend,¹
Pressing to be employed. Stand, and observe them!

Qu. [*to* BERTRAN]. Buried in private, and so suddenly!
It crosses my design, which was t'allow 40
The rites of fun'ral fitting his degree,
With all the pomp of mourning.

Bert. 'Twas not safe.
Objects of pity, when the cause is new,
Would work too fiercely on the giddy crowd.
Had Cæsar's body never been exposed,
Brutus had gained his cause.²

Qu. Then, was he loved? 45

Bert. Oh, never man so much, for saint-like goodness.

Ped. [*Aside*]. Had bad men feared him but as good men loved
him,

He had not yet been sainted.

Qu. I wonder how the people bear his death?

Bert. Some discontent ³ there are; some idle murmurs. 50

Ped. How, idle murmurs! Let me plainly speak!

The doors are all shut up; the wealthier sort
With arms across, and hats upon their eyes,
Walk to and fro before their silent shops;
Whole droves of lenders crowd the banquers'⁴ doors, 55
To call in money; those who have none, mark
Where money goes; for when they rise, 'tis plunder.
The rabble gather round the man of news

¹ Q, "a Witche's Fiend"; (i.e., a familiar; e.g., Graymalkin, *Macbeth*, I, i, 9).

² See *Julius Caesar*, III, ii.

³ So Q; Sc.-Sa., "discontents."

⁴ bankers.

And listen with their mouths; ¹
 Some tell, some hear, some judge of news, some make it 60
 And he who lies most loud is most believed.

Qu. This may be dangerous.

Raym. [*Aside*]. Pray Heav'n it may!

Bert. If one of you must fall,

Self-preservation is the first of laws; ² 65

And if, when subjects are oppressed by Kings,

They justify rebellion by that law,

As well may monarchs turn the edge of right

To cut for them, when self-defence requires it.

Qu. You place such arbitrary pow'r in kings, 70

That I much fear, if I should make you one,

You'll make yourself a tyrant.—Let these know,

By what authority you did this act.

Bert. You much surprise me, to demand that question;
 But, since truth must be told, 'twas by your own. 75

Qu. Produce it; or, by Heav'n, your head shall answer
 The forfeit ³ of your tongue!

Raym. [*Aside*]. Brave mischief towards! ⁴

Bert. You bade me.

Qu. When and where?

Bert. No, I confess, you bade me not in words.

The dial spoke not; but it made shrewd signs, 80

And pointed full upon the stroke of murder;

Yet this you said,

You were a woman, ignorant and weak;

So left it to my care.

Qu. What, if I said,
 I was a woman, ignorant and weak,— 85

Were you to take th' advantage of my sex

And play the devil to tempt me? You contrived,

You urged, you drove me headlong to your toils;

And if, much tired, and frighted more, I paused,

¹ open-mouthed.

² Cf. *Absalom and Achitophel*, I, 458: "And self-defence is nature's eldest law."

³ transgression (French *forfait*).

⁴ is brewing.

Were you to make my doubts your own commission? 90

Bert. This 'tis, to serve a prince too faithfully;
Who, free from laws himself, will have that done
Which, not performed, brings us to sure disgrace,
And, if performed, to ruin.

Qu. This 'tis, to counsel things that are unjust; 95
First, to debauch a King to break his laws,
(Which are his safety) and then seek protection
From him you have endangered; but just Heaven,
When sins are judged, will damn the tempting devil
More deep than those he tempted.¹ 100

Bert. If princes not protect their ministers,²
What man will dare to serve 'em?

Qu. None will dare
To serve 'em ill, when they are left to laws;
But when a counsellor, to serve himself,
Would lay miscarriages upon his prince, 105
Exposing him to public rage and hate;—

Oh, 'tis an act as infamously base,
As should a common soldier skulk behind
And thrust his gen'ral in the front of war.
It shows, he only served himself before, 110
And had no sense of honour, country, King;
But centred on himself, and used his master,
As guardians do their wards, with shows of care,
But with intent to sell the public safety,
And pocket up his prince.³ 115

Ped. [*Aside*]. Well said, i'faith!
This speech is e'en too good for an usurper.

Bert. I see for whom I must be sacrificed;
And, had I not been sotted⁴ with my zeal,
I might have found it sooner.

Qu. From my sight! 120

¹ An observation worthy of the impotent Prince in Lessing's *Emilia Galotti*.

² Possibly an allusion to the impeachment of the Earl of Danby in 1678 (cf. Noyes, and Summers).—*Gen. Eds.*

³ Alluding to the practice by which guardians of heiresses disposed of their hands to the largest bidders.

⁴ besotted.

The prince who bears an insolence like this
 Is such an image of the Pow'rs above,
 As is the statue of the thundering god,¹
 Whose bolts the boys may play with.

Bert. Unrevenged

I will not fall, nor single.

[*Exit.*

Qu. [To RAYMOND, who kisses her hand]. Welcome, welcome!
 I saw you not before. One honest lord 126
 Is hid with ease among a crowd of courtiers.
 How can I be too grateful to the father
 Of such a son as Torrismond?

Raym. His actions were but duty.

Qu. Yet, my Lord, 130
 All have not paid that debt like noble Torrismond.
 You hear how Bertran brands me with a crime
 Of which, your son can witness, I am free.

I sent to stop the murder, but too late;
 For crimes are swift, but penitence is slow. 135
 The bloody Bertran, diligent in ill,
 Flew to prevent the soft returns of pity.

Raym. O cursèd haste, of making sure a sin!—²
 Can you forgive the traitor?

Qu. Never, never!
 'Tis written here in characters so deep 140
 That sev'n years hence, (till then I should ³ not meet him,)
 And in the temple then, I'll drag him thence
 E'en from the holy altar to the block.

Raym. [*Aside*]. She's fired, as I would wish her; aid me, justice,
 As all my ends are thine, to gain this point 145
 And ruin both at once!—[*To her.*] It wounds, indeed,
 To bear affronts too great to be forgiven,
 And not have pow'r to punish. Yet one way
 There is to ruin Bertran.

Qu. Oh, there's none;
 Except an host from Heav'n can make such haste 150

¹ *Jupiter Tonans.*

² Cf. Schiller, *Maria Stuart*, V, xv.

³ supposing I should not.

To save my crown, as he will do to seize it.
 You saw, he came surrounded with his friends,
 And knew, besides, our army was removed
 To quarters too remote for sudden use.

Raym. Yet you may give commission 155
 To some bold man, whose loyalty you trust
 And let him raise the train-bands of the city.

Qu. Gross feeders, lion-talkers, lamb-like fighters!

Raym. You do not know the virtues of your city,
 What pushing force they have. Some popular chief, 160
 More noisy than the rest, but cries halloo,—

And in a trice the bellowing herd come out;
 The gates are barred; the ways are barricadoed;
 And *One and all's* the word. 'True cocks o' th' game,
 That never ask for what, or whom, they fight;
 But turn 'em out, and show 'em but a foe, 165
 Cry—*Liberty*; and that's a cause of quarrel.¹

Qu. There may be danger in that boist'rous rout.
 Who knows, when fires are kindled for my foes,
 But some new blast of wind may turn those flames 170
 Against my palace-walls?

Raym. But still their chief
 Must be some one whose loyalty you trust.

Qu. And who more proper for that trust than you,
 Whose int'rests, though unknown to you, are mine?
 Alphonso, Pedro, haste to raise the rabble;
 He shall appear to head 'em. 175

Raym. [*Aside to ALPH. and PED.*]. First seize Bertran;
 And then insinuate to them that I bring
 Their lawful prince to place upon the throne.

Alph. Our lawful prince?

Raym. Fear not; I can produce him.

¹ Cf. Introduction. The extraordinary excitement in the City of London from 1679 onwards, here satirised, culminated when the indictment against Shaftesbury was ignored on November 24th, 1681. The train-bands had played an important part shortly before the outbreak of the Civil War. Pepys gives many particulars of them in the earlier years of Charles II.

- Ped.* [*To ALPH.*]. Now we want ¹ 180
 Your son Lorenzo; what a mighty faction
 Would he make for us of the city-wives,
 With,—O dear husband, my sweet honey husband,
 Won't you be for the colonel? If you love me,
 Be for the colonel! Oh, he's the finest man! 185
 [*Exeunt ALPHONSO and PEDRO.*]
- Raym.* [*Aside*]. So now we have a plot behind the plot!
 She thinks, she's in the depth of my design,
 And that it's all for her; but time shall show,
 She only lives to help me ruin others
 And, last, to fall herself. 190
- Qu.* Now, to you, Raymond! Can you guess no reason
 Why I repose such confidence in you?
 You needs must think
 There's some more powerful cause than loyalty.
 Will you not speak, to save a lady's blush? 195
 Need I inform you, 'tis for Torrismond
 That all this grace is shown?
- Raym.* [*Aside*]. By all the Pow'rs, worse, worse than what I
 feared!
- Qu.* And yet, what need I blush at such a choice?
 I love a man whom I am proud to love, 200
 And am well pleased my inclination gives
 What gratitude would force. O pardon me;
 I ne'er was covetous of wealth before;
 Yet think so vast a treasure as your son
 Too great for any private man's possession; 205
 And him too rich a jewel to be set
 In vulgar metal, or for vulgar use.
- Raym.* Arm me with patience, Heav'n!
- Qu.* How, patience, Raymond.
 What exercise of patience have you here?
 What find you in my crown to be contemned, 210
 Or in my person loathed? Have I, a Queen,
 Passed by my fellow-rulers of the world

¹ These lines have been slightly rearranged.

Whose vying crowns lay glittering in my way,
 As if the world were paved with diadems?
 Have I refused their blood, to mix with yours 215
 And raise new Kings from so obscure a race,
 Fate scarce knew where to find them, when I called?
 Have I heaped on my person, crown and State,
 To load the scale, and weighed myself with earth,
 For you to spurn the balance?

Raym. 'Bate the last, 220
 And 'tis what I would say.
 Can I, can any loyal subject, see
 With patience, such a stoop from sov'reignty,—
 An ocean poured upon a narrow brook?
 My zeal for you must lay the father by, 225
 And plead my country's cause against my son.
 What though his heart be great, his actions gallant;
 He wants a crown to poise against a crown,
 Birth to match birth, and pow'r to balance pow'r.

Qu. All these I have, and these I can bestow; 230
 But he brings worth and virtue to my bed;
 And virtue is the wealth which tyrants want.
 I stand in need of one whose glories may
 Redeem my crimes; ally me to his fame;
 Dispel the factions of my foes on earth, 235
 Disarm the justice of the Pow'rs above.

Raym. The people never will endure this choice.
Qu. If I endure it, what imports it you?
 Go, raise the ministers of my revenge;
 Guide with your breath this whirling tempest round, 240
 And see its fury fall where I design.
 At last a time for just revenge is given,—
 Revenge, the darling attribute of Heaven;
 But man, unlike his Maker, bears too long;
 Still ¹ more exposed, the more he pardons wrong; 245
 Great in forgiving, and in suff'ring brave;
 To be a saint, he makes himself a slave. [Exit QUEEN.

¹ always.

Raym. [*solus*]. Marriage with Torrismond! It must not be;
 By Heav'n, it must not be! Or, if it be,
 Law, justice, honour, bid farewell to earth; 250
 For Heav'n leaves all to tyrants.

Enter TORRISMOND, who kneels to him.

Torr. O, ever¹ welcome, Sir,
 But doubly now! You come in such a time
 As if propitious fortune took a care
 To swell my tide of joys to their full height 255
 And leave me nothing further to desire.

Raym. I hope I come in time, if not to make,
 At least to save, your fortune and your honour.
 Take heed you steer your vessel right, my son;
 This calm of Heav'n, this mermaid's melody 260
 Into an unseen whirlpool draws you fast,
 And in a moment, sinks you.²

Tor. Fortune cannot,
 And Fate can scarce. I've made the port already,
 And laugh securely at the lazy storm
 That wanted wings to reach me in the deep. 265
 Your pardon, Sir; my duty calls me hence;
 I go to find my Queen, my earthly goddess,
 To whom I owe my hopes, my life, my love.

Raym. You owe her more, perhaps, than you imagine.
 Stay; I command you stay; and hear me first! 270
 This hour's the very crisis of your fate;
 Your good or ill, your infamy or fame,
 And all the colour of your life, depends
 On this important Now.

Tor. I see no danger;
 The city, army, court espouse my cause; 275
 And more than all, the Queen, with public favour
 Indulges my pretensions to her love.

Raym. Nay, if possessing her can make you happy,

¹ So Q; Sc.-Sa., "very."

² Cf. the close of Goethe's ballad, *Der Fischer*.

'Tis granted; nothing hinders your design.

Tor. If she can make me blest? She only can; 280
 Empire and wealth, and all she brings beside,
 Are but the train and trappings of her love;—
 The sweetest, kindest, truest of her sex,
 In whose possession years roll ¹ round on years,
 And joys in circles meet new joys again; 285
 Kisses, embraces, languishing, and death
 Still from each other to each other move,
 To crown the various seasons of our love;
 And doubt you if such love could make me happy?

Raym. Yes; for I think you love your honour more.² 290

Tor. And what can shock my honour in a Queen?

Raym. A tyrant, an usurper!

Tor. Grant she be!

When from the conqueror we hold our lives,
 We yield ourselves his subjects from that hour;
 For mutual benefits make mutual ties. 295

Raym. Why, can you think I owe a thief my life,
 Because he took it not by lawless force?
 What, if he did not all the ill he could?
 Am I obliged by that t'assist his rapines,
 And to maintain his murders? 300

Tor. Not to maintain, but bear 'em unrevenged.
 Kings' titles commonly begin by force,
 Which time wears off, and mellows into right.
 So power, which in one age is tyranny,
 Is ripened in the next to true succession.³ 305
 She's in possession.

Raym. So diseases are.
 Should not a ling'ring fever be removed,
 Because it long has raged within my blood?

¹ Q, "roule."

² Cf. Lovelace,

I could not love thee, dear, so much
 Loved I not Honour more.

³ Probably suggested in part by the speech of the King in *2 King Henry IV*, IV, v, 191.

Do I rebel, when I would thrust it out?
 What, shall I think the world was made for one, 310
 And men are born for Kings, as beasts for men,
 Not for protection, but to be devoured?
 Mark those who dote on arbitrary power,
 And you shall find 'em either hot-brained youth,
 Or needy bankrupts, servile in their greatness, 315
 And slaves to some, to lord it o'er the rest.
 O baseness, to support a tyrant throne,
 And crush your freeborn brethren of the world!
 Nay, to become a part of usurpation;
 T'espouse the tyrant's person, and her crimes, 320
 And on a tyrant get a race of tyrants,
 To be your country's curse in after-ages!
Tor. I see no crime in her whom I adore;
 Or, if I do, her beauty makes it none.
 Look on me as a man abandoned o'er 325
 To an eternal lethargy of love!
 To pull, and pinch, and wound me, cannot cure
 And but disturb ¹ the quiet of my death.
Raym. O virtue, virtue! What art thou become,
 That man should leave thee for that toy, a woman, 330
 Made from the dross and refuse of a man! ²
 Heav'n took him sleeping, when he made her too;
 Had man been waking, he had ne'er consented.
 Now, son, suppose
 Some brave conspiracy were ready-formed, 335
 To punish tyrants and redeem the land,
 Could you so far belie your country's hope
 As not to head the party?
Tor. How could my hand rebel against my heart?
Raym. How could your heart rebel against your reason? 340
Tor. No honour bids me fight against myself.
 The royal family is all extinct;

¹ and can but disturb.

² Jeremy Collier justly ridicules this passage: "I did not know before that a man's Dross lay in his *Ribs*; I believe sometimes it lies higher. But the Phylosophy, the Religion, and the Ceremoniy of these lines, are too tender to be touched."

And she who reigns bestows her crown on me.
 So must I be ungrateful to the living,
 To be but vainly pious to the dead; 345
 While you defraud your offspring of their fate.

Raym. Mark, who defraud their offspring, you or I!
 For know, there yet survives the lawful heir
 Of Sancho's blood, whom when I shall produce,
 I rest assured to see you pale with fear, 350
 And trembling at his name.

Tor. He must be more than man, who makes me tremble;
 I dare him to the field, with all the odds
 Of justice on his side, against my tyrant.¹
 Produce your lawful prince, and you shall see 355
 How brave a rebel love has made your son.

Raym. Read that; 'tis with the royal signet signed,
 And giv'n me by the King, when time should serve,
 To be perused by you.

Tor. [*Reads*]. "I, the King.²
 My youngest and alone-surviving son, 360
 Reported dead, t'escape rebellious rage,
 Till happier times shall call his courage forth
 To break my fetters, or revenge my fate,
 I will that Raymond educate as his,
 And call him Torrismond—" 365
 If I am he, that son, that Torrismond,
 The world contains not so forlorn a wretch.
 Let never man believe he can be happy!
 For, when I thought my fortune most secure,
 One fatal moment tears me from my joys; 370
 And, when two hearts were joined by mutual love,
 The sword of justice cuts upon the knot,
 And severs 'em for ever.

Raym. True; it must.

Tor. O cruel man, to tell me that it must!
 If you have any pity in your breast, 375

¹ Ironically,—recalling Raymond's characterization of Leonora.

² The Spanish formula.

Redeem me from this labyrinth of fate,
 And plunge me in my first obscurity!
 The secret is alone between us two;
 And, though you would not hide me from myself,
 O yet be kind; conceal me from the world, 380
 And be my father still!

Raym. Your lot's too glorious, and the proof's too plain.
 Now, in the name of honour, Sir, I beg you,—
 Since I must use authority ¹ no more—
 On these old knees I beg you, ere I die, 385
 That I may see your father's death revenged.

Tor. Why, 'tis the only bus'ness of my life;
 My order's issued to recall the army,
 And Bertran's death resolved.

Raym. And not the Queen's? Oh, she's the chief offender!
 Shall justice turn her edge within your hand? 391
 No, if she 'scape, you are yourself the tyrant,
 And murd'rer of your father.

Tor. Cruel fates,
 To what have you reserved me?

Raym. Why that sigh?

Tor. Since you must know,—but break, O break, my heart,
 Before I tell my fatal story out!— 396
 Th' usurper of my throne, my house's ruin,
 The murd'rer of my father—is my wife!

Raym. O horror, horror!—After this alliance,
 Let tigers match with hinds, and wolves with sheep, 400
 And ev'ry creature couple with his foe!
 How vainly man designs when Heav'n opposes!
 I bred you up to arms, raised you to power,
 Permitted you to fight for this usurper,—
 Indeed, to save a crown, not hers, but yours,— 405
 All to make sure the vengeance of this day,
 Which e'en this day has ruined. One more question
 Let me but ask, and I have done for ever:—
 Do you yet love the cause of all your woes;

¹ a father's.

Or is she grown, as sure she ought to be, 410
More odious to your sight than toads and adders?

Tor. Oh, there's the utmost malice of my fate,
That I am bound to hate, and born to love!

Raym. No more!—Farewell, my much lamented King!—

[*Aside.*] I dare not trust him with himself so far 415

To own him to the people as their King,
Before their rage has finished my designs
On Bertran and the Queen; but, in despite
E'en of himself, I'll save him. [*Exit.*

Tor. 'Tis but a moment since I have been King, 420
And weary on't already. I'm a lover

And, loved, possess;—yet all these make me wretched;

And Heav'n has giv'n me blessings for a curse.

With what a load of vengeance am I prest;

Yet never, never can I hope for rest; 425

For when my heavy burden I remove,

The weight falls down, and crushes her I love. [*Exit.*

Act V. Scene [I]. *A Bed-chamber [in the Palace].*

Enter TORRISMOND.

Tor. Love, justice, nature, pity and revenge
Have kindled up a wild-fire ¹ in my breast,
And I am all a civil war within.

Enter QUEEN and THERESA, at a distance.

My Leonora there!—

Mine? Is she mine? My father's murd'rer mine! 5

Oh, that I could with honour love her more,

Or hate her less with reason!—See, she weeps;

Thinks me unkind or false, and knows not why

I thus estrange my person from her bed!—

Shall I not tell her?—No, 'twill break her heart; 10

She'll know too soon her own and my misfortunes. [*Exit.*

Qu. He's gone;—and I am lost. Did'st thou not see

¹ A technical term (so used by Shakspeare) for an igniting composition.

His sullen eyes, how gloomily they glanced?

He looked not like the Torrismond I loved.

Ter. Can you not guess from whence this change proceeds? 15

Qu. No; there's the grief, Teresa! O Teresa!

Fain would I tell thee what I feel within,

But shame and modesty have tied my tongue.—

Yet will I tell, that thou may'st weep with me,¹

How dear, how sweet his first embraces were; 20

With what a zeal he joined his lips to mine,

And sucked my breath at ev'ry word he spoke,

As if he drew his inspiration thence;

While both our souls came upward to our mouths,

As neigh'ring monarchs at their borders meet.² 25

I thought,—oh, no! 'Tis false; I could not think—

'Twas neither life nor death, but both in one.

Ter. Then, sure, his transports were not less than yours.

Qu. More, more! For by the high-hung taper's light

I could discern, his cheeks were glowing red; 30

His very eyeballs trembled with his love,

And sparkled through their casements humid fires;

He sighed, and kissed; breathed short, and would have spoke,

But was too fierce to throw away the time;

All he could say was,—Love and Leonora. 35

Ter. How, then, can you suspect him lost so soon?

Qu. Last night he flew not with a bridegroom's haste

Which eagerly prevents³ th' appointed hour.

I told the clocks,⁴ and watched the wasting light,

And listened to each softly-treading step, 40

In hope 'twas he; but still it was not he.

At last he came,—but with such altered looks,

So wild, so ghastly, as if some ghost had met him.

All pale and speechless, he surveyed me round;

¹ Jeremy Collier cites this passage as an instance of "the poets making Women speak Smuttily." "Do Princesses use," he asks, "to make their Reports with such fulsom Freedoms?" But there is more of redeeming passion in the scene than is usual with Dryden.

² A conceit in Dryden's earliest manner—of the Fantastic School.

³ anticipates.

⁴ counted their strokes.

Then with a groan he threw himself a-bed, 45
 But far from me, as far as he could move;
 And sighed, and tossed, and turned,—but still from me.

Ter. What, all the night?

Qu. E'en all the livelong night.—

At last (for, blushing, I must tell thee all,)
 I pressed his hand, and laid me by his side. 50

He pulled it back, as if he touched a serpent.

With that I burst into a flood of tears,
 And asked him how I had offended him?

He answered nothing, but with sighs and groans;
 So, restless, passed the night; and at the dawn 55
 Leapt from the bed, and vanished.

Ter. Sighs and groans,
 Paleness and trembling, are all signs of love.
 He only fears to make you share his sorrows.

Qu. I wish 'twere so; but love still doubts ¹ the worst. 60
 My heavy heart, the prophetsess of woes
 Forebodes some ill at hand. To soothe my sadness,
 Sing me the song, which poor Olympia made,
 When false Bireno left her.²

A SONG

Farewell, ungrateful traitor!
Farewell, my perjured swain! 65

Let never injured creature

Believe a man again!

The pleasure of possessing

Surpasses all expressing;

But 'tis too short a blessing, 70

And love too long a pain.

'Tis easy to deceive us,

In pity of your pain;

But when we love, you leave us

To rail at you in vain. 75

¹ fears.

² An unmistakable reminiscence of *Othello*, IV, iii.

*Before we have descried it,
There is no bliss beside it;
But she, that once has tried it,
Will never love again.*

The passion you pretended, 80
Was only to obtain;
But when the charm is ended,
The charmer you disdain.
Your love by ours we measure,
Till we have lost our treasure; 85
But dying is a pleasure,
When living is a pain.

Re-enter TORRISMOND.

Tor. Still she is here, and still I cannot speak;
But wander like some discontented ghost,
That oft appears, but is forbid to talk.

[*Going again.*]

Qu. O Torrismond, if you resolve my death,
You need no more, but to go hence again.
Will you not speak?

91

Tor. I cannot.

Qu. Speak; oh, speak!
Your anger would be kinder than your silence.

Tor. Oh!

Qu. Do not sigh; or tell me why you sigh! 95

Tor. Why do I live, ye Powers?

Qu. Why do I live to hear you speak that word?
Some black-mouthed villain has defamed my virtue.

Tor. No, no! Pray, let me go!

Qu. [*Kneeling*]. You shall not go!
By all the pleasures of our nuptial bed; 100
If ever I was loved, though now I'm not;
By these true tears which, from my wounded heart,
Bleed at my eyes—

Tor. Rise!

Qu. I will never rise;

I cannot choose a better place to die.

Tor. Oh, I would speak, but cannot. 105

Qu. [*Rising*]. Guilt keeps you silent, then; you love me not.

What have I done, ye Pow'rs, what have I done,
To see my youth, my beauty and my love
No sooner gained, but slighted and betrayed;
And like a rose, just gathered from the stalk 110
But only smelt, and cheaply thrown aside,
To wither on the ground.¹

Tor. For Heav'ns sake, Madam, moderate your passion!

Qu. Why nam'st thou Heav'n? There is no Heav'n for me;
Despair, death, hell have seiz'd my tortur'd soul. 115

When I had raised his grov'ling fate from ground,
To pow'r and love, to empire and to me;
When each embrace was dearer than the first;
Then, then to be contemned; then, then thrown off!
It calls me ² old and withered and deformed 120

And loathsome! Oh, what woman can bear loathsome?
The turtle flies not from his billing mate;
He bills the closer; but ungrateful man,—
Base, barbarous man,—the more we raise our love,
The more we pall and cool and kill his ardour. 125
Racks, poison, daggers, rid me but of life;
And any death is welcome.

Tor. Be witness, all ye Pow'rs that know my heart,
I would have kept the fatal secret hid;
But she has conquered,—to her ruin conquered.— 130
Here, take this paper; read our destinies—
Yet do not; but in kindness to yourself
Be ignorantly safe!

Qu. No; give it me,
E'en though it be the sentence of my death!

Tor. Then see how much unhappy love has made us. 135

¹ This recalls Malherbe's famous:

Rose, elle a vécu, ce que vivent les roses,
L'espace d'un matin.

² argues me.

Oh, Leonora; oh! ¹

We two were born when sullen planets reigned;
When each the other's influence opposed,
And drew the stars to factions at our birth.

Oh, better, better had it been for us,
That we had never seen, or never loved! 140

Qu. There is no faith in Heav'n, if Heav'n says so!—
You dare not give it.

Tor. As unwillingly,
As I would reach out opium to a friend,
Who lay in torture, and desired to die. [*Gives the paper.*
But now you have it, spare my sight the pain 146
Of seeing what a world of tears it costs you.

Go; silently enjoy your part of grief,
And share the sad inheritance with me!

Qu. I have a thirsty fever in my soul; 150
Give me but present ease; and let me die!

[*Exeunt* QUEEN and TERESA.]

Enter LORENZO.

Lor. Arm, arm, my Lord! The city-bands are up;
Drums beating; colours flying; shouts confused;
All clust'ring in a heap, like swarming hives,
And rising in a moment.

Tor. With design 155
To punish Bertran, and revenge the King.
'Twas ordered so.

Lor. Then you're betrayed, my Lord.
'Tis true, they block ² the castle kept by Bertran;
But now they cry: "Down with the palace; fire it;
Pull out th' usurping Queen!" 160

Tor. The Queen, Lorenzo? Durst they name the Queen?

Lor. If railing and reproaching be to name her.

Tor. O sacrilege! Say quickly, who commands
This vile, blaspheming rout?

¹ Cf. the celebrated "Oh, Sophonisba; Sophonisba, Oh"; and its parody.

² blockade.

Lor. I'm loth to tell you;
But both our fathers thrust 'em headlong on,
And bear down all before 'em. 165

Tor. Death and hell!
Somewhat must be resolved, and speedily.
How say'st thou, my Lorenzo? Dar'st thou be
A friend, and once forget thou art a son,
To help me save the Queen?

Lor. [*Aside*]. Let me consider: 170
Bear arms against my father? He begat me;—
That's true; but for whose sake did he beget me?
For his own, sure enough; for me he knew not.—
Oh, but, says conscience,¹ fly in Nature's face?—
But how, if Nature fly in my face first? 175

Then Nature's the aggressor; let her look to't!—
He gave me life, and he may take it back.—
No; that's boy's play, say I. 'Tis policy
For son and father to take diff'rent sides;
For, then, lands and tenements commit no treason.² 180
[*To TORRISMOND.*] Sir, upon mature consideration, I have found
my father to be little better than a rebel; and, therefore, I'll do
my best to secure him for your sake, in hope you may secure him
hereafter for my sake.

Tor. Put on thy utmost speed to head the troops, 185
Which ev'ry moment I expect t'arrive;
Proclaim me, as I am, the lawful King!
I need not caution thee for Raymond's life,
Though I no more must call him father now.

Lor. [*Aside*]. How! Not call him father?³ I see preferment alters a man strangely; this may serve me for a use of instruction, to cast off my father when I am great. Methought too, he called himself the lawful King; intimating sweetly, that he knows what's what with our sovereign lady.—Well, if I rout my father, as I hope in Heaven I shall, I am in a fair way to be a prince of the

¹ The immortal type of this kind of farcical self-colloquy is Falstaff's speech, *1 Henry IV*, V, i, *ad fin.* Cf. also *Merchant of Venice*, II, ii, 1.

² Lorenzo gradually passes from verse to prose.

³ Q absurdly prints this speech as verse.

blood.—Farewell, general; I will bring up those that shall try what mettle there is in orange-tawny.¹ [Exit.]

Tor. [at the door]. Haste there; command the guards be all drawn up

Before the palace-gate!—By Heav'n, I'll face
This tempest, and deserve the name of King! 200

O Leonora, beauteous in thy crimes,
Never were hell and Heav'n so matched before!

Look upward, fair, but as thou look'st on me;
Then all the Blest will beg, that thou may'st live,
And e'en my father's ghost his death forgive. [Exit.]

[Act V.] Scene [II]. *The Palace-yard. Drums and trumpets within.*

Enter RAYMOND, ALPHONSO, PEDRO *and their Party.*

Raym. Now, valiant citizens, the time has come
To show your courage and your loyalty.
You have a prince of Sancho's royal blood
The darling of the Heav'ns and joy of earth.
When he's produced, as soon he shall, among you, 5
Speak, what will you adventure to reseat him
Upon his father's throne? ²

Omnes. Our lives and fortunes!

Raym. What then remains to perfect our success
But o'er the tyrant's guards to force our way?

Omnes. Lead on; lead on! 10
[Drums and trumpets on the other side.]

Enter TORRISMOND *and his Party. As they are going to fight, he speaks.*

Tor. [to his]. Hold; hold your arms!

Raym. [to his]. Retire!

¹ The citizens' (train-bands') orange uniforms, in contrast with those of Lorenzo's red "locusts."

² An allusion to Monmouth? (Cf. Introduction.)

Alph. What means this pause?

Ped. Peace. Nature works within them.
[ALPH. and PED. go apart.]

Tor. How comes it, good old man, that we two meet
On these harsh terms? Thou very rev'rend rebel,
Thou venerable traitor, in whose face
And hoary hairs treason is sanctified, 15
And sin's black dye seems blanch'd by age to virtue! ¹

Raym. What treason is it to redeem my King,
And to reform the State?

Tor. That's a stale cheat;
The primitive rebel, Lucifer, first used it, 20
And was the first reformer of the skies. ²

Raym. What, if I see my prince mistake a poison;
Call it a cordial;—am I then a traitor,
Because I hold his hand, or break the glass?

Tor. How dar'st thou serve thy King against his will? 25

Raym. Because 'tis then the only time to serve him.

Tor. I take the blame of all upon myself;
Discharge thy weight on me!

Raym. Oh, never, never!
Why, 'tis to leave a ship, tossed in a tempest,
Without the pilot's care.

Tor. I'll punish thee— 30
By Heav'n, I will, as I would punish rebels
Thou stubborn loyal man!

Raym. First let me see
Her punished who misleads you from your fame;
Then, burn me, hack me, hew me into pieces;
And I shall die well pleased.

Tor. Proclaim my title, 35
To save th' effusion of my subjects' blood;
And thou shalt still
Be as my foster-father near my breast,

¹ Cf. *2 Henry IV*, IV, i, 36-49.

² This witty passage seems to be the foundation of Johnson's saying, that the Devil was the first Whig. The analogy between Shaftesbury and Lucifer evidently occupied Dryden's mind at this time. Cf. *The Medal*, lines 18-21.

And next my Leonora.

Raym. That word stabs me.
 You shall be still plain Torrismond with me,— 40
 Th' abettor, partner (if you like that name),
 The husband of a tyrant; but no King,
 Till you deserve that title by your justice.

Tor. Then, farewell pity! I will be obeyed.—
 [*To the people.*] Hear, you mistaken men, whose loyalty 45
 Runs headlong into treason;—see your prince!
 In me behold your murdered Sancho's son!
 Dismiss your arms, and I forgive your crimes.

Raym. Believe him not; he raves. His words are loose
 As heaps of sand, and scattering,¹ wide from sense. 50
 You see he knows not me, his nat'ral father;
 But, aiming to possess th' usurping Queen,
 So high he's mounted in his airy² hopes,
 That now the wind is got into his head,
 And turns his brains to frenzy.

Tor. Hear me yet! 55
 I am—

Raym. Fall on, fall on, and hear him not!
 But spare his person, for his father's sake!

Ped. Let me come; if he be mad, I have that shall cure him.
 There's no surgeon in all Arragon has so much dexterity as I have
 at breathing³ of the temple-vein. • 60

Tor. My right for me!

Raym. Our liberty for us!

Omnes. Liberty! Liberty!

[*As they are ready to fight, enter LORENZO and his Party.*]

Lor. On forfeit of your lives, lay down your arms!

Alph. How, rebel, art thou there?

Lor. Take your rebel back again, father mine; the beaten party
 are rebels to the conquerors. I have been at hard-head⁴ with

¹ scattered (cf. "scattering" votes = stray votes).

² Q, "airy" = lofty.

³ giving vent to.—Q prints Pedro's speech, and the second and third of Lorenzo's which follow, as verse.

⁴ "Contest of butting with the head" (*N.E.D.*). So in Dryden's *Troilus and*

your butting¹ citizens; I have routed your herd; I have dispersed them; and now they are retreated quietly, from their extraordinary vocation of fighting in the streets, to their ordinary vocation of cozening in their shops. 70

Tor. [*To RAYMOND*]. You see, 'tis vain contending with the truth;

Acknowledge what I am!

Raym. You are my King;—'would you would be your own!

But, by a fatal fondness, you betray
Your fame and glory to th' usurper's bed, 75
Enjoy the fruits of blood and parricide,
Take your own crown from Leonora's gift,
And hug your father's murd'rer in your arms!

Enter QUEEN, TERESA, and Women.

Alph. No more; behold the Queen!

Raym. Behold the basilisk of Torrismond, 80
That kills him with her eyes.—I will speak on;
My life is of no further use to me;
I would have chaffered it before for vengeance;
Now,—let it go for failing.

Tor. [*Aside*]. My heart sinks in me, while I hear him speak, 85
And ev'ry slackened fibre drops its hold,
Like nature letting down the springs of life;
So much the name of father awes me still.—
Send off the crowd;

For you, now I have conquered, I can hear 90
With honour your demands.²

Lor. [*To ALPHONSO*]. Now, Sir, who proves the traitor? My conscience is true to me; it always whispers right when I have my regiment to back it.

[*Exeunt omnes præter TORRISMOND, RAYMOND and the QUEEN.*

Tor. O Leonora, what can love do more? 95

Cressida, II, iii ("And play at hard-head with their empty skulls") and in *The Hind and the Panther*, l. 1015.

¹ *Cornuti*.

² I have followed Saintsbury's arrangement of these lines.

I have opposed your ill fate to the utmost;
 Combated Heav'n and earth, to keep you mine;
 And yet at last that tyrant justice! Oh—

Qu. 'Tis past; 'tis past; and love is ours no more.

Yet I complain not of the Pow'rs above; 100
 They made m' a miser's feast of happiness,
 And could not furnish out another meal.

Now, by yon' stars, by Heav'n, and earth, and men,—

By all my foes at once—I swear, my Torrismond,
 That to have had you mine for one short day 105
 Has cancelled half my mighty sum of woes.

Say but you hate me not!

Tor. I cannot hate you.

Raym. Can you not? Say that once more,
 That all the Saints may witness it against you!

Qu. Cruel Raymond! 110

Can he not punish me, but he must hate?

Oh, 'tis not justice, but a brutal rage

Which hates th' offender's person with his crimes!

I have enough to overwhelm one woman,

To lose a crown and lover in a day. 115

Let pity lend a tear, when rigour strikes!

Raym. Then, then you should have thought of tears and pity
 When virtue, majesty and hoary age
 Pleaded for Sancho's life!

Qu. My future days shall be one whole contrition. 120

A chapel will I build, with large endowment,

Where ev'ry day an hundred agèd men

Shall all hold up their withered hands to Heaven,

To pardon Sancho's death.

Tor. See, Raymond, see; she makes a large amends. 125

Sancho is dead; no punishment of her

Can raise his cold, stiff limbs from the dark grave;

Nor can his blessèd soul look down from Heaven,

Or break the eternal sabbath of his rest,

To see with joy her miseries on earth. 130

Raym. Heav'n may forgive a crime to penitence,

For Heav'n can judge if penitence be true;
 But man, who knows not hearts, should make examples,
 Which like a warning piece ¹ must be shot off
 To fright the rest from crimes. 135

Qu. Had I but known that Sancho was his father,
 I would have poured a deluge of my blood,
 To save one drop of his.

Tor. Mark that, inexorable Raymond, mark!
 'Twas fatal ignorance that caused his death. 140

Raym. What! If she did not know he was your father,
 She knew he was a man, the best of men,—
 Heav'ns image double-stamped, as man and King.

Qu. He was, he was, e'en more than you can say;
 But yet— 145

Raym. But yet you barbarously murder'd him.

Qu. He will not hear me out!

Tor. Was ever criminal forbid to plead?
 Curb your ill-mannered zeal!

Raym. Sing to him, siren,
 For I shall stop my ears. Now, mince the sin, 150
 And mollify damnation with a phrase:
 Say, you consented not to Sancho's death;
 But barely not forbade it.

Qu. Hard-hearted man, I yield my guilty cause;
 But all my guilt was caused by too much love. 155

Had I for jealousy of empire sought
 Good Sancho's death, Sancho had died before.
 'Twas always in my pow'r to take his life;
 But int'rest never could my conscience blind,
 Till love had cast a mist before my eyes, 160
 And made me think his death the only means
 Which could secure my throne to Torrismond.

Tor. Never was fatal mischief meant so kind;
 For all she gave has taken all away.
 Malicious Pow'rs! Is this to be restored? 165
 'Tis to be worse deposed than Sancho was.

¹ Of ordnance.

Raym. Heav'n has restored you; you depose yourself.
 Oh, when young Kings begin with scorn of justice,
 They make an omen to their after reign,
 And blot their annals in the foremost page. 170

Tor. No more; lest you be made the first example,
 To show how I can punish!

Raym. Once again;
 Let her be made your father's sacrifice,¹
 And, after, make me hers!

Tor. Condemn a wife!
 That were t'atone for parricide with murder! 175

Raym. Then, let her be divorced; we'll be content
 With that poor, scanty justice;—let her part!²

Tor. Divorce! That's worse than death; 'tis death of love.

Qu. The soul and body part not with such pain,
 As I from you; but yet—'tis just, my Lord; 180
 I am th' accurst of Heav'n; the hate of earth;
 Your subjects' detestation, and your ruin;
 And, therefore, fix this doom upon myself.

Tor. Heav'n! Can you wish it, to be mine no more?

Qu. Yes; I can wish it, as the dearest proof 185
 And last that I can make you of my love.

To leave you blest, I would be more accurst
 Than death can make me; for death ends our woes,
 And the kind grave shuts up the mournful scene.
 But I would live without you, to be wretched long,³ 190

And hoard up ev'ry moment of my life,
 To lengthen out the payment of my tears;
 Till e'en fierce Raymond at the last shall say:—
 Now let her die, for she has grieved enough.

Tor. Hear this, hear this, thou tribune of the people, 195
 Thou zealous public blood-hound; hear, and melt!

Raym. [*Aside*]. I could cry now. My eyes grow womanish;
 But yet my heart holds out.

Qu. Some solitary cloister will I choose,
 And there with holy virgins live immured; 200

¹ expiation.² depart.³ So Q. An awkward Alexandrine.

Coarse my attire, and short shall be my sleep,
 Broke by the melancholy midnight bell.
 Now, Raymond, now be satisfied at last!
 Fasting and tears, and penitence and prayer,
 Shall do dead Sancho justice ev'ry hour.

205

Raym. [*Aside*]. By your leave, manhood! [*Wipes his eyes.*]

Tor. He weeps; now he is vanquished!

Raym. No; 'tis a salt rheum that scalds my eyes.

Qu. If he were vanquished, I am still unconquered.—

I'll leave you in the height of all my love,
 E'en when my heart is beating out its way,
 And struggles to you most.

210

Farewell, a last farewell, my dear, dear Lord!

Remember me!—Speak, Raymond; will you let him?

Shall he remember Leonora's love,

215

And shed a parting tear to her misfortunes?

Raym. [*Almost crying*]. Yes, yes; he shall. Pray go!

Tor. Now, by my soul, she shall not go! Why, Raymond,
 Her ev'ry tear is worth a father's life.—

Come to my arms; come, my fair penitent! ¹

220

Let us not think what future ills may fall;

But drink deep draughts of love, and lose them all!

[*Exeunt* TORRISMOND and the QUEEN.]

Raym. No matter yet! He has my hook within him;

Now let him frisk and flounce, and run and roll

And think to break his hold;—he toils in vain.

225

This love, the bait he gorged so greedily,

Will make him sick, and then I have him sure.²

Enter ALPHONSO and PEDRO.

Alph. Brother, there's news from Bertran. He desires
 Admittance to the King, and cries aloud:—

This day shall end our fears of civil war.—

230

For his safe-conduct he entreats your presence;

¹ The date of Rowe's tragedy, *The Fair Penitent*, is 1703.

² Saintsbury recalls apropos of this piece of bathos, that "Dryden was an industrious fisherman."

And begs you would be speedy.

Raym. Though I loathe
The traitor's sight, I'll go. Attend us here!

[*Exit.*]

*Enter GOMEZ, ELVIRA, DOMINIC, with Officers, to make the stage
as full as possible.*¹

Ped. Why, how now, Gomez! What mak'st thou here, with a whole brotherhood of city-bailiffs? Why, thou look'st like Adam in Paradise, with his guard of beasts about him. 236

Gom. Ay; and a man had need of them, Don Pedro; for here are the two old seducers, a wife and a priest—that's Eve and the Serpent—at my elbow.

Dom. Take notice how uncharitably he talks of churchmen!

Gom. Indeed, you are a charitable belswagger!² My wife cried out,—“Fire, fire”; and you brought out your church-buckets, and called for engines to play against it. 243

Alph. I am sorry you are come hither to accuse your wife; her education has been virtuous, her nature mild and easy. 245

Gom. Yes; she's easy, with a vengeance; there's a certain colonel has found her so.

Alph. She came a spotless virgin to your bed.

Gom. And she's a spotless virgin still, for me.³

She's never the worse for my wearing, I'll take my oath on't. I have lived with her with all the innocence of a man of threescore, like a peaceable bed-fellow as I am. 252

Elv. Indeed, Sir, I have no reason to complain of him for disturbing of my sleep.

Dom. A fine commendation you have given yourself; the Church did not marry you for that. 256

Ped. Come, come; your grievances, your grievances!

Dom. Why, noble Sir, I'll tell you.

Gom. Peace, friar; and let me speak first! I am the plaintiff. Sure, you think you are in the pulpit, where you preach by hours.—

Dom. And you edify⁴ by minutes. 261

¹ “*Smith.*—Why fill the stage? *Bayes.*—Oh, Sir, because your heroic verse never sounds well, but when the stage is full.” *The Rehearsal*, IV, 1.

² bully (see Fletcher's *Wit without Money*, III, i; and *N.E.D.*).

³ These two quasi-heroic lines should surely be printed as verse.

⁴ profit.

Gom. Where you make doctrines for the people, and uses and applications for yourselves.

Ped. Gomez, give way to the old gentleman in black.¹

Gom. No; the 'tother old gentleman in black shall take me if I do; I will speak first!—Nay, I will friar, for all your *verbum sacerdotis*. I'll speak truth in few words; and then you may come afterwards, and lie by the clock² as you use to do.—For, let me tell you, gentlemen, he shall lie and forswear himself with any friar in Spain; that's a bold word, now.—

270

Dom. Let him alone; let him alone! I shall fetch him back with a *circum-bendibus*,³ I warrant him.

Alph. Well, what have you to say against your wife, Gomez?

Gom. Why, I say, in the first place, that I and all men are married for our sins, and that our wives are a judgment; that a bachelor-cobbler is a happier man than a prince in wedlock; that we are all visited with a household plague, and *Lord have mercy upon us* should be written on all our doors.⁴

278

Dom. Now he reviles marriage, which is one of the Seven Blessed Sacraments.

280

Gom. 'Tis liker one of the Seven Deadly Sins. But make your best on't; I care not; 'tis but binding a man neck and heels, for all that. But as for my wife, that crocodile of Nilus,⁵ she has wickedly and traitorously conspired the cuckoldom of me, her anointed sovereign lord; and with the help of the aforesaid friar, whom Heaven confound, and with the limbs of one colonel Her-nando, cuckold-maker of this city, devilishly contrived to steal herself away, and under her arm feloniously to bear one casket of diamonds, pearls and other jewels, to the value of 30,000 pistoles.—Guilty, or not guilty? How sayest thou, culprit?

290

Dom. False and scandalous! Give me the Book! I'll take my corporal oath point-blank against every particular of this charge!

Elv. And so will I!

¹ The Dominican habit is white, with a long black mantle.

² circumstantially.

³ "A roundabout turn" (*N.E.D.*). Originally legal slang? To "circumduct" in the Civil Law signified to contravene or nullify.

⁴ As required in times of Plague (cf. Defoe's *Journal of the Plague Year*).

⁵ Cf. the "Serpent of Old Nile," *Antony and Cleopatra*, I, v, 25.

Dom. As I was walking in the streets, telling my beads, and praying to myself according to my usual custom, I heard a foul out-cry before Gomez his portal; and his wife, my penitent, making doleful lamentations. Thereupon, making what haste my limbs would suffer me, that are crippled with often kneeling, I saw him spurning and fisting her most unmercifully; whereupon, using Christian arguments with him to desist, he fell violently upon me, without respect to my Sacerdotal Orders; pushed me from him, and turned me about with a finger and a thumb, just as a man would set up a top. "Mercy!" quoth I.—"Damme!" quoth he;—and still continued labouring me, until a good-minded colonel came by, whom, as Heaven shall save me, I had never seen before.

Gom. O Lord! O Lord! 306

Dom. Ay; and O Lady! O Lady, too!—I redouble my oath: I had never seen him. Well, this noble colonel, like a true gentleman, was for taking the weaker part, you may be sure; whereupon, this Gomez flew upon him like a dragon; got him down, the devil being strong in him; and gave him bastinado upon bastinado, and buffet upon buffet; ¹ which the poor meek colonel, being prostrate, suffered with a most Christian patience. 313

Gom. Who? He meek? I'm sure I quake at the very thought of him. Why, he's as fierce as Rhodomont; ² he made assault and battery upon my person; beat me into all the colours of the rainbow; and every word this abominable priest has uttered is as false as the Alcoran. But if you want a thorough-paced liar, that will swear through thick and thin, commend me to a friar! 319

Enter LORENZO, who comes behind the company, and stands at his father's back unseen, over against GOMEZ.

Lor. [*Aside*]. How now! What's here to do? My cause a-trying, as I live, and that before my father!—Now, fourscore take him for an old bawdy magistrate, that stands like the picture of Madam Justice, with a pair of scales in his hand, to weigh lechery by ounces! 324

¹ Strunk (who quotes Addison, *The Old Whig*, No. 2) notes that the jest here turns upon the gleeful absurdity of imagining the meek Gomez (played by Nokes and later by "Little Dicky" Norris) flying upon the fierce colonel.—*Gen. Eds.*

² Rodomonte, a bragging hero in the *Orlando* epics of Ariosto and Boiardo.

Alph. Well; but all this while, who is this colonel Hernando?

Gom. He's the first-begotten of Beelzebub, with a face as terrible as Demogorgon.¹ 327

[LORENZO peeps over ALPHONSO'S head, and stares at GOMEZ.
No! I lie, I lie. He's a very proper handsome fellow; well-proportioned and clean-shaped, with a face like a cherubin.

Ped. What, backward and forward, Gomez? Dost thou hunt counter? ² 331

Alph. Had this colonel any former design upon your wife? For, if that be proved, you shall have justice.

Gom. [*Aside*]. Now I dare speak, let him look as dreadfully as he will.—I say, Sir, and I will prove it, that he had a lewd design upon her body, and attempted to corrupt her honesty. 336

[LORENZO lifts up his fist clenched at him.

I confess, my wife was as willing—as himself; and, I believe, 'twas she corrupted him; for I have known him formerly a very civil and modest person.

Elv. You see, Sir, he contradicts himself at every word; he's plainly mad. 341

Alph. Speak boldly, man; and say what thou wilt stand by! Did he strike thee?

Gom. I will speak boldly. He struck me on the face before my own threshold, that the very walls cried shame to him. 345

[LORENZO holds up again.

'Tis true, I gave him provocation; for the man's as peaceable a gentleman as any is in all Spain.

Dom. Now the truth comes out, in spite of him.

Ped. I believe the friar has bewitched him.

Alph. For my part, I see no wrong that has been offered him.

Gom. How? No wrong? Why, he ravished me with the help of two soldiers; carried me away *vi et armis*, and would have put me into a plot against the Government. [LORENZO holds up again.

I confess, I never could endure the Government; because it was

¹“The dreaded name of Demogorgon,” appears in *Paradise Lost* (II, 964), and, earlier in the *Orlando Furioso*, and in *The Faerie Queen* (I, i, 37).

²To the scent. Cf. *Hamlet*, IV, v, 110.

tyrannical. But my sides and shoulders are black and blue, as I can strip and show the marks of them. [LORENZO *again*.
But that might happen, too, by a fall that I got yesterday upon the pebbles. [*All laugh*.]

Dom. Fresh straw and a dark chamber! A most manifest judgment; there never comes better of railing against the Church. 360

Gom. Why, what will you have me say? I think you'll make me mad! Truth has been at my tongue's end this half-hour; and I have not power to bring it out, for fear of this bloody-minded colonel.

Alph. What colonel? 365

Gom. Why, my colonel—I mean my wife's colonel—that appears there to me like my *malus genius*, and terrifies me.

Alph. [*Turning*]. Now you are mad indeed, Gomez; this is my son Lorenzo.

Gom. How? Your son Lorenzo? It is impossible. 370

Alph. As true as your wife Elvira is my daughter.

Lor. What! Have I taken all this pains about a sister?

Gom. No; you have taken some about me; I am sure, if you are her brother, my sides can show the tokens of our alliance.

Alph. [*To LORENZO*]. You know I put your sister into a nunnery, with a strict command not to see you; for fear you should have wrought upon her to have taken the habit,¹ which was never my intention; and, consequently, I married her without your knowledge, that it might not be in your power to prevent it.

Elv. You see, brother, I had a natural affection to you. 380

Lor. What a delicious harlot have I lost! Now, pox upon me, for being so near akin to thee!

Elv. However, we are both beholden to friar Dominic. The Church is an indulgent mother; she never fails to do her part.

Dom. Heavens, what will become of me! 385

Gom. Why, you are not likely to trouble Heaven; those fat guts were never made for mounting.²

¹ Possibly because Lorenzo had wished his sister to lead the easy life of a nun in such a convent as that depicted in Dryden's comedy, *The Assignment*. But the touch is probably of Spanish rather than of English origin.

² The lean Mawworm in *The Hypocrite (ad fin.)* consoles himself for his discomfiture by his prospect of "mounting" *solus* at the last.

Lor. I shall make bold to disburden him of my hundred pistoles, to make him the lighter for his journey; indeed, 'tis partly out of conscience, that I may not be accessory to his breaking his vow of poverty. 391

Alph. I have no secular power to reward the pains you have taken with my daughter; but I shall do it by proxy, friar! Your bishop's my friend, and is too honest to let such as you infect a cloister.

Gom. Ay, do, father-in-law; let him be stript of his habit, and disordered.¹—I would fain see him walk *in quirpo*,² like a cased³ rabbit, without his holy fur upon his back, that the world may once behold the inside of a friar. 398

Dom. Farewell, kind gentlemen! I give you all my blessing before I go.—May your sisters, wives and daughters be so naturally lewd, that they may have no occasion for a devil to tempt, or a friar to pimp for them! 402

[*Exit, with a rabble pushing him.*]

Enter TORRISMOND, LEONORA, BERTRAN, RAYMOND, TERESA &c.

Tor. He lives! He lives! My royal father lives!
Let ev'ry one partake the gen'ral joy!
Some angel with a golden trumpet sound: 405
King Sancho lives! And let the echoing skies
From pole to pole resound: King Sancho lives!
O Bertran, oh! No more my foe, but brother!
One act like this blots out a thousand crimes.

Bert. Bad men, when 'tis their int'rest, may do good. 410
I must confess, I counsell'd Sancho's murder,
And urged the Queen by specious arguments;
But, still suspecting that her love was changed,
I spread abroad the rumour of his death,
To sound the very soul of her designs. 415
Th' event, you know, was answ'ring to my fears;
She threw the odium of the fact⁴ on me,
And publicly avowed her love to you.

¹ dismissed from his Order.

² in body; i.e., without cloak or disguise (Saintsbury).

³ skinned; i.e., uncased (*Id.*).

⁴ crime.

Raym. Heav'n guided all, to save the innocent.

Bert. I plead no merit, but a bare forgiveness. 420

Tor. Not only that, but favour! Sancho's life
Whether by virtue or design preserved,
Claims all within my pow'r.

Qu. My prayers are heard;
And I have nothing further to desire
But Sancho's leave to authorise our marriage. 425

Tor. Oh, fear not him! Pity and he are one;
So merciful a King did never live,—
Loth to revenge, and easy to forgive.
But let the bold conspirator beware;
For Heav'n makes princes its peculiar care.¹ 430

[*Exeunt Omnes.*]

FINIS.

¹ So also in Dryden's *Astræa Redux*: "You and the flowers are its peculiar care."

Epilogue.

*By a Friend of the Author's.*¹

There's none, I'm sure, who is a friend to love
But will our Friar's character approve.
The ablest spark among you sometimes needs
Such pious help, for charitable deeds.
Our Church, alas! (as Rome objects) does want 5
These ghostly comforts for the falling saint.
This gains 'em their whore-converts, and may be
One reason of the growth of Popery.
So Mahomet's religion came in fashion,
By the large leave it gave to fornication. 10
Fear not the guilt, if you can pay for't well;
There is no Dives in the Roman hell;
Gold opens the strait gate, and lets him in,
But want of money is a mortal sin.²
For all besides you may discount to Heaven, 15
And drop a bead to keep the tallies³ even.
How are men cozened still with shows of good!
The bawd's best mask is the grave friar's hood;
Though vice no more a clergyman displeases,
Than doctors can be thought to hate diseases. 20
'Tis by your living ill that they live well;
By your debauches their fat paunches swell.
'Tis a mock-war between the priest and devil;
When they think fit, they can be very civil.
As some, who did French counsels most advance, 25

¹ This Epilogue is reprinted here because it is included in Q; but it is alike worthless and offensive, and it would be a waste of trouble to seek to trace the identity of its author. [Saintsbury noted that in 1704 this Epilogue was "attributed . . . to Dryden himself" (*State Poems*, III), and Strunk thinks this "ascription . . . may be correct."—*Gen. Eds.*]

² The verse reads like a parody of "Desire of greatness is a godlike sin." (*Absalom and Achiophel*, Part I.)

³ accounts.

To blind the world, have railed in print at France,¹—
 Thus do the clergy at your vices bawl,
 That with more ease they may engross them all.
 By damning yours, they do their own maintain;
 A churchman's godliness is always gain. 30
 Hence to their prince they will superior be;
 And civil treason grows Church-loyalty.²
 They boast, the gift of Heav'n is in their power;
 Well may they give the God they can devour!³
 Still to the sick and dead their claims they lay; 35
 For 'tis on carrion that the vermin prey.
 Nor have they less dominion on our life;
 They trot the husband, and they pace⁴ the wife.
 Rouse up, you cuckolds of the northern climes,
 And learn from Sweden to prevent such crimes! 40
 Unman the Friar, and leave the holy drone }
 To hum in his forsaken hive alone; }
 He'll work no honey, when his sting is gone. }
 Your wives and daughters soon will leave the cells,
 When they have lost the sound of Aaron's bells.⁵ 45

¹ An allusion to the secret co-operation between Barrillon and some of the leaders of the Parliamentary Opposition up to the year 1681?

² See the *Satyre Menippée*, *passim*, for illustrations of this text.

³ Cf. *Absalom and Achitophel*, Part I:

The Egyptian rites the Jebrites embraced,
 Where gods were recommended by their taste.

⁴ The latter stable term is applied very similarly in *Pericles*, IV, vi, 68.

⁵ A mock allusion to *Exodus*, xxviii, 33-35.

John Crowne

HIS PLACE IN
RESTORATION COMEDY

*A Monograph by the late Sir Adolphus
William Ward, Litt.D., LL.D., F.B.A.,
Master of Peterhouse, Cambridge*

CROWNE'S PLACE IN RESTORATION COMEDY

Life.—John Crowne was the son of William Crowne, who in 1636–37 accompanied the Earl of Arundel on his futile mission to the Emperor in behalf of the Palatine family, and published a *True Relation* of his travels. In 1650 William Crowne became lieutenant-colonel and commissioner of militia for the county of Salop. In 1654 he served as member of Parliament for Bridgnorth. Two years later he emigrated to Nova Scotia, to become, by Cromwell's grant, one of the two proprietors of this province; but Nova Scotia was returned to the French after the Restoration, and John Crowne was thus, according to his own account, deprived of "half a great province of vast value" which would have descended to him from his father. The younger Crowne was born about 1640. He accompanied his father to America and was a student at Harvard College, "the university of New-England," from 1657 to 1659 or perhaps 1660. He returned to England, probably in that year, and began his career as an author in 1665 with the romance of *Pandion and Amphigenia*, and as a dramatist in 1671, with the tragi-comedy of *Juliana, or, the Princess of Poland*. The known facts of his career thereafter are not great in number or distinction. He quarreled with Settle; was friendly—on the whole—with Dryden (who was one of the "house-poets" of the King's Men about 1675, when Crowne was serving the Duke's House in the same capacity); and, for the rest, enjoyed for brief periods the fickle favour of Rochester and the "princely bounty"—chiefly in promises—of Charles II. Like his royal patron, unhappily, Crowne was always hard-pressed for money. His repeated attempts to win compensation for his father's American estate met with failure; but Queen Anne, who had acted in his *Calisto* in her childhood, seems to have granted him £50 a year from 1701 to 1706. He was buried at St. Giles-in-the-Fields, London, on April 27, 1712.¹

Whether or not it be true that Rochester intended Crowne to supplant Dryden in the favour of the Court, and that the great writer ever afterwards maintained a lofty silence as to the successes

¹ For newly ascertained facts, incorporated above, see A. F. White, *John Crowne, His Life and Dramatic Works*, Western Reserve University Press, 1922, pp. 1–52 and notes.—*Gen. Eds.*

of the other, congratulating him only when he had failed¹—there is nothing to show that Crowne himself at all mistook the height of his own literary stature. His editors roundly assert that, as a writer of comedies, the author of *Sir Courtly Nice* was Dryden's superior; but even of his supposed masterpiece in the branch of the drama best suited to his gifts Crowne (in the Preface to *Caligula*) only goes so far as to declare that it was "as fortunate a comedy as has been written in this age." One is tempted to say—and not only by way of contrasting him, as usual, with Dryden—that the kind of modesty for which Crowne was wont to take credit, bore no close resemblance to that which fitly accompanies real eminence. "It would be very strange," he protests to the readers of the masque by which he first won himself a name, and to which Dryden good-humouredly, or in the way of business, offered to supply an epilogue, "if a bad writer should write well." "The play I present you," he says in the Dedication of *The Country Wit*, "cannot boast of extraordinary merit; it is not of the first kind of plays." "Our poet," confesses the Prologue to *The English Friar*, "even in poetry is poor"; and, with a sincerity altogether beyond cavil, he assures the patron to whom he dedicates his latest extant play, *The Married Beau*: "I have not much fire of fancy." Manifestly, he knew himself to be second-rate, where the higher qualities of the dramatic poet came into question; and second-rate he remains even in respect of those coarser wares to which his productivity as a comic dramatist was in the main confined.

Already in his earliest play, the tragi-comedy of *Juliana, or The Princess of Poland* (printed 1671) the audience had been greatly entertained by the comic character of a landlord, whose brisk volubility of speech remains diverting to the reader. In the Court masque of *Calisto, or the Chaste Nymph*, which was produced at Court² in 1675 and which seemed of a sudden to open to its author the road to fame, he had no opportunity for displaying comic genius. Indeed, the station and the sex of the performers, as well as the youthful age of the two Princesses who took the

¹ Cf. Spence, *Anecdotes*, and Malone's *Dryden*.

² Many interesting details concerning this production have recently appeared in Eleanore Boswell's *Restoration Court Stage* (1932), ch. III.—*Gen. Eds.*

chief parts, as well as the very nature of the theme which it was the poet's task to adapt to the occasion, prescribed to him as refined a treatment as he was capable of imagining. It cannot be said that he soared high in his endeavour to reach a suitable level; what, he afterwards wrote, "tempted me into so great a labyrinth was the fair and beautiful image that stood at the portal, I mean the exact and perfect character of Chastity in the person of Calisto, which I thought a very proper character for the Princess to represent." But the pure and lofty imagination of the author of *Comus* was needed, in order to rise to the heights of such an argument; and Crowne had hard work of it to meet the requirements of his problem. For the action of the masque was to be confined to seven performers, all ladies; only two of these were to wear the masculine habit; and the principal part was to be sustained by a princess of thirteen, with another princess of eleven as one of her associates, while the rest of the actresses were young ladies of high birth and position. (They included, by an irony of fortune for which the author of the masque is not to be held responsible that "beautiful soul," the future Mrs. Godolphin.) So Crowne set to work to revise his myth by giving it a virtuous ending; nor could he help it that this ending reduced to a meaningless absurdity the metamorphosis of Calisto and her little sister into constellations ("accept," says the repentant Jupiter, "the small dominion of a star"). As for the action of the masque and its dialogue, their propriety is quite creditable;—though this cannot be said to hold of the chief scene of the play, in which Jupiter makes love under the guise of Diana, and which approaches very much nearer to Offenbach than it does to Milton.

In the same year 1675 Crowne produced what is probably the earliest of his extant comedies—a species which Sir Courtly Nice ridiculously bids ladies nauseate, and gentlemen decline to endure. Crowne's public was less queasy; but he himself was willing to confess that he had not aimed high in *The Country Wit*, and that a great part of this play consisted of "comedy almost sunk into farce." As is not unusual with this author, the plot is opened briskly and brightly; moreover, it seems on the whole to be better sustained than is the case in most of his comedies. (One of the

most telling episodes—where Ramble paints Betty Frisque's portrait in the presence of her senile protector—is of course taken from Molière's *Le Sicilien, ou L'Amour Peintre*, nor was Crowne so little master of his craft as to be unable to preserve something of the vivacity, though he reproduced very little of the grace, of that inimitable trifle.) Nor can it be denied that there is just a touch of nature in the relations between Ramble, Christina, and her father;—at least, such is the impression left upon us, thanks to the striking resemblance which on the surface this group of personages bears to the better known trio of Tom Jones, Sophia, and Squire Western. And for the passionate outburst of Christina's maid Isabella on behalf of her injured mistress it might be possible to find an even more honoured parallel.¹ But it was not in what seems to a modern reader the main action of the piece that its writer can have expected its patrons—who are stated to have included King Charles II—to find their chief delight. The epilogue spoken by Sir Mannerly Shallow (probably acted by Nokes) claims for this eccentric character, or for the actor performing it, the credit of saving the poet and his work; and in the old-fashioned young country gentleman and his man Booby, who in their rustic simplicity and self-confidence come to town to be made gulls and fools of there, we meet the first of those eccentrically humorous figures—as a rule hunting in couples—on which Crowne seems usually to have depended for the success of his comedies. The comic savour has almost gone out of Sir Mannerly's scraps of Latin and other archaisms (he reads “drolleries,” dances “corantos,” and remembers playing a part in a romantic tragedy); and the fun of the winding-up, when he marries the daughter of a ticket-porter and an apple-woman, while a tramp steals his bag of money from Booby and leaves a child in its place, is not what the critics of the twentieth century would call “convincing.”

On *The Country Wit* there followed among Crowne's comedies some time between 1681 and 1683, when it is known to have been in print, *City Politiques* (i.e., politicians), a clever though in one of its two plots extremely repulsive play. It belongs to the bundle of literary productions (largely, though not wholly, tares) which

¹ White, *op. cit.*, p. 91, suggests further sources and parallels.—*Gen. Eds.*

dated from the agitated epoch beginning with the Popish Plot persecutions, rising to its height in the triumph of the Protestant cause by the Middlesex Grand Jury's ignoring of the indictment against Shaftesbury and ending with his flight from the country a year later (November 1682). "When I first wrote this play," says Crowne, "half the nation was mad"; but though he allows that he may have been little better than mad himself to attack "a whole powerful party," the Court must have been in tolerably calm waters before he came forward to denounce its adversaries. In the play a young good-for-nothing, who because of his indifference to public questions is charged by his Whig father with having turned Tory, exclaims in an injured tone: "A Tory! that's a good one; when I am now writing an answer to *Absalom and Achitophel*,"—to be called *Azariah and Hushai*. Yet the actual height of the political conflict had most assuredly been passed, when so pale a reflexion of Titus Oates as Dr. Panchy seemed sufficient for presentation on the stage, when Shaftesbury was left out altogether,¹ and when the most effective part of the direct political satire consisted of a humorous travesty of the Protestant Joiner into the Catholic Bricklayer.² The character, however, with which the dramatist evidently took the greatest pains and for which he characteristically invented a dialect of his own, was the wholly eccentric lawyer Bartoline, who has not yet been quite satisfactorily identified and who may have been not more than a semi-personal caricature. The part was written for "Tony" Leigh and seems to have been one of his great successes. The dialogue contains an element of good Anti-Jacobin fun, including some (as for instance the reference to "the Club of Young Politique Whigs") which has to this day not lost all its pungency; but no fire either of political principle or of moral indignation burns beneath the mass of satire, and the loyal playwright cannot deny himself the satisfac-

¹ White, however (p. 130), suggests that Shaftesbury is represented "in a general way" by the Podesta.—*Gen. Eds.*

² Goethe might almost be supposed to have made a study of his arguments for those of Vansen in *Egmont*. It may be added that a happy touch or two is also to be found in the Podesta, with whose election the business of the Politiques begins, and who comes before us as a County Council incarnate in the breadth of his good intentions.

tion of depicting all the opponents of the Court as secretly desirous of being paid their price by it.

The "love" plot, in which the character of the hero Florio has been thought to have been borrowed from Horner in Wycherley's *Country Wife*,¹ is intolerably offensive, all the more so because it is to some extent duplicated, according to a practice not unusual with Crowne. On the other hand, the situation in Act iii, however disgusting in one at least of its ingredients, must be allowed to be ingeniously devised and skilfully prepared. Altogether, though the moral tone of the play is of the lowest, and its atmosphere clouded by wanton wives, debauchees, and rascals pretending to be patriots, the author certainly handles his materials with considerable theatrical skill; and the action, for the simple reason that it rarely drags, contrives to sustain an attention which it often fails to deserve.

The story is well known, how Crowne, apparently quick neither in the choice of dramatic subjects nor in the treatment of them, was shown two Spanish plays by King Charles II, one of which was the comedy *No puede ser*; ² how when he had with the help of these written three acts of *Sir Courtly Nice, or It cannot be*, he read them to the King, who approved of them, except that he thought them "not merry enough"; and how the King died before witnessing the play as adapted to the royal taste. The gibes in the Prologue against at least the name of Protestants, are what might have been expected in a new play, the first to be produced in James II's reign. It did not take Crowne long to discover that *No puede ser* had already been translated for the English stage by Sir Thomas St. Serfe under the title of *Tarugo's Wiles, or the Coffee-House*, and acted in 1667. Tarugo is the Crack of Crowne's comedy (acted by "Tony" Leigh), an eccentric Oxonian who under the guise of an Indian nabob's heir, attended by a ballet of "Siamites and Bantammers," diversifies the action of the piece by his *lazzi* and vagaries, and whose nonsense is elaborated with a

¹ White (p. 137), suggests also the influence of *Volpone*.—*Gen. Eds.*

² Agustin Moreto's *No puede ser guardar una mujer* ("No keeping a woman") appears itself to be an imitation of Lope de Vega's *Major Imposibile* ("The greatest impossibility"); and perhaps this was the second play commended to Crowne's notice by the King. [Cf. White, p. 141.—*Gen. Eds.*]

spirit beyond what is usually to be found in Crowne. The praises which have been lavished upon this comedy as a whole, and more especially upon the character from which it derives its name, seem exaggerated, although it for an unusually long time retained its popularity on the stage. The main plot, which turns on the futility of the attempt to guard a Danaë of the period, is neither very novel nor at all attractive; and the opening and the close are alike revolting. The comic wealth of the play is supposed to lie in its double antithesis of humorous characters—Sir Courtly Nice being contrasted with the brutally coarse and rude Surly, a variation of Wycherley's Plain Dealer, and the peppery cavalier Hothead paired off with the Puritan Testimony, who cants about "the great sinfulness of sin" but before the end of the play is caught out as a common reprobate. Sir Courtly Nice himself is no doubt an amusing specimen of the genus fopling. Etherege's *Man of Mode* had been produced twelve years before, but it could be easily shown that Crowne had not forgotten the character. Except, however, that Sir Courtly is perhaps the most utterly washed-out decadent of the series, and that his effeminacy here and there expresses itself with notable felicity, most readers will agree that he falls something short of his reputation. Of course Mountfort who, in the parlance of the stage, "created" the part, and Colley Cibber after him, may have contrived to invest it with irresistible details. Of the other personages the "Aunt" represents a conventional (perhaps originally Spanish) type of which Crowne seems to have been fond; it was a happy thought to make her describe herself as one of fourteen sisters, none of whom married—"we were all so reserved."

With *The English Friar* (probably acted in 1689,¹ printed 1690) we find ourselves in different times from those in which Crowne had congratulated the nation on its marvellous good fortune in being privileged to see King James II follow on King Charles II.² Comments have been wasted on the supposed political inconsistency of the author of this in its essence rather contemptible comedy. He had no reason for venerating the memory of King James and his ecclesiastical policy; and we may allow for his having,

¹ Cf. White, p. 152.—*Gen. Eds.*

² See Prologue to *Sir Courtly Nice*.

like Dryden, entertained a genuine antipathy to priests and parsons of any denomination. Yet it would be absurd to believe that in 1690 he was really troubled by fears of Popish designs for undermining the public or private virtue of Englishmen or Englishwomen such as he imputes to Father Finical, his Order, and his Church. And it is difficult to believe that the character of this coarse hypocrite and impostor, who is created a bishop *in partibus*, and appears before his enraptured female admirers with a cross of gold suspended over his cassock, should have been modelled on Father Petre (though he certainly was lampooned with every freedom of invention), or on any other influential cleric of King James' Court. Nor does Lord Stately, the solemn nonentity who seeks to obtain a blue riband by morigeration to the Father and his Church, appear to have been drawn from any living original. Father Finical is a roughly devised sample of the religious charlatan who under the cloak of religion pursues his private ends, cheats his patron of three thousand pounds, and while surrounded by admiring ladies is bent upon seducing the waiting-maid. The immortal figure of Tartuffe had of course suggested the outlines of this despicable character; but no copy has ever more utterly failed to reproduce either the subtlety or the truthfulness of its original. Although, unlike Tartuffe, Father Finical is represented as an ordained priest, the friends of the Church of Rome in England had no reason for losing their temper over so clumsy an onslaught. The bottom is moreover knocked out of the English dramatist's satire by the simple fact that he is denouncing a vanquished foe, and one who needed no unmasking like the *Wolf* in sheep's clothing of Cibber's later comedy. As for Lord Stately, he must be allowed to be an entertaining specimen of empty patrician pomposity,—whether he is found declaiming on his own grandeur and insisting on the privileges of the peerage (including arm-chairs), or whether he is shocked by the up-to-date freedoms of his daughters and the roysterers with whom the elder sister, an idle hussy drawn with some social insight as well as humour (“I do love Love,” she says) is foolhardy enough to venture into contact. Among the roysterers in question are a pair of zanies coupled in Crowne's favourite way—the more than Mohawk insolence of Young Ranter being

matched by the idiotic admiration lavished by Old Ranter upon his hopeful son.

Although this comedy, again according to its author's wont, opens well, its double action hardly succeeds in keeping up the reader's interest. The folly of Stately's daughter Laura too obviously overshoots the mark, though it hardly prepares us for the unspeakable grossness of Young Ranter's final scene with her; on the other hand, the effect of the dénouement of the main plot,—the revelation of Father Finical's rascality,—has been largely discounted beforehand. The entire play not only shows its author at his worst, but exemplifies with unmistakable distinctness the progress of the decay into which our national comedy had fallen,—a decay all the more deplorable in the present instance, where an English play seems to challenge comparison with a masterpiece of French dramatic art.

Crowne's latest extant comic drama (for a play by him bearing the title of *Justice Busy* appears never to have been printed) was *The Married Beau, or the Curious Impertinent*, acted and printed in 1694. This comedy, which was frequently performed in the period ensuing upon its production, is again a version—or it might with equal propriety be called a perversion—of a celebrated original, but not of another drama. The story of *The Ill-Advised Curiosity* (*Il Curioso Impertinente*, which as Mr. Ormsby observes would be more precisely translated "The Inquisitive Man who had no business to be so") is related in chapters XXIII–V of Part I of *Don Quixote*. Crowne's comedy is by no means unskillfully constructed; its dramatic interest is kept up to the close; and the success achieved by it is perfectly intelligible. Indeed, in the scene between the adulterers where the action rises to its height, the author is carried away into a glow and tremor of passion as unusual with him as it is remote from the self-restraint of Cervantes. But, taking the play as a whole, it falls as far short of the nobility as *The English Friar* does of the veracity of its original. Every incident in the story, every turn in its course, and every character contained in it, seems to have been deliberately transposed into a lower key, as if on purpose to suit the meaner tastes of a different public and the ignobler style of its theatrical pur-

veyor. In novel and play alike the "ill-advised curiosity" is that of the husband who seeks to test the virtue of his wife by inducing his most intimate friend to pretend to tempt it, and whose infatuation meets with its deserved reward. But, in the novel, the husband is impelled to his ill-omened venture by the Nemesis awaiting those that know not how to bear the favours of Fortune, and his friend enters into the shameful plot not only reluctantly, but with the deliberate design of thwarting it. In the play, the husband consistently behaves as an egregious fool inflated with grotesque self-conceit; and the noble Lothario of the tale, in whose fall lies half its tragedy, is turned into Polidor, a heartless voluptuary who is particularly gratified by the chance of cuckolding the friend of his bosom. The character of the wife, too, though not perhaps in the same measure, loses in interest what it loses in gravity; from the very first this Mrs. Lovely dreads that Polidor's attractions may prove irresistible; and the dramatist feels obliged to add another character, the chaste Camilla, by way of personifying the virtue of which he is unable to indicate, like the novelist, the gradual but certain corruption. The one personage in the novel faithfully transferred to the play is the lady's maid Leonela (Lionell); though even in this instance Crowne contrives to coarsen the application of the homely but forcible truism that "the sins of mistresses entail this mischief among others: they make themselves the slaves of their own servants." What wonder that the English dramatist should neither dare to call upon his audience to accept the logical conclusion, or in other words the tragical catastrophe, of the Spanish novel, nor in the conduct of his action feel able to dispense with adventitious aids! The comedy ends with the successful hoodwinking of the vainglorious husband. As for the supplementary fun, it is of the familiar pattern. The amorous old fool Thorneback pairs off with a junior rival Sir John Shittlecock, who falls in love with all the women he encounters, though like Young Marlow in *She Stoops to Conquer* he is, as he avers, "a pegoose with a lady, but the devil with a chambermaid." The fooling of these worthies is not very novel though occasionally wildly extravagant, and ends in roaring farce.

Unless in the foregoing brief review of Crowne's comedies injustice has been done to his powers, of which there is every reason for concluding that he made the most, there ought to be no pretence for setting him up, in continuation or renewal of Rochester's transitory attempt, as a rival to Dryden. Crowne was more effective in comedy than in tragedy, but in both the one and the other he lacks the first and most indispensable condition of literary distinction,—viz.: a style of his own. Apparently conscious of this defect, and yet ambitious of rising to heights of success towards which fortune seemed to beckon him only in order to jilt him on the way, he strove long and laboured hard to establish a claim upon a prominent position among English comic dramatists. What pains he took may fairly be gathered from the fact that in a literary career, covering a full generation of thirty years, he produced not more than six examples that have endured of the dramatic species in which he must have known himself best qualified to excel. As to choice of subject his range was, in the circumstances, wide. The political bearing noticeable in several of his comedies seems attributable rather to a desire to stand well with authority, than to any strong bias of principle or sentiment in his own mind; like nearly all the writers of the later Stuart age he no doubt held that "wit is a Tory";¹ but after he had joined in hounding down the Whigs in *City Politiques*, and in *Sir Courtly Nice* had not spared his sneers against the "persecuted" Protestants, he showed, in *The English Friar*, unmistakable signs of a willingness to uphold the *régime* established by the Revolution. His plots, on the whole, are not wanting in original turns, but in both his last two comedies he resorted—as his contemporaries probably did to a larger extent than literary research has yet ascertained—to Spanish sources, dramatic in the earlier and novelistic in the later instance. He never dispensed with the use of a double plot—"main" and "bye"—but it must be granted that he often showed more skill than some of his competitors in interweaving both parts of his action. It cannot be asserted that in general he displays much

¹Wit is a Tory, ne'er with us would join;
Wit never help'd the Whigs to write one line.

Epilogue to *City Politiques* (spoken by Bartoline).

ability in construction; but some of his comedies (especially *The Country Wit* and *The English Friar*) open remarkably well, and others (for instance *City Politiques*) work up skilfully enough to their principal situation. The last act or two of his comedies are, however, apt to be wanting in vigour; perhaps where the interest of the action is so largely theatrical or conventional, it cannot without difficulty be sustained through five acts. Now and then Crowne sought to help it on (as in *Sir Courtly Nice*) by resorting to the aid of those ballet-*intermezzos* which Molière had borrowed from the Italians. Elsewhere he contented himself with the simpler expedient of allowing a comic action to degenerate into "screaming" farce. Beyond a doubt it was on the characters of his plays that Crowne concentrated his chief endeavours, and in them that he intended their chief strength to lie. English Comedy, wrote an accomplished critic¹ about this time, far from being a tissue of polite intrigue full of interesting incident and lovers' talk, like that of Spain and France, is "a representation of everyday life, according to the diversity of humours, and the varying characters of men." It may be doubted whether this criticism took into account either the direction which French comedy, in the hands of its greatest master, was following; or the much-favoured Spanish species known under the name of *figuron*. So far as the English drama is concerned, the favourite types instanced by St.-Évremond—from alchemist to politique gull and fop—might seem to be gathered promiscuously from the crowded gallery of the great master of the comedy of humours, and from the more meagre collections of his later followers; but the truth is that these studies of nature had in their turn become largely conventional, and that it is not often that in such a writer as Crowne we meet with a really fresh comic type. Neither Sir Mannerly Shallow nor Sir Courtly Nice, the most successful probably of Crowne's eccentric characters, can be said to have conquered for himself a domain of his own among gulls and fops. In order to accentuate the efforts of his comic inventiveness, Crowne frequently adopted the device of relieving caricature by caricature; Young Ranter and Old Ranter, Thorneback and Shittlecock, are matched against one

¹ *De la Comédie Anglaise; Œuvres de M. de Saint-Évremond* (5th. ed.), III, 275.

another, and in *Sir Courtly Nice* he even accomplishes the *tour de force* of presenting two pairs of eccentrics,—Sir Courtly and Surly, and Testimony and Hothead. But while the strain which he thus puts upon his powers is obvious, we cannot but remain cognisant of the fact that the end of the comedy of humours is at hand, and that there can be no question of a permanent revival of the species by this or any other belated follower of its originator, not endowed like Ben Jonson with real inventive power and an all but inexhaustible creative energy.

The prose dialogue of Crowne is as a rule marked by a taking vivacity or alertness such as even with a rather fastidious audience frequently serves the purpose of brilliancy of wit. Now and then he may be said to be actually witty, but more frequently he raises the unavoidable smile by not unexpected facetiousness. As a matter of course, he is as much at home in blank verse as in prose, but of his comedies only the latest (*The Married Beau*) is in metre, having been no doubt intended to rise to a higher pitch than was attainable by the author's comic style. *The Country Wit* exhibits that free mixture of blank verse and prose which is common in early Restoration comedy, together with not a little of that bastard prose, familiar even to much later periods of our literature, which is blank verse without seeming to know it.

If such self-knowledge as was possessed by Crowne enabled him to recognise the limits of his powers as a dramatist, he was, one may be sure, equally awake to the shortcomings of the age for which he wrote. Indeed, he might seem to have understood its faults better than his own, when he illustrates his assertion that "many of his plays have been very successful and yet clean," by a reference to *Sir Courtly Nice*. The moral standard of Crowne's comedies may not be the lowest to which the English theatre had sunk, or was to sink. But, in another sense, it could not have been lower than what it actually was; for it was always and frankly that which the public chose to prescribe to the dramatist content to cater for its taste.

A. W. WARD.

William Wycherley

THE PLAIN-DEALER

Critical and Biographical Essay by Herbert Ellsworth Cory, Professor in the University of Washington. Text edited with notes by M. Alexandre Beljame, late Professor in the University of Paris, and Doctor Harold S. Symmes

CRITICAL AND BIOGRAPHICAL ESSAY

“Manly” Wycherley.—Macaulay’s hearty and honest contempt (heightened a little and made a little hectic by his love of sensational antithesis) and our own immoral prudery have made us suspicious of Wycherley’s sturdy sincerity. We have gained incalculably, to be sure, in learning that it is not necessary for a man to be obscene or lascivious in order to be manly. But we have lost some real insight in forgetting that a powerful idealist is often very brutal. Carlyle was brutal and we revenge ourselves by calling him, most falsely, a pessimist. Wycherley was rather foul-mouthed and decidedly brutal and we feel bound to stigmatize him as an incorrigible roué masquerading as a satirist.

Yet Wycherley’s life, sordid as it undoubtedly is, is the life of an honest man, no better than he should be, but, in his heavy-handed way, essentially idealistic. Even Jeremy Collier, that super-parson who fulminated against the immorality of Restoration Comedy and who went on unhappily into an excess of just wrath that became fanatical and absurd injustice, was impelled to treat the handsome and grim Plain Dealer with quiet respect. Just there the sour parson recognized a spiritual kinsman and a better man. For Wycherley was an Anglo-Saxon whom no amount of French influence,—neither the influence of a sojourn in France during his most plastic years nor the influence of a brilliant Molière on his ambitious maturity,—could Gallicize.

His Prenticeship.—William Wycherley (born c. 1640), was the son of Daniel Wycherley, teller to the exchequer, high steward to the fifth marquis of Winchester, buyer of manors, and scarred veteran of the law courts. There is no need to explain further why William, for all his royalism, when he went into France at the age of fifteen and entered into converse with the court ladies, was called by the famous Mademoiselle de Rambouillet the “little Huguenot.” The “little Huguenot,” for all his various abandonments of Protestantism, he essentially remained. He returned to England in 1659, with a most transparent Gallic veneer, and in 1660 became a gentleman commoner at Queen’s College, Oxford, where Doctor Barlow seems to have had little trouble in temporarily wiping out his callow Catholicism. Wycherley left Oxford without matriculating and, although admitted a member of the Inner Temple, he neglected sober law to flit about with men and women of letters and fash-

ion.¹ Pope says that he died a Roman Catholic. Whether or not that is true, he may be safely assumed to have vacillated, like many vigorous minds of that age, and probably like its master, Dryden, with perfect sincerity.

How soon he took to writing plays is a question. Few artists, indeed, can be trusted as autobiographers when the matter of precocity comes up for consideration. Wycherley at the decline of his life seems, for all his failing memory, to have been fatiguingly consistent in one cherished statement, the oft-repeated assurance to Pope that he wrote *Love in a Wood*, his first comedy, at the age of nineteen; but the evidence is rather against his accuracy (though in no measure against his sincerity), and we may revise his asseverations as we have learned to revise Pope's. In his old age Wycherley, the Plain Dealer, was really no more of an essential liar than he was in his youth and in his maturity; he was simply most divertingly vain and absurd; he had arrived at a senility possible only to an Anglo-Saxon.

First Plays.—*Love in a Wood*, at all events, seems not to have been acted until the spring of 1671, when it charmed the wits of the town and brought King Charles' and everybody else's mistress, the Duchess of Cleveland, to see the play on two successive performances during Lent. The famous story of the Plain Dealer's introduction to the plain dealing Duchess at this time is too characteristic and illuminating to sacrifice either to a fear of too much repetition or a fear of the demands of propriety. John Dennis has the most blunt and plausible version.

"The writing of that play was the Occasion of becoming acquainted with one of King Charles's Mistresses after a very particular manner. As Mr. Wycherley was going thro' *Pall Mall* towards *St. James's* in his Chariot, he met the foresaid lady in hers, who, thrusting half her Body out of the Chariot, cry'd out aloud to him, 'You Wycherley, you are a Son of a Whore,' at the same time laughing aloud and heartily. . . . Mr. Wycherley was certainly very much surpriz'd at it, yet not so much but he soon apprehended it was spoke with Allusion to the latter End of a Song in the forementio'd Play—

'Great Wits and great Braves
Have always a Punk to their Mother.'

. . . Wycherley, recovering from his Surprise, ordered his Coachman to drive

¹ Mr. Willard Connely (*Brawny Wycherley*, p. 45), conjectures that the dramatist was the "Mr. Wycherly" who was on the staff of Charles II's Ambassador to Spain from January 1664 to February 1665.—*Gen. Eds.*

back, and to overtake the Lady. As soon as he got over-against her, he said to her, 'Madam, you have been pleased to bestow a title on me which generally belongs to the Fortunate. Will your Ladyship be at the Play to-night?' 'Well,' she reply'd, 'what if I am there?' 'Why, then I will be there to wait on your Ladyship, tho' I disappoint a very fine Woman who has made me an Assignation.' 'So,' said she, 'you are sure to disappoint a Woman who has favour'd you for one who has not.' 'Yes,' reply'd he, 'if she who has not favour'd me is the finer Woman of the two. But he who will be constant to your Ladyship, till he can find a finer Woman, is sure to die your Captive.'"¹

King Charles seems to have accepted his new rival with a fine blending of nonchalance and graciousness and, some time later, we are told, went to see the dramatist—who was prostrated with fever—and sat on the edge of the bed. One is reminded of the two immortal incorrigibles in Ariosto's notorious twenty-eighth canto. Buckingham, too, was jealous for a time, but soon changed front. The Plain Dealer was not niggardly in gratitude. For, later, when the Duke was in disgrace and confined in the Tower, Wycherley wrote in defiant praise,

Your late Disgrace is but the Court's Disgrace,
As its false accusation but your Praise.

Love in a Wood is grovellingly indecent, and vagrant in structure. However, its alleged indebtedness to Sedley's *Mulberry Garden* (1668), need hardly be added to the list of its limitations.² On the contrary, the play, with all its crudeness, is harshly and boldly stamped with Wycherley's privy signet. Lady Flippant, a widow who declaims against marriage while she pursues the whole genus of man with a zeal that takes the lustre and the modernity from some of Bernard Shaw's astonishing ladies, is a thoroughly characteristic creation of the Plain Dealer and a characteristic target for his fervent and mortal hatred of hypocrisy. Herein Wycherley was an ancestor of whom Harry Fielding had no need to be ashamed. But Wycherley hated hypocrisy so heartily that he always portrayed it too broadly—so broadly, sometimes, that its unreal absurdity dulled the edge of his satire. For the rest, the scenes in which Miss Lucy's frail virtue is set to sale by those two

¹ *Familiar Letters*, London, 1721.

² Dr. Johannes Klette (*William Wycherley's Leben und dramatische Werke*, Münster, 1883, pp. 41 ff.) has discussed this point indifferently.

incomparable business competitors, her mother Crossbite and her blasé beau Dapperwit, are scenes which, with all their crudities, have an incorrigible humour absolutely peculiar to Wycherley and, more generally, a rough smack of that essential health of the Restoration which impelled it to drag its vices, if not out into the sunlight at least out into those implacable magnifiers, the foot-lights. In exaggerating, glorifying, mutilating its vices, like beggars and fakirs, the Restoration by the very perversity of its frankness effected its own cure without any significant aid whatsoever from the super-parson. To drag tawdry vices on the stage and to warp them even to the edge of prurient fancy was, after all, to effect a kind of moral fresh air cure. England purified herself almost involuntarily through a sort of abandon and frankness that had all the outrageous vigor of sheer health. France was more delicate, more self-contained, and bred slowly in her brilliant court the great underlying disease that took a tremendous convulsion to cure.

Wycherley's second play, *The Gentleman Dancing-Master* (acted 1672, pr. 1673), is less coarse and less sincere than any of Wycherley's other plays. From Calderón, Wycherley adapted a rather threadbare situation, a daughter of a fantastic scheming Spaniard intriguing with a lover disguised as a dancing-master. To be merely diverted by Wycherley is to be decidedly disappointed.

The Country Wife.—There is not much to say about Wycherley's life at this period. One incident, nevertheless, is too characteristic to be omitted. It may be best recorded in the inimitable tart phrases of Macaulay, though we should note in passing that Macaulay is most unjust in implying it to be the "only good action" of Wycherley's life.

"He is said to have made great exertions to obtain the patronage of Buckingham for the illustrious author of *Hudibras*, who was now sinking into an obscure grave, neglected by a nation proud of his genius and by a court which he had served too well. His grace consented to see poor Butler; and an appointment was made. But unhappily two pretty women passed by; the volatile Duke ran after them; the opportunity was lost and could never be regained."¹

We may note also that Wycherley had taken to sea for a short space either in 1665 or 1672, along with many another gentleman

¹ *The Comic Dramatists of the Restoration.*

land-lubber. He seems to have witnessed a battle with the Dutch but, what is vastly more important, found time to gather some materials for his most remarkable play, *The Plain Dealer*.

The Plain Dealer, however, was preceded by *The Country Wife* (1675). Hazlitt prophesied that this comedy would "last longer than anything of Congreve's as a popular acting play."¹ So much has been made of Wycherley's dependence on foreign originals, especially as regards the influence of Molière's *École des Femmes* on Wycherley's conception of Pinchwife, the jealous husband who strives in vain to keep his unsophisticated but most diabolically naïve country wife from the contamination of city society, that I would like to quote a passage from Hazlitt which justly emphasizes Wycherley's own contribution.

"Agnes, in Molière's play, has a great deal of the same unconscious impulse and heedless naïveté, but hers is sentimentalised and varnished over (in the French fashion) with longwinded apologies and analytical distinctions. It wants the simple force and home truth. It is not so direct and downright. [Mrs. Pinchwife] is not even a novice in casuistry: she blurts out her meaning before she knows what she is saying, and she speaks her mind by her actions oftener than by her words. The outline of the plot is the same; but the point-blank hits and master-strokes, the sudden thoughts and delightful expedients, such as her changing the letters, the meeting her husband plump in the Park, as she is running away from him as fast as her heels can carry her, her being turned out of doors by her jealous booby of a husband, and sent by him to her lover disguised as Alicia, her sister-in-law—occur first in the modern play."²

While Molière was a supreme writer and Wycherley only a brilliant writer of his day, we may here hold with Hazlitt rather than with Taine when he says of the English writer:

"If he imitates the Agnes of Molière, as he does in *The Country Wife*, he marries her in order to profane marriage, deprives her of honor, still more of modesty, still more of grace, and changes her artless tenderness into shameless instincts and scandalous confessions."

¹ It was frequently acted till 1748; thereafter, in "eviscerated . . . alterations" by John Lee and, later, by Garrick, "even yet occasionally seen in the provinces." Wycherley's original reappeared at the Regent Theatre, London, in February, 1924 (Summers, *Wycherley*, II, 8).—*Gen. Eds.*

² *Lectures on the Comic Writers*, "On Wycherley, Congreve, Vanbrugh, and Farquhar," *Works*, ed. Waller and Glover, London, 1903, VIII, 76.

We may well rub our eyes and wonder whether we have happened upon some traditional criticism of a French book by a ponderous English moralist. Taine's *History of English Literature*, formula and all, is greater than anything of the sort ever attempted in England. But it missed the point sadly when he came to Wycherley. The fundamental point—we may urge it quite seriously—is that *The Country Wife* has a profound poetic justice. Horner, who intrigues with the prurient wives of such creatures as the sniggering Sir Jasper Fidget and with the innocently sensual spouse of that selfish and morose roué, Pinchwife,—Horner, the mad blackguard, who cuckolds half the town, is the very Nemesis of the Restoration.

And the Country Wife herself is a siren who defies all severe reproachful aloofness. It is useless, moreover, to seek justification with the gentle Charles Lamb in the paradox that she and all her associates belong to an unreal and non-moral world of harmless, gaily colored puppets. Lamb himself felt constrained to except Wycherley, more or less, from his immortal quibbling defense. Wycherley was too earnest, too uncompromisingly Saxon. And of all his characters the Country Wife is the most triumphantly real in her instinctive wickedness. As you read the play in your study, her vivacious speeches evoke a lively and most winning image of the lady and recall the garrulous ripple of her voice and her constant pantomime, sly and naïve, as do few speeches in far greater plays. You see her fresh young innocent face, her strange clumsy adroitness, her paradox of action; you hear her childlike intonations, a soubrette's treble, so sincere, so perfectly innocent, yet so unconsciously naughty; you catch the truly wanton flash of eyes which have never seen or dreamed of wantonness but which were brought into the world to encounter it. Wycherley's honesty puts us to shame. We must own that we are captivated by this unique and incorrigible creature. And in spite of the fact that she is most extravagantly drawn we must admit that she is alluring because she is so real that we can hear her very panting in her ceaseless skipping about. She is real. And she is also a symbol. She is a sort of Comic Muse of the Restoration, a Goddess of its wilful Springtide who, too sure, makes the beribboned satyrs

burst into the hard guffaw of the town and clubs, and the thickly powdered ladies giggle with great sophistication behind their fans. But her very freshness and frankness bring sunlight into this atmosphere that reeks of drugging perfumes. She, more than Jeremy Collier's brimstone eloquence or Dick Steele's labored sentimentality, teaches the age to cure itself as an animal might cure itself.

Marriage and Prison.—Wycherley's most completely representative performance, *The Plain Dealer* (1676), we may most fitly reserve for consideration at the close of this study. It played a curiously dramatic part in one of the most picturesque incidents of his life. One day Wycherley, in company with a certain Mr. Fairbeard, arrived at a bookseller's shop at the happy moment when the reputedly wealthy and certainly charming Countess of Drogheda sought solace for her domestic troubles (fated to be interrupted, soon after, by a short widowhood), by inquiring of the bookseller for a copy of the much discussed and notorious *Plain Dealer*. Like Leigh Hunt we may leave the rest of the story to "its . . . best repeater, Mr. Bell."

"Madam," said Mr. Fairbeard, "since you are for the 'Plain Dealer,' there he is for you," pushing Mr. Wycherley towards her at the time. "Yes," observed Wycherley, with his usual promptitude and gallantry, "this lady can bear plain-dealing, for she appears to be so accomplished, that what would be a compliment addressed to others, would be plain-dealing addressed to her." The countess replied to this sally, with "No truly, Sir, I am not without my faults any more than the rest of my sex; and yet, notwithstanding all my faults, I love plain-dealing, and am never more fond of it than when it tells me of my faults." "Then, Madam," interposed Mr. Fairbeard, who appears to have played his part in the scene with excellent taste and good-humour, "you and the Plain Dealer seem designed by heaven for each other."

"The result of this dramatic exordium," adds Leigh Hunt, "was the usual termination of comedy,—matrimony; and (as Dennis might have said) something not so pleasant afterwards, at the fall of the curtain." For Wycherley, at that time expecting from King Charles the tutorship of the Duke of Richmond on a salary of £1,500 a year and a pension when his tutorial duties were over, was foolish enough to conceal his marriage in an excess of diplomacy that was, of course, set at nought by discovery and by the displeasure of Charles, who withdrew his offer. To cap the climax,

the countess, evidently as familiar with *The Country Wife* as with *The Plain Dealer*, proved to be a sort of Mrs. Pinch-husband and we read amusing stories of how the creator of Mr. Horner and Captain Manly went meekly to convene with his friends just across the street from his lodgings, at the Cock Tavern, where he was always commanded to leave the windows open in order that his countess might assure herself that his friends and he were entertaining no models for heroines of future comedies.

At her death the countess settled her estate on Wycherley and with it some stubborn law disputes which so multiplied his debts that they brought him, *sans* estate, within prison walls. Here he had plenty of chance to verify his Plain Dealer's harsh animadversions on friends. His publisher, who had fed fat on his last comedy, refused him the loan of twenty pounds. His father would not stir to his rescue. So in prison he remained four years or more,¹ until it chanced that King James II was pleased to inquire about the author. On learning that the author was in prison he gave orders for the payment of his debts and for a pension of £200 a year as long as Wycherley remained in England. But Wycherley was ashamed to tell the king's envoy the full extent of his debts and remained in the tentacles of worry for some little time longer until his father relented sufficiently to pay off the remnant.

Last Years.—Wycherley's last years have deeply disgusted such men as Macaulay and Taine, but to me they seem very pathetic for all their sordidness. The old man who had made such a handsome figure for Lely's canvas when he was twenty-eight, was now drawn by Kneller with such pathetic ragged grey hair that he could not endure the image of himself and induced the painter to draw a wig over the shameful reality. Wycherley formed a capricious but noble friendship with the brilliant boy, Alexander Pope, who, at the age of sixteen, could criticize with gentle but deadly frankness the old man's limping, ribald, and platitudinous verses. At night the Plain Dealer read himself to sleep on the shrewd wisdom of Montaigne, Rochefoucauld, or Seneca; in the morning he would write verses full of their thoughts and phrases without

¹ Seven years, according to some accounts. The dates are somewhat uncertain.—*Gen. Eds.*

an adumbration of a memory of his complete dependence. His memory grew worse; his triviality and his iteration more damnable. Vague thoughts of young, wanton days flickered through his murky twilight and seasoned his verses with crude ribaldry that had none of the vigor of his old satirical sallies. From time to time he quarreled with Pope, made it up, and took the young man's painful advice by turning some of his wretched verses into very tolerable prose maxims, some of which have a fine flash of Wycherley's earlier satire.

One of these maxims, he lived out in a measure, on his death-bed. "Old men," he had written, "give young men good counsel, not being able longer to give them bad examples." Eleven days before his death he had married Elizabeth Jackson. "The old man," we are told by Pope, "then lay down, satisfied in the conscience of having by this act paid his just debts, obliged a woman who he was told had merit, and shown an heroic resentment of the ill-usage of his next heir. Some hundred pounds which he had with the lady discharged those debts; a jointure of £400¹ a year made her a recompense; and the nephew he left to comfort himself as well as he could with the miserable remains of a mortgaged estate." One more thing, then, the Plain Dealer did that was in his best vein. About a day before his death, he called in his young wife, requested her fulfillment of a desire he was about to reveal and, on gaining a promise, said: "My dear, it is only this,—that you will never marry an old man again."

The Plain Dealer.—John Dryden wrote in his heartiest vein: "The author of *The Plain Dealer*, whom I am proud to call my friend, has obliged all honest and virtuous men by one of the most bold, most general, and most useful satires, which has ever been presented on the English theatre."² Yet to George Meredith, *The Plain Dealer* seemed to be merely "a coarse prose adaption of the *Misanthrope*, stuffed with lumps of realism in a vulgarized theme to hit the mark of English appetite."³ To Hazlitt, to whom we must always listen with respect, it seemed well to say, "No

¹ £500, according to other authorities.—*Gen. Eds.*

² Preface to *The State of Innocence*.

³ *An Essay on Comedy*, New York, 1905, pp. 24–25. [See also below, p. 553.—*Gen. Eds.*]

one can read this play attentively without being the better for it as long as he lives." But, in the history of the confusing attitudes towards *The Plain Dealer* we can always match a laudation with a curse. And it was no less kindly a critic than Leigh Hunt who observed, *à propos* of the hero, Captain Manly, and of his treatment of the treacherous, hypocritical Olivia:

"In this gusto of desecrated animal passion fit only for some ferocious sensualist who believed himself as great a rascal as he thought everybody else, the wits of those days saw nothing to deteriorate from a character emphatically christened and thought 'Manly,' a name which it imparted as an epithet of honour to the Author himself."¹

Quite equal as a storm centre of controversy to the problem of Wycherley's morality in *The Plain Dealer*, is the question of Wycherley's indebtedness to Molière. As Voltaire said cautiously: "All Wycherley's strokes are stronger and bolder than those of our *Misanthrope*, but then they are less delicate, and the Rules of Decorum are not so well observed in this Play."² It is fatally easy, however, to go beyond this and attribute all the brilliance to Molière, all the crudeness to Wycherley. Against such a charge Mr. W. C. Ward, one of the most judicious as well as sympathetic of Wycherley's critics, unhesitatingly defends him:

"It is almost a truism that the most original writers are frequently the most extensive plagiarists, and Wycherley has so overlaid his appropriations with the colouring of his own brilliant individuality, that his play appears almost equally a masterpiece of originality as of ingenuity."³

The charge of indecency against *The Plain Dealer* has perhaps never been more cogently urged than by Mr. John Palmer who, borrowing a hint from Leigh Hunt, says:

"What is the precise nature of this indecency? *The Plain Dealer* is not indecent in the sense that was urged by Jeremy Collier and Lord Macaulay. *The Plain Dealer* is exactly the reverse of any attempt to administer an aphrodisiac . . . it is

¹ *The Dramatic Works of Wycherley, Congreve, Vanbrugh, and Farquhar*, London and New York, 1866, "Biographical and Critical Notices," pp. xvii, sq.

² *Letters concerning the English Nation*, London, 1733. "Letter xix," pp. 182-83.

³ *The Plays of William Wycherley, Mermaid Edition*. See p. 365 and Notes for an examination of some details of Wycherley's borrowings. See also Nettleton, *English Drama of the Restoration and Eighteenth Century*, p. 81.

the deliberate attempt of a ferocious moralist to expose the vices of nature for our disgust. It is the unhappy protest against life of a man who lived semi-consciously against the grain of his nature. It is indecent in the sense that any protest against life is indecent—in the sense that any deliberate tendency to turn the seamy side without and to ignore the equitable balance of nature is indecent.”¹

Here, indeed, not in the alleged plagiarizing and degrading of Molière, not in the alleged vulgarisation of Shakespeare's Viola into Manly's lover, Fidelity (futile charges and never even faintly luminous), here, indeed, in a defense of Wycherley's wolfish indecency or a condemnation of it, lies the nexus of a real controversy. Unfortunately for Mr. Palmer, he tries to find his way out by insisting that Wycherley justified himself by presenting his characters so that “the audience is invited to look upon them at a distance,” by making his appeal “to the intelligence rather than to the sympathy of his hearers,” and that therefore he made a legitimate “comic appeal.” All this derives from Lamb's famous paradox which, it must be remembered, Lamb hesitated to apply to Wycherley. And, anyway, Lamb's paradox has the virtue of whimsical surprise, of quaintly defiant defense of a cause which he believes, in his heart of hearts, to be already lost before he has taken the stand. No, we must approach this drama grimly and closely: we must weigh it in the scales with real life, the real life of the Restoration and the real life of our own day. Perhaps the most expressive phrases ever penned about *The Plain Dealer* were written by Professor Felix E. Schelling, who tells us that in this comedy above all of Wycherley's we can “recognize that this savage blasphemer in the halls of beauty and of art is, after all, at heart a moralist, indignantly flagellating vice as well as gloating over her deformities.”²

“At heart a moralist.” Yes, Wycherley readily sacrifices plot and character to his fierce convictions. The plot is but a series of loosely knit scenes in each of which the dialogue is singularly

¹ *The Comedy of Manners*, pp. 134-35. Compare Leigh Hunt: “Indeed all misanthropes, whatever be their pretensions in other respects, nay, in very proportion to their claims upon being thought exceptions to the generality of mankind, are, and must be, so far, nothing but stupid and immodest coxcombs, for daring to set up their supposed knowledge of themselves above the whole virtues of the rest of their fellow-creatures.”

² *Camb. Hist. of Engl. Lit.*, VIII, 164-65.

drastic; it is a group of violent satires linked hastily by a few conventional plot devices. The characters are drawn with the broad coarse strokes of a Rubens turned cartoonist. The "petulant, litigious" Widow Blackacre is the frankest caricature. But life itself presents us, in spite of the critics of Dickens, with no small number of breathing caricatures.¹ Olivia is a mænad as conceived by a very Flemish Rubens, but partly twisted and deformed by her stifling, hypocritical town life into a gargoyle. But this creature, so warped by Wycherley's hatred of hypocrisy, has an appalling reality about her. Manly, like Horner, is a ruthless Nemesis of the Restoration, but more terrible than Horner, a fierce embittered Silenus turned Nemesis. For all his outrageous actions, in which the satire of Wycherley burns and snarls, he is made supremely lifelike in the turn which makes him except from his general disgust at human nature the two most unmitigated scoundrels of the play. "Indignantly flagellating vice as well as gloating over her deformities." Yes, Wycherley is addicted to devil-worship. Because the wits of the town referred to the author as "Manly" Wycherley we must not make the absurd mistake of Taine and Leigh Hunt and many others that Wycherley was endeavoring to portray here his ideal hero. No, all this indecency, in spite of Mr. Palmer, is quite justifiable in its one-sided devotion to the seamy side of life, since to portray "the equitable balance of nature," while it may serve with the enlightened, is sure to feed the cheap optimism of those who see in life what they want to see and no more. And the indecent portraiture of Manly is really a celebration of the author's devil-worship, a practice which has been followed with gusto and profit by many more idealists than the average reader would like to suppose,—a devil-worship which to some vigorous minds seems the only way to wage war to the knife on the smug and the apathetic: by constantly shocking and appalling them.

Previous Editions and the Present Text.—The first edition of *The Plain Dealer* (Q), which is the basis of the present text (pre-

¹ The attempt to prove the Widow Blackacre a copy of the Countess in Racine's *Les Plaideurs* is one of the most negligible of the almost invariably futile attempts to strip away Wycherley's originality. [More plausible is the suggestion that in sketching the Widow, Wycherley had his litigious father in mind. (Cf. Summers, Connely, et al.)—*Gen. Eds.*]

pared with notes by M. Alexandre Beljame and Dr. Harold S. Symmes), appeared in 1677. Two more quartos came out before the year's end, and a fourth followed in 1678. Additional quartos appeared in 1681, 1686, 1691, 1694, 1700, and 1709: ten quartos in all, constituting, according to the title pages, at least six separate editions. There were collected editions of Wycherley's plays in 1713, 1720, 1731, 1735, and 1736, and others, of somewhat uncertain date, between 1751 and 1768. In 1840 Leigh Hunt first issued *The Dramatic Works of Wycherley, Congreve, Vanburgh, and Farquhar, With Biographical and Critical Notices*. The good offices of this monumental volume were almost dashed for the populace by Macaulay's brilliant but often libellous review, the *Comic Dramatists of the Restoration*, sometimes called *Leigh Hunt*, which it called forth. Hunt's edition reappeared in 1849, 1851, and 1866; and W. C. Ward edited our play for *The Mermaid Series* in 1888. Two important editions appeared in 1924: Montague Summers' (in *Complete Works of William Wycherley*), and—most complete and valuable of recent editions—G. B. Churchill's (in *The Belles Lettres Series*). The piece is included also in *Plays of the Restoration and Eighteenth Century*, by MacMillan and Jones (New York, 1931).

HERBERT ELLSWORTH CORY.

T H E
PLAIN-DEALER.

A
C O M E D Y

As it is Acted at the
Theatre Royal.

Written by M^r WYCHERLEY.

H O R A T.

—*Ridiculum acre*

Fortius & melius magnas plerumque fecat res.

Licensed Jan. 9. 1676

ROGER L'ESTRANGE

L O N D O N,

Printed by T. N. for James Magnes and Rich. Bentley
in Ruffel Street in Covent-garden near the Piazza's.

M.DC.LXXVII.

The Latin motto is from Horace, *Satires*, I, x, 14-15: “Ridicule often decides **great** issues more vigorously and effectively than severity.”

TO MY LADY B~~---~~.¹

Madam,

Tho I never had the honour to receive a favour from you, nay, or be known to you, I take the confidence of an author to write to you a *billiet-doux* dedicatory; which is no new thing, for by most dedications it appears that authors, though they praise their patrons from top to toe, and seem to turn 'em inside out, know 'em as little as sometimes their patrons their books, tho they read 'em out; and if the poetical daubers did not write the name of the man or woman on top of the picture, 'twere impossible to guess whose it were. But you, madam, without the help of a poet have made your self known and famous in the world; and because you do not want it, are therefore most worthy of an epistle dedicatory. And this play claims naturally your protection, since it has lost its reputation with the ladies of stricter lives in the playhouse; and (you know) when men's endeavours are discountenanc'd and refus'd by the nice coy women of honour, they come to you, to you, the great and noble patroness of rejected and bashful men, of which number I profess my self to be one, though a poet, a dedicating poet; to you, I say, madam, who have as discerning a judgement, in what's obscene or not, as any quick-sighted civil person of 'em all, and can make as much of a double-meaning saying as the best of 'em; yet would not, as some do, make nonsense of a poet's jest, rather than not make it bawdy: by which they show they as little value wit in a play as in a lover, provided they can bring t'other thing about. Their sense indeed lies all one way, and therefore are only for that in a poet, which is moving, as they say; but what do they mean by that word "moving?" Well, I must not put 'em to the blush, since I find I can do't. In short, madam, you wou'd not be one of those who ravish a poet's innocent words, and make 'em guilty of their own naughtiness (as 'tis term'd) in spite of his teeth; nay, nothing is secure from the power of their imaginations, no, not their husbands, whom they cuckold with themselves, by thinking of other men, and so make the lawful matrimonial embraces adultery, wrong husbands and poets in thought and word, to keep their own reputations; but your ladyship's justice, I know, wou'd think a woman's arraigning and damning a poet for her own obscenity like her crying out a rape, and hanging a man for giving her pleas-

¹ Mother Bennet, a famous procuress (cf. Dryden, *Sir Martin Mar-all*, IV and Pepys, May 30, 1668, etc.).

ure, only that she might be thought not to consent to't; and so to vindicate her honour, forfeits her modesty. But you, madam, have too much modesty to pretend to't, tho you have as much to say for your modesty as many a nicer she: for you never were seen at this play, no, not the first day; and 'tis no matter what people's lives have been, they are unquestionably modest who frequent not this play. For, as Mr. Bays¹ says of his, "That it is the only touchstone of men's wit and understanding," mine is, it seems, the only touchstone of women's vertue and modesty. But hold, that touchstone is equivocal, and, by the strength of a lady's imagination, may become something that is not civil; but your ladyship, I know, scorns to misapply a touchstone.

And, madam, tho you have not seen this play, I hope (like other nice ladies) you will the rather read it: yet, lest the chambermaid or page shou'd not be trusted, and their indulgence cou'd gain no further admittance for it than to their ladies' lobbies or outward rooms, take it into your care and protection; for, by your recommendation and procurement, it may have the honour to get into their closets; for what they renounce in publick, often entertains 'em there, with your help especially. In fine, madam, for these and many other reasons, you are the fittest patroness or judge of this play; for you shew no partiality to this or that author; for from some many ladies will take a broad jeast as cheerfully as from the watermen, and sit at some downright filthy plays (as they call 'em) as well satisfy'd, and as still, as a poet cou'd wish 'em elsewhere: therefore it must be the doubtful obscenity of my plays alone they take exceptions at, because it is too bashful for 'em; and, indeed, most women hate men for attempting by halves on their chastity: and bawdy, I find, like satyr, shou'd be home, not to have it taken notice of. But, now I mention satyr, some there are who say, "'Tis the plain-dealing of the play, not the obscenity; 'tis taking off the ladies' masks, not offering at their pettycoats, which offends 'em:" and generally they are not the handsomest, or most innocent, who are the most angry at their being discover'd:

Nihil est audacius illis

Deprensis; iram atque animos a crimine sumunt.²

Pardon, madam, the quotation; for a dedication can no more be without ends of Latine, than flattery; and 'tis no matter whom it is writ to; for an author can as easily (I hope) suppose people to have more understand-

¹ In *The Rehearsal*, III, i: "I know you have wit by the judgement you make of this Play . . . my Play is my Touchstone."

² Juvenal, *Sat.* VI, 284-85. "Nothing is bolder than they who are detected; their anger and spirit rises in proportion to their guilt."

ing and languages than they have, as well as more vertues: but why, the devil! shou'd any of the few modest and handsome be alarm'd? (for some there are who as well as any deserve those attributes, yet refrain not from seeing this play, nor think it any addition to their vertue to set up for it in a playhouse, lest there it shou'd look too much like acting.) But why, I say, shou'd any at all of the truly vertuous be concern'd, if those who are not so are distinguish'd from 'em? For by that mask of modesty which women wear promiscuously in publick, they are all alike; and you can no more know a kept wench from a woman of honour by her looks than by her dress; for those who are of quality without honour (if any such there are) they have their quality to set off their false modesty, as well as their false jewels; and you must no more suspect their countenances for counterfeit than their pendants, though as the plain-dealer Montaigne says, "*Elles envoient leur conscience au bordel, et tiennent leur contenance en règle.*"¹ But those who act as they look, ought not to be scandaliz'd at the reprehension of others' faults, lest they tax themselves with 'em, and by too delicate and quick an apprehension not only make that obscene which I meant innocent, but that satyr on all, which was intended only on those who deserv'd it.

But, madam, I beg your pardon for this digression to civil women and ladies of honour, since you and I shall never be the better for 'em; for a comic poet and a lady of your profession make most of the other sort; and the stage and your houses, like our plantations, are propagated by the least nice women; and, as with the ministers of justice, the vices of the age are our best business. But now I mention publick persons, I can no longer defer doing you the justice of a dedication, and telling you your own, who are, of all publick-spirited people, the most necessary, most communicative, most generous and hospitable. Your house has been the house of the people; your sleep still disturb'd for the publick; and when you arose, 'twas that others might lye down and you waked that others might rest; the good you have done is unspeakable. How many young inexperienced heirs have you kept from rash foolish marriages? and from being jilted for their lives by the worst sort of jilts, wives? How many unbewitched widowers' children have you preserv'd from the tyranny of stepmothers? How many old dotards from cuckoldage, and keeping other men's wenches and children? How many adulteries and unnatural sins have you prevented? In fine, you have been a constant scourge to the old lecher, and often a terrour to the young; you have made concupiscence

¹ *Essays*, Bk. III, ch. 5. "They send their conscience to the stewes and keep their countenance in order" (Florio's transl.).

its own punishment, and extinguish'd lust with lust, like blowing up of houses to stop the fire.

Nimirum propter continentiam, incontinentia necessaria est, incendium ignibus extinguitur.¹

There's Latin for you again, madam; I protest to you, as I am an author, I cannot help it; nay, I can hardly keep my self from quoting Aristotle and Horace, and talking to you of the rules of writing (like the French authors), to shew you and my reader I understand 'em, in my epistle, lest neither of you should find it out by the play; and according to the rules of dedications, 'tis no matter whether you understand or no what I quote or say to you of writing; for an author can as easily make any one a judge or critick in an epistle, as an hero in his play. But, madam, that this may prove to the end a true epistle dedicatory, I'd have you to know 'tis not without a design upon you, which is in the behalf of the fraternity of Parnassus; that songs and sonnets may go at your houses, and in your liberties, for guineys and half-guineys; and that wit, at least with you, as of old, may be the price of beauty, and so you will prove a true encourager of poetry; for love is a better help to it than wine; and poets, like painters, draw better after the life than by fancy. Nay, in justice, madam, I think a poet ought to be as free of your houses, as of the play-houses: since he contributes to the support of both, and is as necessary to such as you, as a ballad-singer to a pick-purse, in convening the cullies at the theatres, to be pick'd up and carry'd to supper and bed at your houses. And, madam, the reason of this motion of mine is, because poor poets can get no favour in the tiring-rooms, for they are no keepers, you know; and folly and money, the old enemies of wit, are even too hard for it on its own dunghill: and for other ladies, a poet can least go to the price of them; besides, his wit, which ought to recommend him to 'em, is as much an obstruction to his love, as to his wealth or preferment; for most women nowadays apprehend wit in a lover, as much as in a husband; they hate a man that knows 'em, they must have a blind easie fool, whom they can lead by the nose; and, as the Scythian women² of old, must baffle a man, and put out his eyes, ere they will lye with him; and then too like thieves, when they have plunder'd and stript a man, leave him. But if there shou'd be one of an hundred of those ladies generous enough to give her self to a man that has more wit than money, (all things con-

¹ Based on Tertullian, *De Pudicitia*, ch. I (cf. Summers, *Wycherley*, II, 296); but Wycherley borrowed the quotation from Montaigne, *Essays*, Bk. III, ch. 5. "Incontinency is needful for continency's sake; so fire is extinguished by flames."

² So Montaigne, *ibid.*, Bk. III, ch. 5.

sider'd,) he wou'd think it cheaper coming to you for a mistress, though you made him pay his guinney; as a man in a journey (out of good husbandry), had better pay for what he has in an inn, than lye on free-cost at a gentleman's house.

In fine, madam, like a faithful dedicator, I hope I have done my self right in the first place; then you, and your profession, which in the wisest and most religious government in the world, is honour'd with the publick allowance; and in those that are thought the most unciviliz'd and barbarous, is protected and supported by the ministers of justice; and of you, madam, I ought to say no more here, for your vertues deserve a poem rather than an epistle, or a volume intire to give the world your memoirs, or life at large; and which (upon the word of an author that has a mind to make an end of his dedication) I promise to do, when I write the annals of our British love, which shall be dedicated to the ladies concern'd, if they will not think them something too obscene too; when your life, compar'd with many that are thought innocent, I doubt not may vindicate you, and me, to the world, for the confidence I have taken in this address to you; which then may be thought neither impertinent nor immodest; and, whatsoever your amorous misfortunes have been, none can charge you with that heinous, and worst of women's crimes, hypocrisie; nay, in spight of misfortunes or age, you are the same woman still; though most of your sex grow Magdalens at fifty, and as a solid French author¹ has it,

Après le plaisir vient la peine;
Après la peine, la vertu.

But sure an old sinner's continency is much like a gamester's forswearing play, when he has lost all his money; and modesty is a kind of a youthful dress, which, as it makes a young woman more amiable, makes an old one more nauseous; a bashful old woman is like an hopeful old man; and the affected chastity of antiquated beauties is rather a reproach than an honour to 'em, for it shews the men's vertue only, not theirs. But you, in fine, madam, are no more an hypocrite than I am when I praise you; therefore I doubt not will be thought (even by yours and the play's enemies, the nicest ladies) to be the fittest patroness for,

Madam,

Your ladyship's most obedient, faithful, humble servant, and

THE PLAIN-DEALER.

¹ This author has not been found.

Prologue,

Spoken by the Plain-Dealer.

I the Plain-Dealer am to act to-day:
And my rough part begins before the play.
First, you who scribe, yet hate all that write,
And keep each other company in spite,
As rivals in your common mistriss, fame, 5
And, with faint praises, one another damn; ¹
'Tis a good play (we know) you can't forgive,
But grudge your selves the pleasure you receive:
Our scribler therefore bluntly bid me say,
He wou'd not have the wits pleas'd here to-day. 10
Next, you, the fine, loud gentlemen o' th' pit,
Who damn all plays, yet, if y'ave any wit,
'Tis but what here you spunge ² and daily get;
Poets, like friends to whom you are in debt,
You hate: and so rooks laugh, to see undone 15
Those pushing gamesters whom they live upon.
Well, you are sparks; and still will be i' th' fashion:
Rail then at playes, to hide your obligation.
Now, you shrewd judges, who the boxes sway, }
Leading the ladies' hearts and sense astray, } 20
And, for their sakes, see all, and hear no play; }
Correct your cravats, foretops, lock behind:
The dress and breeding of the play ne'er mind;
Plain-dealing is, you'll say, quite out of fashion;
You'll hate it here, as in a dedication. 25
And your fair neighbours, in a limning poet
No more than in a painter will allow it.

¹ Cf. Pope's "Damn with faint praise" (*Epistle to Dr. Arbuthnot*, l. 201).

² By seeing part of the play without paying (cf. Epilogue of D'Avenant's *The Man's the Master*).

Pictures too like, the ladies will not please:
They must be drawn too here like goddesses.
You, as at Lely's ¹ too, would truncheon wield, 30
And look like heroes in a painted field;
But the coarse dauber of the coming scenes
To follow life and nature only means,
Displays you as you are, makes his fine woman
A mercenary jilt, and true to no man; 35
His men of wit and pleasure of the age
Are as dull rogues as ever cumber'd stage:
He draws a friend only to custom just,
And makes him naturally break his trust.
I, only, act a part like none of you; 40
And yet, you'll say, it is a fool's part too:
An honest man, who, like you, never winks
At faults; but, unlike you, speaks what he thinks:
The onely fool who ne'er found patron yet,
For truth is now a fault as well as wit. 45
And where else, but on stages, do we see
Truth pleasing, or rewarded honesty?
Which our bold poet does this day in me. }
If not to th' honest, be to th' prosp'rous kind:
Some friends at court let the Plain-Dealer find. 50

¹ Sir Peter Lely ("Mr. Lely" of II, i—knighted in 1679), the well-known painter. Wycherley sat for him. Many of his portraits of Charles II's court beauties are still to be seen at Hampton Court.

The Persons¹

MANLY, of an honest, surly, nice humour, suppos'd first, in the time of the Dutch war, to have procur'd the command of a ship, out of honour, not interest; and choosing a sea-life only to avoid the world.

FREEMAN, MANLY'S Lieutenant, a gentleman well educated, but of a broken fortune, a complier with the age.

VERNISH, MANLY'S bosom and onely friend.

NOVEL, a pert railing Coxcomb, and an admirer of novelties, makes love to OLIVIA.

MAJOR OLDFOX, an old impertinent Fop, given to scribbling, makes love to the Widow BLACKACRE.

My Lord PLAUSIBLE, a ceremonious, supple, commending Coxcomb, in love with OLIVIA.

JERRY BLACKACRE, a true raw Squire, under age and his mother's government, bred to the law.

OLIVIA, MANLY'S Mistriss.

FIDELIA, in love with MANLY, and follows him to sea in man's cloaths.

ELIZA, Cousin to OLIVIA.

LETTICE, OLIVIA'S Woman.

Widow BLACKACRE, a petulant, litigious Widow, always in law, and Mother to Squire JERRY.

Lawyers, Knights of the Post,² Bayliffs and Aldermen, a Bookseller's Prentice, a Foot-boy, Sailors, Waiters, and Attendants.

THE SCENE,

LONDON.

¹ The first cast was as follows:

MANLY.....*Mr. Hart.*
FREEMAN.....*Kynaston.*
VERNISH.....*Mr. Griffin.*
NOVEL.....*Mr. Clark.*
MAJOR OLDFOX.....*Cartwright.*
PLAUSIBLE.....*Haines.*

JERRY.....*Charlton.*
OLIVIA.....*Mrs. Marshall.*
FIDELIA.....*Mrs. Boutell.*
ELIZA.....*Mrs. Knep (or Knipp,*
Pepys' friend).
LETTICE.....*Mrs. Knight.*
THE WIDOW BLACKACRE...*Mrs. Cory.*

² Hangers-on who got their living by giving false evidence. Cf. p. 353, n. 3, and pp. 394 ff.

The Plain-Dealer

Act I. Scene I.—*Captain Manly's Lodging.*

Enter Captain MANLY, surlily, my Lord PLAUSIBLE, following him; and two Sailors behind.

Man. Tell not me (my good Lord Plausible) of your decorums, supercilious forms, and slavish ceremonies; your little tricks, which you, the spaniels of the world, do daily over and over, for and to one another; not out of love or duty, but your servile fear.

L. Plau. Nay, i'faith, i'faith, you are too passionate; and I must humbly beg your pardon and leave to tell you, they are the arts and rules the prudent of the world walk by. 7

Man. Let 'em. But I'll have no leading-strings; I can walk alone: I hate a harness, and will not tug on in a faction, kissing my leader behind, that another slave may do the like to me. 10

L. Plau. What, will you be singular then, like no body? follow, love, and esteem no body?

Man. Rather than be general, like you, follow everybody; court and kiss everybody; though perhaps at the same time you hate everybody. 15

L. Plau. Why, seriously, with your pardon, my dear friend—

Man. With your pardon, my no friend, I will not, as you do, whisper my hatred or my scorn; call a man fool or knave by signs or mouths over his shoulder, whilst you have him in your arms; for such as you, like common whores and pickpockets, are onely dangerous to those you embrace. 21

L. Plau. Such as I! Heav'ns defend me!—upon my honour—

Man. Upon your title, my lord, if you'd have me believe you.

L. Plau. Well, then, as I am a person of honour, I never attempted to abuse or lessen any person in my life. 25

Man. What, you were afraid?

L. Plau. No; but seriously, I hate to do a rude thing: no, faith, I speak well of all mankind.

Man. I thought so; but know that speaking well of all mankind is the worst kind of detraction; for it takes away the reputation of the few good men in the world, by making all alike. Now, I speak ill of most men, because they deserve it; I that can do a rude thing, rather than an unjust thing. 33

L. Plau. Well, tell not me, my dear friend, what people deserve; I ne'er mind that. I, like an author in a dedication, never speak well of a man for his sake, but my own; I will not disparage any man, to disparage my self: for to speak ill of people behind their backs, is not like a person of honour; and, truly, to speak ill of 'em to their faces, is not like a complaisant person. But if I did say or do an ill thing to any, it shou'd be sure to be behind their backs, out of pure good manners. 41

Man. Very well; but I, that am an unmannerly sea-fellow, if I ever speak well of people, (which is very seldom indeed,) it shou'd be sure to be behind their backs; and if I wou'd say or do ill to any, it shou'd be to their faces. I wou'd juttle a proud, strutting, overlooking coxcomb, at the head of his sycophants, rather than put out my tongue at him when he were past me; wou'd frown in the arrogant, big, dull face of an overgrown knave of business, rather than vent my spleen against him when his back were turn'd; wou'd give fauning slaves the lye whil'st they embrace or commend me; cowards, whil'st they brag; call a rascal by no other title, though his father had left him a duke's; laugh at fools aloud before their mistresses; and must desire people to leave me, when their visits grow at last as troublesom as they were at first impertinent. 55

L. Plau. I wou'd not have my visits troublesom.

Man. The onely way to be sure not to have 'em troublesom, is to make 'em when people are not at home; for your visits, like other good turns, are most obliging when made or done to a man in his absence. A pox! Why shou'd any one, because he has nothing to do, go and disturb another man's business? 61

L. Plau. I beg your pardon, my dear friend. What, you have business?

Man. If you have any, I wou'd not detain your lordship.

L. Plau. Detain me, dear sir! I can never have enough of your company. 66

Man. I'm afraid I shou'd be tiresom; I know not what you think.

L. Plau. Well, dear sir, I see you'd have me gone.

Man. But I see you won't. [*Aside.* 71

L. Plau. Your most faithful—

Man. God be w'ye, my lord.

L. Plau. Your most humble—

Man. Farewel.

L. Plau. And eternally— 75

Man. And eternally ceremony—Then the devil take thee eternally. [*Aside.*

L. Plau. You shall use no ceremony, by my life.

Man. I do not intend it.

L. Plau. Why do you stir then? 80

Man. Only to see you out of doors, that I may shut 'em against more welcomes.

L. Plau. Nay, faith, that shan't pass upon your most faithful humble servant.

Man. Nor this any more upon me. [*Aside.*

L. Plau. Well, you are too strong for me. 86

Man. I'd sooner be visited by the plague; for that only wou'd keep a man from visits, and his doors shut. [*Aside.*

[*Ex[ist]* thrusting out my Lord PLAUSIBLE.

Manent Sailors.

1st Sail. Here's a finical fellow, Jack! What a brave fair-weather captain of a ship he wou'd make! 90

2nd Sail. He a captain of a ship! it must be when she's in the dock then; for he looks like one of those that get the king's commissions for hulls ¹ to sell a king's ship, when a brave fellow has fought her almost to a long-boat.²

1st Sail. On my conscience then, Jack, that's the reason our

¹ To enable the holder to sell dismantled government vessels (cf. Churchill).

² Till there was virtually nothing left of her.

bully tar sunk our ship: not only that the Dutch¹ might not have her, but that the courtiers, who laugh at wooden legs, might not make her prize. 98

2nd Sail. A pox of his sinking, Tom! we have made a base, broken, short voyage of it. 100

1st Sail. Ay, your brisk dealers in honour alwayes make quick returns with their ships to the dock, and their men to the hospitals. 'Tis, let me see, just a month since we set out of the river, and the wind was almost as cross to us as the Dutch.

2nd Sail. Well, I forgive him sinking my own poor truck, if he wou'd but have given me time and leave to have sav'd black Kate of Wapping's² small venture. 107

1st Sail. Faith, I forgive him, since, as the purser told me, he sunk the value of five or six thousand pound of his own, with which he was to settle himself somewhere in the Indies; for our merry lieutenant was to succeed him in his commission for the ship back; for he was resolved never to return again for England. 112

2nd Sail. So it seemed, by his fighting.

1st Sail. No; but he was a-weary of this side of the world here, they say.

2nd Sail. Ay, or else he would not have bid so fair for a passage into t'other. 117

1st Sail. Jack, thou think'st thy self in the forecastle, thou'rt so waggish. But I tell you then he had a mind to go live and bask himself on the sunny side of the globe. 120

2nd Sail. What, out of any discontent? for he's alwayes as dogged as an old tarpaulin, when hindred of a voyage by a young pantaloons³ captain.

1st Sail. 'Tis true I never saw him pleas'd but in the fight; and then he look'd like one of us coming from the pay-table, with a new lining to our hats under our arms. 126

2nd Sail. A pox! He's like the Bay of Biscay, rough and angry, let the wind blow where 'twill.

¹ With whom England had been at war in 1665 and 1672-74.

² See below, p. 287, n. 4.

³ Pantaloon had been recently introduced. Cf. *Hudibras*, I, iii, 923:

And as the French we conquered once
Now give us laws for pantaloons.

1st Sail. Nay, there's no more dealing with him, than with the land in a storm, no near— 130

2nd Sail. 'Tis a hurry-durry¹ blade. Dost thou remember after we had tugg'd hard the old leaky long-boat to save his life, when I welcom'd him ashore, he gave me a box on the ear, and call'd me fawning waterdog?

Enter MANLY and FREEMAN.

1st Sail. Hold thy peace, Jack, and stand by; the foul weather's coming. 136

Man. You rascals! Dogs! How cou'd this tame thing get through you?

1st Sail. Faith, to tell your honour the truth, we were at hob in the hall,² and whilst my brother and I were quarrelling about a cast, he slunk by us. 141

2nd Sail. He's a sneaking fellow, I warrant for't.

Man. Have more care for the future, you slaves. Go, and with drawn cutlases stand at the stair-foot, and keep all that ask for me from coming up; suppose you were guarding the scuttle³ to the powder-room. Let none enter here, at your and their peril. 147

1st Sail. No, for the danger wou'd be the same: you wou'd blow them and us up, if we shou'd.

2nd Sail. Must no one come to you, sir? 150

Man. No man, sir.

1st Sail. No man, sir; but a woman then, an't like your honour—

Man. No woman neither, you impertinent dog! Wou'd you be pimping? A sea pimp is the strangest monster she has.

2nd Sail. Indeed, an't like your honour, 'twill be hard for us to deny a woman any thing, since we are so newly come on shore.

1st Sail. We'll let no old woman come up, though it were our trusting landlady at Wapping.⁴ 158

Man. Wou'd you be witty, you brandy casks you? you become

¹ rough, boisterous (a sailor's epithet).

² A game in which a peg or pin is used as a mark or target, as in quoits (*N.E.D.*).

³ ship's deck-hole.

⁴ Near the London docks.

a jest as ill as you do a horse. Begone, you dogs! I hear a noise on the stairs. [*Exeunt* Sailors.]

Free. Faith, I am sorry you wou'd let the fop go; I intended to have had some sport with him. 163

Man. Sport with him! A pox! Then why did you not stay? you shou'd have enjoy'd your coxcomb, and had him to your self for me. 166

Free. No, I shou'd not have car'd for him without you neither; for the pleasure which fops afford is like that of drinking, only good when 'tis shar'd; and a fool, like a bottle, which wou'd make you merry in company, will make you dull alone. But how the devil cou'd you turn a man of his quality down stairs? You use a lord with very little ceremony, it seems. 172

Man. A lord! What, thou art one of those who esteem men onely by the marks and value fortune has set upon 'em, and never consider intrinsick worth! but counterfeit honour will not be current with me: I weigh the man, not his title; 'tis not the king's stamp¹ can make the metal better or heavier. Your lord is a leaden shilling, which you bend every way, and debases the stamp he bears, instead of being rais'd by it.—Here again, you slaves! 179

Enter Sailors.

1st Sail. Only to receive farther instructions, an't like your honour. What if a man shou'd bring you money, shou'd we turn him back? 182

Man. All men, I say; must I be pester'd with you too? You dogs, away?

2d Sail. Nay, I know one man your honour would not have us hinder coming to you, I'm sure. 186

Man. Who's that? speak quickly, slaves.

2nd Sail. Why, a man that should bring you a challenge; for though you refuse money, I'm sure you love fighting too well to refuse that. 190

Man. Rogue! Rascal! Dog! [*Kicks the* Sailors out.]

¹ Cf. Burns (who is known to have read Wycherley), "The rank is but the guinea's stamp."

Free. Nay, let the poor rogues have their fore-castle jests; they cannot help 'em in a fight, scarce when a ship's sinking.

Man. Dam their untimely jests! A servant's jest is more sauciness than his counsel. 195

Free. But what, will you see no body? Not your friends?

Man. Friends!—I have but one, and he, I hear, is not in town; nay, can have but one friend, for a true heart admits but of one friendship, as of one love. But in having that friend, I have a thousand; for he has the courage of men in despair, yet the diffidency and caution of cowards; the secresie of the revengeful, and the constancy of martyrs: one fit to advise, to keep a secret, to fight and dye for his friend. Such I think him; for I have trusted him with my mistress in my absence: and the trust of beauty is sure the greatest we can shew. 205

Free. Well, but all your good thoughts are not for him alone, I hope? Pray, what d'ye think of me for a friend?

Man. Of thee! Why, thou art a latitudinarian¹ in friendship, that is, no friend; thou dost side with all mankind, but wilt suffer for none. Thou art indeed like your Lord Plausible, the pink of courtesie, therefore hast no friendship; for ceremony and great professing renders friendship as much suspected as it does religion.

Free. And no professing, no ceremony at all in friendship, were as unnatural and as undecent as in religion; and there is hardly such a thing as an honest hypocrite, who professes himself to be worse than he is, unless it be your self; for though I cou'd never get you to say you were my friend, I know you'll prove so. 217

Man. I must confess, I am so much your friend, I wou'd not deceive you; therefore must tell you (not only because my heart is taken up, but according to your rules of friendship) I cannot be your friend. 221

Free. Pray, why?

Man. Because he that is (you'll say), a true friend to a man, is a friend to all his friends. But you must pardon me, I cannot wish well to pimps, flatterers, detractors, and cowards, stiff nodding

¹ ultra-liberal (like those Anglicans of Wycherley's time who advocated union with the dissenters).

knaves, and supple, pliant, kissing fools. Now, all these I have seen you use like the dearest friends in the world. 227

Free. Hah! hah! hah!—What, you observ'd me, I warrant, in the galleries at Whitehall, doing the business of the place. Pshaw! Court professions, like court promises, go for nothing, man! But, faith, cou'd you think I was a friend to all those I hugg'd, kiss'd, flatter'd, bow'd to? Hah! ha!— 232

Man. You told 'em so, and swore it too; I heard you.

Free. Ay, but when their backs were turn'd, did I not tell you they were rogues, villains, rascals, whom I despis'd and hated? 235

Man. Very fine! But what reason had I to believe you spoke your heart to me, since you profess'd deceiving so many?

Free. Why, don't you know, good captain, that telling truth is a quality as prejudicial to a man that wou'd thrive in the world, as square play to a cheat, or true love to a whore? Wou'd you have a man speak truth to his ruine? You are severer than the law, which requires no man to swear against himself. You wou'd have me speak truth against my self, I warrant, and tell my promising friend the courtier, he has a bad memory? 244

Man. Yes.

Free. And so make him remember to forget my business. And I shou'd tell the great lawyer too, that he takes oftner fees to hold his tongue, than to speak? 248

Man. No doubt on't.

Free. Ay, and have him hang or ruine me, when he shou'd come to be a judge, and I before him. And you wou'd have me tell the new officer, who bought his employment lately, that he is a coward? 253

Man. Ay.

Free. And so get my self cashiered, not him, he having the better friends, though I the better sword. And I shou'd tell the scribler of honour,¹ that heraldry were a prettier and fitter study for so fine a gentleman than poetry? 258

Man. Certainly.

Free. And so find myself maul'd in his next hir'd lampoon.

¹ the "fine . . . gentleman" poet of the next line (cf. Hamlet's "thieves of mercy").

And you wou'd have me tell the holy lady, too, she lies with her chaplain? 262

Man. No doubt on't.

Free. And so draw the clergy upon my back, and want a good table to dine at sometimes. And by the same reason too, I shou'd tell you that the world thinks you a mad-man, a brutal, and have you cut my throat, or worse, hate me! What other good success of all my plain-dealing cou'd I have, than what I've mentioned? 268

Man. Why, first, your promising courtier wou'd keep his word out of fear of more reproaches, or at least wou'd give you no more vain hopes: your lawyer wou'd serve you more faithfully; for he, having no honour but his interest, is truest still to him he knows suspects him: the new officer wou'd provoke thee to make him a coward, and so be cashier'd, that thou, or some other honest fellow, who had more courage than money, might get his place: the noble sonneteer wou'd trouble thee no more with his madrigals: the praying lady wou'd leave off railing at wenching before thee, and not turn away her chambermaid for her own known frailty with thee: and I, instead of hating thee, shou'd love thee for thy plain-dealing; and in lieu of being mortifi'd, am proud that the world and I think not well of one another. 281

Free. Well, doctors differ. You are for plain-dealing, I find; but against your particular notions, I have the practice of the whole world. Observe but any morning what people do when they get together on the Exchange, in Westminster-hall, or the galleries in Whitehall. 286

Man. I must confess, there they seem to rehearse Bays's grand dance.¹ Here you see a bishop bowing low to a gaudy atheist; a judge to a door-keeper; a great lord to a fishmonger, or scrivener with a jack-chain² about his neck; a lawyer to a serjeant-at-arms; a velvet physician to a thredbare chymist; and a supple gentleman-usher to a surly beefeater; and so tread round in a preposterous huddle of ceremony to each other, whil'st they can hardly hold their solemn false countenances.

¹ See *The Rehearsal*, V, i: "a grand . . . ancient Dance . . . since deriv'd . . . to the Inns of Court."

² a chain of linked double loops, not welded together, which resemble a figure 8; so called from being used in roasting-jacks (*N.E.D.*).

Free. Well, they understand the world. 295

Man. Which I do not, I confess.

Free. But, sir, pray believe the friendship I promise you real, whatsoever I have profest to others: try me, at least.

Man. Why, what wou'd you do for me?

Free. I wou'd fight for you. 300

Man. That you wou'd do for your own honour. But what else?

Free. I wou'd lend you money, if I had it.

Man. To borrow more of me another time. That were but putting your money to interest; an usurer wou'd be as good a friend.—But what other piece of friendship? 305

Free. I wou'd speak well of you to your enemies.

Man. To encourage others to be your friends, by a shew of gratitude. But what else?

Free. Nay, I wou'd not hear you ill spoken of behind your back by my friend. 310

Man. Nay, then, thou'rt a friend, indeed. But it were unreasonable to expect it from thee, as the world goes now, when new friends, like new mistresses, are got by disparaging old ones.

Enter FIDELIA.

But here comes another, will say as much at least. Dost thou not love me devilishly too, my little voluntier, as well as he or any man can? 316

Fid. Better than any man can love you, my dear captain.

Man. Look you there, I told you so.

Fid. As well as you do truth or honour, sir; as well.

Man. Nay, good young gentleman, enough, for shame! Thou hast been a page, by thy flattering and lying, to one of those praying ladies who love flattery so well they are jealous of it; and wert turn'd away for saying the same things to the old housekeeper for sweetmeats, as you did to your lady; for thou flatterest every thing and every body alike. 325

Fid. You, dear sir, shou'd not suspect the truth of what I say of you, though to you. Fame, the old lyar, is believ'd when she speaks wonders of you; you cannot be flatter'd, sir, your merit is unspeakable.

Man. Hold, hold, sir, or I shall suspect worse of you, that you have been a cushion-bearer to some state hypocrite, and turn'd away by the chaplains, for out-flattering their probation sermons for a benefice. 333

Fid. Suspect me for any thing, sir, but the want of love, faith, and duty to you, the bravest, worthiest of mankind; believe me, I could dye for you, sir. 336

Man. Nay, there you lye, sir; did I not see thee more afraid in the fight than the chaplain of the ship, or the purser that bought his place?

Fid. Can he be said to be afraid, that ventures to sea with you?

Man. Fie! fie! no more; I shall hate thy flattery worse than thy cowardice, nay, than thy bragging. 342

Fid. Well, I own then I was afraid, mightily afraid; yet for you I would be afraid again, an hundred times afraid. Dying is ceasing to be afraid, and that I cou'd do sure for you, and you'll believe me one day. [*Weeps.*]

Free. Poor youth! believe his eyes, if not his tongue; he seems to speak truth with them. 348

Man. What, does he cry? A pox on't! a maudlin flatterer is as nauseously troublesom as a maudlin drunkard. No more, you little milksop, do not cry, I'll never make thee afraid again; for of all men, if I had occasion, thou shouldst not be my second; and when I go to sea again, thou shalt venture thy life no more with me. 354

Fid. Why, will you leave me behind then? (If you wou'd preserve my life, I'm sure you shou'd not.) [*Aside.*]

Man. Leave thee behind! ay, ay, thou art a hopeful youth for the shore only. Here thou wilt live to be cherish'd by fortune and the great ones; for thou may'st easily come to out-flatter a dull poet, out-lye a coffee-house or gazet-writer, out-swear a knight of the post, out-watch a pimp, out-fawn a rook, out-promise a lover, out-rail a wit, and out-brag a sea-captain:—all this thou canst do, because thou'rt a coward, a thing I hate; therefore thou'lt do better with the world than with me, and these are the good courses you must take in the world. There's good advice, at least, at parting; go, and be happy with't. 366

Fid. Parting, sir! O let me not hear that dismal word.

Man. If my words frighten thee, be gone the sooner; for to be plain with thee, cowardice and I cannot dwell together.

Fid. And cruelty and courage never dwelt together sure, sir. Do not turn me off to shame and misery; for I am helpless and friendless. 372

Man. Friendless! there are half a score friends for thee then. [*Offers her gold.*] I leave my self no more: they'll help thee a little. Be gone, go; I must be cruel to thee (if thou call'st it so) out of pity. 376

Fid. If you wou'd be cruelly pitiful, sir, let it be with your sword, not gold. [*Exit.*]

Enter 1st Sailor.

1st Sail. We have, with much ado, turn'd away two gentlemen, who told us, forty times over, their names were Mr. Novel and Major Oldfox. 381

Man. Well, to your post again. [*Exit Sailor.*] But how come those puppies coupled alwayes together?

Free. O, the coxcombs keep each other company, to shew each other, as Novel calls it; or, as Oldfox says, like two knives, to whet one another. 386

Man. And set other people's teeth an¹ edge.

Enter 2nd Sailor.

2nd Sail. Here is a woman, an't like your honour, scolds and bustles with us, to come in, as much as a seaman's widow at the Navy office: her name is Mrs. Blackacre. 390

Man. That fiend too!

Free. The Widow Blackacre, is it not? that litigious she-petty-fogger, who is at law and difference with all the world; but I wish I cou'd make her agree with me in the church. They say she has fifteen hundred pounds a year jointure, and the care of her son, that is, the destruction of his estate. 396

Man. Her lawyers, attornies, and solicitors, have fifteen hundred pounds a year, whil'st she is contented to be poor, to make

¹ Q₂ "on."

other people so. For she is as vexatious as her father was, the great attorney, nay, as a dozen Norfolk attornies,¹ and as implacable an adversary as a wife suing for alimony, or a parson for his tithes; and she loves an Easter term,² or any term, not as other countrey ladies do, to come up to be fine, cuckold their husbands, and take their pleasure; for she has no pleasure but in vexing others, and is usually cloath'd and dagled³ like a baud in disguise, pursu'd through alleys by serjeants. When she is in town, she lodges in one of the inns of Chancery, where she breeds her son, and is her self his tutoress in law-French; and for her countrey abode, though she has no estate there, she chooses Norfolk.— But, bid her come in, with a pox to her! she is Olivia's kinswoman, and may make me amends for her visit, by some discourse of that dear woman. [Exit Sailor.

Enter Widow BLACKACRE, *with a mantle and a green bag,*⁴ *and several papers in the other hand:* JERRY BLACKACRE *in a gown, laden with green bags, following her.*

Wid. I never had so much to do with a judge's door-keeper, as with yours; but—

Man. But the incomparable Olivia, how does she since I went?

Wid. Since you went, my suit— 416

Man. Olivia, I say, is she well?

Wid. My suit, if you had not return'd—

Man. Dam your suit! how does your cousin Olivia?

Wid. My suit, I say, had been quite lost; but now— 420

Man. But now, where is Olivia? in town? for—

Wid. For to-morrow we are to have a hearing.

Man. Wou'd you'd let me have a hearing to-day!

¹ Among the people of Norfolk, formerly reckoned to be very quarrelsome and litigious, lawyers swarmed to such a degree that a statute was made so early as the reign of Henry VI to restrain their number. (See John Wilkes, *Encyclopædia Londinensis*, 1810-29, XVII, 145, and cf. Arbuthnot, *The History of John Bull*, ch. VI, Cassell's *Nat. Libr.*, p. 97.)

² of court.

³ I. e., having the skirts clogged or splashed with dirt or wet. (Swift's use of the word, in 1727, is the earliest cited by *N.E.D.*)

⁴ Formerly used (as blue bags are now) by English barristers and lawyers for carrying their documents.

Wid. But why won't you hear me?

Man. I am no judge; and you talk of nothing but suits; but, pray tell me, when did you see Olivia? 426

Wid. I am no visiter, but a woman of business; or if I ever visit, 'tis only the Chancery-lane ¹ ladies, ladies towards the law; and not any of your lazy, good-for-nothing flirts, who cannot read law-French,² tho' a gallant writ it. But as I was telling you, my suit— 431

Man. Dam these impertinent vexatious people of business, of all sexes! they are still troubling the world with the tedious recitals of their lawsuits: and one can no more stop their mouths than a wit's when he talks of himself, or an intelligencer's ³ when he talks of other people. 436

Wid. And a pox of all vexatious, impertinent lovers! they are still perplexing the world with the tedious narrations of their love-suits, and discourses of their mistresses! You are as troublesome to a poor widow of business, as a young coxcomby rithming⁴ lover. 441

Man. And thou art as troublesom to me, as a rook to a losing gamester, or a young putter of cases to his mistress and sempstress, who has love in her head for another.

Wid. Nay, since you talk of putting of cases, and will not hear me speak, hear our Jerry a little; let him put our case to you, for the tryal's to-morrow; and since you are my chief witness, I wou'd have your memory refresh'd and your judgment inform'd, that you may not give your evidence improperly.—Speak out, child.

Jer. Yes, forsooth. Hemh! hemh! John-a-Stiles— 450

Man. You may talk, young lawyer, but I shall no more mind you than a hungry judge does a cause after the clock has struck one.

Free. Nay, you'll find him as peevish too.

Wid. No matter. Jerry, go on.—Do you observe it then, sir; for I think I have seen you in a gown once. Lord, I cou'd hear our Jerry put cases all day long.—Mark him, sir. 457

¹ The "Main Street" of London lawyers.

² The language of the law, surviving from the Conqueror's times.

³ newsmonger, spy.

⁴ "riming" in Q10.

Jer. John-a-Stiles—no—there are first, Fitz, Pere, and Ayle;—no, no, Ayle, Pere, and Fitz; Ayle is seised in fee of Blackacre; John-a-Stiles disseises ¹ Ayle; Ayle makes claim, and the disseisor dyes; then the Ayle—no, the Fitz—

461

Wid. No, the Pere, sirrah.

Jer. Oh, the Pere! ay, the Pere, sir, and the Fitz—no, the Ayle,—no, the Pere and the Fitz, sir, and—

Man. Dam Pere, Mere, and Fitz, sir!

465

Wid. No, you are out, child.—Hear me, captain, then. There are Ayle, Pere, and Fitz; Ayle is seised in fee of Blackacre; and, being so seised, John-a-Stiles disseises the Ayle, Ayle makes claim, and the disseisor dyes; and then the Pere re-enters, the Pere, sirrah, the Pere—[to JERRY] and the Fitz enters upon the Pere, and the Ayle brings his writ of disseizen in the post; ² and the Pere brings his writ of disseizen in the Pere, and—

472

Man. Canst thou hear this stuff, Freeman? I cou'd as soon suffer a whole noise ³ of flatterers at a great man's levee in a morning; but thou hast servile complacency enough to listen to a quibbling statesman in disgrace, nay, and be beforehand with him, in laughing at his dull no-jest; but I—

[Offering to go out.]

Wid. Nay, sir, hold! Where's the subpœna, Jerry? I must serve you, sir. You are requir'd by this, to give your testimony—

Man. I'll be forsworn to be reveng'd on thee.

480

[Ex[it] MANLY throwing away the subpœna.]

Wid. Get you gone, for a lawless companion!—Come, Jerry, I had almost forgot we were to meet at the master's at three: let us mind our business still, child.

Jer. Ay, forsooth, e'en so let's.

Free. Nay, madam, now I wou'd beg you to hear me a little, a little of my business.

486

Wid. I have business of my own calls me away, sir.

Free. My business wou'd prove yours too, dear madam.

¹ dispossesses; *seised in*, possessed of.

² *Ayle*, grandfather; *Pere*, father; *Fitz*, son. "This stuff" of Mrs. Blackacre's refers to a writ open to persons who, after having once legally recovered real property, have again been dispossessed of it. (See Wharton's *Law Lexicon* and Bouvier's *Law Dictionary*.) *John-a-Stiles*, John Doe.

³ A band of musicians (cf. *2 Henry IV*, II, iv, 12).

Wid. Yours wou'd be some sweet business, I warrant. What, 'tis no Westminster Hall ¹ business? wou'd you have my advice?

Free. No, faith, 'tis a little Westminster Abby business; I wou'd have your consent. 492

Wid. O fie, fie, sir! to me such discourse, before my dear minor there!

Jer. Ay, ay, mother, he wou'd be taking livery and seizen of your jointure by digging the turf, but I'll watch your waters,² bully, ifac.³—Come away, mother. 497

[*Exit* JERRY *haling away his* Mother.]

Manet FREEMAN. *Enter to him* FIDELIA.

Fid. Dear sir, you have pity; beget but some in our captain for me.

Free. Where is he? 500

Fid. Within; swearing as much as he did in the great storm, and cursing you, and sometimes sinks into calms and sighs, and talks of his Olivia.

Free. He wou'd never trust me to see her. Is she handsom?

Fid. No, if you'll take my word; but I am not a proper judge.

Free. What is she? 506

Fid. A gentlewoman, I suppose, but of as mean a fortune as beauty; but her relations wou'd not suffer her to go with him to the Indies: and his aversion to this side of the world, together with the late opportunity of commanding the convoy, wou'd not let him stay here longer, tho' to enjoy her. 511

Free. He loves her mightily then?

Fid. Yes, so well, that the remainder of his fortune (I hear about five or six thousand pounds) he has left her, in case he had dy'd by the way, or before she cou'd prevail with her friends to follow him, which he expected she shou'd do; and has left behind him his great bosom friend to be her convoy to him. 517

Free. What charms has she for him, if she be not handsom?

¹ I.e., legal.

² watch your actions strictly (Grose, *Lexicon Balatronicum*, London, 1811).

³ in fact.

Fid. He fancies her, I suppose, the only woman of truth and sincerity in the world. 520

Free. No common beauty, I confess.

Fid. Or else sure he wou'd not have trusted her with so great a share of his fortune, in his absence; I suppose (since his late loss) all he has.

Free. Why, has he left it in her own custody? 525

Fid. I am told so.

Free. Then he has shew'd love to her indeed, in leaving her, like an old husband that dyes as soon as he has made his wife a good jointure.—But I'll go in to him, and speak for you, and know more from him of his Olivia. *[Exit.*

Manet FIDELIA sola.

Fid. His Olivia indeed, his happy Olivia!
 Yet she was left behind, when I was with him;
 But she was ne'r out of his mind or heart.
 She has told him she lov'd him; I have shew'd it,
 And durst not tell him so, till I had done, 535
 Under this habit, such convincing acts
 Of loving friendship for him, that through it
 He first might find out both my sex and love;
 And, when I'd had him from his fair Olivia,
 And this bright world of artful beauties here, 540
 Might then have hop'd, he wou'd have look'd on me,
 Amongst the sooty Indians; and I cou'd,
 To choose,¹ there live his wife, where wives are forc'd
 To live no longer, when their husbands dye;
 Nay, what's yet worse, to share 'em whilst they live 545
 With many rival wives. But here he comes,
 And I must yet keep out of his sight, not
 To lose it for ever. *[Exit.*

Enter MANLY and FREEMAN.

Free. But pray what strange charms has she that cou'd make you love? 550

¹ at my own choice.

Man. Strange charms indeed! She has beauty enough to call in question her wit or virtue, and her form wou'd make a starved hermit a ravisher; yet her virtue and conduct wou'd preserve her from the subtil lust of a pamper'd prelate. She is so perfect a beauty, that art cou'd not better it, nor affectation deform it; yet all this is nothing. Her tongue as well as face ne'er knew artifice; nor ever did her words or looks contradict her heart. She is all truth, and hates the lying, masking, daubing world, as I do; for which I love her, and for which I think she dislikes not me. For she has often shut out of her conversation for mine, the gaudy fluttering parrots of the town, apes and echoes of men only, and refus'd their common-place pert chat, flattery and submissions, to be entertain'd with my sullen bluntness, and honest love. And, last of all, swore to me, since her parents wou'd not suffer her to go with me, she wou'd stay behind for no other man; but follow me without their leave, if not to be obtain'd. Which oath— 566

Free. Did you think she wou'd keep?

Man. Yes; for she is not (I tell you) like other women, but can keep her promise, tho' she has sworn to keep it. But, that she might the better keep it, I left her the value of five or six thousand pound: for women's wants are generally their most importunate solicitors to love or marriage. 572

Free. And money summons lovers more than beauty, and augments but their importunity, and their number; so makes it the harder for a woman to deny 'em. For my part, I am for the French maxim: ¹—"If you wou'd have your female subjects loyal, keep 'em poor."—But, in short, that your mistress may not marry, you have given her a portion. 578

Man. She had given me her heart first, and I am satisfi'd with the security; I can never doubt her truth and constancy.

Free. It seems you do, since you are fain to bribe it with money. But how come you to be so diffident of the man that sayes he loves you, and not doubt the woman that sayes it? 583

Man. I shou'd (I confess) doubt the love of any other woman but her, as I do the friendship of any other man but him I have trusted; but I have such proofs of their faith as cannot deceive me.

¹ Source not found.

Free. Cannot!

587

Man. Not but I know that generally no man can be a great enemy but under the name of friend; and if you are a cuckold, it is your friend only that makes you so, for your enemy is not admitted to your house: if you are cheated in your fortune, 'tis your friend that does it, for your enemy is not made your trustee: if your honour or good name be injur'd, 'tis your friend that does it still, because your enemy is not believ'd against you. Therefore, I rather choose to go where honest, downright barbarity is profest, where men devour one another like generous hungry lyons and tygers, not like crocodiles; where they think the devil white, of our complexion; and I am already so far an Indian. But if your weak faith doubts this miracle of a woman, come along with me, and believe; and thou wilt find her so handsom, that thou, who art so much my friend, wilt have a mind to lie with her, and so will ¹ not fail to discover what her faith and thine is to me.

When we're in love, the great adversity, 603
Our friends and mistresses at once we try. [Exeunt.]

FINIS ACTUS PRIMI.

Act II. Scene I.—*Olivia's Lodging.*

Enter OLIVIA, ELIZA, LETTICE.

Oliv. Ah, cousin, what a world 'tis we live in! I am so weary of it.

Eliza. Truly, cousin, I can find no fault with it, but that we cannot always live in't, for I can never be weary of it.

Oliv. O hideous! you cannot be in earnest sure, when you say you like the filthy world. 5

Eliza. You cannot be in earnest sure, when you say you dislike it.

Oliv. You are a very censorious creature, I find.

Eliza. I must confess I think we women as often discover where we love by railing, as men when they lie by their swearing; and

¹ So in the old editions; Mermaid, wrongly, "wilt." Will = I will (cf. below II, i, p. 309: "has neither courage" = "he has," etc.; and, for similar ellipses, *Measure for Measure*, II, iv, 103, and modern "thank you" = "I thank you").

the world is but a constant keeping gallant, whom we fail not to quarrel with when any thing crosses us, yet cannot part with't for our hearts. 13

Let. A gallant indeed, madam, whom ladies first make jealous, and then quarrel with it for being so; for if, by her indiscretion, a lady be talk'd of for a man, she cries presently, "'Tis a censorious world!" if, by her vanity, the intrigue be found out, "'Tis a prying malicious world!" if, by her over-fondness, the gallant proves unconstant, "'Tis a false world!" and if, by her nigardliness, the chambermaid tells, "'Tis a perfidious world!" But that, I'm sure, your ladyship cannot say of the world yet, as bad as 'tis. 21

Oliv. But I may say, "'Tis a very impertinent world!"—Hold your peace.—And, cousin, if the world be a gallant, 'tis such a one as is my aversion. Pray name it no more.

Eliza. But is it possible the world, which has such variety of charms for other women, can have none for you? Let's see—first, what d'ye think of dressing, and fine cloaths? 27

Oliv. Dressing! Fie, fie, 'tis my aversion.—[*To LETTICE.* But, come hither, you dowdy; methinks you might have open'd this toure¹ better; O hideous! I cannot suffer it! D'ye see how't sits?

Eliza. Well enough, cousin, if dressing be your aversion. 31

Oliv. 'Tis so: and for variety of rich cloaths, they are more my aversion.

Let. Ay, 'tis because your ladyship wears 'em too long; for indeed a gown, like a gallant, grows one's aversion by having too much of it. 36

Oliv. Insatiable creature! I'll be sworn I have had this not above three days, cousin, and within this month have made some six more.

Eliza. Then your aversion to 'em is not altogether so great. 40

Oliv. Alas! 'tis for my woman only I wear 'em, cousin.

Let. If it be for me only, madam, pray do not wear 'em.

Eliza. But what d'ye think of visits—balls?

Oliv. O, I detest 'em!

Eliza. Of playes?

Oliv. I abominate 'em; filthy, obscene, hideous things. 45

¹ circular tress of false hair.

Eliza. What say you to masquerading in the winter, and Hide-Park in the summer?

Oliv. Insipid pleasures I taste not.

Eliza. Nay, if you are for more solid pleasures, what think you of a rich young husband? 51

Oliv. O horrid! marriage! what a pleasure you have found out! I nauseate it of all things.

Let. But what does your ladyship think then of a liberal handsom young lover? 55

Oliv. A handsom young fellow, you impudent! Be gone out of my sight. Name a handsom young fellow to me! foh, a hideous handsom young fellow I abominate! [*Spits.*]

Eliza. Indeed! But let's see—will nothing please you? what d'ye think of the court? 60

Oliv. How? the court! the court, cousin! my aversion, my aversion, my aversion of all aversions!

Eliza. How? the court! where—

Oliv. Where sincerity is a quality as out of fashion and as unprosperous as bashfulness; I cou'd not laugh at a quibble, tho' it were a fat privy-counsellor's; nor praise a lord's ill verses, tho' I were my self the subject; nor an old lady's young looks, tho' I were her woman; nor sit to a vain young simile-maker,¹ tho' he flatter'd me. In short, I cou'd not glote² upon a man when he comes into a room, and laugh at him when he goes out: I cannot rail at the absent to flatter the standers-by; I— 71

Eliza. Well, but railing now is so common, that 'tis no more malice, but the fashion; and the absent think they are no more the worse for being rail'd at, than the present think they're the better for being flatter'd. And for the court—

Oliv. Nay, do not defend the court; for you'll make me rail at it like a trusting citizen's widow. 77

Eliza. Or like a Holborn³ lady, who cou'd not get in to the last ball, or was out of countenance in the drawing-room the last

¹ So all old editions; Mermaid, "smile-maker." (Cf. below, V, ii, p. 390,—“A wit is . . . known by his . . . simile.”)

² Obsolete: gloat.

³ Another “citizen's” lady, for Holborn lies in the centre of the City.

Sunday of her appearance there; for none rail at the court but those who cannot get into it, or else who are ridiculous when they are there; and I shall suspect you were laugh'd at when you were last there, or wou'd be a maid of honour.

Oliv. I a maid of honour! To be a maid of honour, were yet of all things my aversion. 85

Eliza. In what sense am I to understand you? But in fine, by the word aversion, I'm sure you dissemble; for I never knew woman yet us'd it who did not. Come, our tongues belie our hearts more than our pocket-glasses do our faces. But methinks we ought to leave off dissembling, since 'tis grown of no use to us; for all wise observers understand us now adays, as they do dreams, almanacks, and Dutch gazets, by the contrary: and a man no more believes a woman, when she says she has an aversion for him, than when she says she'll cry out.

Oliv. O filthy! hideous! Peace, cousin, or your discourse will be my aversion; and you may believe me. 96

Eliza. Yes; for if any thing be a woman's aversion, 'tis plain-dealing from another woman: and perhaps that's your quarrel to the world; for that will talk, as your woman says.

Oliv. Talk? not of me, sure; for what men do I converse with? What visits do I admit? 101

Enter Boy.

Boy. Here's the gentleman to wait upon you, madam.

Oliv. On me! You little unthinking fop; d'ye know what you say?

Boy. Yes, madam, 'tis the gentleman that comes every day to you, who— 106

Oliv. Hold your peace, you heedless little animal, and get you gone. This country boy, cousin, takes my dancing-master, tailor, or the spruce milliner, for visitors. [*Exit Boy.*]

Let. No, madam; 'tis Mr. Novel, I'm sure, by his talking so loud: I know his voice too, madam. 111

Oliv. You know nothing, you buffle-headed¹ stupid creature

¹ buffalo-headed, foolish.

you: you wou'd make my cousin believe I receive visits. But if it be Mr.—what did you call him?

Let. Mr. Novel, madam; he that— 115

Oliv. Hold your peace; I'll hear no more of him. But if it be your Mr.—(I can't think of his name again) I suppose he has follow'd my cousin hither.

Eliza. No, cousin, I will not rob you of the honour of the visit: 'tis to you, cousin; for I know him not. 120

Oliv. Nor did I ever hear of him before, upon my honour, cousin; besides, han't I told you, that visits, and the business of visits, flattery and detraction, are my aversion? D'ye think then I wou'd admit such a coxcomb as he is? who rather than not rail, will rail at the dead, whom none speak ill of; and rather than not flatter, will flatter the poets of the age, whom none will flatter; who affects novelty as much as the fashion; and is as fantastical as changeable, and as well known as the fashion; who likes nothing but what is new, nay, wou'd choose to have his friend, or his title, a new one. In fine, he is my aversion. 130

Eliza. I find you do know him, cousin; at least, have heard of him.

Oliv. Yes, now I remember, I have heard of him.

Eliza. Well; but since he is such a coxcomb, for Heav'n's sake, let him not come up. Tell him, Mrs. Lettice, your lady is not within. 136

Oliv. No, Lettice, tell him my cousin is here, and that he may come up; for, notwithstanding I detest the sight of him, you may like his conversation; and tho' I wou'd use him scurvily, I will not be rude to you in my own lodging; since he has follow'd you hither, let him come up, I say. 141

Eliza. Very fine! pray let him go to the devil, I say, for me: I know him not, nor desire it. Send him away, Mrs. Lettice.

Oliv. Upon my word, she shan't: I must disobey your commands, to comply with your desires. Call him up, Lettice. 145

Eliza. Nay, I'll swear she shall not stir on that errand.

[*Holds* LETTICE.

Oliv. Well then, I'll call him my self for you, since you will have it so.—Mr. Novel, [*Calls out at the door.*] sir, sir!

me the priviledge of railing in my turn.—But, now I think on't, the women ought to be your province, as the men are mine: and you must know we had him whom— 220

Oliv. Him, whom—

Nov. What? invading me already? and giving the character before you know the man?

Eliza. No, that is not fair, tho' it be usual.

Oliv. I beg your pardon, Mr. Novel; pray go on. 225

Nov. Then, I say, we had that familiar coxcomb who is at home wheresoe're he comes.

Oliv. Ay, that fool—

Nov. Nay then, madam, your servant; I'm gone. Taking the fool out of one's mouth is worse than taking the bread out of one's mouth. 231

Oliv. I've done; your pardon, Mr. Novel: pray proceed.

Nov. I say, the rogue, that he may be the onely wit in company, will let no body else talk, and—

Oliv. Ay, those fops who love to talk all themselves are of all things my aversion. 236

Nov. Then you'll let me speak, madam, sure. The rogue, I say, will force his jest upon you; and I hate a jest that's forc'd upon a man, as much as a glass.

Eliza. Why, I hope, sir, he does not expect a man of your temperance in jesting should do him reason? 241

Nov. What! interruption from this side too? I must then—

[Offers to rise. OLIVIA holds him.]

Oliv. No, sir.—You must know, cousin, that fop he means, tho' he talks only to be commended, will not give you leave to do't.

Nov. But, madam— 245

Oliv. He a wit! Hang him; he's only an adopter of stragling jests and fatherless lampoons; by the credit of which he eats at good tables, and so, like the barren beggar-woman, lives by borrow'd children.

Nov. Madam— 250

Oliv. And never was author of any thing but his news: but that is still all his own.

Nov. Madam, pray—

Oliv. An eternal babler; and makes no more use of his ears, than a man that sits at a play by his mistress, or in Fop-corner.¹ He's, in fine, a base detracting fellow, and is my aversion.—But who else, prythee, Mr. Novel, was there with you? Nay, you shan't stir. 258

Nov. I beg your pardon, madam; I cannot stay in any place where I'm not allow'd a little Christian liberty of railing.

Oliv. Nay prythee, Mr. Novel, stay: and tho' you shou'd rail at me, I wou'd hear you with patience. Prythee, who else was there with you?

Nov. Your servant, madam.

Oliv. Nay, prythee tell us, Mr. Novel, prythee do. 265

Nov. We had no body else.

Oliv. Nay, faith, I know you had. Come, my Lord Plausible was there too; who is, cousin, a—

Eliza. You need not tell me what he is, cousin; for I know him to be a civil, good-natur'd, harmless gentleman, that speaks well of all the world, and is always in good-humour; and— 271

Oliv. Hold, cousin, hold. I hate detraction; but I must tell you, cousin, his civility is cowardice, his good-nature want of wit; and has² neither courage or sense to rail: and for his being always in humour, 'tis because he is never dissatisfi'd with himself. In fine, he is my aversion; and I never admit his visits beyond my hall.

Nov. No, he visit you! Dam him, cringing, grinning rogue! if I shou'd see him coming up to you, I wou'd make bold to kick him down again. Ha!—

Enter my LORD PLAUSIBLE.

My dear lord, your most humble servant. 280

[*Rises and salutes PLAUSIBLE, and kisses him.*

Eliza. So! I find kissing and railing succeed each other with the angry men as well as with the angry women; and their quarrels

¹ In the front of the pit, close to the stage: "At the Theatre exalted in a Box, give audience to ev'ry trim amorous twining Fop of the Corner, that comes thither to make a noise, hear no Play and show himself" (Otway, *Friendship in Fashion*, Act. V).

² So Q and all texts before 1694. That and Mermaid, Churchill, and Summers, "he has." See above, p. 301, n.

are like love-quarrels, since absence is the only cause of them; for as soon as the man appears again, they are over. *[Aside.*

L. Plau. Your most faithful humble servant, generous Mr. Novel. And, madam, I am your eternal slave, and kiss your fair hands; which I had done sooner, according to your commands, but— 288

Oliv. No excuses, my lord.

Eliza. What, you sent for him then, cousin? *[Apart.*

Nov. Ha! invited! *[Aside.*

Oliv. I know you must divide your self; for your good company is too general a good to be engross'd by any particular friend.

L. Plau. O Lord, madam, my company! your most obliged, faithful, humble servant. But I could have brought you good company indeed; for I parted at your door with two of the worthiest, bravest men— 297

Oliv. Who were they, my lord?

Nov. Who do you call the worthiest, bravest men, pray?

L. Plau. O, the wisest, bravest gentlemen! men of such honour and virtue! of such good qualities! ah— 301

Eliza. This is a coxcomb that speaks ill of all people a different way, and libels everybody with dull praise, and commonly in the wrong place; so makes his panegyricks abusive lampoons. *[Aside.*

Oliv. But pray let me know who they were? 305

L. Plau. Ah! such patterns of heroick virtue! such—

Nov. Well: but who the devil were they?

L. Plau. The honour of our nation! the glory of our age; ah! I could dwell a twelvemonth on their praise; which indeed I might spare by telling their names; Sir John Current and Sir Richard Court-Title. 311

Nov. Court-Title! hah, ha!

Oliv. And Sir John Current! Why will you keep such a wretch company, my lord?

L. Plau. Oh, madam, seriously, you are a little too severe; for he is a man of unquestion'd reputation in every thing. 316

Oliv. Yes, because he endeavours only with the women to pass for a man of courage, and with the bullies for a wit; with the wits

for a man of business, and with the men of business for a favourite at court; and at court for good City-security. 320

Nov. And for Sir Richard, he—

L. Plau. He loves your choice pick'd company, persons that—

Oliv. He loves a lord indeed; but—

Nov. Pray, dear madam, let me have but a bold stroke or two at his picture. He loves a lord, as you say, tho'— 325

Oliv. Tho' he borrow'd his money, and ne'r paid him again.

Nov. And wou'd bespeak a place three days before at the back-end of a lord's coach to Hide-Park.

L. Plau. Nay, i'faith, i'faith, you are both too severe.

Oliv. Then to shew yet more his passion for quality, he makes love to that fulsome coach-load of honour, my Lady Goodly; for he's always at her lodging. 332

L. Plau. Because it is the conventickle-gallant, the meeting-house of all the fair ladies, and glorious superfine beauties of the town. 335

Nov. Very fine ladies! there's first—

Oliv. Her honour, as fat as an hostess.

L. Plau. She is something plump indeed, a goodly, comly, graceful person.

Nov. Then there's my Lady Frances—what d'ye call 'er? as ugly— 341

Oliv. As a citizen's lawfully begotten daughter.

L. Plau. She has wit in abundance, and the handsomest heel, elbow, and tip of an ear, you ever saw.

Nov. Heel, and elbow! hah, ha! ha! And there's my Lady Betty you know— 346

Oliv. As sluttish and slatternly as an Irish woman bred in France.

L. Plau. Ah! all she has hangs with a loose air, indeed, and becoming negligence. 350

Eliza. You see all faults with lovers' eyes, I find, my lord.

L. Plau. Ah, madam, your most obliged, faithful, humble servant to command! But you can say nothing sure against the superfine mistress—

Oliv. I know who you mean. She is as censorious and detracting a jade as a superannuated sinner. 356

L. Plau. She has a smart way of raillery, 'tis confest.

Nov. And then for Mrs. Gridline—¹

L. Plau. She, I'm sure is—

Oliv. One that never spoke ill of any body, 'tis confest. For she is as silent in conversation as a countrey lover, and no better company than a clock, or a weather-glass: for if she sounds, 'tis but once an hour to put you in mind of the time of day, or to tell you 'twill be cold or hot, rain or snow. 364

L. Plau. Ah, poor creature! she's extremely good and modest.

Nov. And for Mrs. Bridlechin, she's— 366

Oliv. As proud as a churchman's wife.

L. Plau. She's a woman of great spirit and honour, and will not make herself cheap, 'tis true.

Nov. Then Mrs. Hoyden, that calls all people by their surnames and is— 371

Oliv. As familiar a duck—

Nov. As an actress in the tyring room. There I was once beforehand with you, madam.

L. Plau. Mrs. Hoyden! a poor, affable, good-natur'd soul. But the divine Mrs. Trifle comes thither too. Sure her beauty, virtue, and conduct, you can say nothing to. 377

Oliv. No!

Nov. No!—Pray let me speak, madam.

Oliv. First, can any one be call'd beautiful that squints? 380

L. Plau. Her eyes languish a little, I own.

Nov. Languish! hah, ha!

Oliv. Languish!—Then, for her conduct, she was seen at *The Countrey Wife* after the first day. There's for you, my lord.

L. Plau. But, madam, she was not seen to use her fan all the play long, turn aside her head, or by a conscious blush discover more guilt than modesty. 387

Oliv. Very fine! Then you think a woman modest that sees the hideous *Countrey Wife* without blushing or publishing her detestation of it? D'ye hear him, cousin? 390

¹ "Flax-grey" (Summers).

Eliza. Yes, and am, I must confess, something of his opinion; and think, that as an over-conscious fool at a play, by endeavouring to shew the author's want of wit, exposes his own to more censure, so may a lady call her own modesty in question, by publickly cavilling with the poet's. For all those grimaces of honour and artificial modesty disparage a woman's real virtue, as much as the use of white and red does the natural complexion; and you must use very, very little, if you wou'd have it thought your own. 398

Oliv. Then you wou'd have a woman of honour with passive looks, ears, and tongue, undergo all the hideous obscenity she hears at nasty plays. 401

Eliza. Truly, I think a woman betrays her want of modesty, by shewing it publickly in a playhouse, as much as a man does his want of courage by a quarrel there; for the truly modest and stout say least, and are least exceptious, especially in publick. 405

Oliv. O hideous! Cousin, this cannot be your opinion. But you are one of those who have the confidence to pardon the filthy play.

Eliza. Why, what is there of ill in't, say you?

Oliv. O fie! fie! fie! wou'd you put me to the blush anew? call all the blood into my face again? But to satisfie you then; first, the clandestine obscenity in the very name of Horner. 412

Eliza. Truly, 'tis so hidden, I cannot find it out, I confess.

Oliv. O horrid! Does it not give you the rank conception or image of a goat, or town-bull, or a satyr—nay, what is yet a filthier image than all the rest, that of an eunuch? 416

Eliza. What then? I can think of a goat, a bull, or a satyr, without any hurt.

Oliv. Ay: but, cousin, one cannot stop there.

Eliza. I can, cousin. 420

Oliv. O no; for when you have those filthy creatures in your head once, the next thing you think, is what they do; as their defiling of honest men's beds and couches, rapes upon sleeping and waking countrey virgins under hedges, and on haycocks. Nay, farther— 425

Eliza. Nay, no farther, cousin. We have enough of your com-

ment on the play, which will make me more asham'd than the play it self.

Oliv. O, believe me, 'tis a filthy play! and you may take my word for a filthy play as soon as another's. But the filthiest thing in that play, or any other play, is— 431

Eliza. Pray keep it to your self, if it be so.

Oliv. No, faith, you shall know it; I'm resolv'd to make you out of love with the play. I say, the lewdest, filthiest thing is his china; nay, I will never forgive the beastly author his china.¹ He has quite taken away the reputation of poor china it self, and sully'd the most innocent and pretty furniture of a ladies chamber; insomuch that I was fain to break all my defil'd vessels. You see I have none left; nor you, I hope. 439

Eliza. You'll pardon me, I cannot think the worse of my china for that of the playhouse. 441

Oliv. Why, you will not keep any now, sure! 'Tis now as unfit an ornament for a ladies chamber as the pictures that come from Italy and other hot countries; as appears by their nudities, which I always cover, or scratch out, whereso'er I find 'em. But china! out upon't, filthy china! nasty debauch'd china! 446

Eliza. All this will not put me out of conceit with china, nor the play, which is acted to-day, or another of the same beastly author's, as you call him, which I'll go see.

Oliv. You will not, sure! nay, you sha' not venture your reputation by going, and mine by leaving me alone with two men here: nay, you'll disoblige me for ever, if— [*Pulls her back.*]

Eliza. I stay!—your servant. [*Exit ELIZA.*]

Oliv. Well—but, my lord, tho' you justifie every body, you cannot in earnest uphold so beastly a writer, whose ink is so smutty, as one may say. 456

L. Plau. Faith, I dare swear the poor man did not think to disoblige the ladies, by any amorous, soft, passionate, luscious saying in his play.

Oliv. Foy,² my lord! But what think you, Mr. Novel, of the play? tho' I know you are a friend to all that are new. 461

¹ See *Country Wife*, IV, iii.

² faith (cf. Congreve, *Double Dealer*, I, iv: "O foy! Sir Paul!"); so in Q; later eds., "Fie," "Fy."

Nov. Faith, madam, I must confess, the new plays wou'd not be the worse for my advice, but I cou'd never get the silly rogues, the poets, to mind what I say; but I'll tell you what counsel I gave the surly fool you spake of. 465

Oliv. What was't?

Nov. Faith, to put his play into rithme; ¹ for rithme, you know, often makes mystical nonsense pass with the criticks for wit, and a double-meaning saying with the ladies, for soft, tender, and moving passion. But, now I talk of passion, I saw your old lover this morning—Captain— [Whispers.

Enter Captain MANLY, FREEMAN, and FIDELIA standing behind.

Oliv. Whom?—nay, you need not whisper.

Man. We are luckily got hither unobserv'd.—How! in a close conversation with these supple rascals, the outcasts of sempstresses' shops! 475

Free. Faith, pardon her, captain, that, since she cou'd no longer be entertain'd with your manly bluntness and honest love, she takes up with the pert chat and common place flattery of these fluttering parrots of the town, apes and echoes of men only.

Man. Do not you, sir, play the echo too, mock me, dally with my own words, and shew your self as impertinent as they are.

Free. Nay, captain— 482

Fid. Nay, lieutenant, do not excuse her; methinks she looks very kindly upon 'em both, and seems to be pleas'd with what that fool there sayes to her. 485

Man. You lye, sir! and hold your peace, that I may not be provok'd to give you a worse reply.

Oliv. Manly return'd, d'ye say! and is he safe?

Nov. My lord saw him too.—Hark you, my lord.

[Whispers to PLAUSIBLE.

Man. She yet seems concern'd for my safety, and perhaps they are admitted now here but for their news of me; for intelligence indeed is the common passport of nauseous fools, when they go their round of good tables and houses. [Aside.

¹ rhyme.

Oliv. I heard of his fighting only, without particulars, and confess I alwayes lov'd his brutal courage, because it made me hope it might rid me of his more brutal love. 496

Man. What's that? [Aside.]

Oliv. But is he at last return'd, d'ye say, unhurt?

Nov. Ay, faith, without doing his business; for the rogue has been these two years pretending to a wooden leg, which he wou'd take from fortune as kindly as the staff of a marshal of France, and rather read his name in a gazet— 502

Oliv. Than in the entail of a good estate.

Man. So!— [Aside.]

Nov. I have an ambition, I must confess, of losing my heart before such a fair enemy as your self, madam; but that silly rogues shou'd be ambitious of losing their arms, and— 507

Oliv. Looking like a pair of compasses.

Nov. But he has no use of his arms but to set 'em on kimbow,¹ for he never pulls off his hat, at least not to me, I'm sure; for you must know, madam, he has a fanatical hatred to good company: he can't abide me. 512

L. Plau. O, be not so severe to him, as to say he hates good company: for I assure you he has a great respect, esteem and kindness for me. 515

Man. That kind, civil rogue has spoken yet ten thousand times worse of me than t'other. [Aside.]

Oliv. Well, if he be return'd, Mr. Novel, then shall I be pester'd again with his boistrous sea-love; have my alcove smell like a cabin, my chamber perfum'd with his tarpaulin Brandenburg;² and hear volleys of brandy-sighs, enough to make a fog in one's room. Foh! I hate a lover that smells like Thames Street!³ 522

Man. [Aside]. I can bear no longer, and need hear no more.— [To OLIVIA.] But since you have these two pulvillio⁴ boxes, these essence-bottles, this pair of musk-cats here, I hope I may venture to come yet nearer you. 526

Oliv. Overheard us then?

Nov. I hope he heard me not. [Aside.]

¹ akimbo.

² morning-gown (N.E.D.)

³ In which still stand Billingsgate Wharf and Market. ⁴ perfum'd powder.

L. Plau. Most noble and heroick captain, your most oblig'd, faithful, humble servant. 530

Nov. Dear tar, thy humble servant.

Man. Away!—[*Thrusts NOVEL and PLAUSIBLE on each side.*] Madam—

Oliv. Nay, I think I have fitted ¹ you for listning.

Man. You have fitted me for believing you cou'd not be fickle, tho' you were young; cou'd not dissemble love, tho' 'twas your interest; nor be vain,² tho' you were handsom; nor break your promise, tho' to a parting lover; nor abuse your best friend, tho' you had wit: but I take not your contempt of me worse than your esteem or civility for these things here, tho' you know 'em. 540

Nov. Things!

L. Plau. Let the captain railly a little.

Man. Yes, things! Canst thou be angry, thou thing?

[*Coming up to NOVEL.*]

Nov. No, since my lord sayes you speak in raillery; for, tho' your sea-raillery be something rough, yet, I confess, we use one another too as bad every day at Locket's,³ and never quarrel for the matter.

L. Plau. Nay, noble captain, be not angry with him.—A word with you, I beseech you— [Whispers to MANLY.]

Oliv. Well, we women, like the rest of the cheats of the world, when our cullies or creditors have found us out, and will or can trust no longer, pay debts and satisfie obligations with a quarrel, the kindest present a man can make to his mistress, when he can make no more presents. For oftentimes in love, as at cards, we are forc'd to play foul, only to give over the game; and use our lovers like the cards, when we can get no more by them, throw 'em up in a pet upon the first dispute. [Aside.]

Man. My lord, all that you have made me know by your whispering, which I knew not before is, that you have a stinking breath; there's a secret for your secret.

L. Plau. Pshaw! pshaw! 560

Man. But, madam, tell me, pray, what was't about this spark cou'd take you? Was it the merit of his fashionable impudence;

¹ punished fittingly, properly (*N.E.D.*).

³ See below, *The Way of the World*, p. 607, n. 1.

² Q "in vain."

the briskness of his noise, the wit of his laugh, his judgment, or fancy in his garniture? or was it a well-trim'd glove, or the scent of it, that charm'd you? 565

Nov. Very well, sir: 'gad, these sea-captains make nothing of dressing. But let me tell you, sir, a man by his dress, as much as by any thing, shews his wit and judgment; nay, and his courage too.

Free. How, his courage, Mr. Novel? 570

Nov. Why, for example, by red breeches, tuck'd-up hair or peruke, a greasie broad belt, and now adaves a short sword.

Man. Thy courage will appear more by thy belt than thy sword, I dare swear.—Then, madam, for this gentle piece of courtesie, this man of tame honour, what cou'd you find in him? Was it his languishing affected tone? his mannerly look? his second-hand flattery, the refuse of the playhouse tiring-rooms? or his slavish obsequiousness in watching at the door of your box at the playhouse, for your hand to your chair? or his janty way of playing with your fan? or was it the gunpowder spot ¹ on his hand, or the jewel in his ear, that purchas'd your heart? 581

Oliv. Good jealous captain, no more of your—

L. Plau. No, let him go on, madam, for perhaps he may make you laugh: and I wou'd contribute to your pleasure any way.

Man. Gentle rogue! 585

Oliv. No, noble captain, you cannot, sure, think any thing cou'd take me more than that heroick title of yours, captain; for you know we women love honour inordinately.

Nov. Hah, ha! faith, she is with thee, bully, for thy raillery.

Man. Faith, so shall I be with you, no bully, for your grinning.

[*Aside to NOVEL.*]

Oliv. Then that noble lyon-like meen of yours, that soldier-like, weather-beaten complexion, and that manly roughness of your voice; how can they otherwise than charm us women, who hate effeminacy!

Nov. Hah, ha! faith, I can't hold from laughing. 595

Man. Nor shall I from kicking anon. [*Aside to NOVEL.*]

¹A "beauty spot" produced by means of gunpowder (*N.E.D.*). See Otway's *Soldier's Fortune*, IV, i.

Oliv. And then, that captain-like carelessness in your dress, but especially your scarf; 'twas just such another, only a little higher ty'd, made me in love with my tailor as he past by my window the last training-day; ¹ for we women adore a martial man, and you have nothing wanting to make you more one, or more agreeable, but a wooden leg. 602

L. Plau. Nay, i'faith, there your ladyship was a wag, and it was fine, just, and well raily'd. 602

Nov. Ay, ay, madam, with you ladies too, martial men must needs be very killing. 606

Man. Peace, you Bartholomew-fair buffoons! And be not you vain that these laugh on your side, for they will laugh at their own dull jests; but no more of 'em, for I will only suffer now this lady to be witty and merry. 610

Oliv. You wou'd not have your panegyrick interrupted. I go on then to your humour. Is there any thing more agreeable than the pretty sullenness of that? than the greatness of your courage, which most of all appears in your spirit of contradiction? for you dare give all mankind the lye; and your opinion is your onely mistress, for you renounce that too, when it becomes another man's. 616

Nov. Hah, ha! I cannot hold, I must laugh at thee, tar, faith!

L. Plau. And i'faith, dear captain, I beg your pardon, and leave to laugh at you too, tho' I protest I mean you no hurt; but, when a lady raillies, a stander by must be complaisant, and do her reason in laughing: hah, ha! 621

Man. Why, you impudent, pitiful wretches, you presume, sure, upon your effeminacy to urge me; for you are in all things so like women, that you may think it in me a kind of cowardice to beat you. 625

Oliv. No hectoring, good captain.

Man. Or, perhaps, you think this ladies presence secures you; but have a care, she has talk'd her self out of all the respect I had for her; and by using me ill before you, has given me a priviledge of using you so before her: but if you wou'd preserve your respect to her, and not be beaten before her, go, be gone immediately.

Nov. Be gone! what? 632

¹ For the militia.

L. Plau. Nay, worthy, noble, generous, captain—

Man. Be gone, I say!

Nov. Be gone again! to us be gone!

635

Man. No chattering, baboons, instantly be gone, or—

[*Puts them out of the room: NOVEL struts, PLAUSIBLE cringes.*]

Nov. Well, madam, we'll go make the cards ready in your bed-chamber: sure you will not stay long with him.

[*Ex[eunt]* PLAUS[IBLE and] NOV[EL].

Oliv. Turn hither your rage, good captain Swaggerhuff, and be saucy with your mistress, like a true captain; but be civil to your rivals and betters, and do not threaten any thing but me here; no, not so much as my windows; nor do not think your self in the lodgings of one of your suburb mistresses beyond the Tower. 643

Man. Do not give me cause to think so; for those less infamous women part with their lovers, just as you did from me, with unforc'd vows of constancy and floods of willing tears; but the same winds bear away their lovers and their vows: and for their grief, if the credulous unexpected fools return, they find new comforters, fresh cullies, such as I found here. The mercenary love of those women too suffers shipwrack with their gallants' fortunes; now you have heard chance has us'd me scurvily, therefore you do too. Well, persevere in your ingratitude, falsehood, and disdain; have constancy in something, and I promise you to be as just to your real scorn as I was to your feign'd love; and henceforward will despise, contemn, hate, loath, and detest you most faithfully. 656

Enter LETTICE.

Oliv. Get the hombre-cards ready in the next room, Lettice, and— [Whispers to LETTICE.]

Free. Bravely resolv'd, captain!

Fid. And you'll be sure to keep your word, I hope, sir? 660

Man. I hope so too.

Fid. Do you but hope it, sir? If you are not as good as your word, 'twill be the first time you ever brag'd, sure.

Man. She has restor'd my reason with my heart.

Free. But now you talk of restoring, captain, there are other

things, which next to one's heart one wou'd not part with; I mean your jewels and money, which it seems she has, sir. 667

Man. What's that to you, sir?

Free. Pardon me, whatsoever is yours I have a share in't, I'm sure, which I will not lose for asking, tho' you may be too generous or too angry now to do't your self. 671

Fid. Nay, then I'll make bold to make my claim too.

[*Both going towards* OLIVIA.]

Man. Hold, you impertinent, officious fops—How have I been deceiv'd! [*Aside.*]

Free. Madam, there are certain appurtenances to a lover's heart, call'd jewels, which always go along with it. 676

Fid. And which, with lovers, have no value in themselves, but from the heart they come with. Our captain's, madam, it seems you scorn to keep, and much more will those worthless things without it, I am confident. 680

Oliv. A gentleman, so well made as you are, may be confident—us easie women cou'd not deny you any thing you ask, if 'twere for your self; but, since 'tis for another, I beg your leave to give him my answer.—(An agreeable young fellow this!—and wou'd not be my aversion!—) [*Aside.*] Captain, your young friend here has a very persuading face, I confess; yet you might have ask'd me your self for those trifles you left with me, which (heark you a little, for I dare trust you with the secret; you are a man of so much honour, I'm sure) I say then, not expecting your return, or hoping ever to see you again, I have deliver'd your jewels to— 690

[*Aside to* MANLY.]

Man. Whom?

Oliv. My husband.

Man. Your husband!

Oliv. Ay, my husband. For since you cou'd leave me, I am lately and privately marry'd to one who is a man of so much honour and experience in the world that I dare not ask him for your jewels again to restore 'em to you; lest he shou'd conclude you never wou'd have parted with 'em to me on any other score but the exchange of my honour: which rather than you'd let me lose, you'd lose, I'm sure, your self, those trifles of yours. 700

Man. Triumphant impudence! but marry'd too!

Oliv. O, speak not so loud, my servants know it not: I am marry'd; there's no resisting one's destiny, or love, you know.

Man. Why, did you love him too?

Oliv. Most passionately; nay, love him now, tho' I have marry'd him, and he me: which mutual love I hope you are too good, too generous a man to disturb, by any future claim, or visits to me. 'Tis true, he is now absent in the country, but returns shortly; therefore I beg of you, for your own ease and quiet, and my honour, you will never see me more. 710

Man. I wish I never had seen you.

Oliv. But if you shou'd ever have any thing to say to me hereafter, let that young gentleman there be your messenger.

Man. You wou'd be kinder to him; I find he shou'd be welcome.

Oliv. Alas! his youth wou'd keep my husband from suspicions, and his visits from scandal; for we women may have pity for such as he, but no love: and I already think you do not well to spirit him away to sea; and the sea is already but too rich with the spoils of the shore. 719

Man. True perfect woman!—If I cou'd say any thing more injurious to her now, I wou'd; for I cou'd outtrail a bilk'd whore, or a kick'd coward; but now I think on't, that were rather to discover my love than hatred; and I must not talk, for something I must do. [*Aside.*]

Oliv. I think I have given him enough of me now, never to be troubled with him again.— [*Aside.*]

Enter LETTICE.

Well, Lettice, are the cards and all ready within? I come then.— Captain, I beg your pardon: you will not make one at hombra?

Man. No, madam, but I'll wish you a little good luck before you go. 730

Oliv. No, if you wou'd have me thrive, curse me: for that you'll do heartily, I suppose.

Man. Then if you will have it so, may all the curses light upon you women ought to fear, and you deserve!—First, may the curse of loving play attend your sordid covetousness, and fortune

cheat you, by trusting to her, as you have cheated me; the curse of pride, or a good reputation, fall on your lust; the curse of affectation on your beauty; the curse of your husband's company on your pleasures; and the curse of your gallant's disappointments in his absence; and the curse of scorn, jealousy, or despair on your love; and then the curse of loving on!

741

Oliv. And to requite all your curses, I will only return you your last; may the curse of loving me still fall upon your proud hard heart, that cou'd be so cruel to me in these horrid curses! but heaven forgive you!

[*Ex[ist]*] OLIV[IA].

Man. Hell and the devil reward thee!

Free. Well, you see now, mistresses, like friends, are lost by letting 'em handle your money; and most women are such kind of witches, who can have no power over a man, unless you give 'em money; but when once they have got any from you, they never leave you till they have all. Therefore I never dare give a woman a farthing.

752

Man. Well, there is yet this comfort of losing one's money with one's mistress, a man is out of danger of getting another; of being made prize again by love, who, like a pyrat, takes you by spreading false colours: but when once you have run your ship aground, the treacherous picaroon ¹ loofs; ² so by your ruin you save your self from slavery at least.

758

Enter Boy.

Boy. Mrs.³ Lettice, here's Madam ⁴ Blackacre come to wait upon her honour.

760

Man. D'ye hear that? Let us be gone before she comes: for hence forward I'll avoid the whole damn'd sex for ever, and woman as a sinking ship.

[*Exeunt* MANLY and FIDELIA.]

Free. And I'll stay, to revenge on her your quarrel to the sex; for out of love to her jointure, and hatred to business, I wou'd marry her, to make an end of her thousand suits, and my thousand engagements, to the comfort of two unfortunate sorts of people, my plaintiffs and her defendants, my creditors and her adversaries.

¹ rogue, plunderer, pirate.² loofs.³ Miss.⁴ Mrs.

Enter WIDOW BLACKACRE, *led in by* Major OLDFOX, *and* JERRY BLACKACRE *following, laden with green bags.*

Wid. 'Tis an arrant sea-ruffian; but I am glad I met with him at last, to serve him again, major; for the last service was not good in law. Boy, duck, Jerry, where is my paper of memorandums? Give me, child: so. Where is my cousin Olivia now, my kind relation? 773

Free. Here is one that wou'd be your kind relation, madam.

Wid. What mean you, sir?

Free. Why, faith, (to be short) to marry you, widow.

Wid. Is not this the wild rude person we saw at Captain Manly's? 778

Jer. Ay, forsooth, an't please.

Wid. What wou'd you? what are you? Marry me! 780

Free. Ay, faith; for I am a younger brother, and you are a widow.

Wid. You are an impertinent person; and go about your business.

Free. I have none, but to marry thee, widow. 785

Wid. But I have other business, I'd have you to know.

Free. But you have no business anights, widow; and I'll make you pleasanter business than any you have. For anights, I assure you, I am a man of great business; for the business—

Wid. Go, I'm sure you're an idle fellow. 790

Free. Try me but, widow, and employ me as you find my abilities and industry.

Old. Pray be civil to the lady, Mr. — she's a person of quality, a person that is no person—

Free. Yes, but she's a person that is a widow. Be you mannerly to her, because you are to pretend only to be her squire, to arm her to her lawyer's chambers: but I will be impudent and baudy; for she must love and marry me. 798

Wid. Marry come up, you saucy familiar Jack! You think, with us widows, 'tis no more than up, and ride. Gad forgive me! now adayes, every idle, young, hectoring, roaring companion, with a pair of turn'd red breeches, and a broad back, thinks to

carry away any widow of the best degree. But I'd have you to know, sir, all widows are not got, like places at court, by impudence and importunity only. 805

Old. No, no, soft, soft, you are a young man, and not fit—

Free. For a widow? yes sure, old man, the fitter.

Old. Go to, go to; if others had not laid in their claims before you—

Free. Not you, I hope. 810

Old. Why not I, sir? sure I am a much more proportionable match for her than you, sir; I, who am an elder brother, of a comfortable fortune, and of equal years with her.

Wid. How's that, you unmannerly person? I'd have you to know, I was born but in *Ann' undec' Caroli prim'*.¹ 815

Old. Your pardon, lady, your pardon: be not offended with your very humble servant—But, I say, sir, you are a beggarly younger brother, twenty years younger than her, without any land or stock, but your great stock of impudence: therefore what pretension can you have to her? 820

Free. You have made it for me: first, because I am a younger brother.

Wid. Why, is that a sufficient plea to a relict? how appears it, sir? by what foolish custom?

Free. By custom time out of mind only. Then, sir, because I have nothing to keep me after her death, I am the likelier to take care of her life. And for my being twenty years younger than her, and having a sufficient stock of impudence, I leave it to her whether they will be valid exceptions to me in her widow's law or equity.

Old. Well, she has been so long in chancery, that I'll stand to her equity and decree between us. Come, lady, pray snap up this young snap² at first, or we shall be troubled with him. Give him a City-widow's answer (that is, with all the ill-breeding imaginable)—[*Aside to the Widow.*] Come, madam. 834

Wid. Well then, to make an end of this foolish wooing, for nothing interrupts business more: first for you, major— 836

Old. You declare in my favour, then?

¹ 1636 (the eleventh year of Charles I's reign)—by which reckoning she would be a young woman of forty (cf. Churchill).

² merry fellow.

Free. What, direct the court? (Come, young lawyer, thou sha't be a counsel for me.) [To JERR[Y].

Jer. Gad, I shall betray your cause then, as well as an older lawyer; never stir.¹ 841

Wid. First, I say, for you, major, my walking hospital of an ancient foundation; thou bag of mummy, that wou'dst fall asunder, if 'twere not for thy cerecloaths—

Old. How, lady? 845

Free. Hah, ha!—

Jer. Hey, brave mother! use all suitors thus, for my sake.

Wid. Thou wither'd, hobbling, distorted cripple; nay, thou art a cripple all over: wou'dst thou make me the staff of thy age, the crutch of thy decrepidness? me— 850

Free. Well said, widow! Faith, thou wou'dst make a man love thee now, without dissembling.

Wid. Thou senseless, impertinent, quibbling, driveling, feeble, paralytic, impotent, fumbling, frigid nicompoop!²

Jer. Hey, brave mother, for calling of names, i'fac! 855

Wid. Wou'dst thou make a caudle-maker, a nurse of me? Can't you be bed-rid without a bed-fellow? Won't your swan-skins, furr's, flannels, and the scorch'd trencher, keep you warm there? Wou'd you have me your Scotch warming-pan,³ with a pox to you! Me!— 860

Old. O Heav'ns!

Free. I told you I shou'd be thought the fitter man, major.

Jer. Ay, you old fobus,⁴ and you wou'd have been my guardian, wou'd you, to have taken care of my estate, that half of't shou'd never come to me, by letting long leases at pepper-corn rents?⁵

Wid. If I wou'd have marry'd an old man, 'tis well known I might have marry'd an earl, nay, what's more, a judge, and been cover'd the winter nights with the lamb-skins, which I prefer to the ermines⁶ of nobles. And dost thou think I wou'd wrong my poor minor there for you? 870

¹ "Let me never stir if I don't!"

² old form of "nicompoop" (cf. "nickumpoop," *Bailey's Dictionary*, 1736).

³ a wench (*Grose, Lexicon Balatronicum*).

⁴ an opprobrious epithet (*Farmer, Slang Dict.*).

⁵ nominal rent. ⁶ Later used also (in place of lamb-skins) for judicial robes.

Free. Your minor is a chopping minor, God bless him!

[*Strokes* JERRY on the head.

Old. Your minor may be a major of horse or foot, for his bigness; and it seems you will have the cheating of your minor to your self.

Wid. Pray, sir, bear witness:—cheat my minor! I'll bring my action of the case for the slander. 875

Free. Nay, I wou'd bear false witness for thee now, widow, since you have done me justice, and have thought me the fitter man for you.

Wid. Fair and softly, sir, 'tis my minor's case, more than my own; and I must do him justice now on you. 880

Free. How?

Old. So then.

Wid. You are, first, (I warrant,) some renegado from the inns of court and the law; and thou'lt come to suffer for't by the law, that is, be hang'd. 885

Jer. Not about your neck, forsooth, I hope.

Free. But, madam—

Old. Hear the court.

Wid. Thou art some debauch'd, drunken, leud, hectoring, gaming companion, and want'st some widow's old gold ¹ to nick ² upon; but I thank you, sir, that's for my lawyers. 891

Free. Faith, we shou'd ne'er quarrel about that; for guineas ¹ wou'd serve my turn. But, widow—

Wid. Thou art a foul-mouth'd boaster of thy lust, a mere bragadochio of thy strength for wine and women, and wilt belie thyself more than thou dost women, and art every way a base deceiver of women; and wou'd deceive me too, wou'd you? 897

Free. Nay, faith, widow, this is judging without seeing the evidence.

Wid. I say, you are a worn-out whoremaster at five-and-twenty,

¹“The point of the antithesis lies in the opposition of the *new guinea* to the *old gold* (ducats, nobles). *Guineas* were not coined before the year 1662 (1663)” (W. C. Ward). Cf. the lines beginning

Some value wit, like Coin, because 'tis old,
And judge the lightest, is the purest gold, . . .

(*An Epistle to Mr. Dryden, Wycherley, Posthumous Works.*)

² gamble.

both in body and fortune; and cannot be trusted by the common wenches of the town, lest you shou'd not pay 'em; nor by the wives of the town lest you shou'd pay 'em: so you want women, and wou'd have me your baud to procure 'em for you. 904

Free. Faith, if you had any good acquaintance, widow, 'twou'd be civilly done of thee; for I am just come from sea.

Wid. I mean, you wou'd have me keep you, that you might turn keeper; for poor widows are only us'd like bauds by you: you go to church with us, but to get other women to lie with. In fine, you are a cheating, chousing¹ spendthrift; and having sold your own annuity, wou'd waste my jointure. 911

Jer. And make havock of our estate personal, and all our gilt plate; I shou'd soon be picking up all our mortgag'd apostle-spoons,² bowls, and beakers, out of most of the ale-houses betwixt Hercules Pillars³ and the Boatswain in Wapping; nay, and you'd be scouring amongst my trees, and make 'em knock down one another, like routed reeling watchmen at midnight. Wou'd you so, bully? 918

Free. Nay, prythee, widow, hear me.

Wid. No, sir; I'd have you to know, thou pitiful, paltry, lath-back'd fellow, if I wou'd have marry'd a young man, 'tis well known I cou'd have had any young heir in Norfolk, nay, the hopefull'st young man this day at the King's-bench bar; I that am a relict and executrix of known plentiful assits and parts,⁴ who understand my self and the law. And wou'd you have me under covert-baron⁵ again? No, sir, no covert-baron for me. 926

Free. But, dear widow, hear me. I value you only, not your jointure.

Wid. Nay, sir, hold there; I know your love to a widow is covetousness of her jointure: and a widow, a little stricken in years, with a good jointure, is like an old mansion-house in a good pur-

¹ swindling.

² old-fashioned silver spoons, with handles ending in figures of the apostles; the usual presents of sponsors at baptisms (*N.E.D.*).

³ a tavern in Hyde Park, mentioned in *Tom Jones*, Bk. XVI, ch. ii.

⁴ *Pars rationalis*, the ancient division of a man's goods into three equal parts, of which one went to his heirs of lineal descendants, another to his wife, and the third was at his own disposal (Wharton's *Law-Lexicon*, London, 1892).

⁵ Cf. *Spanish Friar*, IV, i, *supra*, p. 203, n. 3.

chase, never valu'd but take one, take t'other: and perhaps, when you are in possession, you'd neglect it, let it drop to the ground, for want of necessary repairs or expences upon't. 934

Free. No, widow, one wou'd be sure to keep all tight, when one is to forfeit one's lease by dilapidation.

Wid. Fie! fie! I neglect my business with this foolish discourse of love. Jerry, child, let me see the list of the jury: I'm sure my cousin Olivia has some relations amongst 'em. But where is she?

Free. Nay, widow, but hear me one word only. 940

Wid. Nay, sir, no more, pray; I will no more hearken again to your foolish love-motions, than to offers of arbitration.

[*Ex[eunt]* *Wid[ow]* and *JERR[Y]*.

Free. Well, I'll follow thee yet; for he that has a pretension at court, or to a widow, must never give over for a little ill usage.

Old. Therefore I'll get her by assiduity, patience, and long-sufferings, which you will not undergo; for you idle young fellows leave off love when it comes to be business; and industry gets more women than love. 948

Free. Ay, industry, the fool's and old man's merit.—But I'll be industrious too, and make a business on't, and get her by law, wrangling, and contests, and not by sufferings: and, because you are no dangerous rival, I'll give thee counsel, major:— 952

If you litigious widow e'r wou'd gain,

Sigh not to her, but by the law complain;

To her, as to a baud, defendant sue 955

With statutes, and make justice pimp for you.

[*Exeunt.*]

FINIS ACTUS SECUNDI.

Act III. Scene I.—*Westminster-Hall.*

Enter MANLY and FREEMAN, *two Sailors behind.*

Man. I hate this place worse than a man that has inherited a chancery suit: I wish I were well out on't again.

Free. Why, you need not be afraid of this place: for a man without money needs no more fear a croud of lawyers than a croud of pickpockets.

Man. This, the reverend of the law wou'd have thought the palace or residence of Justice; but, if it be, she lives here with the state of a Turkish emperor, rarely seen; and besieg'd rather than defended by her numerous black guard¹ here.

Free. Methinks 'tis like one of their own halls in Christmas time, whither from all parts fools bring their money, to try by the dice (not the worst judges) whether it shall be their own or no; but, after a tedious fretting and wrangling, they drop away all their money on both sides; and, finding neither the better, at last go emptily and lovingly away together to the tavern, joining their curses against the young lawyers' box,² that sweeps all, like the old ones. 17

Man. Spoken like a revelling Christmas lawyer.

Free. Yes, I was one, I confess; but was fain to leave the law, out of conscience, and fall to making false musters: rather chose to cheat the king than his subjects; plunder rather than take fees.

Man. Well, a plague and a purse famine light on the law; and that female limb of it who drag'd me hither to-day! But prythee go see if, in that croud of dagled³ gowns there, thou canst find her.

[*Pointing to a crowd of Lawyers at the end of the stage.*

[*Exit FREEMAN.*

Manet MANLY.

How hard it is to be an hypocrite! 25
 At least to me, who am but newly so.
 I thought it once a kind of knavery,
 Nay, cowardice, to hide one's faults; but now
 The common frailty, love, becomes my shame.
 He must not know I love th' ungrateful still, 30
 Lest he contemn me more than she; for I,
 It seems, can undergo a woman's scorn,
 But not a man's—

¹ Possibly the "Black guard" (cf. *N.E.D.*) of soldiers at Westminster; or the judges and barristers.

² Money-box, with a hint (indicated by "sweeps") at a dice-box. The Inns of Court held high revels at Christmas time (see next line), and gambling was a legal pastime at this season (Churchill).

³ Cf. p. 295, n. 3.

Enter to him FIDELIA.

Fid. Sir, good sir, generous captain.

Man. Prythee, kind impertinence, leave me. Why shou'dst thou follow me, flatter my generosity now, since thou know'st I have no money left? if I had it, I'd give it thee, to buy my quiet. 37

Fid. I never follow'd yet, sir, reward or fame, but you alone; nor do I now beg any thing but leave to share your miseries. You shou'd not be a niggard of 'em, since, methinks, you have enough to spare. Let me follow you now, because you hate me, as you have often said. 42

Man. I ever hated a coward's company, I must confess.

Fid. Let me follow you till I am none, then; for you, I'm sure, will go through such worlds of dangers, that I shall be inur'd to 'em; nay, I shall be afraid of your anger more than danger, and so turn valiant out of fear. Dear captain, do not cast me off till you have try'd me once more: do not, do not go to sea again without me. 49

Man. Thou to sea! to court, thou fool; remember the advice I gave thee: thou art a handsome spaniel, and canst faun naturally: go, busk about ¹ and run thy self into the next great man's lobby; first faun upon the slaves without, and then run into the ladies bedchamber; thou may'st be admitted at last to tumble her bed. Go seek, I say, and lose me; for I am not able to keep thee: I have not bread for my self. 56

Fid. Therefore I will not go, because then I may help and serve you.

Man. Thou!

Fid. I warrant you, sir; for, at worst, I cou'd beg or steal for you.

Man. Nay, more bragging! Dost thou not know there's venturing your life in stealing? Go, prythee, away: thou art as hard to shake off as that flattering, effeminating mischief, love.

Fid. Love did you name? Why, you are not so miserable as to be yet in love, sure? 65

Man. No, no, prythee away, be gone, or—I had almost discover'd my love and shame; well, if I had? that thing cou'd not

¹ to beat or cruise about (*N.E.D.*).

think the worse of me—or if he did?—no—yes, he shall know it—he shall—but then I must never leave him, for they are such secrets, that make parasites and pimps lords of their masters: for any slavery or tyranny is easier than love's.—[*Aside.*] Come hither, since thou art so forward to serve me: hast thou but resolution enough to endure the torture of a secret? for such to some is insupportable. 74

Fid. I wou'd keep it as safe as if your dear, precious life depended on't.

Man. Dam your dearness! It concerns more than my life,—my honour.

Fid. Doubt it not, sir.

Man. And do not discover it, by too much fear of discovering it; but have a great care you let not Freeman find it out. 81

Fid. I warrant you, sir, I am already all joy with the hopes of your commands; and shall be all wings in the execution of 'em: speak quickly, sir.

Man. You said you'd beg for me. 85

Fid. I did, sir.

Man. Then you shall beg for me.

Fid. With all my heart, sir.

Man. That is, pimp for me.

Fid. How, sir? 90

Man. D'ye start! Think'st thou, thou cou'dst do me any other service? Come, no dissembling honour: I know you can do it handsomly, thou wert made for't. You have lost your time with me at sea, you must recover it.

Fid. Do not, sir, beget your self more reasons for your aversion to me, and make my obedience to you a fault; I am the unfittest in the world to do you such a service. 97

Man. Your cunning arguing against it shews but how fit you are for it. No more dissembling: here (I say) you must go use it for me to Olivia. 100

Fid. To her, sir?

Man. Go flatter, lie, kneel, promise, any thing to get her for me: I cannot live unless I have her. Didst thou not say thou

wou'dst do any thing to save my life? and she said you had a persuading face. 105

Fid. But, did you not say, sir, your honour was dearer to you than your life? and wou'd you have me contribute to the loss of that, and carry love from you to the most infamous, most false, and—

Man. And most beautiful!— [Sighs aside.]

Fid. Most ungrateful woman that ever liv'd; for sure she must be so, that cou'd desert you so soon, use you so basely, and so lately too: do not, do not forget it, sir, and think—

Man. No, I will not forget it, but think of revenge; I will lie with her out of revenge. Go, be gone, and prevail for me, or never see me more. 116

Fid. You scorn'd her last night.

Man. I know not what I did last night; I dissembled last night.

Fid. Heavens!

Man. Be gone, I say, and bring me love or compliance back, or hopes at least, or I'll never see thy face again, by— 121

Fid. O, do not swear, sir! first hear me.

Man. I am impatient, away! you'll find me here till twelve. [Turns away.]

Fid. Sir—

Man. Not one word, no insinuating argument more, or soothing persuasion; you'll have need of all your rhetorick with her: go strive to alter her, not me; be gone. 127

[*Ex[it]*] MAN[LY] at the end of the stage.

Manet FIDELIA.

Fid. Shou'd I discover to him now my sex,
And lay before him his strange cruelty,
'Twou'd but incense it more.—No, 'tis not time. 130
For his love must I then betray my own?
Were ever love or chance till now severe?
Or shifting woman pos'd with such a task?
Forc'd to beg that which kills her, if obtain'd,
And give away her lover not to lose him! [*Ex[it]*] FIDEL[IA].

Enter WIDOW BLACKACRE, *in the middle of half-a-dozen* Lawyers, *whisper'd to by a fellow in black,* JERRY BLACKACRE *following the croud.*

Wid. Offer me a reference,¹ you saucy companion you! d'ye know who you speak to? Art thou a solicitor in chancery, and offer a reference? A pretty fellow! Mr. Serjeant Ploddon, here's a fellow has the impudence to offer me a reference!

Serj. Plod. Who's that has the impudence to offer a reference within these walls? 141

Wid. Nay, for a splitter of causes² to do't!

Serj. Plod. No, madam; to a lady learned in the law, as you are, the offer of a reference were to impose upon you. 144

Wid. No, no, never fear me for a reference, Mr. Serjeant. But, come, have you not forgot your brief? Are you sure you shan't make the mistake of—hark you—[*Whispers.*] Go then, go to your court of Common-pleas, and say one thing over and over again: you do it so naturally, you'll never be suspected for protracting time. 150

Serj. Plod. Come, I know the course of the court, and your business. [*Exit Serj. PLOD.*]

Wid. Let's see, Jerry, where are my minutes? Come, Mr. Quaint, pray go talk a great deal for me in chancery; let your words be easie, and your sense hard; my cause requires it: branch³ it bravely,⁴ and deck my cause with flowers, that the snake may lie hidden. Go, go, and be sure you remember the decree of my Lord Chancellor, *Tricesimo quart'* of the queen.⁵ 158

Quaint. I will, as I see cause, extenuate or amplify matter of fact; baffle truth with impudence; answer exceptions with questions, tho' never so impertinent; for reasons give 'em words; for law and equity, tropes and figures; and so relax and enervate the sinews of their argument with the oyl of my eloquence. But when

¹ An offer of settlement (through arbitration) out of court.

² A pettifogging lawyer, who arranges to limit (split) a suit to a part of the claim in question (*Wharton, Law Lexicon*).

³ Embroider with flowers and twigs (*Schmidt, Shakespeare Lexicon*).

⁴ splendidly, finely.

⁵ In the thirty-fourth year of Elizabeth.

my lungs can reason no longer, and not being able to say any thing more for our cause, say every thing of our adversary; whose reputation, though never so clear and evident in the eye of the world, yet with sharp invectives— 167

Wid. (Alias, Belin'sgate.¹)

Quaint. With poinant and sowre invectives, I say, I will de-face, wipe out, and obliterate his fair reputation, even as a record with the juice of lemons; and tell such a story, (for the truth on't is, all that we can do for our client in chancery, is telling a story,) a fine story, a long story, such a story— 173

Wid. Go, save thy breath for the cause; talk at the bar, Mr. Quaint: you are so copiously fluent, you can weary any one's ears sooner than your own tongue. Go, weary our adversary's counsel, and the court; go, thou art a fine-spoken person: adad, I shall make thy wife jealous of me, if you can but court the court into a decree for us. Go, get you gone, and remember—[*Whispers.*]—[*Exit QUAIN.*]—Come, Mr. Blunder, pray baul soundly for me, at the King's-bench, bluster, sputter, question, cavil; but be sure your argument be intricate enough to confound the court; and then you do my business. Talk what you will, but be sure your tongue never stand still; for your own noise will secure your sense from censure: 'tis like coughing or heming when one has got the belly-ake, which stifles the unmannerly noise. Go, dear rogue, and succeed; and I'll invite thee, ere it be long, to more souz'd venison. 188

Blund. I'll warrant you, after your verdict, your judgment shall not be arrested upon if's and and's. [*Exit.*]

Wid. Come, Mr. Petulant, let me give you some new instructions for our cause in the Exchequer. Are the barons ² sate?

Pet. Yes, no; may be they are, may be they are not: what know I? what care I?

Wid. Hey day! I wish you wou'd but snap up the counsel on t'other side anon at the bar as much; and have a little more patience with me, that I might instruct you a little better. 197

Pet. You instruct me! what is my brief for, mistress?

¹ Billingsgate.

² Of the Exchequer: Judges of the Court of Exchequer.

Wid. Ay, but you seldom read your brief but at the bar, if you do it then. 200

Pet. Perhaps I do, perhaps I don't, and perhaps 'tis time enough: pray hold your self contented, mistress.

Wid. Nay, if you go there too, I will not be contented, sir; tho' you, I see, will lose my cause for want of speaking, I wo' not: you shall hear me, and shall be instructed. Let's see your brief.

Pet. Send your solicitor¹ to me. Instructed by a woman! I'd have you to know, I do not wear a bar-gown—

Wid. By a woman! and I'd have you to know, I am no common woman; but a woman conversant in the laws of the land, as well as your self, tho' I have no bar-gown. 210

Pet. Go to, go to, mistress, you are impertinent, and there's your brief for you: instruct me! [*Flings her breviate at her.*]

Wid. Impertinent to me, you saucy Jack, you! you return my breviate, but where's my fee? you'll be sure to keep that, and scan that so well, that if there chance to be but a brass half-crown in't, one's sure to hear on't again: wou'd you wou'd but look on your breviate half so narrowly! But pray give me my fee too, as well as my brief. 218

Pet. Mistress, that's without precedent. When did a counsel ever return his fee, pray? and you are impertinent and ignorant to demand it. 221

Wid. Impertinent again, and ignorant, to me! Gadsbodikins, you puny upstart in the law, to use me so! you green-bag carrier, you murderer of unfortunate causes, the clerk's ink is scarce off of your fingers,—you that newly come from lamblacking² the judges' shooes, and are not fit to wipe mine; you call me impertinent and ignorant! I wou'd give thee a cuff on the ear, sitting the courts,³ if I were ignorant. Marry gep,⁴ if it had not been for me, thou hadst been yet but a hearing counsel⁵ at the bar. 229

[*Ex[ist]*] PETULANT.

¹ According to strict legal etiquette, barristers took their "instructions" from their clients' solicitors,—not directly from the clients (Wharton).

² lamp-blackening.

³ during sessions.

⁴ Or "Marry gip," probably from "By Mary Gipsy," by St. Mary of Egypt (*N.E.D.*); fused with "Marry come up" (get along with you!).

⁵ a briefless barrister (Churchill).

Enter Mr. BUTTONGOWN, crossing the stage in haste.

Mr. Buttongown, Mr. Buttongown, whither so fast? what, won't you stay till we are heard? 231

But. I cannot, Mrs. Blackacre, I must be at the council, my lord's cause stays there for me.

Wid. And mine suffers here.

But. I cannot help it. 235

Wid. I'm undone.

But. What's that to me?

Wid. Consider the five-pound fee, if not my cause: that was something to you.

But. Away, away! pray be not so troublesom, mistress: I must be gone. 241

Wid. Nay, but consider a little, I am your old client, my lord but a new one; or let him be what he will, he will hardly be a better client to you than my self: I hope you believe I shall be in law as long as I live? therefore am no despicable client. Well, but go to your lord; I know you expect he shou'd make you a judge one day; but I hope his promise to you will prove a true lord's promise. But that he might be sure to fail you, I wish you had his bond for't.

But. But what, will you yet be thus impertinent, mistress? 250

Wid. Nay, I beseech you, sir, stay; if it be but to tell me my lord's case; come, in short—

But. Nay, then—

[*Ex[it]*] BUTTONGOWN.

Wid. Well, Jerry, observe, child, and lay it up for hereafter. These are those lawyers who, by being in all causes, are in none: therefore if you wou'd have 'em for you, let your adversary fee 'em; for he may chance to depend upon 'em; and so, in being against thee, they'll be for thee.

Jer. Ay, mother; they put me in mind of the unconscionable wooers of widows, who undertake briskly their matrimonial business for their money; but when they have got it once, let who's will drudge for them. Therefore have a care of 'em, forsooth. There's advice for your advice. 263

Wid. Well said, boy.—Come, Mr. Splitcause, pray go see when

my cause in Chancery comes on; and go speak with Mr. Quillit in the King's-bench, and Mr. Quirk in the Common-pleas, and see how our matters go there.

Enter Major OLDFOX.

Old. Lady, a good and propitious morning to you; and may all your causes go as well as if I my self were judge of 'em! 269

Wid. Sir, excuse me; I am busie, and cannot answer complements in Westminster Hall.—Go, Mr. Splitcause, and come to me again to that bookseller's; there I'll stay for you, that you may be sure to find me.

Old. No, sir, come to the other bookseller's. I'll attend your ladship thither. [Exit SPLITCAUSE.]

Wid. Why to the other?

Old. Because he is my bookseller, lady. 277

Wid. What, to sell you lozenges for your catarrh? or medicines for your corns? What else can a major deal with a bookseller for?

Old. Lady, he prints for me. 280

Wid. Why, are you an author?

Old. Of some few essayes; deign you, lady, to peruse 'em. (She is a woman of parts; and I must win her by shewing mine.) [*Aside.*]

The bookseller's boy.

Boy. Will you see Culpepper,¹ mistress? "Aristotle's Problems?"² "The Complete Midwife?"¹ 285

Wid. No; let's see Dalton,³ Hughs,⁴ Shepherd,⁵ Wingate.⁶

Boy. We have no law books.

Wid. No? you are a pretty bookseller then.

¹Nicholas Culpeper, *A Directory for Midwives*, London, 1651; *The Complete Midwife*, 1663.

²J. R. de Émingen's *Aristotelis Problemata*, Englished by 1595, had a "Twenty-fifth Edition," London, 1710.

³Michael Dalton, author of *The Countrey Justice*, 1618 (numerous editions down to 1742), and other works.

⁴William Hughs, another legal writer (see note 6).

⁵William Sheppard (d. 1675?), legal writer. The *D.N.B.* mentions 24 works by him.

⁶Edmund Wingate, *An exact abridgment of all the Statutes . . . from the beginning of Magna Charta*. London, 1642, 1655, 1663 (continued by William Hughs).

Old. Come, have you e're a one of my essayes left?

Boy. Yes, sir, we have enough, and shall alwayes have 'em. 290

Old. How so?

Boy. Why, they are good, steady, lasting ware.

Old. Nay, I hope they will live; let's see.—Be pleas'd, madam, to peruse the poor endeavors of my pen: for I have a pen, tho' I say it, that—

[*Gives her a book.*

Jer. Pray let me see “St. George for Christendom,” or, “The Seven Champions of England.”¹ 297

Wid. No, no; give him “The Young Clerk's Guide.”²—What, we shall have you read your self into a humour of rambling and fighting, and studying military discipline, and wearing red breeches.

Old. Nay, if you talk of military discipline, shew him my “Treatise of the Art Military.” 302

Wid. Hold; I wou'd as willingly he shou'd read a play.

Jer. O, pray forsooth, mother, let me have a play.

Wid. No, sirrah; there are young students of the law enough spoil'd already by playes. They wou'd make you in love with your landress, or, what's worse, some queen of the stage that was a landress; and so turn keeper before you are of age. [*Several crossing the stage.*] But stay, Jerry, is not that Mr. What d'y'-call-him, that goes there, he that offer'd to sell me a suit in chancery for five hundred pound, for a hundred down, and only paying the clerk's fees?

Jer. Ay, forsooth, 'tis he.

Wid. Then stay here, and have a care of the bags, whilst I follow him.—Have a care of the bags, I say. 315

Jer. And do you have a care, forsooth, of the statute against Champertee,³ I say. [*Ex[it] Widow.*

¹ An intentional confusion—to show Jerry's ignorance—between *St. George for England*, 1650 (cf. *The Gentleman Dancing-Master*, V, 1) and *The Seven Champions of Christendom*.

² Title again inaccurate: *The Young Clerk's Tutor . . . a . . . collection of the best presidents* (precedents) *recognizances*, etc. 3d ed., London, 1664. (Over 50 eds. of this work exist.)

³ Champerty, the illegal proceeding whereby an outsider engages to help a plaintiff or defendant to prosecute a suit, on condition that, if it be brought to a successful issue, he is to receive a share of the property in dispute (*N.E.D.*).

Enter FREEMAN to them.

Free. So, there's a limb of my widow, which was wont to be inseparable from her: she can't be far. [*Aside.*] How now, my pretty son-in-law that shall be, where's my widow? 320

Jer. My mother, but not your widow, will be forthcoming presently.

Free. Your servant, major. What, are you buying furniture for a little sleeping closet, which you miscall a study? For you do only by your books, as by your wenches, bind 'em up neatly and make 'em fine, for other people to use 'em. And your bookseller is properly your upholster, for he furnishes your room, rather than your head. 328

Old. Well, well, good sea-lieutenant, study you your compass; that's more than your head can deal with.—(I will go find out the widow, to keep her out of his sight, or he'll board her, whilst I am treating a peace.) [*Aside.*

[*Exit* OLDFOX.]

Manent FREEMAN, JERRY.

Jer. Nay, prythee, friend, now, let me have but "The Seven Champions." You shall trust me no longer than till my mother's Mr. Splitcause comes; for I hope he'll lend me wherewithall to pay for't. 336

Free. Lend thee! here, I'll pay him. Do you want money, squire? I'm sorry a man of your estate should want money.

Jer. Nay, my mother will ne'er let me be at age: and till then, she says— 340

Free. At age! why you are at age already to have spent an estate, man. There are younger than you have kept their women these three years, have had half a dozen claps, and lost as many thousand pounds at play.

Jer. Ay, they are happy sparks! Nay, I know some of my schoolfellows, who, when we were at school, were two years younger than me; but now, I know not how, are grown men before me, and go where they will, and look to themselves. But my curmudgeonly mother wo'nt allow me wherewithall to be a man of my self with. 350

Free. Why, there 'tis; I knew your mother was in fault. Ask but your schoolfellows what they did to be men of themselves.

Jer. Why, I know they went to law with their mothers; for they say, there's no good to be done upon a widow-mother, till one goes to law with her; but mine is as plaguy a lawyer as any's of our Inn. Then wou'd she marry too, and cut down my trees. Now, I shou'd hate, man, to have my father's wife kiss'd and slap'd, and t'other thing too, (you know what I mean,) by another man: and our trees are the purest, tall, even, shady twigs, by my fa¹— 360

Free. Come, squire, let your mother and your trees fall as she pleases, rather than wear this gown and carry green bags all thy life, and be pointed at for a tony.² But you shall be able to deal with her yet the common way. Thou shalt make false love to some lawyer's daughter, whose father, upon the hopes of thy marrying her, shall lend thee money and law, to preserve thy estate and trees: and thy mother is so ugly no body will have her, if she cannot cut down thy trees. 368

Jer. Nay, if I had but any body to stand by me, I am as stomachful as another. 370

Free. That will I: I'll not see any hopeful young gentleman abus'd.

Boy. By any but your self. [*Aside.*]

Jer. The truth on't is, mine's as arrant a widow-mother to her poor child as any's in England. She wo'nt so much as let one have sixpence in one's pocket to see a motion,³ or the dancing of the ropes, or— 377

Free. Come, you shan't want money; there's gold for you.

Jer. O lord, sir, two guineys! D'ye lend me this? Is there no trick in't? Well, sir, I'll give you my bond, for security. 380

Free. No, no; thou hast given me thy face for security: any body wou'd swear thou dost not look like a cheat. You shall have what you will of me; and if your mother will not be kinder to you, come to me, who will.

¹ faith (Yorkshire dial.,—*Engl. Dial. Dict.*).

² simpleton (cf. "The keeping tonies of the pit," Prologue *All for Love*, 1678).

³ puppet-show.

Jer. By my fa—he's a curious fine gentleman!—But will you stand by one? [*Aside.*

Free. If you can be resolute. 387

Jer. Can be resolv'd! Gad, if she gives me but a cross word, I'll leave her to-night, and come to you. But now I have got money, I'll go to Jack-of-all-Trades, at t'other end of the Hall, and buy the neatest purest things— 391

Free. And I'll follow the great boy, and my blow at his mother. Steal away the calf, and the cow will follow you. [*Aside.*

[*Exit* JERRY, follow'd by FREEMAN.]

Enter, on the other side, MANLY, WIDOW BLACKACRE, and OLDFOX.

Man. Dam your cause, can't you lose it without me? which you are like enough to do, if it be, as you say, an honest one: I will suffer no longer for't. 396

Wid. Nay, captain, I tell you, you are my prime witness; and the cause is just now coming on, Mr. Splitcause tells me. Lord, methinks you shou'd take a pleasure in walking here, as half you see now do; for they have no business here, I assure you.

Man. Yes; but I'll assure you then, their business is to persecute me. But d'ye think I'll stay any longer, to have a rogue, because he knows my name, pluck me aside and whisper a news-book secret to me with a stinking breath? a second come piping angry from the court, and sputter in my face his tedious complaints against it? a third law-coxcomb, because he saw me once at a reader's¹ dinner, come and put me a long law-case, to make a discovery of his indefatigable dulness and my wear'd patience? a fourth, a most barbarous civil rogue, who will keep a man half an hour in the croud with a bow'd body, and a hat off, acting the reform'd sign of the Salutation tavern, to hear his bountiful professions of service and friendship, whil'st he cares not if I were damn'd, and I am wishing him hang'd out of my way?—I'd as soon run the gantlet, as walk t'other turn. 414

¹ reader, lecturer in law.

Enter to them JERRY BLACKACRE, *without his bags, but laden with trinkets, which he endeavours to hide from his Mother, and follow'd at a distance by* FREEMAN.

Wid. O, are you come, sir? But where have you been, you ass? And how come you thus laden? 416

Jer. Look here, forsooth, mother; now here's a duck, here's a boar-cat, and here's an owl.

[Making a noise with catcalls and other such like instruments.

Wid. Yes, there is an owl, sir.

Old. He's an ungracious bird indeed. 420

Wid. But go, thou trangame,¹ and carry back those trangames, which thou hast stol'n or purloin'd; for no body wou'd trust a minor in Westminster-Hall, sure.

Jer. Hold your self contented, forsooth: I have these commodities by a fair bargain and sale; and there stands my witness and creditor. 426

Wid. How's that! What sir, d'ye think to get the mother by giving the child a rattle?—But where are my bags, my writings, you rascal?

Jer. O, law! where are they, indeed? *[Aside.*

Wid. How, sirrah? speak, come— 431

Man. You can tell her, Freeman, I suppose. *[Apart to him.*

Free. 'Tis true, I made one of your salt-water sharks steal 'em whil'st he was eagerly choosing his commodities, as he calls 'em, in order to my design upon his mother. *[Apart to him.*

Wid. Won't you speak? Where were you, I say, you son of a— an unfortunate woman?—O, major, I'm undone! They are all that concern my estate, my jointure, my husband's deed of gift, my evidences for all my suits now depending! What will become of them? 440

Free. I'm glad to hear this.—*[Aside.]* They'll be all safe, I warrant you, madam.

Wid. O where? where? Come, you villain, along with me, and shew me where.

[Exeunt Widow, JERRY, OLDFOX.

Manent MANLY, FREEMAN.

¹ trinket, toy, worthless thing.

Man. Thou hast taken the right way to get a widow, by making her great boy rebel; for when nothing will make a widow marry, she'll do't to cross her children. But canst thou in earnest marry this harpy, this volume of shrivell'd blurr'd parchments and law, this attornies desk? 449

Free. Ay, ay; I'll marry and live honestly, that is, give my creditors, not her, due benevolence,—pay my debts.

Man. Thy creditors, you see, are not so barbarous as to put thee in prison; and wilt thou commit thy self to a noisom dungeon for thy life? which is the only satisfaction thou canst give thy creditors by this match. 455

Free. Why, is not she rich?

Man. Ay; but he that marries a widow for her money, will find himself as much mistaken as the widow that marries a young fellow for due benevolence, as you call it.

Free. Why, d'ye think I shan't deserve wages? I'll drudge faithfully. 461

Man. I tell thee again, he that is the slave in the mine has the least propriety in the ore. You may dig, and dig; but if thou wou'dst have her money, rather get to be her trustee than her husband; for a true widow will make over her estate to any body, and cheat her self rather than be cheated by her children or a second husband. 467

Enter to them JERRY, running in a fright.

Jer. O law, I'm undone! I'm undone! my mother will kill me:—you said you'd stand by one.

Free. So I will, my brave squire, I warrant thee. 470

Jer. Ay, but I dare not stay till she comes; for she's as furious, now she has lost her writings, as a bitch when she has lost her puppies.

Man. The comparison's handsom!

Jer. O, she's here! 475

Enter Widow BLACKACRE and OLDFOX.

Free. [To the Sailor]. Take him, Jack, and make haste with him to your master's lodging; and be sure you keep him up till I come. [Exit JERRY and Sailor.]

Wid. O my dear writings! Where's this heathen rogue, my minor? 480

Free. Gone to drown or hang himself.

Wid. No, I know him too well; he'll ne'r be *felo de se* that way: but he may go and choose a guardian of his own head, and so be *felo de ses beins*;¹ for he has not yet chosen one.

Free. Say you so? And he shan't want one. [Aside.]

Wid. But, now I think on't, 'tis you, sir, have put this cheat upon me; for there is a saying, "Take hold of a maid by her smock, and a widow by her writings, and they cannot get from you." But I'll play fast and loose with you yet, if there be law, and my minor and writings are not forthcoming; I'll bring my action of *detinue* or *trover*.² But first, I'll try to find out this guardianless, graceless villain.—Will you jog, major? 492

Man. If you have lost your evidence, I hope your causes cannot go on, and I may be gone?

Wid. O no; stay but a making-water while (as one may say) and I'll be with you again. 496

[Ex[eunt] Widow BLACKACRE and Major OLDFOX.]

Manent MANLY, FREEMAN.

Free. Well; sure I am the first man that ever began a love-intrigue in Westminster-Hall.

Man. No, sure; for the love to a widow generally begins here: and as the widow's cause goes against the heir or executors, the jointure-rivals commence their suit to the widow. 501

Free. Well; but how, pray, have you past your time here, since I was forc'd to leave you alone? You have had a great deal of patience.

Man. Is this a place to be alone, or have patience in? But I have had patience, indeed; for I have drawn upon me, since I came, but three quarrels and two lawsuits. 507

¹ *beins* or *biens*, or *byens* = goods (*Law French Dict.* by F. O., London, 1701), a parody of the legal phrase *felo de se*, meaning that the boy will commit suicide of his own goods.

² Action to recover possession of (*detinue*) or damages for (*trover*) property illegally seized.

Free. Nay, faith, you are too curst ¹ to be let loose in the world: you shou'd be ty'd up again in your sea-kennel, call'd a ship. But how cou'd you quarrel here? 510

Man. How cou'd I refrain? A lawyer talk'd peremptorily and saucily to me, and as good as gave me the lye.

Free. They do it so often to one another at the bar, that they make no bones on't elsewhere. 514

Man. However, I gave him a cuff on the ear; whereupon he jogs two men, whose backs were turn'd to us, (for they were reading at a bookseller's,) to witness I struck him, sitting the courts; which office they so readily promis'd, that I call'd 'em rascals and knights of the post. One of 'em presently calls two other absent witnesses, who were coming towards us at a distance; whil'st the other, with a whisper, desires to know my name, that he might have satisfaction by way of challenge, as t'other by way of writ; but if it were not rather to direct his brother's writ, than his own challenge—There, you see, is one of my quarrels, and two of my lawsuits. 525

Free. So!—and the other two?

Man. For advising a poet to leave off writing, and turn lawyer, because he is dull and impudent, and sayes or writes nothing now but by precedent.

Free. And the third quarrel? 530

Man. For giving more sincere advice to a handsom, well-drest young fellow, (who ask'd it too,) not to marry a wench that he lov'd, and I had lay'n with.

Free. Nay, if you will be giving your sincere advice to lovers and poets, you will not fail of quarrels. 535

Man. Or if I stay in this place; for I see more quarrels crouding upon me. Let's be gone, and avoid 'em.

Enter NOVEL at a distance, coming towards them.

A plague on him, that sneer is ominous to us; he is coming upon us, and we shall not be rid of him.

Nov. Dear bully, don't look so grum ² upon me; you told me

¹ ill-tempered.

² glum.

just now, you had forgiven me a little harmless raillery upon wooden legs last night. 542

Man. Yes, yes, pray be gone; I am talking of business.

Nov. Can't I hear it? I love thee, and will be faithful, and always— 545

Man. Impertinent! 'Tis business that concerns Freeman only.

Nov. Well, I love Freeman too, and wou'd not divulge his secret. Prythee speak, prythee, I must—

Man. Prythee let me be rid of thee; I must be rid of thee.

Nov. Faith, thou canst hardly, I love thee so. Come, I must know the business. 551

Man. So, I have it now. [*Aside.*] Why, if you needs will know it, he has a quarrel, and his adversary bids him bring two friends with him: now, I am one, and we are thinking who we shall have for a third. [*Several crossing the stage.*]

Nov. A pox, there goes a fellow owes me an hundred pound, and goes out of town to-morrow: I'll speak with him, and come to you presently. [*Exit NOVEL.*]

Man. No, but you wo'not.

Free. You are dextrously rid of him. 560

Enter OLDFOX.

Man. To what purpose, since here comes another as impertinent? I know by his grin he is bound hither.

Old. Your servant, worthy, noble captain. Well, I have left the widow, because she carry'd me from your company: for, faith, captain, I must needs tell thee thou art the only officer in England, who was not an Edg-hill¹ officer, that I care for. 566

Man. I'm sorry for't.

Old. Why, wou'dst thou have me love them?

Man. Any body rather than me.

Old. What, you are modest, I see! therefore, too, I love thee. 570

Man. No, I am not modest; but love to brag my self, and can't patiently hear you fight over the last civil war. Therefore, go look out the fellow I saw just now here, that walks with his stockings and his sword² out at heels, and let him tell you the history

¹ See p. 348, n. 1.

² So old eds. Q2, "sword and stockings."

of that scar on his cheek, to give you occasion to shew yours got in the field at Bloomsbury,¹ not that of Edg-hill. Go to him, poor fellow; he is fasting, and has not yet the happiness this morning to stink of brandy and tobacco: go, give him some to hear you; I am busie. 579

Old. Well, ygad, I love thee now, boy, for thy surliness. Thou art no tame captain, I see, that will suffer—

Man. An old fox.

Old. All that sha'nt make me angry: I consider thou art peevish, and fretting at some ill success at law. Prythee, tell me what ill luck you have met with here. 585

Man. You.

Old. Do I look like the picture of ill luck? gadsnouns,² I love thee more and more. And shall I tell thee what made me love thee first?

Man. Do; that I may be rid of that damn'd quality and thee.

Old. 'Twas thy wearing that broad sword there. 591

Man. Here, Freeman, let's change: I'll never wear it more.

Old. How! you won't, sure. Prythee, don't look like one of our holyday captains³ now adayes, with a bodkin by your side, your martinet rogues. 595

Man. (O, then, there's hopes.)—[*Aside.*] What, d'ye find fault with martinet? Let me tell you sir, 'tis the best exercise⁴ in the world; the most ready, most easie, most graceful exercise that ever was us'd, and the most—

Old. Nay, nay, sir, no more; sir, your servant: if you praise martinet once, I have done with you, sir. Martinet! martinet!—
[*Exit* OLDFOX.]

Free. Nay, you have made him leave you as willingly as ever he

¹ "On account of its remoteness from houses, the site now covered" by Bloomsbury Square used to be a favorite meeting-place of the "gallants" "for the settlement of affairs of honour," and for other fights (Thornbury & Walford, *Old and New London*, 1887-93, IV, 543). *Edgehill*, an early battlefield (1642) of the Civil War.

² (by) God's wounds. (Cf. "Od's nouns," *Merry Wives*, IV, 1, 25.)

³ one not fitted for serious action (*N.E.D.*).

⁴ Martinet in this sense (according to the *N.E.D.*) = "The system of drill invented by Martinet," the famous drill master of Louis XIV's time. The phrase "martinet rogues" exemplifies the more familiar modern sense.

did an enemy; for he was truly for the king and parliament: for the parliament in their list; and for the king in cheating 'em of their pay, and never hurting the king's party in the field. 605

Enter a Lawyer towards them.

Man. A pox! this way: here's a lawyer I know threatning us with another greeting.

Law. Sir, your very servant; I was afraid you had forgotten me.

Man. I was not afraid you had forgotten me. 610

Law. No, sir; we lawyers have pretty good memories.

Man. You ought to have by your wits.

Law. O, you are a merry gentleman, sir: I remember you were merry when I was last in your company.

Man. I was never merry in thy company, Mr. Lawyer, sure.

Law. Why, I'm sure you jok'd upon me, and sham'd me all night long. 617

Man. Sham'd! ¹ prythee what barbarous law-term is that?

Law. Shamming! why, don't you know that? 'tis all our way of wit, sir. 620

Man. I am glad I do not know it then. Shamming! what does he mean by't, Freeman?

Free. Shamming is telling you an insipid dull lye with a dull face, which the slie wag the author only laughs at himself; and making himself believe 'tis a good jest, puts the sham only upon himself. 626

Man. So, your lawyer's jest, I find, like his practice, has more knavery than wit in't. I shou'd make the worst shammer in England: I must always deal ingeniously,² as I will with you, Mr. Lawyer, and advise you to be seen rather with attornies and solicitors, than such fellows as I am: they will credit your practice more. 632

Law. No, sir, your company's an honour to me.

¹ In 1680 "our tongue was enriched with two words, Mob and Sham." Macaulay, *Hist. of Engl.* (Wycherley's comment antedates 1680. Skeat's earliest example is dated 1688.)

² So Q (meaning, as also in Dryden, *ingenuously*;—*N.E.D.*). Later eds., "ingenuously."

Man. No, faith; go this way, there goes an attorney; leave me for him; let it never be said a lawyer's civility did him hurt. 635

Law. No, worthy, honoured sir; I'll not leave you for any attorney, sure.

Man. Unless he had a fee in his hand.

Law. Have you any business here, sir? Try me: I'd serve you sooner than any attorney breathing. 640

Man. Business!—So, I have thought of a sure way. [*Aside.*] Yes, faith, I have a little business.

Law. Have you so, sir? in what court, sir? what is't, sir? Tell me but how I may serve you, and I'll do't, sir, and take it for as great an honour— 645

Man. Faith, 'tis for a poor orphan of a sea-officer of mine, that has no money. But if it cou'd be follow'd in *forma pauperis*,¹ and when the legacy's recover'd—

Law. *Forma pauperis*, sir!

Man. Ay, sir.

[*Several crossing the stage.*]

Law. Mr. Bumblecase,² Mr. Bumblecase! a word with you.— Sir, I beg your pardon at present; I have a little business—

Man. Which is not in *forma pauperis*. [*Exit Lawyer.*]

Free. So, you have now found a way to be rid of people without quarrelling? 655

Enter Alderman.

Man. But, here's a City-rogue will stick as hard upon us, as if I ow'd him money.

Ald. Captain, noble sir, I am yours heartily, d'ye see; why shou'd you avoid your old friends?

Man. And why shou'd you follow me? I owe you nothing. 660

Ald. Out of my hearty respects to you: for there is not a man in England—

Man. Thou wou'dst save from hanging with the expence of a shilling only.

Ald. Nay, nay, but, captain, you are like enough to tell me—

Man. Truth, which you won't care to hear; therefore you had better go talk with some body else. 667

¹ In common law "paupers" might sue without having to pay fees.

² bumble = bungle.

Ald. No, I know no body can inform me better of some young wit, or spendthrift, that has a good dip'd¹ seat and estate in Middlesex, Hartfordshire, Essex, or Kent; any of these wou'd serve my turn: now, if you knew of such a one, and wou'd but help— 672

Man. You to finish his ruine.

Ald. I'faith, you shou'd have a snip—

Man. Of your nose, you thirty-in-the-hundred rascal; ² wou'd you make me your squire setter, your baud for manners? 676

[*Takes him by the nose.*]

Ald. Oh!

Free. Hold, or here will be your third law-suit.

Ald. Gads precious,³ you hectoring person you, are you wild? I meant you no hurt, sir: I begin to think (as things go) land-security best, and have for a convenient mortgage, some ten, fifteen or twenty thousand pound by me. 682

Man. Then go lay it out upon an hospital, and take a mortgage of Heaven, according to your City custom; for you think by laying out a little money to hook in that too hereafter. Do, I say, and keep the poor you've made by taking forfeitures, that Heaven may not take yours. 687

Ald. No, to keep the cripples you make this war. This war spoils our trade.

Man. Dam your trade! 'tis the better for't. 690

Ald. What, will you speak against our trade?

Man. And dare you speak against the war, our trade?

Ald. Well, he may be a convoy of ships I am concern'd in. [*Aside.*—Come, captain, I will have a fair correspondency with you, say what you will. 695

Man. Then prythee be gone.

Ald. No, faith; prythee, captain, let's go drink a dish of lac'd coffee,⁴ and talk of the times. Come, I'll treat you: nay, you shall go, for I have no business here.

Man. But I have. 700

¹ mortgaged (*N.E.D.*).

² you who take 30%.

³ (by) God's precious (blood).

⁴ coffee mixed with spirits.

Ald. To pick up a man to give thee a dinner. Come, I'll do thy business for thee.

Man. Faith, now I think on't, so you may, as well as any man: for 'tis to pick up a man to be bound with me, to one who expects city security for— 705

Ald. Nay, then your servant, captain; business must be done.

Man. Ay, if it can. But hark you, alderman, without you—

Ald. Business, sir, I say, must be done; and there's an officer of the treasury I have an affair with—[*Several crossing the stage.*
[*Exit Alderman.*

Man. You see now what the mighty friendship of the world is; what all ceremony, embraces, and plentiful professions come to! You are no more to believe a professing friend than a threatening enemy; and as no man hurts you, that tells you he'll do you a mischief, no man, you see, is your servant who says he is so. Why the devil, then, shou'd a man be troubled with the flattery of knaves if he be not a fool or cully; or with the fondness of fools, if he be not a knave or cheat? 717

Free. Only for his pleasure: for there is some in laughing at fools, and disappointing knaves.

Man. That's a pleasure, I think, wou'd cost you too dear, as well as marrying your widow to disappoint her. But, for my part, I have no pleasure by 'em but in despising 'em, wheresoe'er I meet 'em; and then the pleasure of hoping so to be rid of 'em. But now my comfort is, I am not worth a shilling in the world, which all the world shall know; and then I'm sure I shall have none of 'em come near me. 726

Free. A very pretty comfort, which I think you pay too dear for.—But is the twenty pound gone since the morning?

Man. To my boat's crew.—Wou'd you have the poor, honest, brave fellows want? 730

Free. Rather than you or I.

Man. Why, art thou without money? thou who art a friend to every body?

Free. I ventur'd my last stake upon the squire to nick him of his mother; and cannot help you to a dinner, unless you will go dine with my lord— 736

Man. No, no; the ordinary is too dear for me, where flattery must pay for my dinner: I am no herald, or poet.

Free. We'll go then to the bishop's—

Man. There you must flatter the old philosophy: I cannot renounce my reason for a dinner. 741

Free. Why, then let's go to your alderman's.

Man. Hang him, rogue! that were not to dine; for he makes you drunk with lees of sack before dinner, to take away your stomach: and there you must call usury and extortion God's blessings, or the honest turning of the penny; hear him brag of the leather breeches in which he trotted first to town, and make a greater noise with his money in his parlour, than his casheers do in his counting-house, without hopes of borrowing a shilling.

Free. Ay, a pox on't! 'tis like dining with the great gamesters; and when they fall to their common dessert, to see the heaps of gold drawn on all hands, without going to twelve.¹ Let us go to my Lady Goodly's. 753

Man. There, to flatter her looks, you must mistake her grandchildren for her own; praise her cook, that she may rail at him; and feed her dogs, not your self. 756

Free. What d'ye think of eating with your lawyer, then?

Man. Eat with him! damn him! To hear him employ his barbarous eloquence in a reading upon the two-and-thirty good bits in a shoulder of veal, and be forc'd your self to praise the cold bribe-pye that stinks, and drink law-French wine as rough and harsh as his law-French. A pox on him! I'd rather dine in the Temple-rounds or walks,² with the knights without noses, or the knights of the post,³ who are honester fellows and better company.

¹ A gambling term. (Professor Hales suggests "without playing till midnight"?)

² "The Temple Church . . . was the church of the Knights Templars, and consists of two parts, the Round church and the choir." Lawyers received their clients in the Round (Wheatley and Cunningham, *London Past and Present*, III, 352).

³ Cf. *Hudibras*, III, iii:

Retain all sorts of witnesses
That ply in the Temple under trees,
Or walk the Round with Knights o' th' Posts,
About the cross legg'd Knights their hosts,—

(the cross-legged "knights without noses" being the effigies of dead crusaders in the Temple Church). Cf. above p. 282, n. 2; also Otway, *The Soldier's Fortune*, I, i, and R. W. Billings, *Illustrations of the Temple Church*, 1838.

But let us home and try our fortune; for I'll stay no longer here for your damn'd widow. 766

Free. Well, let us go home then; for I must go for my damn'd widow, and look after my new damn'd charge. Three or four hundred years ago a man might have din'd in this Hall.¹

Man. But now the lawyer only here is fed; 770
And, bully-like, by quarrels gets his bread.

FINIS ACTUS TERTII.

Act IV. Scene I.—*Manly's Lodging.*

Enter MANLY and FIDELIA.

Man. Well, there's success in thy face. Hast thou prevail'd? say.

Fid. As I cou'd wish, sir.

Man. So; I told thee what thou wert fit for, and thou wou'dst not believe me. Come, thank me for bringing thee acquainted with thy genius. Well, thou hast mollifi'd her heart for me? 6

Fid. No, sir, not so; but what's better.

Man. How, what's better?

Fid. I shall harden your heart against her.

Man. Have a care, sir; my heart is too much in earnest to be fool'd with, and my desire at heighth, and needs no delays to incite it. What, you are too good a pimp already, and know how to endear pleasure by withholding it? But leave off your page's bawdy-house tricks, sir, and tell me, will she be kind?

Fid. Kinder than you cou'd wish, sir. 15

Man. So, then: well, prythee, what said she?

Fid. She said—

Man. What? thou'rt so tedious: speak comfort to me; what?

Fid. That of all things you were ² her aversion.

Man. How? 20

Fid. That she wou'd sooner take a bedfellow out of an hospital, and diseases into her arms, than you.

¹ Westminster Hall, formerly used as a banquet-room (see Pepys, Apr. 23, 1661).

² Later eds. "are."

Man. What?

Fid. That she wou'd rather trust her honour with a dissolute debauch'd hector, nay worse, with a finical baffled coward, all over loathsom with affectation of the fine gentleman. 26

Man. What's all this you say?

Fid. Nay, that my offers of your love to her were more offensive, than when parents wooe their virgin daughters to the enjoyment of riches only; and that you were in all circumstances as nauseous to her as a husband on compulsion. 31

Man. Hold; I understand you not.

Fid. So, 'twill work, I see.

[*Aside.*

Man. Did not you tell me—

Fid. She call'd you ten thousand ruffins.¹

35

Man. Hold, I say.

Fid. Brutes—

Man. Hold.

Fid. Sea-monsters—

Man. Dam your intelligence! Hear me a little now.

40

Fid. Nay, surly coward she call'd you too.

Man. Won't you hold yet? Hold, or—

Fid. Nay, sir, pardon me; I cou'd not but tell you she had the baseness, the injustice, to call you coward, sir; coward, coward, sir.

Man. Not yet?—

45

Fid. I've done. Coward, sir.

Man. Did not you say, she was kinder than I cou'd wish her?

Fid. Yes, sir.

Man. How then?—O—I understand you now. At first she appear'd in rage and disdain; the truest sign of a coming² woman: but at last you prevail'd, it seems; did you not? 51

Fid. Yes, sir.

Man. So then, let's know that only: come, prythee, without delays. I'll kiss thee for that news beforehand.

Fid. So; the kiss I'm sure is welcome to me, whatsoe're the news will be to you. [*Aside.*

Man. Come, speak, my dear voluntier.

¹ ruffians.

² inclined to make or meet advances (*N.E.D.*).

Fid. How welcome were that kind word too, if it were not for another woman's sake! [*Aside.*

Man. What, won't you speak? You prevail'd for me at last, you say? 61

Fid. No, sir.

Man. No more of your fooling, sir: it will not agree with my impatience or temper.

Fid. Then not to fool you, sir, I spoke to her for you, but prevail'd for my self; she wou'd not hear me when I spoke in your behalf, but bid me say what I wou'd in my own, tho' she gave me no occasion, she was so coming: and so was kinder, sir, than you cou'd wish; which I was only afraid to let you know, without some warning. 70

Man. How's this? Young man, you are of a lying age; but I must hear you out, and if—

Fid. I wou'd not abuse you, and cannot wrong her by any report of her, she is so wicked.

Man. How, wicked! had she the impudence, at the second sight of you only— 76

Fid. Impudence, sir! oh, she has impudence enough to put a court out of countenance, and debauch a stew.

Man. Why, what said she?

Fid. Her tongue, I confess, was silent; but her speaking eyes gloted ¹ such things, more immodest and lascivious than ravishers can act, or women under a confinement ² think. 82

Man. I know there are whose eyes reflect more obscenity than the glasses in alcoves; but there are others too who use a little art with their looks, to make 'em seem more beautiful, not more loving: which vain young fellows like you are apt to interpret in their own favour, and to the lady's wrong. 87

Fid. Seldom, sir. Pray, have you a care of gloting eyes; for he that loves to gaze upon 'em, will find at last a thousand fools and cuckolds in 'em instead of cupids. 90

¹ See p. 303, n. 2.

² Perhaps, women *lying in* (cf. *Love in a Wood*, I, ii: "My mistress . . . is as jealous of me as a wife of her husband when she lies in . . .") though the *N.E.D.* does not record this meaning of confinement before 1772.

Man. Very well, sir.—But what, you had only eye-kindness from Olivia?

Fid. I tell you again, sir, no woman sticks there; eye-promises of love they only keep; nay, they are contracts which make you sure of 'em. In short, sir, she seeing me, with shame and amazement dumb, unactive, and resistless, threw her twisting arms about my neck, and smother'd me with a thousand tasteless kisses. Believe me, sir, they were so to me. 98

Man. Why did you not avoid 'em then?

Fid. I fenced with her eager arms, as you did with the grapples of the enemy's fireship; and nothing but cutting 'em off cou'd have freed me. 102

Man. Damn'd, damn'd woman, that cou'd be so false and infamous! and damn'd, damn'd heart of mine, that cannot yet be false, tho' so infamous! what easie, tame suffering trampled things does that little god of talking cowards make of us! but— 106

Fid. So! it works, I find, as I expected. [*Aside.*]

Man. But she was false to me before, she told me so her self, and yet I cou'd not quite believe it; but she was, so that her second falseness is a favour to me, not an injury, in revenging me upon the man that wrong'd me first of her love. Her love!—a whore's, a witch's love!—But what, did she not kiss well, sir?—I'm sure I thought her lips—but I must not think of 'em more—but yet they are such I cou'd still ¹ kiss—grow to—and then tear off with my teeth, grind 'em into mammocks,² and spit 'em into her cuckold's face. 116

Fid. Poor man, how uneasie he is! I have hardly the heart to give so much pain, tho' withall I give him a cure, and to my self new life. [*Aside.*]

Man. But what, her kisses sure cou'd not but warm you into desire at last, or a compliance with hers at least? 121

Fid. Nay, more, I confess—

Man. What more? speak.

Fid. All you cou'd fear had pass'd between us, if I cou'd have been made to wrong you, sir, in that nature. 125

Man. Cou'd have been made! you lie, you did.

¹ always, for ever.

² shapeless pieces.

Fid. Indeed, sir, 'twas impossible for me; besides, we were interrupted by a visit; but I confess, she wou'd not let me stir, till I promis'd to return to her again within this hour, as soon as it shou'd be dark; by which time she wou'd dispose of her visit, and her servants, and her self, for my reception: which I was fain to promise, to get from her. 132

Man. Ha!

Fid. But if ever I go near her again, may you, sir, think me as false to you, as she is; hate, and renounce me, as you ought to do her, and I hope will do now. 136

Man. Well, but now I think on't, you shall keep your word with your lady. What, a young fellow, and fail the first, nay, so tempting an assignation!

Fid. How, sir? 140

Man. I say, you shall go to her when 'tis dark, and shall not disappoint her.

Fid. I, sir! I shou'd disappoint her more by going; for—

Man. How so?

Fid. Her impudence and injustice to you will make me disappoint her love, loath her. 146

Man. Come, you have my leave; and if you disgust¹ her, I'll go with you, and act love, whil'st you shall talk it only.

Fid. You, sir! nay, then I'll never go near her. You act love, sir! You must but act it indeed, after all I have said to you. Think of your honour, sir: love— 151

Man. Well, call it revenge, and that is honourable: I'll be reveng'd on her; and thou shalt be my second.

Fid. Not in a base action, sir, when you are your own enemy. O go not near her, sir; for Heav'n's sake, for your own, think not of it! 156

Man. How concern'd you are! I thought I should catch you. What, you are my rival at last, and are in love with her your self; and have spoken ill of her out of your love to her, not me: and therefore wou'd not have me go to her! 160

Fid. Heav'n witness for me, 'tis because I love you only, I wou'd not have you go to her.

¹ dislike.

Man. Come, come, the more I think on't, the more I'm satisfi'd you do love her. Those kisses, young man, I knew were irresistible; 'tis certain. 165

Fid. There is nothing certain in the world, sir, but my truth and your courage.

Man. Your servant, sir. Besides, false and ungrateful as she has been to me, and tho' I may believe her hatred to me great as you report it, yet I cannot think you are so soon and at that rate belov'd by her, tho' you may endeavor it. 171

Fid. Nay, if that be all, and you doubt it still, sir, I will conduct you to her; and, unseen, your ears shall judge of her falseness, and my truth to you, if that will satisfie you.

Man. Yes, there is some satisfaction in being quite out of doubt; because 'tis that alone withholds us from the pleasure of revenge. 177

Fid. Revenge! What revenge can you have, sir? Disdain is best reveng'd by scorn; and faithless love, by loving another, and making her happy with the other's losings: which, if I might advise— 181

Enter FREEMAN.

Man. Not a word more.

Free. What, are you talking of love yet, captain? I thought you had done with't.

Man. Why, what did you hear me say? 185

Free. Something imperfectly of love, I think.

Man. I was only wond'ring why fools, rascals, and desertless wretches, shou'd still have the better of men of merit with all women, as much as with their own common mistress, Fortune!

Free. Because most women, like Fortune, are blind, seem to do all things in jest, and take pleasure in extravagant actions. Their love deserves neither thanks, or blame, for they cannot help it: 'tis all sympathy; therefore the noisie, the finical, the talkative, the cowardly, and effeminate, have the better of the brave, the reasonable, and man of honour; for they have no more reason in their love, or kindness, than Fortune her self. 196

Man. Yes, they have their reason. First, honour in a man

they fear too much to love; and sence in a lover upbraids their want of it; and they hate anything that disturbs their admiration of themselves; but they are of that vain number, who had rather shew their false generosity, in giving away profusely to worthless flatterers, than in paying just debts. And, in short, all women, like fortune (as you say) and rewards, are lost by too much meriting. 204

Fid. All women, sir! sure there are some who have no other quarrel to a lover's merit, but that it begets their despair of him.

Man. Thou art young enough to be credulous; but we— 207

Enter 1st Sailor.

Sail. Here are now below, the scolding daggled ¹ gentlewoman, and that Major Old—Old—Fop, I think you call him.

Free. Oldfox:—prythee bid 'em come up, with your leave, captain, for now I can talk with her upon the square; if I shall not disturb you. 212

Man. No; for I'll be gone. Come, voluntier.

Free. Nay, pray stay; the scene between us will not be so tedious to you as you think. Besides, you shall see how I have rigg'd my squire out, with the remains of my shipwrack'd wardrobe; he is under your sea valet-de-chambre's hands, and by this time drest, and will be worth your seeing. Stay, and I'll fetch my fool. 218

Man. No; you know I cannot easily laugh: besides, my voluntier and I have business abroad. 220

[*Ex[eunt]* MANLY and FIDELIA on one side; FREEMAN on t'other.

Enter Major OLDFOX and Widow BLACKACRE.

Wid. What, no body here! Did not the fellow say he was within?

Old. Yes, lady; and he may be perhaps a little busie at present; but if you think the time long till he comes, [*Unfolding papers*] I'll read you here some of the fruits of my leisure, the overflowings of my fancy and pen.—(To value me right, she must know my parts.)—[*Aside.*] Come— 227

¹ See above, p. 295; n. 3.

Wid. No, no; I have reading work enough of my own in my bag, I thank you.

Old. Ay, law, madam; but here is a poem, in blank verse, which I think a handsom declaration of one's passion. 231

Wid. O! if you talk of declarations, I'll shew you one of the prettiest pen'd things, which I mended too my self, you must know.

Old. Nay, lady, if you have us'd your self so much to the reading harsh law, that you hate smooth poetry, here is a character for you, of— 236

Wid. A character! Nay, then I'll shew you my bill in chancery here, that gives you such a character of my adversary, makes him as black—

Old. Pshaw! away, away, lady! But if you think the character too long, here is an epigram, not above 20 lines, upon a cruel lady, who decreed her servant shou'd hang himself, to demonstrate his passion. 243

Wid. Decreed! if you talk of decreeing, I have such a decree here, drawn by the finest clerk— 245

Old. O lady, lady, all interruption, and no sense between us, as if we were lawyers at the bar! But I had forgot, Apollo and Littleton¹ never lodge in a head together. If you hate verses, I'll give you a cast of my politics in prose. 'Tis a *Letter to a Friend in the Countrey*; which is now the way of all such sober solid persons as my self, when they have a mind to publish their disgust to the times; though perhaps, between you and I, they have no friend in the country. And sure a politic, serious person may as well have a feign'd friend in the country to write to, as an idle poet a feign'd mistress to write to. And so here is my *Letter to a Friend, (or no friend) in the Countrey, concerning the late Conjuncture of Affairs, in relation to Coffee-houses; or, The Coffee-man's Case.*² 257

Wid. Nay, if your letter have a case in't, 'tis something; but first I'll read you a letter of mine to a friend in the country, call'd a letter of attorney. 260

¹ Sir Thomas Littleton, 1402-81, judge and legal author. His fame rests upon a short treatise on "Tenures" (London, ca. 1481 (D.N.B.)).

² Alluding to the suppression of the Coffee-houses in 1675 (see Macaulay, *Hist. of Engl.*, I, ch. III).

Enter to them FREEMAN, and JERRY BLACKACRE in an old gaudy suit and red breeches of FREEMAN'S.

Old. What, interruption still! O the plague of interruption! worse to an author than the plague of critics. [*Aside.*

Wid. What's this I see? Jerry Blackacre, my minor, in red breeches! What, hast thou left the modest seemly garb of gown and cap, for this? And have I lost all my good inns-of-chancery breeding upon thee then? And thou wilt go a-breeding thy self from our Inn of Chancery and Westminster Hall, at coffee-houses, and ordinaries, play-houses, tennis-courts, and baudy-houses? 268

Jer. Ay, ay, what then? perhaps I will; but what's that to you? Here's my guardian and tutor now, forsooth, that I am out of your huckster's hands. 271

Wid. How! thou hast not chosen him for thy guardian yet?

Jer. No, but he has chosen me for his charge, and that's all one; and I'll do any thing he'll have me, and go all the world over with him; to ordinaries, and baudy-houses, or any where else.

Wid. To ordinaries and baudy-houses! have a care, minor, thou wilt enfeeble there thy estate and body: do not go to ordinaries and baudy-houses, good Jerry. 278

Jer. Why, how come you to know any ill by baudy-houses? You never had any hurt by 'em, had you, forsooth? Pray hold your self contented; if I do go where money and wenches are to be had, you may thank your self; for you us'd me so unnaturally, you wou'd never let me have a penny to go abroad with; nor so much as come near the garret where your maidens lay; nay, you wou'd not so much as let me play at hotcockles with 'em, nor have any recreation with 'em tho' one shou'd have kist you behind, you were so unnatural a mother, so you were. 287

Free. Ay, a very unnatural mother, faith, squire.

Wid. But, Jerry, consider thou art yet but a minor; however, if thou wilt go home with me again, and be a good child, thou shalt see— 291

Free. Madam, I must have a better care of my heir under age, than so; I wou'd sooner trust him alone with a stale waiting-woman and a parson, than with his widow-mother and her lover or lawyer.

Wid. Why, thou villain, part mother and minor! rob me of my child and my writings! but thou shalt find there's law; and as in the case of ravishment of guard ¹—Westminster the Second.²

Old. Young gentleman squire, pray be rul'd by your mother and your friends. 299

Jer. Yes, I'll be rul'd by my friends, therefore not by my mother, so I won't: I'll choose him for my guardian till I am of age; nay, may be, for as long as I live. 302

Wid. Wilt thou so, thou wretch? and when thou'rt of age, thou wilt sign, seal and deliver too, wilt thou?

Jer. Yes, marry will I, if you go there too. 305

Wid. O do not squeeze wax, son; rather go to ordinaries and bawdy-houses, than squeeze wax. If thou dost that, farewell the goodly manor of Blackacre, with all its woods, underwoods, and appurtenances whatever! Oh, oh! [*Weeps.*]

Free. Come, madam, in short, you see I am resolv'd to have a share in the estate, yours or your son's; if I cannot get you, I'll keep him, who is less coy, you find; but if you wou'd have your son again, you must take me too. Peace or war? love or law? You see my hostage is in my hand: I'm in possession. 314

Wid. Nay, if one of us must be ruin'd, e'en let it be him. By my body, a good one! Did you ever know yet a widow marry or not marry for the sake of her child? I'd have you to know, sir, I shall be hard enough for you both yet, without marrying you, if Jerry won't be rul'd by me. What say you, booby, will you be rul'd? speak. 320

Jer. Let one alone, can't you?

Wid. Wilt thou choose him for guardian, whom I refuse for husband?

Jer. Ay, to choose, I thank you.

Wid. And are all my hopes frustrated? Shall I never hear thee put cases again to John the butler, or our vicar? never see thee amble the circuit with the judges; and hear thee, in our town-hall, louder than the cryer? 328

¹ A writ against a person who took from a guardian the body of his ward (*Tomlins, Law-Dict.*, 1820).

² The second Statute of Westminster (see Stubbs, *Select Charters*, Oxford, 1870, p. 1866).

Jer. No, for I have taken my leave of lawyering and pettifogging. 330

Wid. Pettifogging! thou prophane villain, hast thou so? Pettifogging!—then you shall take your leave of me, and your estate too; thou shalt be an alien to me and it forever. Pettifogging!

Jer. O, but if you go there too, mother, we have the deeds and settlements, I thank you. Wou'd you cheat me of my estate, i'fac? 336

Wid. No, no, I will not cheat your little brother Bob; for thou wert not born in wedlock.

Free. How's that?

Jer. How! what quirk has she got in her head now? 340

Wid. I say, thou canst not, shalt not inherit the Blackacres' estate.

Jer. Why? why, forsooth? What d'ye mean, if you go there too?

Wid. Thou art but my base child; and according to the law, canst not inherit it. Nay, thou art not so much as bastard eigne.¹

Jer. What, what? Am I then the son of a whore, mother? 346

Wid. The law says—

Free. Madam, we know what the law says; but have a care what you say. Do not let your passion, to ruine your son, ruine your reputation. 350

Wid. Hang reputation, sir! am not I a widow? have no husband, nor intend to have any? Nor wou'd you, I suppose, now have me for a wife. So I think now I'm reveng'd on my son and you, without marrying, as I told you.

Free. But consider, madam. 355

Jer. What, have you no shame left in you, mother?

Wid. Wonder not at it, major. 'Tis often the poor prest widow's case, to give up her honour to save her jointure; and seem to be a light woman, rather than marry: as some young men, they say, pretend to have the filthy disease, and lose their credit with most women, to avoid the importunities of some. 361

[*Aside to OLDFOX.*

Free. But one word with you, madam.

¹ first-born.

Wid. No, no, sir. Come, major, let us make haste now to the Prerogative-court.

Old. But, lady, if what you say be true, will you stigmatize your reputation on record? And, if it be not true, how will you prove it? 367

Wid. Pshaw! I can prove any thing: and for my reputation, know, major, a wise woman will no more value her reputation, in disinheriting a rebellious son of a good estate, than she wou'd in getting him, to inherit an estate. 371

[*Ex[eunt]* *Wid[ow]* and *OLDFOX*.]

Free. Madam—We must not let her go so, squire.

Jer. Nay, the devil can't stop her tho', if she has a mind to't. But come, bully-guardian, we'll go and advise with three attornies, two proctors, two solicitors, and a shrewd man of White Friers,¹ neither attorney, proctor, nor solicitor, but as pure a pimp to the law as any of 'em: and sure all they will be hard enough for her: for I fear, bully guardian, you are too good a joker to have any law in your head. 379

Free. Thou'rt in the right on't, squire, I understand no law; especially that against bastards, since I'm sure the custom is against that law, and more people get estates by being so, than lose 'em. [*Exeunt.*]

[Act IV. Scene II.]—*The scene changes to Olivia's Lodging.*

Enter Lord *PLAUSIBLE* and *Boy* with a candle.

L. Plau. Little gentleman, your most obedient, faithful, humble servant. Where, I beseech you, is that divine person, your noble lady?

Boy. Gone out, my lord; but commanded me to give you this letter. [*Gives him a letter.*]

¹“Whitefriars retained the privilege of protecting debtors from arrest. Insolvents consequently were to be found in every dwelling, from cellar to garret. Of these a large proportion were knaves and libertines” (Macaulay, *Hist. of Engl.*, I, ch. III).

Enter to him NOVEL.

L. Plau. Which he must not observe. [*Aside. Puts it up.*]

Nov. Hey, boy, where is thy lady?

Boy. Gone out, sir; but I must beg a word with you.

[*Gives him a letter, and exit.*]

Nov. For me? So.—[*Puts up the letter.*] Servant, servant, my lord; you see the lady knew of your coming, for she is gone out. 10

L. Plau. Sir, I humbly beseech you not to censure the lady's good breeding: she has reason to use more liberty with me than with any other man.

Nov. How, vicount, how?

L. Plau. Nay, I humbly beseech you, be not in choler; where there is most love, there may be most freedom. 16

Nov. Nay, then 'tis time to come to an eclercisment¹ with you, and to tell you, you must think no more of this lady's love.

L. Plau. Why, under correction, dear sir?

Nov. There are reasons, reasons, vicount. 20

L. Plau. What, I beseech you, noble sir?

Nov. Prythee, prythee, be not impertinent, my lord; some of you lords are such conceited, well-assur'd, impertinent rogues.

L. Plau. And you noble wits are so full of shamming and droling, one knows not where to have you seriously. 25

Nov. Well, you shall find me in bed with this lady one of these dayes.

L. Plau. Nay, I beseech you, spare the lady's honour; for hers and mine will be all one shortly.

Nov. Prythee, my lord, be not an ass. Dost thou think to get her from me? I have had such encouragements— 31

L. Plau. I have not been thought unworthy of 'em.

Nov. What, not like mine! Come to an eclercisment, as I said.

L. Plau. Why, seriously then, she has told me vicountess sounded prettily. 35

Nov. And me, that Novel was a name she wou'd sooner change hers for than for any title in England.

¹ *eclaircissement.*

L. Plau. She has commended the softness and respectfulness of my behaviour.

Nov. She has prais'd the briskness of my raillery, of all things, man. 41

L. Plau. The sleepiness of my eyes she lik'd.

Nov. Sleepiness! dulness, dulness. But the fierceness of mine she ador'd.

L. Plau. The brightness of my hair she lik'd. 45

Nov. The brightness! no, the greasiness, I warrant. But the blackness and lustre of mine she admires.

L. Plau. The gentleness of my smile.

Nov. The subtilty of my leer.

L. Plau. The clearness of my complexion. 50

Nov. The redness of my lips.

L. Plau. The whiteness of my teeth.

Nov. My janty way of picking them.

L. Pau. The sweetness of my breath.

Nov. Hah, ha!—Nay, then she abus'd you, 'tis plain; for you know what Manly said:—the sweetness of your pulvillio she might mean; but for your breath! ha, ha, ha! Your breath is such, man, that nothing but tobacco can perfume: and your complexion nothing cou'd mend but the small-pox. 59

L. Plau. Well, sir, you may please to be merry; but, to put you out of all doubt, sir, she has receiv'd some jewels from me, of value. 62

Nov. And presents from me; besides what I presented her jantly, by way of 'ombre, of three or four hundred pound value, which I'm sure are the earnest-pence for our love-bargain. 65

L. Plau. Nay, then, sir, with your favour, and to make an end of all your hopes, look you there, sir, she has writ to me—

Nov. How! how! well, well, and so she has to me; look you there—
[*Deliver to each other their letters.*

L. Plau. What's here? 70

Nov. How's this?

[*Reads out.*—My dear lord, You'll excuse me for breaking my word with you, since 'twas to oblige, not offend you; for I am only gone

abroad but to disappoint Novel, and meet you in the drawing-room; ¹ where I expect you with as much impatience as when I us'd to suffer Novel's visits, the most impertinent fop that ever affected the name of a wit, therefore not capable, I hope, to give you jealousy; for, for your sake alone, you saw, I renounc'd an old lover, and will do all the world. Burn the letter, but lay up the kindness of it in your heart, with your—OLIVIA. 80

Very fine! but pray let's see mine.

L. Plau. I understand it not; but sure she cannot think so of me.

Nov. [*Reads the other letter.*] Hum! ha!—meet—for your sake—hum—quitted an old lover—world—burn—in your heart—with your—OLIVIA 85

Just the same, the names only alter'd.

L. Plau. Surely there must be some mistake, or somebody has abus'd her and us.

Nov. Yes, you are abus'd, no doubt on't, my lord; but I'll to Whitehall, and see. 90

L. Plau. And I, where I shall find you are abus'd.

Nov. Where, if it be so, for our comfort, we cannot fail of meeting with fellow-sufferers enough; for, as Freeman said of another, she stands in the drawing-room, like the glass, ready for all comers to set their gallantry by her: and, like the glass too, lets no man go from her unsatisfi'd with himself. [*Exeunt Ambo.*]

Enter OLIVIA and Boy.

Oliv. Both here, and just gone?

Boy. Yes, madam.

Oliv. But are you sure neither saw you deliver the other a letter? 100

Boy. Yes, yes, madam, I am very sure.

Oliv. Go then to the Old Exchange,² to Westminster, Holborn, and all the other places I told you of; I shall not need you these two hours: be gone, and take the candle with you, and be sure you leave word again below, I am gone out, to all that ask. 105

¹ At Whitehall. (Cf. *Country Wife*, iii, ii,—“Tis time to go to Whitehall, and I must not fail the drawing-room . . . Faith, the King will have supp'd.”)

² The Royal Exchange, in contradistinction to the New Exchange, “Britain's Bourse,” built in the Strand in 1609 (*v. burse, N.E.D.*).

Boy. Yes, madam.

[*Exit.*

Oliv. And my new lover will not ask, I'm sure; he has his lesson, and cannot miss me here, tho' in the dark: which I have purposely design'd, as a remedy against my blushing gallant's modesty; for young lovers, like game-cocks, are made bolder by being kept without light.

111

Enter her husband VERNISH, as from a journey.

Ver. Where is she? Darkness everywhere! [*Softly.*

Oliv. What, come before your time? My soul! my life! your haste has augmented your kindness; and let me thank you for it thus, and thus—[*Embracing and kissing him.*] And tho' (my soul) the little time since you left me has seem'd an age to my impatience, sure it is yet but seven—

117

Ver. How! who's that you expected after seven?

Oliv. Ha! my husband return'd! and have I been throwing away so many kind kisses on my husband, and wrong'd my lover already?

[*Aside.*

Ver. Speak, I say, who was't you expected after seven?

Oliv. What shall I say?—oh—[*Aside.*] Why 'tis but seven days, is it, dearest, since you went out of town? and I expected you not so soon.

125

Ver. No, sure, 'tis but five days since I left you.

Oliv. Pardon my impatience, dearest, I thought 'em seven at least.

Ver. Nay, then—

Oliv. But, my life, you shall never stay half so long from me again; you shan't indeed, by this kiss you shan't.

131

Ver. No, no; but why alone in the dark?

Oliv. Blame not my melancholy in your absence—But, my soul, since you went, I have strange news to tell you: Manly is return'd.

135

Ver. Manly return'd! Fortune forbid!

Oliv. Met with the Dutch in the Channel,¹ fought, sunk his

¹ England and France declared war against the Dutch in 1672, and there was an obstinate battle between the Dutch fleet under De Ruyter and the English fleet under the Duke of York off the coast of Suffolk (Green, *Hist. of the Engl. People*, Bk. VIII, ch. 2).

ship, and all he carri'd with him. He was here with me yesterday.

Ver. And did you own our marriage to him? 140

Oliv. I told him I was marry'd to put an end to his love and my trouble; but to whom, is yet a secret kept from him and all the world. And I have us'd him so scurvily, his great spirit will ne'er return to reason it farther with me; I have sent him to sea again, I warrant. 145

Ver. 'Twas bravely done. And sure he will now hate the shore more than ever, after so great a disappointment. Be you sure only to keep a while our great secret, till he be gone. In the mean time, I'll lead the easie, honest fool by the nose, as I us'd to do; and whil'st he stays, rail with him at thee; and when he's gone, laugh with thee at him. But have you his cabinet of jewels safe? Part not with a seed-pearl to him, to keep him from starving. 152

Oliv. Nor from hanging.

Ver. He cannot recover 'em; and, I think, will scorn to beg 'em again. 155

Oliv. But, my life, have you taken the thousand guineys he left in my name out of the goldsmith's ¹ hands?

Ver. Ay, ay; they are remov'd to another goldsmith's.

Oliv. Ay, but, my soul, you had best have a care he find not where the money is; for his present wants (as I'm inform'd) are such as will make him inquisitive enough. 161

Ver. You say true, and he knows the man too; but I'll remove it to morrow.

Oliv. To morrow! O do not stay till to morrow; go to night, immediately. 165

Ver. Now I think on't, you advise well, and I will go presently.

Oliv. Presently! instantly! I will not let you stay a jot.

Ver. I will then, tho' I return not home till twelve.

Oliv. Nay, tho' not till morning, with all my heart. Go, dearest; I am impatient till you are gone—[*Thrusts him out.*] So, I have at once now brought about those two grateful businesses, which all prudent women do together, secur'd money and pleasure; and now all interruptions of the last are remov'd. Go, husband, and

¹ Down to the eighteenth century goldsmiths acted as bankers.

come up, friend; just the buckets in the well; the absence of one brings the other. But I hope, like them too, they will not meet in the way, jostle,¹ and clash together. 176

Enter FIDELIA, and MANLY treading softly and staying behind at some distance.

So, are you come? (but not the husband-bucket, I hope, again.)—
Who's there? my dearest? [Softly.

Fid. My life—

Oliv. Right, right.—Where are thy lips? Here, take the dumb and best welcomes, kisses and embraces; 'tis not a time for idle words. In a duel of love, as in others, parlying shews basely. Come, we are alone; and now the word is only satisfaction, and defend not thy self. 184

Man. How's this? Wuh,² she makes love like a devil in a play; and in this darkness, which conceals her angel's face, if I were apt to be afraid, I shou'd think her a devil. [Aside.

Oliv. What, you traverse ground, young gentleman!

[FIDELIA avoiding her.

Fid. I take breath only.

Man. Good Heav'ns! how was I deceiv'd! [Aside.

Oliv. Nay, you are a coward; what, are you afraid of the fierceness of my love? 192

Fid. Yes, madam, lest its violence might presage its change; and I must needs be afraid you wou'd leave me quickly, who cou'd desert so brave a gentleman as Manly. 195

Oliv. O, name not his name! for in a time of stol'n joys, as this is, the filthy name of husband were not a more alaying sound.

Man. There's some comfort yet. [Aside.

Fid. But did you not love him?

Oliv. Never. How cou'd you think it? 200

Fid. Because he thought it; who is a man of that sence, nice discerning, and diffidency, that I shou'd think it hard to deceive him.

Oliv. No; he that distrusts most the world, trusts most to

¹ jostle.

² So in old eds. (also, *Gentleman Dancing-Master*, III, i.). Altered after 1694 to *how*, or *why*. But *wuh* seems simply a variant of *whew* in Shakespeare, or *huh* (N.E.D.).

himself, and is but the more easily deceiv'd, because he thinks he can't be deceiv'd. His cunning is like the coward's sword, by which he is oftner worsted than defended. 206

Fid. Yet, sure, you us'd no common art to deceive him.

Oliv. I knew he lov'd his own singular moroseness so well, as to dote upon any copy of it; wherefore I feign'd a hatred to the world too that he might love me in earnest: but, if it had been hard to deceive him, I'm sure 'twere much harder to love him. A dogged, ill-manner'd— 212

Fid. D'ye hear her, sir? pray, hear her. [*Aside to MANLY.*]

Oliv. Surly, untractable, snarling brute! He! a masty¹ dog were as fit a thing to make a gallant of. 215

Man. Ay, a goat, or monky, were fitter for thee. [*Aside.*]

Fid. I must confess, for my part (tho' my rival) I cannot but say he has a manly handsomness in's face and meen.

Oliv. So has a Saracen in the sign.

Fid. Is proper,² and well made. 220

Oliv. As a drayman.

Fid. Has wit.

Oliv. He rails at all mankind.

Fid. And undoubted corage.

Oliv. Like the hangman's; can murder a man when his hands are ty'd. He has cruelty indeed; which is no more corage, than his railing is wit. 227

Man. Thus women, and men like women, are too hard for us, when they think we do not hear 'em: and reputation, like other mistresses, is never true to a man in his absence. [*Aside.*]

Fid. He is— 231

Oliv. Prythee, no more of him: I thought I had satisfi'd you enough before, that he cou'd never be a rival for you to apprehend. And you need not be more assur'd of my aversion to him, but by the last testimony of my love to you; which I am ready to give you. Come, my soul, this way— [*Pulls FIDELIA.*]

Fid. But, madam, what cou'd make you dissemble love to him, when 'twas so hard a thing for you; and flatter his love to you?

¹ mastiff.

² fine, handsome.

Oliv. That which makes all the world flatter and dissemble, 'twas his money: I had a real passion for that. Yet I lov'd not that so well, as for it to take him; for as soon as I had his money I hastened his departure; like a wife, who when she has made the most of a dying husband's breath, pulls away the pillow. 244

Man. Damn'd money! its master's potent rival still; and like a saucy pimp, corrupts it self the mistress it procures for us. [*Aside.*

Oliv. But I did not think with you, my life, to pass my time in talking. Come hither, come; yet stay, till I have lock'd a door in the other room, that may chance to let us in some interruption; which reciting poets or losing gamesters fear not more than I at this time do. [*Exit OLIVIA.*

Fid. Well, I hope you are now satisfi'd, sir, and will be gone to think of your revenge? 253

Man. No, I am not satisfi'd, and must stay to be reveng'd.

Fid. How, sir? You'll use no violence to her, I hope, and forfeit your own life, to take away hers? that were no revenge. 256

Man. No, no, you need not fear: my revenge shall only be upon her honour, not her life.

Fid. How, sir? her honour? O Heav'ns! consider, sir, she has no honour. D'ye call that revenge? can you think of such a thing? But reflect, sir, how she hates and loaths you. 261

Man. Yes, so much she hates me, that it wou'd be a revenge sufficient to make her accessory to my pleasure, and then let her know it.

Fid. No, sir, no; to be reveng'd on her now, were to disappoint her. Pray, sir, let us be gone. [*Pulls MANLY.*

Man. Hold off! What, you are my rival then! and therefore you shall stay, and keep the door for me, whil'st I go in for you; but when I'm gone, if you dare to stir off from this very board, or breathe the least murmuring accent, I'll cut her throat first; and if you love her, you will not venture her life. Nay, then I'll cut your throat too; and I know you love your own life at least.

Fid. But, sir; good sir. 273

Man. Not a word more, lest I begin my revenge on her by killing you. 275

Fid. But are you sure 'tis revenge that makes you do this? how can it be?

Man. Whist!

Fid. 'Tis a strange revenge indeed.

Man. If you make me stay, I shall keep my word, and begin with you. No more. 281

[*Exit MANLY at the same door OLIVIA went.*]

Manet FIDELIA.

Fid. O Heav'ns! is there not punishment enough
In loving well, if you will have't a crime,
But you must add fresh torments daily to't,
And punish us like peevish rivals still, 285
Because we fain wou'd find a heaven here?
But did there never any love like me,
That untry'd tortures you must find me out?
Others, at worst, you force to kill themselves;
But I must be self-murd'ress of my love, 290
Yet will not grant me pow'r to end my life,
My cruel life; for when a lover's hopes
Are dead and gone, life is unmerciful. [*Sits down and weeps.*]

Re-enter MANLY to her.

Man. I have thought better on't: I must not discover my self now I am without witnesses; for if I barely wou'd publish it, she wou'd deny it with as much impudence, as she wou'd act it again with this young fellow here.—Where are you? 297

Fid. Here—oh—now I suppose we may be gone.

Man. I will; but not you. You must stay and act the second part of a lover; that is, talk kindness to her. 300

Fid. Not I, sir.

Man. No disputing, sir, you must: 'tis necessary to my design of coming again to morrow night.

Fid. What, can you come again then hither?

Man. Yes; and you must make the appointment, and an apology for your leaving her so soon; for I have said not a word to her; but have kept your counsel,¹ as I expect you shou'd do

¹ secret.

mine. Do this faithfully, and I promise you here, you shall run my fortune ¹ still, and we will never part as long as we live; but if you do not do it, expect not to live. 310

Fid. 'Tis hard, sir; but such a consideration will make it easier. You won't forget your promise, sir?

Man. No, by Heav'n's! But I hear her coming. [Exit.

Enter OLIVIA to FIDELIA.

Oliv. Where is my life? Run from me already! You do not love me, dearest; nay, you are angry with me, for you wou'd not so much as speak a kind word to me within: what was the reason?

Fid. I was transported too much. 317

Oliv. That's kind.—But come, my soul, what make you here? Let us go in again; we may be surpris'd in this room, 'tis so near the stairs. 320

Fid. No, we shall hear the better here, if any body shou'd come up.

Oliv. Nay, I assure you, we shall be secure enough within: come, come—

Fid. I am sick, and troubled with a sudden dizziness; cannot stir yet. 326

Oliv. Come, I have spirits within.

Fid. Oh!—don't you hear a noise, madam?

Oliv. No, no; there is none: come, come. [Pulls her.

Fid. Indeed there is; and I love you so much, I must have a care of your honour, if you wo' not, and go; but to come to you to morrow night, if you please. 332

Oliv. With all my soul. But you must not go yet; come, prythee.

Fid. Oh!—I am now sicker, and am afraid of one of my fits.

Oliv. What fits? 335

Fid. Of the falling sickness: and I lie generally an hour in a trance: therefore pray consider your honour for the sake of my love, and let me go, that I may return to you often.

Oliv. But will you be sure then to come to morrow night?

¹ Run the risks that I shall run. Cf. Lettré: Courir même fortune, être exposé aux mêmes risques et perils:

D'où vient qu'ayant voulu courir notre fortune,
Il ne partage pas l'allégresse commune?

Fid. Yes.

340

Oliv. Swear.

Fid. By our past kindness!

Oliv. Well, go your wayes then, if you will, you naughty creature you. [*Exit FIDELIA.*] These young lovers, with their fears and modesty, make themselves as bad as old ones to us; and I apprehend their bashfulness more than their tattling.

346

FIDELIA returns.

Fid. O madam, we're undone! There was a gentleman upon the stairs, coming up with a candle, which made me retire. Look you, here he comes!

Enter VERNISH, and his Man with a light.

Oliv. How! my husband! Oh, undone indeed! This way. [*Exit.*]

Ver. Ha! You shall not 'scape me so, sir. [*Stops FIDELIA.*]

Fid. O Heav'ns! more fears, plagues, and torments yet in store!

[*Aside.*]

Ver. Come, sir, I guess what your business was here; but this must be your business now. Draw.

[*Draws.*]

Fid. Sir—

355

Ver. No expostulations: I shall not care to hear of't. Draw.

Fid. Good sir!

Ver. How, you rascal! not courage to draw; yet durst do me the greatest injury in the world? Thy cowardice shall not save thy life.

[*Offers to run at FIDELIA.*]

Fid. O hold, sir, and send but your servant down, and I'll satisfie you, sir, I cou'd not injure you as you imagine.

362

Ver. Leave the light and be gone. [*Exit*] Serv[ant.] Now, quickly, sir, what you've to say, or—

Fid. I am a woman, sir, a very unfortunate woman.

365

Ver. How! a very handsom woman, I'm sure then: here are witnesses of't too, I confess— [*Pulls off her peruke and feels her breasts.*] Well, I'm glad to find the tables turn'd; my wife is in more danger of cuckolding than I was.

[*Aside.*]

Fid. Now, sir, I hope you are so much a man of honour, as to let me go, now I have satisfi'd you, sir.

371

Ver. When you have satisfi'd me, madam, I will.

Fid. I hope, sir, you are too much a gentleman to urge those secrets from a woman which concern her honour. You may guess my misfortune to be love by my disguise: but a pair of breeches cou'd not wrong you, sir. 376

Ver. I may believe love has chang'd your outside, which cou'd not wrong me; but why did my wife run away?

Fid. I know not, sir; perhaps because she wou'd not be forc'd to discover me to you, or to guide me from your suspicions, that you might not discover me your self; which ungentleman-like curiosity I hope you will cease to have, and let me go. 382

Ver. Well, madam, if I must not know who you are, 'twill suffice for me only to know certainly what you are; which you must not deny me. Come, there is a bed within, the proper rack for lovers; and if you are a woman, there you can keep no secrets; you'll tell me there all unask'd. Come. [*Pulls her.*]

Fid. Oh! what d'ye mean? Help! oh—

Ver. I'll show you: but 'tis in vain to cry out: no one dares help you; for I am lord here. 390

Fid. Tyrant here!—But if you are master of this house, which I have taken for a sanctuary, do not violate it your self.

Ver. No, I'll preserve you here, and nothing shall hurt you, and will be as true to you as your disguise; but you must trust me then. Come, come. 395

Fid. Oh! oh! rather than you should drag me to a death¹ so horrid and so shameful, I'll die here a thousand deaths.—But you do not look like a ravisher, sir.

Ver. Nor you like one wou'd put me to't; but if you will—

Fid. Oh! oh! help! help— 400

Enter Servant.

Ver. You saucy rascal, how durst you come in, when you heard a woman squeak? That shou'd have been your cue to shut the door.

Serv. I come, sir, to let you know, the alderman coming home

¹ So all eds. published in Wycherley's lifetime; Hunt, Mermaid, MacMillan and Jones, "deed,"—a doubtful alteration.

immediately after you were at his house, has sent his casheer with the money according to your note. 405

Ver. Dam his money! Money never came to any, sure, unseasonably till now. Bid him stay.

Serv. He sayes, he cannot a moment.

Ver. Receive it you then.

Serv. He sayes he must have your receipt for it: he is in haste, for I hear him coming up, sir. 411

Ver. Dam him! Help me in here then with this dishonourer of my family.

Fid. Oh! oh!

Serv. You say she is a woman, sir. 415

Ver. No matter, sir: must you prate?

Fid. Oh Heav'ns! is there—

[*They thrust her in, and lock the door.*]

Ver. Stay there, my prisoner; you have a short reprieve.

I'll fetch the gold, and that she can't resist,

For with a full hand 'tis we ravish best. [*Exeunt.*]

FINIS ACTUS QUARTI.

Act V. Scene I.—*Eliza's Lodgings.*

Enter OLIVIA and ELIZA.

Oliv. Ah, cousin! nothing troubles me but that I have given the malicious world its revenge, and reason now to talk as freely of me as I us'd to do of it.

Eliza. Faith, then, let not that trouble you; for, to be plain, cousin, the world cannot talk worse of you than it did before. 5

Oliv. How, cousin! I'd have you to know, before this *faux pas*, this trip of mine, the world cou'd not talk of me.

Eliza. Only that you mind other people's actions so much that you take no care of your own, but to hide 'em; that, like a thief, because you know your self most guilty, you impeach your fellow-criminals first, to clear your self. 11

Oliv. O wicked world!

Eliza. That you pretend an aversion to all mankind in publick,

only that their wives and mistresses may not be jealous, and hinder you of their conversation in private. 15

Oliv. Base world!

Eliza. That abroad you fasten quarrels upon innocent men for talking of you, only to bring 'em to ask your pardon at home, and to become dear friends with 'em, who were hardly your acquaintance before. 20

Oliv. Abominable world!

Eliza. That you condemn the obscenity of modern plays, only that you may not be censur'd for never missing the most obscene of the old ones.

Oliv. Damn'd world! 25

Eliza. That you deface the nudities of pictures, and little statues, only because they are not real.

Oliv. O, fie! fie! fie! hideous, hideous! Cousin, the obscenity of their censures makes me blush!

Eliza. The truth of 'em, the naughty world wou'd say now. 30

Enter LETTICE hastily.

Let. O, madam! here is that gentleman coming up who now you say is my master.

Oliv. O, cousin! whither shall I run? protect me, or—

[*OLIVIA runs away, and stands at a distance.*]

Enter VERNISH.

Ver. Nay, nay, come—

Oliv. O, sir, forgive me! 35

Ver. Yes, yes, I can forgive you being alone in the dark with a woman in man's cloaths: but have a care of a man in woman's cloaths.

Oliv. What does he mean? he dissembles only to get me into his power: or has my dear friend made him believe he was a woman? My husband may be deceiv'd by him, but I'm sure I was not.

[*Aside.*]

Ver. Come, come, you need not have lay'n out of your house for this; but perhaps you were afraid, when I was warm with

suspitions, you must have discover'd who she was.—And, prythee, may I not know it? 45

Oliv. She was—(I hope he has been deceiv'd: and since my lover has play'd the card, I must not renounce.) [*Aside.*]

Ver. Come, what's the matter with thee? If I must not know who she is, I'm satisfi'd without. Come hither. 49

Oliv. Sure you do know her; she has told you her self, I suppose.

Ver. No, I might have known her better but that I was interrupted by the goldsmith you know, and was forc'd to lock her into your chamber, to keep her from his sight; but, when I return'd, I found she was got away by tying the window-curtains to the balcony, by which she slid down into the street. For, you must know, I jested with her, and made her believe I'd ravish her; which she apprehended, it seems, in earnest. 57

Oliv. And she got from you?

Ver. Yes.

Oliv. And is quite gone? 60

Ver. Yes.

Oliv. I'm glad on't—otherwise you had ravish'd her, sir? But how durst you go so far, as to make her believe you wou'd ravish her? let me understand that, sir. What! there's guilt in your face, you blush too: nay, then you did ravish her, you did, you base fellow! What, ravish a woman in the first month of our marriage! 'tis a double injury to me, thou base, ungrateful man! wrong my bed already, villain! I cou'd tear out those false eyes, barbarous, unworthy wretch!

Eliza. So, so!— 70

Ver. Prythee hear, my dear.

Oliv. I will never hear you, my plague, my torment!

Ver. I swear—prythee, hear me.

Oliv. I have heard already too many of your false oaths and vows, especially your last in the church. O wicked man! and wretched woman that I was! I wish I had then sunk down into a grave, rather than to have given you my hand, to be led to your loathsom bed. Oh—oh— [*Seems to weep.*]

Ver. So, very fine! just a marriage-quarrel! which tho' it generally begins by the wife's fault, yet, in the conclusion, it becomes

the husband's; and whosoever offends at first, he only is sure to ask pardon at last. My dear— 82

Oliv. My devil—

Ver. Come, prythee be appeas'd, and go home; I have bespoken our supper betimes: for I cou'd not eat till I found you. Go, I'll give you all kind of satisfactions; and one, which uses to be a reconciling one, two hundred of those guineys I receiv'd last night, to do what you will with. 88

Oliv. What, wou'd you pay me for being your baud?

Ver. Nay, prythee no more; go, and I'll thoroughly satisfie you when I come home; and then, too, we will have a fit of laughter at Manly, whom I am going to find at the Cock ¹ in Bow-street, where I hear he din'd. Go, dearest, go home. 93

Eliza. A very pretty turn, indeed, this! [*Aside.*]

Ver. Now, cousin, since by my wife I have that honour and priviledge of calling you so, I have something to beg of you too; which is not to take notice of our marriage to any whatever yet awhile, for some reasons very important to me. And, next, that you will do my wife the honour to go home with her; and me the favour, to use that power you have with her, in our reconcilment.

Eliza. That, I dare promise, sir, will be no hard matter. Your servant.—[*Exit* VERNISH.]—Well, cousin, this I confess was reasonable hypocrisie; you were the better for't. 103

Oliv. What hypocrisie?

Eliza. Why, this last deceit of your husband was lawful, since in your own defence. 106

Oliv. What deceit? I'd have you to know I never deceiv'd my husband.

Eliza. You do not understand me, sure: I say, this was an honest come-off, and a good one. But 'twas a sign your gallant had had enough of your conversation, since he cou'd so dextrously cheat your husband in passing for a woman. 112

Oliv. What d'ye mean, once more, with my gallant, and passing for a woman?

Eliza. What do you mean? you see your husband took him for a woman. 116

¹ The Cock Tavern; cf. Critical Essay, p. 266.

Oliv. Whom?

Eliza. Heyday! why, the man he found you with, for whom last night you were so much afraid; and who you told me—

Oliv. Lord, you rave sure! 120

Eliza. Why, did not you tell me last night—

Oliv. I know not what I might tell you last night, in a fright.

Eliza. Ay, what was that fright for? for a woman? besides, were you not afraid to see your husband just now? I warrant only for having been found with a woman! Nay, did you not just now, too, own your false step, or trip, as you call'd it? which was with a woman too! Fie, this fooling is so insipid, 'tis offensive. 127

Oliv. And fooling with my honour will be more offensive. Did you not hear my husband say he found me with a woman in man's cloaths? and d'ye think he does not know a man from a woman?

Eliza. Not so well, I'm sure, as you do; therefore I'd rather take your word. 132

Oliv. What, you grow scurrilous, and are, I find, more censorious than the world! I must have a care of you, I see.

Eliza. No, you need not fear yet, I'll keep your secret.

Oliv. My secret! I'd have you to know, I have no need of confidents, tho' you value your self upon being a good one. 137

Eliza. O admirable confidence! you show more in denying your wickedness, than other people in glorying in't.

Oliv. Confidence, to me! to me such language! nay, then I'll never see your face again.—(I'll quarrel with her, that people may never believe I was in her power; but take for malice all the truth she may speak against me.)—[*Aside.*] Lettice, where are you? Let us be gone from this censorious, ill woman. 144

Eliza. Nay, thou shalt stay a little, to damn thyself quite.—[*Aside.*] One word first, pray, madam; can you swear that whom your husband found you with— 147

Oliv. Swear! ay, that whosoever 'twas that stole up, unknown, into my room, when 'twas dark, I know not, whether man or woman, by Heav'ns! by all that's good; or, may I never more have joyes here, or in the other world! Nay, may I eternally— 151

Eliza. Be damn'd. So, so, you are damn'd enough already by your oaths; and I enough confirm'd, and now you may please to

be gone. Yet take this advice with you, in this plain-dealing age, to leave off forswearing your self; for when people hardly think the better of a woman for her real modesty, why should you put that great constraint upon your self to feign it? 157

Oliv. O hideous! hideous advice! let us go out of the hearing of it. She will spoil us, Lettice.

[*Ex[eunt]* OLIV[IA] and LETT[ICE] at one door, ELI[ZA] at t'other.

[Act V. Scene II.]—*The scene changes to the Cock in Bow Street. A table and bottles.*

MANLY and FIDELIA.

Man. How! sav'd her honour by making her husband believe you were a woman! 'Twas well, but hard enough to do, sure.

Fid. We were interrupted before he cou'd contradict me.

Man. But can't you tell me, d'ye say, what kind of man he was?

Fid. I was so frightned, I confess, I can give no other account of him, but that he was pretty tall, round-fac'd, and one, I'm sure, I ne'r had seen before. 7

Man. But she, you say, made you swear to return tonight?

Fid. But I have since sworn, never to go near her again; for the husband wou'd murder me, or worse, if he caught me again. 10

Man. No, I will go with you, and defend you to night, and then I'll swear, too, never to go near her again.

Fid. Nay, indeed, sir, I will not go, to be accessory to your death too. Besides, what shou'd you go again, sir, for?

Man. No disputing, or advice, sir, you have reason to know I am unalterable. Go therefore presently, and write her a note, to inquire if her assignation with you holds; and if not to be at her own house, where else? And be importunate to gain admittance to her to night. Let your messenger, ere he deliver your letter, inquire first if her husband be gone out. Go, 'tis now almost six of the clock; I expect you back here before seven, with leave to see her then. Go, do this dext'rously, and expect the performance of my last night's promise, never to part with you. 23

Fid. Ay, sir; but will you be sure to remember that?

Man. Did I ever break my word? Go, no more replies, or doubts. [*Exit* FIDELIA.]

Enter FREEMAN, *to* MANLY.

Where hast thou been? 27

Free. In the next room with my Lord Plausible and Novel.

Man. Ay, we came hither, because 'twas a private house; but with thee indeed no house can be private, for thou hast that pretty quality of the familiar fops of the town, who, in an eating-house, alwayes keep company with all people in't but those they came with. 33

Free. I went into their room, but to keep them, and my own fool, the squire, out of your room; but you shall be peevish now, because you have no money. But why the devil won't you write to those we were speaking of? Since your modesty, or your spirit, will not suffer you to speak to 'em, to lend you money, why won't you try 'em at last that way?

Man. Because I know 'em already, and can bear want better than denials, nay, than obligations. 41

Free. Deny you! they cannot. All of 'em have been your intimate friends.

Man. No, they have been people only I have oblig'd particularly. 45

Free. Very well; therefore you ought to go to 'em the rather, sure.

Man. No, no. Those you have oblig'd most, most certainly avoid you, when you can oblige 'em no longer; and they take your visits like so many duns. Friends, like mistresses, are avoided for obligations past. 51

Free. Pshaw! but most of 'em are your relations; men of great fortune and honour.

Man. Yes; but relations have so much honour as to think poverty taints the blood, and disown their wanting kindred; believing, I suppose, that as riches at first makes a gentleman, the want of 'em degrades him. But damn 'em! now I am poor, I'll anticipate their contempt, and disown them. 58

Free. But you have many a female acquaintance whom you

have been liberal to, who may have a heart to refund to you a little, if you wou'd ask it: they are not all Olivias. 61

Man. Dam thee! how cou'dst thou think of such a thing? I wou'd as soon rob my footman of his wages. Besides, 'twere in vain too: for a wench is like a box in an ordinary,¹ receives all people's money easily, but there is no getting, nay, shaking any out again; and he that fills it is sure never to keep the key. 66

Free. Well, but noble captain, wou'd you make me believe that you, who know half the town, have so many friends, and have oblig'd so many, can't borrow fifty or an hundred pound?

Man. Why, noble lieutenant, you who know all the town, and call all you know friends, methinks shou'd not wonder at it; since you find ingratitude too. For how many lords' families (tho' descended from blacksmiths or tinkers) hast thou call'd great and illustrious? how many ill tables call'd good eating? how many noisie coxcombs wits? how many pert cocking² cowards stout? how many taudry affected rogues well-drest? how many perukes admir'd? and how many ill verses applauded? and yet canst not borrow a shilling. Dost thou expect I, who always spoke truth, shou'd? 79

Free. Nay, now you think you have paid me; but hark you, captain, I have heard of a thing call'd grinning honour, but never of starving honour. 82

Man. Well, but it has been the fate of some brave men: and if they won't give me a ship again, I can go starve any where, with a musket on my shoulder. 85

Free. Give you a ship! why, you will not solicit it.

Man. If I have not solicited it by my services, I know no other way.

Free. Your servant, sir; nay, then I'm satisfi'd, I must solicit my widow the closer, and run the desperate fortune of matrimony on shore. [Exit.

¹ Ordinaries, originally restaurants, soon became gambling-houses. Box = money-box, or the proprietor's "bank." "In little more than three hours, the box has had more than three pounds of their money and all the three gamesters have been losers." (*The Nicker Nicked, or the Cheats of Gaming*, 3d ed., 1669, *Harleian Miscellany*, Park's ed., II, 110.)

² insolent, cocky (*N.E.D.*); (Q, "coaching").

Enter to MANLY, VERNISH.

Man. How!—Nay, here is a friend indeed; and he that has him in his arms can know no wants. [Embraces VERNISH.]

Ver. Dear sir! and he that is in your arms is secure from all fears whatever: nay, our nation is secure by your defeat at sea, and the Dutch that fought against you have prov'd enemies to themselves only in bringing you back to us. 97

Man. Fie, fie! this from a friend? and yet from any other 'twere unsufferable: I thought I shou'd never have taken any thing ill from you. 100

Ver. A friend's privilege is to speak his mind, tho' it be taken ill.

Man. But your tongue need not tell me you think too well of me; I have found it from your heart, which spoke in actions, your unalterable heart. But Olivia is false, my friend, which I suppose is no news to you. 105

Ver. He's in the right on't. [Aside.]

Man. But cou'dst thou not keep her true to me?

Ver. Not for my heart, sir.

Man. But cou'd you not perceive it at all before I went? Cou'd she so deceive us both? 110

Ver. I must confess, the first time I knew it, was three dayes after your departure, when she receiv'd the money you had left in Lombard-street in her name; and her tears did not hinder her, it seems, from counting that. You wou'd trust her with all, like a true generous lover! 115

Man. And she like a mean jilting—

Ver. Traytrous—

Man. Base—

Ver. Damn'd—

Man. Covetous— 120

Ver. Mercenary whore—(I can hardly hold from laughing.) [Aside.]

Man. Ay, a mercenary whore indeed; for she made me pay her before I lay with her.

Ver. How!—Why, have you lay'n with her?

Man. Ay, ay. 125

Ver. Nay, she deserves you shou'd report it at least, tho' you have not.

Man. Report it! by Heav'n, 'tis true!

Ver. How! sure not.

Man. I do not use to lie, nor you to doubt me. 130

Ver. When?

Man. Last night, about seven or eight of the clock.

Ver. Ha!—Now I remember, I thought she spake as if she expected some other rather than me. A confounded whore, indeed!

[*Aside.*

Man. But what, thou wonder'st at it! Nay, you seem to be angry too. 136

Ver. I cannot but be enrag'd against her, for her usage of you: damn'd, infamous, common jade!

Man. Nay, her cuckold, who first cuckolded me in my money, shall not laugh all himself: we will do him reason, shan't we? 140

Ver. Ay, ay.

Man. But thou dost not, for so great a friend, take pleasure enough in your friend's revenge, methinks.

Ver. Yes, yes; I'm glad to know it, since you have lay'n with her. 145

Man. Thou canst not tell me who that rascal, her cuckold, is?

Ver. No.

Man. She wou'd keep it from you, I suppose.

Ver. Yes, yes.

Man. Thou wou'dst laugh, if thou knewst but all the circumstances of my having her. Come, I'll tell thee. 151

Ver. Dam her! I care not to hear any more of her.

Man. Faith, thou shalt. You must know—

Enter FREEMAN backwards, endeavouring to keep out NOVEL, Lord PLAUSIBLE, JERRY, and OLDFOX, who all press upon him.

Free. I tell you he has a wench with him, and wou'd be private.

Man. Dam 'em! a man can't open a bottle in these eating-houses, but presently you have these impudent, intruding, buzzing flies and insects in your glass.—Well, I'll tell thee all anon. In the mean time prythee go to her, but not from me, and try if you can

get her to lend me but an hundred pound of my money, to supply my present wants; for I suppose there is no recovering any of it by law. 161

Ver. Not any; think not of it: nor by this way neither.

Man. Go try, at least.

Ver. I'll go; but I can satisfie you beforehand it will be to no purpose. You'll no more find a refunding wench— 165

Man. Than a refunding lawyer; indeed their fees alike scarce ever return. However, try her; put it to her.

Ver. Ay, ay, I'll try her; put it to her home with a vengeance.
[Exit VERNISH.]

Manent cæteri.

Nov. Nay, you shall be our judge, Manly. Come, major, I'll speak it to your teeth; if people provoke me to say bitter things to their faces, they must take what follows; tho' like my lord Plausible, I'd rather do't civilly behind their backs. 172

Man. Nay, thou art a dangerous rogue, I've heard, behind a man's back.

L. Plau. You wrong him sure, noble captain; he wou'd do a man no more harm behind his back than to his face. 176

Free. I am of my lord's mind.

Man. Yes, a fool, like a coward, is the more to be fear'd behind a man's back, more than a witty man; for, as a coward is more bloody than a brave man, a fool is more malicious than a man of wit. 181

Nov. A fool, tar,—a fool! nay, thou art a brave sea-judge of wit! a fool! Prythee when did you ever find me want something to say, as you do often?

Man. Nay, I confess thou art alwayes talking, roaring, or making a noise; that I'll say for thee. 186

Nov. Well, and is talking a sign of a fool?

Man. Yes, alwayes talking, especially too if it be loud and fast, is the sign of a fool.

Nov. Pshaw! Talking is like fencing, the quicker the better; run 'em down, run 'em down, no matter for parrying; push on still,

sa, sa, sa! ¹ no matter whether you argue in form, push in guard or no. 193

Man. Or hit or no; I think thou always talk'st without thinking, Novel. 195

Nov. Ay, ay; study'd play's the worse, to follow the allegory, as the old pedant says.

Old. A young fop!

Man. I ever thought the man of most wit had been like him of most money, who has no vanity in shewing it every where, whil'st the beggarly pusher of his fortune has all he has about him still, only to show. 202

Nov. Well, sir, and make a pretty show in the world, let me tell you; nay, a better than your close hunks. A pox, give me ready money in play! what care I for a man's reputation? what are we the better for your substantial thrifty curmudgeon in wit, sir?

Old. Thou art a profuse young rogue indeed. 207

Nov. So much for talking, which, I think, I have prov'd a mark of wit; and so is railing, roaring, and making a noise; for railing is satyr, you know; and roaring and making a noise, humour. 210

Enter to them FIDELIA; taking MANLY aside, and shewing him a paper.

Fid. The hour is betwixt seven and eight exactly: 'tis now half an hour after six.

Man. Well, go then to the Piazza,² and wait for me; as soon as it is quite dark, I'll be with you. I must stay here yet awhile for my friend.—[*Exit FIDELIA.*] But is railing satyr, Novel? 215

Free. And roaring and making a noise, humour?

Nov. What, won't you confess there's humour in roaring and making a noise?

Free. No.

Nov. Nor in cutting napkins and hangings? 220

Man. No, sure.

¹ Cf. *King Lear*, IV, vi, 207, and Schmidt, *Shakespeare Lexicon*.

² Of Covent Garden (cf. *Country Wife*, V, iii). There was also another Piazza, that of the Royal Exchange (see John Timbs, *Curiosities of London*, 1876, pp. 292-94, 324-25).

Nov. Dull fops!

Old. O rogue, rogue, insipid rogue! Nay, gentlemen, allow him those things for wit; for his parts lie only that way. 224

Nov. Peace, old fool! I wonder not at thee; but that young fellows shou'd be so dull, as to say there's no humour in making a noise, and breaking windows! I tell you there's wit and humour too in both; and a wit is as well known by his frolick as by his simile. 229

Old. Pure rogue! there's your modern wit for you! Wit and humour in breaking of windows! There's mischief, if you will, but no wit or humour. 232

Nov. Prythee, prythee, peace, old fool! I tell you, where there is mischief, there's wit. Don't we esteem the monky a wit amongst beasts, only because he's mischievous? And, let me tell you, as good-nature is a sign of a fool, being mischievous is a sign of a wit.

Old. O rogue, rogue! Pretend to be a wit, by doing mischief and railing! 238

Nov. Why, thou, old fool, hast no other pretence to the name of a wit, but by railing at new playes. 240

Old. Thou, by railing at that facetious noble way of wit, quibbling.

Nov. Thou call'st thy dulness gravity; and thy dozing, thinking.

Old. You, sir, your dulness, spleen; and you talk much and say nothing. 245

Nov. Thou read'st much, and understand'st nothing, sir.

Old. You laugh loud, and break no jest.

Nov. You rail, and no body hangs himself; and thou hast nothing of the satyr but in thy face.

Old. And you have no jest, but your face, sir. 250

Nov. Thou art an illiterate pedant.

Old. Thou art a fool with a bad memory.

Man. Come, a pox on you both! you have done like wits now; for you wits, when you quarrel, never give over till ye prove one another fools. 255

Nov. And you fools have never any occasion of laughing at us wits but when we quarrel. Therefore let us be friends, Oldfox.

Man. They are such wits as thou art, who make the name of a

wit as scandalous as that of bully; and signifie a loud-laughing, talking, incorrigible coxcomb, as bully a roaring hardned coward.

Free. And wou'd have his noise and laughter pass for wit, as t'other his huffing and blustering for courage. 262

Enter VERNISH.

Man. Gentlemen, with your leave, here is one I would speak with; and I have nothing to say to you. [*Puts 'em out of the room.*]

Manent MANLY, VERNISH.

Ver. I told you 'twas in vain to think of getting money out of her: she sayes, if a shilling wou'd do't, she wou'd not save you from starving or hanging, or what you wou'd think worse, begging or flattering; and rails so at you, one wou'd not think you had lay'n with her. 269

Man. O, friend, never trust for that matter a woman's railing; for she is no less a dissembler in her hatred than her love; and as her fondness of her husband is a sign he's a cuckold, her railing at another man is a sign she lies with him. 273

Ver. He's in the right on't: I know not what to trust to.

[*Aside.*]

Man. But you did not take any notice of it to her, I hope? 275

Ver. So!—Sure he is afraid I shou'd have disprov'd him by an inquiry of her: all may be well yet. [*Aside.*]

Man. What hast thou in thy head that makes thee seem so unquiet?

Ver. Only this base impudent woman's falseness; I cannot put her out of my head. 281

Man. O, my dear friend, be not you too sensible of my wrongs; for then I shall feel 'em too with more pain, and think 'em unsufferable. Dam her, her money, and that ill-natured whore too, Fortune her self! But if thou wou'dst ease a little my present trouble, prythee go borrow me somewhere else some money: I can trouble thee. 287

Ver. You trouble me, indeed, most sensibly, when you command me any thing I cannot do. I have lately lost a great deal of money at play, more than I can yet pay; so that not only my

money, but my credit too is gone, and know not where to borrow: but cou'd rob a church for you.—(Yet wou'd rather end your wants by cutting your throat.) *[Aside.]*

Man. Nay, then I doubly feel my poverty, since I'm incapable of supplying thee. *[Embraces VERNISH.]*

Ver. But, methinks, she that granted you the last favour, (as they call it,) shou'd not deny you any thing— 297

Nov. Hey, tarpaulin, have you done?

[NOVEL looks in and retires again.]

Ver. I understand not that point of kindness, I confess.

Man. No, thou dost not understand it, and I have not time to let you know all now; for these fools, you see, will interrupt us: but anon, at supper, we'll laugh at leisure together at Olivia's cuckold, who took a young fellow, that goes between his wife and me, for a woman.

Ver. Ha! 305

Man. Senseless, easie rascal! 'twas no wonder she chose him for a husband; but she thought him, I thank her, fitter than me, for that blind bearing office.

Ver. I cou'd not be deceiv'd in that long woman's hair ty'd up behind, nor those infallible proofs, her pouting swelling breasts: I have handled too many, sure, not to know 'em. *[Aside.]*

Man. What, you wonder the fellow cou'd be such a blind coxcomb? 313

Ver. Yes, yes— *[NOVEL looks in again, and retires.]*

Nov. Nay, prythee, come to us, Manly. Gad, all the fine things one says in their company, are lost without thee. 316

Man. Away, fop! I'm busie yet.—You see we cannot talk here at our ease: besides, I must be gone immediately, in order to meeting with Olivia again to night.

Ver. To night! it cannot be, sure— 320

Man. I had an appointment just now from her.

Ver. For what time?

Man. At half an hour after seven precisely.

Ver. Don't you apprehend the husband?

Man. He! Sniveling gull! He a thing to be fear'd! A husband! The tamest of creatures! 326

Ver. Very fine!

[*Aside.*

Man. But, prythee, in the mean time, go try to get me some money. Tho' thou art too modest to borrow for thy self, thou canst do any thing for me, I know. Go; for I must be gone to Olivia: go, and meet me here anon.—Freeman, where are you?

[*Exit* MANLY.

Manet VERNISH.

Ver. Ay, I'll meet with you, I warrant; but it shall be at Olivia's. Sure, it cannot be; she denies it so calmly, and with that honest, modest assurance, it can't be true—and he does not use to lye—but belying a woman when she won't be kind, is the onely lye a brave man will least scruple. But then the woman in man's cloaths, whom he calls a man!—well, but by her breasts I know her to be a woman:—but then, again, his appointment from her, to meet with him to night! I am distracted more with doubt than jealousy. Well, I have no way to disabuse or revenge my self, but by going home immediately, putting on a riding sute, and pretending to my wife the same business which carry'd me out of town last, requires me again to go post to Oxford tonight. Then, if the appointment he boasts of be true, it's sure to hold; and I shall have an opportunity either of clearing her, or revenging my self on both. Perhaps she is his wench, of an old date, and I am his cully, whil'st I think him mine; and he has seem'd to make his wench rich, only that I might take her off of ¹ his hands. Or if he has but lately lay'n with her, he must needs discover by her my treachery to him; which I'm sure he will revenge with my death, and which I must prevent with his, if it were only but for fear of his too just reproaches; for, I must confess, I never had till now any excuse but that of int'rest, for doing ill to him. [Exit VERNISH.

Enter MANLY and FREEMAN.

Man. Come hither; only, I say, be sure you mistake not the time. You know the house exactly where Olivia lodges, 'tis just hard by. 356

Free. Yes, yes.

¹ So Q; cf. Shakespeare, *II Henry VI*, II, i, 96: "a fall off of a tree."

Man. Well then, bring 'em all, I say, thither, and all you know that may be then in the house; for the more witnesses I have of her infamy, the greater will be my revenge: and be sure you come strait up to her chamber, without more ado. Here, take the watch; you see 'tis above a quarter past seven; be there in half an hour exactly. 363

Free. You need not doubt my diligence, or dexterity; I am an old scowrer,¹ and can naturally beat up a wench's quarters that won't be civil. Shan't we break her windows too? 366

Man. No, no: be punctual only. [*Ex[eunt] ambo.*]

[Act V. Scene III.—*A Room in the Same.*]²

Enter Widow BLACKACRE, and two Knights of the Post:
a Waiter with wine.

Wid. Sweetheart, are you sure the door was shut close, that none of those roysters saw us come in?

Wait. Yes, mistriss; and you shall have a privater room above, instantly. [*Ex[it] Wait[er].*]

Wid. You are safe enough, gentlemen; for I have been private in this house ere now, upon other occasions, when I was something younger. Come, gentlemen; in short, I leave my business to your care and fidelity: and so here's to you. 8

1st Knight. We were ungrateful rogues if we shou'd not be honest to you; for we have had a great deal of your money. 10

Wid. And you have done me many a good job for't; and so, here's to you again.

2nd Knight. Why, we have been perjur'd but six times for you.

1st Knight. Forg'd but four deeds, with your husband's last deed of gift. 15

2nd Knight. And but three wills.

1st Knight. And counterfeited hands and seals to some six bonds; I think that's all, brother?

Wid. Ay, that's all, gentlemen; and so, here's to you again.

¹ Cf. *The Spanish Friar*, *supra*, p. 142, n. 6.

² No change of scene in Q.

2nd Knight. Nay, 'twou'd do one's heart good to be forsworn for you: you have a conscience in your wayes, and pay us well. 21

1st Knight. You are in the right on't, brother; one wou'd be damn'd for her, with all one's heart.

2nd Knight. But there are rogues, who make us forsworn for 'em; and when we come to be paid, they'll be forsworn too, and not pay us our wages, which they promis'd with oaths sufficient.

1st Knight. Ay, a great lawyer that shall be nameless bilkt me too. 28

Wid. That was hard, methinks, that a lawyer shou'd use gentlemen witnesses no better. 30

2nd Knight. A lawyer! d'ye wonder a lawyer should do't? I was bilk'd by a reverend divine, that preaches twice on Sundayes, and prays half an hour still before dinner.

Wid. How! a conscientious divine and not pay people for damning themselves! sure then, for all his talking, he does not believe damnation. But, come, to our business. Pray be sure to imitate exactly the flourish at the end of this name. 37

[Pulls out a deed or two.]

1st Knight. O, he's the best in England at untangling a flourish, madam.

Wid. And let not the seal be a jot bigger. Observe well the dash too, at the end of this name. 41

2nd Knight. I warrant you, madam.

Wid. Well, these, and many other shifts, poor widows are put to sometimes; for every body wou'd be riding a widow, as they say, and breaking into her jointure: they think marrying a widow an easie business, like leaping the hedge where another has gone over before; a widow is a meer gap, a gap with them. 47

Enter to them Major OLDFOX, with two Waiters. The Knights of the Post huddle up the writings.

What, he here! Go then, go, my hearts, you have your instructions. *[Exeunt Knights of the Post.]*

Old. Come, madam, to be plain with you, I'll be fob'd off no longer. I'll bind her and gag her but she shall hear me. *[Aside.]* Look you, friends, there's the money I promis'd you; and now do

you what you promis'd me: here are my garters, and here's a gag.—You shall be acquainted with my parts, lady, you shall.

Wid. Acquainted with your parts! A rape! a rape!—what, will you ravish me? 55

[*The Waiters tie her to the chair, gag her; and ex[eunt].*]

Old. Yes, lady, I will ravish you; but it shall be through the ear, lady, the ear onely, with my well-pen'd acrostics.

Enter to them FREEMAN, JERRY BLACKACRE, three Bailiffs, a Constable and his Assistants, with the two Knights of the Post.

What, shall I never read my things undisturb'd again?

Jer. O law! my mother bound hand and foot, and gaping as if she rose before her time to day! 60

Free. What means this, Oldfox? But I'll release you from him; you shall be no man's prisoner but mine. Bayliffs, execute your writ. [FREEMAN untyes her.

Old. Nay, then, I'll be gone, for fear of being bayl, and paying her debts without being her husband. [Exit OLDFOX.

1st Bail. We arrest you in the king's name, at the suit of Mr. Freeman, guardian to Jeremiah Blackacre, esquire, in an action of ten thousand pounds. 68

Wid. How, how, in a choak-bayl action! ¹ What, and the pen-and-ink gentlemen taken too!—Have you confest, you rogues?

1st Knight. We needed not to confess; for the bayliffs dogg'd us hither to the very door, and overheard all that you and we said.

Wid. Undone, undone then! no man was ever too hard for me till now. O Jerry, child, wilt thou vex again the womb that bore thee? 75

Jer. Ay, for bearing me before wedlock, as you say. But I'll teach you call a Blackacre a bastard, tho' you were never so much my mother.

Wid. Well, I'm undone! not one trick left? no law-meush ² imaginable? [*Aside.*—Cruel sir, a word with you, I pray. 80

¹ an action raising so great an issue as to prevent the possibility of bail being offered (*N.E.D.*).

² Loophole (see *Meuse* in *N.E.D.*); cf. Churchill. Other eds. erroneously read "mesh."

Free. In vain, madam; for you have no other way to release your self, but by the bonds of matrimony.

Wid. How, sir, how! that were but to sue out an habeas-corpus, for a removal from one prison to another. Matrimony!

Free. Well, bayliffs, away with her. 85

Wid. O stay, sir! can you be so cruel as to bring me under covert-baron again, and put it out of my power to sue in my own name? Matrimony to a woman is worse than excommunication, in depriving her of the benefit of the law; and I wou'd rather be depriv'd of life. But hark you, sir, I am contented you shou'd hold and enjoy my person by lease or patent, but not by the spiritual patent call'd a licence; that is, to have the priviledges of a husband, without the dominion; that is, *durante beneplacito*.¹ In consideration of which, I will out of my jointure secure you an annuity of three hundred pounds a year, and pay your debts; and that's all you younger brothers desire to marry a widow for, I'm sure. 97

Free. Well, widow, if—

Jer. What! I hope, bully-guardian, you are not making agreements without me? 100

Free. No, no. First, widow, you must say no more that he is a son of a whore; have a care of that. And, then, he must have a settled exhibition of forty pounds a year, and a nag of assizes, kept by you, but not upon the common;² and have free ingress, egress, and regress, to and from your maids' garret. 105

Wid. Well, I can grant all that too.

Jer. Ay, ay, fair words butter no cabage: but guardian, make her sign, sign and seal; for otherwise, if you knew her as well as I, you wou'd not trust her words for a farthing. 109

Free. I warrant thee, squire.—Well, widow, since thou art so generous, I will be generous too; and if you'll secure me four hundred pound a year, but during your life, and pay my debts, not above a thousand pound, I'll bate you your person, to dispose of as you please. 114

¹ during pleasure.

² His nag (which will carry him to court sessions?) is to be maintained by the Widow, not to be put off on the parish ground.

Wid. Have a care, sir; a settlement without a consideration is void in law; you must do something for't. 116

Free. Prythee, then let the settlement on me be call'd alimony; and the consideration, our separation. Come; my lawyer, with writings ready drawn, is within, and in haste. Come.

Wid. But, what, no other kind of consideration, Mr. Freeman? Well, a widow, I see, is a kind of *sine cure*, by custom of which the unconscionable incumbent enjoys the profits, without any duty, but does that still elsewhere. [Ex[eunt] omn[es].]

[Act V. Scene IV.]—*The scene changes to Olivia's lodging.*

Enter OLIVIA with a candle in her hand.

Oliv. So, I am now prepar'd once more for my timorous young lover's reception. My husband is gone; and go thou out too, thou next interrupter of love—[Puts out the candle.] Kind darkness, that frees us lovers from scandal and bashfulness, from the censure of our gallants and the world!—So, are you there? 5

Enter to OLIVIA, FIDELIA, follow'd softly by MANLY.

Come, my dear punctual lover, there is not such another in the world; thou hast beauty and youth to please a wife; address and wit, to amuse and fool a husband; nay, thou hast all things to be wish'd in a lover, but your fits. I hope, my dear, you won't have one to-night; and that you may not, I'll lock the door, tho' there be no need of it, but to lock out your fits; for my husband is just gone out of town again. Come, where are you? 12

[Goes to the door, and locks it.]

Man. Well, thou hast impudence enough to give me fits too, and make revenge it self impotent, hinder me from making thee yet more infamous, if it can be. [Aside.]

Oliv. Come, come, my soul, come. 16

Fid. Presently, my dear; we have time enough sure.

Oliv. How! time enough! True lovers can no more think they ever have time enough, than love enough. You shall stay with me all night; but that is but a lover's moment. Come. 20

Fid. But won't you let me give you and my self the satisfaction of telling you how I abus'd your husband last night?

Oliv. Not when you can give me, and your self too, the satisfaction of abusing him again to night. Come.

Fid. Let me but tell you how your husband— 25

Oliv. O name not his, or Manly's more loathsom name, if you love me! I forbid 'em last night: and you know I mention'd my husband but once, and he came. No talking, pray, 'twas ominous to us. You make me fancy a noise at the door already, but I'm resolv'd not to be interrupted.—[*A noise at the door.*] Where are you? Come, for, rather than lose my dear expectation now, tho' my husband were at the door, and the bloody ruffian Manly here in the room, with all his awful insolence, I wou'd give my self to this dear hand, to be led away to heavens of joys, which none but thou canst give.—But what's this noise at the door? So, I told you what talking wou'd come to.—[*The noise at the door increases.*] Ha!—O Heavens, my husband's voice!— 37

[*OLIVIA listens at the door.*

Man. Freeman is come too soon. [*Aside.*

Oliv. O, 'tis he!—Then here's the happiest minute lost that ever bashful boy or trifling woman fool'd away! I'm undone! my husband's reconciliation too was false, as my joy all delusion. But come this way, here's a back-door.—[*Exit, and returns.*] The officious jade has lock'd us in, instead of locking others out: but let us then escape your way, by the balcony; and whil'st you pull down the curtains, I'll fetch from my closet what next will best secure our escape. I have left my key in the door, and 'twill not suddenly be broke open. [*Exit.*

[*A noise as it were people were forcing the door.*

Man. Stir not, yet fear nothing.

Fid. Nothing but your life, sir.

Man. We shall know this happy man she calls husband. 50

OLIVIA re-enters.

Oliv. Oh, where are you? What, idle with fear? Come, I'll tie the curtains, if you will hold. Here take this cabinet and purse,

for it is thine, if we escape; [MANLY takes from her the cabinet and purse]—therefore let us make haste. [Ex[ist] OLIV[IA].

Man. 'Tis mine indeed now again, and it shall never escape more from me, to you at least. 56

[The door broken open. Enter VERNISH alone with a dark-lantern and a sword, running at MANLY, who draws, puts by the thrust, and defends himself, whilst FIDELIA runs at VERNISH behind.

Ver. So, there I'm right, sure— [With a low voice.

Man. [Softly]—Sword and dark-lantern villain, are some odds; but—

Ver. Odds! I'm sure I find more odds than I expected. What, has my insatiable two seconds at once? but— [With a low voice.

[Whilst they fight, OLIVIA re-enters, tying two curtains together.

Oliv. Where are you now?—What, is he entered then, and are they fighting? O do not kill one that can make no defence!— [MANLY throws VERNISH down and disarms him.] How! but I think he has the better on't. Here's his scarf, 'tis he. So, keep him down still: I hope thou hast no hurt, my dearest? 66

[Embracing MANLY.

Enter to them FREEMAN, LORD PLAUSIBLE, NOVEL, JERRY BLACKACRE, and the Widow BLACKACRE, lighted in by the two Sailors with torches.

Ha!—what?—Manly! and have I been thus concern'd for him! embracing him! And has he his jewels again too! What means this? O, 'tis too sure, as well as my shame! which I'll go hide for ever. [Offers to go out, MANLY stops her.

Man. No, my dearest; after so much kindness as has past between us, I cannot part with you yet.—Freeman, let no body stir out of the room; for, notwithstanding your lights, we are yet in the dark, till this gentleman please to turn his face—[Pulls VERNISH by the sleeve.] How! Vernish! Art thou the happy man then? Thou! Thou! Speak, I say; but thy guilty silence tells me all—Well, I shall not upbraid thee; for my wonder is striking me as dumb as thy shame has made thee. But what? my little volunteer hurt, and fainting!

Fid. My wound, sir, is but a slight one in my arm; tis only my fear of your danger, sir, not yet well over. 81

Man. But what's here? more strange things—[*Observing FIDELIA's hair unty'd behind, and without a peruke, which she lost in the scuffle.*] What means this long woman's hair, and face! now all of it appears too beautiful for a man; which I still thought womanish indeed! What, you have not deceiv'd me too, my little volunteer? 87

Oliv. Me she has, I'm sure.

[*Aside.*

Man. Speak!

Enter ELIZA and LETTICE.

Eliza. What, cousin, I am brought hither by your woman, I suppose, to be a witness of the second vindication of your honour?

Oliv. Insulting is not generous. You might spare me, I have you. 93

Eliza. Have a care, cousin, you'll confess anon too much; and I wou'd not have your secrets. 95

Man. Come, your blushes answer me sufficiently, and you have been my volunteer in love. [To FIDELIA.

Fid. I must confess I needed no compulsion to follow you all the world over; which I attempted in this habit, partly out of shame to own my love to you, and fear of a greater shame, your refusal of it: for I knew of your engagement to this lady, and the constancy of your nature; which nothing cou'd have alter'd, but her self. 103

Man. Dear madam, I desir'd you to bring me out of confusion, and you have given me more. I know not what to speak to you, or how to look upon you; the sense of my rough, hard, and ill usage of you, (tho' chiefly your own fault,) gives me more pain now 'tis over, than you had when you suffer'd it: and if my heart, the refusal of such a woman—[*Pointing to OLIVIA*] were not a sacrifice to prophane your love, and a greater wrong to you than ever yet I did you, I wou'd beg of you to receive it, tho' you us'd it as she had done; for tho' it deserv'd not from her the treatment she gave it, it does from you. 113

Fid. Then it has had punishment sufficient from her already,

and needs no more from me; and, I must confess, I wou'd not be the onely cause of making you break your last night's oath to me, of never parting with me; if you do not forget or repent it. 117

Man. Then take for ever my heart, and this with it;—[*Gives her the cabinet*] for 'twas given to you before, and my heart was before your due; I only beg leave to dispose of these few—Here, madam, I never yet left my wench unpaid. 121

[*Takes some of the jewels, and offers 'em to OLIVIA; she strikes 'em down: PLAUSIBLE and NOVEL take 'em up.*

Oliv. So it seems, by giving her the cabinet.

L. Plau. These pendants appertain to your most faithful humble servant.

Nov. And this locket is mine; my earnest for love, which she never paid: therefore my own again. 126

Wid. By what law, sir, pray?—Cousin Olivia, a word. What, do they make a seizure on your goods and chattels, *vi et armis*? Make your demand, I say, and bring your trover, bring your trover. I'll follow the law for you. 130

Oliv. And I my revenge. [*Exit OLIVIA.*

Man. [*To VERNISH.*] But 'tis, my friend, in your consideration most, that I wou'd have return'd part of your wife's portion; for 'twere hard to take all from thee, since thou hast paid so dear for't, in being such a rascal. Yet thy wife is a fortune without a portion; and thou art a man of that extraordinary merit in vilany, the world and fortune can never desert thee, tho' I do; therefore be not melancholy. Fare you well, sir.—[*Exit VERNISH doggedly.*] Now, madam, I beg your pardon [*Turning to FIDELIA*] for lessening the present I made you; but my heart can never be lessen'd. This, I confess, was too small for you before; for you deserve the Indian world; and I wou'd now go thither, out of covetousness for your sake only. 143

Fid. Your heart, sir, is a present of that value, I can never make any return to't.—[*Pulling MANLY from the company.*] But I can give you back such a present as this, which I got by the loss of my father, a gentleman of the north, of no mean extraction, whose onely child I was, therefore left me in the present possession of two thousand pounds a year; which I left, with multitudes of

pretenders, to follow you, sir; having in several publick places seen you, and observ'd your actions throughly, with admiration, when you were too much in love to take notice of mine, which yet was but too visible. The name of my family is Grey, my other Fidelia. The rest of my story you shall know when I have fewer auditors.

Man. Nay, now, madam, you have taken from me all power of making you any complement on my part; for I was going to tell you, that for your sake onely I wou'd quit the unknown pleasure of a retirement; and rather stay in this ill world of ours still, tho' odious to me, than give you more frights again at sea, and make again too great a venture there, in you alone. But if I shou'd tell you now all this, and that your virtue (since greater than I thought any was in the world) had now reconcil'd me to't, my friend here wou'd say, 'tis your estate that has made me friends with the world. 164

Free. I must confess I shou'd; for I think most of our quarrels to the world are just such as we have to a handsom woman; only because we cannot enjoy her as we wou'd do.

Man. Nay, if thou art a *Plain-dealer* too, give me thy hand; for now I'll say, I am thy friend indeed; and for your two sakes, tho' I have been so lately deceiv'd in friends of both sexes,— 170

I will believe there are now in the world
Good-natur'd friends, who are not prostitutes,
And handsom women worthy to be friends;
Yet, for my sake, let no one e'er confide
In tears, or oaths, in love, or friend untry'd. 175

[*Exeunt omnes.*]

FINIS.

Epilogue,¹

Spoken by the Widow Blackacre.

To you the judges learned in stage-laws,
Our poet now, by me, submits his cause;
For with young judges, such as most of you,
The men by women best their bus'ness do:
And, truth on't is, if you did not sit here, 5
To keep for us a term throughout the year,
We cou'd not live by'r tongues; nay, but for you,
Our chamber-practice wou'd be little too.
And 'tis not only the stage-practiser
Who by your meeting, gets her living here: 10
For, as in Hall of Westminster
Sleek sempstress vents amidst the courts her ware;
So, while we baul, and you in judgment sit,
The visor-mask sells linnen too i' th' pit.
O, many of your friends, besides us here, 15
Do live by putting off their sev'ral ware.
Here's daily done the great affair o' th' nation;
Let love and us then ne'r have long-vacation.
But hold; like other pleaders I have done
Not my poor client's bus'ness, but my own. 20
Spare me a word then, now, for him. First know,
Squires of the long robe, he does humbly show,
He has a just right in abusing you,
Because he is a Brother-Templer too:
For at the bar you raily one another; 25
Nay, fool and knave, is swallow'd from a brother:
If not the poet here, the Templer spare,

¹Q prints this after the Prologue.

The Plain-Dealer

405

And maul him when you catch him at the bar.

From you, our common modish censurers,

Your favour, not your judgment, 'tis he fears:

Of all loves begs you then to rail, find fault;

For playes, like women, by the world are thought }
}

(When you speak kindly of 'em) very naught.

30

Sir John Vanbrugh

THE PROVOK'D WIFE

*Edited with Critical Essay and
Notes by Alwin Thaler, Professor
in the University of Tennessee*

CRITICAL ESSAY

Life.—Sir John Vanbrugh was born in London, in January, 1664. His grandfather, Gillis Van Brugg, a member of an old and honorable Flemish family, had settled in London sometime in the first quarter of the century. Like him, the dramatist's father was a solid and reputable citizen; he is described as a man "of a religious turn," a confectioner by trade, and father of nineteen children. On his mother's side Vanbrugh was of good old English stock, for Elizabeth Vanbrugh was the youngest daughter of Sir Dudley Carleton, nephew of the vivacious letter-writer and diplomat. That Vanbrugh must have had something of a liberal education seems self-evident, but no definite information about its early stages has come to light. Apparently he was sent to France in 1683, at the age of nineteen, and there, during the next two years, he probably received his first training in architecture. Early in 1686 he was back in England, duly embarked in another profession which in his case as in that of Farquhar and Steele provided contacts and experiences equally useful to the gay young man about town and the future dramatist. Ten years later, in 1696, Ensign Vanbrugh had become Captain Vanbrugh, and by that title all the town had come to know him when George I, in 1714, made him Sir John to all the world.

Meanwhile, Vanbrugh had had many adventures, and built many a castle and many a play. In 1690, when travelling in France while that country and England were at war, Vanbrugh was seized as a spy and ultimately imprisoned in the Bastille, though, according to Voltaire, he never learned how he had merited this distinction. Voltaire adds that Vanbrugh improved his enforced leisure by writing a comedy—perhaps, according to tradition, the first draft of *The Provok'd Wife*. After his return to London and liberty he cultivated the pleasures of the town, especially his life-long passion for the theatre. "Three plays at once" (*The Relapse*, *Æsop*, and *The Provok'd Wife*), produced in the space of six months, between December, 1696 and May, 1697, were the first fruits of his pen, to be equalled in excellence later only by *The Confederacy* (1705) and the unfinished *Journey to London* (printed 1728). The unequal quality of Vanbrugh's plays is partly explained by the fact that for all his instinctive at-homeness on the stage he never allowed the theatre to become more than his favorite avocation. As he says in the Prologue to *The*

Confederacy, he "writ for praise;" not for the profit of authors' nights or the sinecures sought and won by other dramatists of his time. He gave *The Relapse* to Drury Lane and *The Provok'd Wife* to Lincoln's Inn Fields, and drew small praise and less profit from his minor pieces.

Certainly his championship of Betterton's company in its decline all but drained his purse. To give these players a fresh start Vanbrugh, who had already won distinction as an architect, built them the stately Haymarket Theatre at a cost reported to have been far above the £3000 he raised by subscriptions. The house opened in 1705 under Vanbrugh's management, with Congreve participating for some three months. Here, in the course of the year, Vanbrugh produced for the first time *The Confederacy* and his well-named but indifferently written *Mistake*; and here, early in 1706, he revived *The Provok'd Wife* and *Squire Trelooby*.¹ The Haymarket, however, was a failure from first to last. Its company was inferior to that of Drury Lane; the house itself relatively inaccessible; and, worst of all, so spacious that the actor's voices were lost in their resounding echoes. Vanbrugh imported Italian operas and singers for the Haymarket but this novelty proved ruinously expensive. Before the end of 1706, in short, he was glad to drop out of the management as best he could, though the aftermath of debts and obligations kept him in financial straits for years after.

An embarrassment of another sort had come to him considerably earlier,—in 1698, when Jeremy Collier in his philippic against the stage took especial pains to establish the immorality and profaneness of *The Relapse* and *The Provok'd Wife*. Vanbrugh, as his *Short Vindication* shows, merely laughed at Collier's earnest but indiscriminate condemnation; but the town and posterity took Collier seriously, and Vanbrugh's reputation, consequently, suffered far beyond his real ill-deserving. On the whole,² he was simply too honest to swell the speciously moralizing chorus of the new sentimental dramatists—and too busy. He continued to translate or adapt a play now and then to oblige old friends, but he had vigorously thrown himself into his architectural work before the Collier controversy was cold, and by 1702 he had started to build Castle Howard and won fame. His appointment as royal Comptroller of the Works and Clarencieux King of Arms followed during the next two years, and other valuable preferment later. In 1705 he began Blenheim Castle, the most famous essay in the grand and ponderous architectural style in which he delighted. The vicissitudes of Blenheim, and other architectural enterprises, busied him during the next twenty years, though he found time—

¹ See below, p. 415, n. 5.

² Cf. below, p. 417, on the ending of *The Relapse*.

in 1719, at the age of fifty-five—to contract what proved to be an exceedingly happy marriage. During these years, also, he started his *Journey to London*, “finished” after his death by Colley Cibber. Vanbrugh’s letters tell the story of his twenty years’ struggle over Blenheim—of Marlborough’s ups and downs, of the vindictiveness of the Duchess, and of Vanbrugh’s ultimate victory in defeat. They yield pleasant pictures also of his many-sided social relationships, of the solid happiness of his home life—in a word, of the genial, hearty character of the man. His friends were legion. He was on intimate terms with various and sundry earls and dukes, and equally at home with Congreve and Dryden, Sir Godfrey Kneller and Jacob Tonson. Swift laughed in print at Brother Van because he did not relish his Whiggism nor his Parson Hiccup, but at Vanbrugh’s death in 1726 Swift and Pope hastened to join the many who paid him tribute as a man of wit and honor.

Career as a Dramatist.—The following list indicates the chronology of Vanbrugh’s writings for and of the theatre:

1. *The Relapse*, acted at Drury Lane, 1696.
2. *Æsop*, acted at D.L., 1697; adapted from Boursault’s *Les Fables d’Ésope*. Part II, a fragment of three scenes; never acted; first printed in 1697.
3. *The Provok’d Wife*, acted at Lincoln’s Inn Fields, 1697.
4. *The Country House*, acted at D.L., 1698; ¹ free translation of Dancourt’s *La Maison de Campagne*.
5. *A Short Vindication of the Relapse and the Provok’d Wife from Immorality and Profaneness*, 1698.
6. *The Pilgrim*, a prose adaptation of Fletcher’s comedy, acted at D.L., 1700.
7. *The False Friend*, acted at D.L., 1702; adapted from the Spanish *La Traición busca el Castigo*, by de Rojas Zorilla, and Le Sage’s French version thereof, *Le Traître puni*.
8. *Squire Trelooby*, by Vanbrugh, Congreve, and Walsh, acted at L.I.F., 1704; based on Molière’s *Monsieur de Pourceaugnac*.
9. *The Confederacy*, acted at the Haymarket, 1705; adapted from Dancourt’s *Les Bourgeoises à la Mode*.
10. *The Mistake*, acted at the Haymarket, 1705; free translation of Molière’s *Le Dépit Amoureux*.

¹ Cf. Hotson, *Commonwealth and Restoration Stage*, pp. 307–08, 377.

Sir John Vanbrugh

11. *The Cuckold in Conceit*, acted at the Haymarket, 1707; never printed.¹
12. *A Journey to London*, unfinished; completed and produced by Colley Cibber at D.L., 1782, as *The Provok'd Husband*.

As a dramatist Vanbrugh was at his best at the very beginning and again at the end of his career. Between-whiles his work is interesting in spots but second-rate in the large, except for *The Confederacy*, in which he did himself justice in spite of his troubles with the Haymarket. Chronology, then, offers practically no clues to his merits or defects. His gift for the theatre was instinctive. He wrote his first play because Cibber's *Love's Last Shift* obviously demanded a sequel and a parody, and he continued to write as he found leisure and inclination. He was not an artist who schooled himself by degrees: he did not develop as a dramatist. An analysis, therefore, of the plays that everyone recognizes as Vanbrugh's best, will best indicate his distinctive quality; but a preliminary glance at his secondary work will be useful, for much of it throws light upon his greater plays and upon the history of English comedy in his time.

The Minor Plays.—Thus, his adaptation of *The Pilgrim* is not without interest to the student of English comedy. Its long run testifies chiefly to the vitality of Fletcher's fine comedy,² for Vanbrugh prudently kept himself in the background. He managed to reduce much of Fletcher's blank verse to prose by mere re-arrangement on the printed page, he coarsened the language somewhat, and broadened the madhouse scenes—but on the whole this is, for that age, a rare instance of an adaptation that does not do violence to its original. Besides starting Nance Oldfield upon her brilliant career, the piece gained distinction from Dryden's association with it. With characteristic generosity, "my good friend Mr. Vanbrook," as Dryden calls him,³ gave Dryden his author's night, for which occasion Dryden wrote his last verses, *The Secular Masque*, and a Prologue, Epilogue, and Song.

¹ Attributed to Vanbrugh by Colley Cibber. Translated from Molière's *Cocu Imaginaire*.

² Cf. *Repr. Engl. Com.*, III, lxxvii.

³ Cambridge *Dryden*, ed. Noyes, p. 898.

All of Vanbrugh's lesser pieces are free translations or adaptations. They are not, like *The Confederacy*, triumphant achievements of their kind, but several of them stand out well above the average in this age of translation and adaptation. Vanbrugh was never a slavish borrower and even his rather indifferent efforts are usually redeemed from utter futility by raciness of language and occasional strokes of vigorous caricature. He knows his idiom, and manages to root his borrowings in English soil. Thus, he invented outright the character of Polidorus Hogstye (of Beast Hall in Swine County)—an early representative of one of his favorite types, the country bumpkin of quality—in *Æsop*. This piece has "no hero, no romance, no plot, no show" and its several episodes have but a thin thread of story to connect them, yet it has its good points. A gallery of fantastic humours—country gentlemen of the Hogstye breed, mothers of doubtful character, affected learned ladies—pass before *Æsop* to be advised or judged in a series of fables done with Hogarthian pungency and with something of the spirit if not exactly with the deftness of Gilbertian extravaganza.¹ *Æsop* is one of the best of the minor pieces. *The False Friend* and *The Mistake*, on the other hand, are undoubtedly the worst, and Macready² justly saw in the former "a contradiction to Pope's assertion that Van never wanted wit." The Prologue ingenuously announces that it was written to gain the favor of the "dread reformers." Both plays were dull enough for the purpose, both are tragicomedies—a kind of drama for which Vanbrugh had no aptitude—and both were probably dashed off hurriedly as stop-gaps for the players.

Squire Trelooby—a joint translation, from Molière, in which Vanbrugh, Walsh, and Congreve collaborated—was hastily written for a special occasion, and it is quite possible that *The Country House* served a similar purpose. This short farce has to do with a miserly city lawyer whose extravagant wife fills his country house with hungry guests. The husband gets rid of them by anticipating, with a difference, Tony Lumpkin's trick of turning

¹ *Æsop*, Part II, fragmentary and insignificant, alludes to the troubles between the players and the patentees.

² *Reminiscences*, ed. Sir Frederick Pollock, I, 475.

his house into an inn. The action here, what there is of it, has spirit, and the piece is funny, though not uproariously so. Even more lively is *Squire Trelooby*. Unfortunately this piece, like several others of Vanbrugh's translations and adaptations,¹ was printed anonymously, but the circumstances of this particular publication are so involved that it has been seriously doubted²

¹ E.g., *Æsop*, *The Pilgrim*, etc. *The Cuckold in Conceit* is described as "never printed."

² For documents and discussion see J. C. Hodges ("The Authorship of *Squire Trelooby*," *Rev. of Engl. Stud.*, Oct., 1928), who doubts "whether any extant play represents the work of" the collaborators. Professor Hodges ascribes the authorship of the anonymous *Squire* of 1704 to John Ozell, author (1714) of a complete English version of Molière, chiefly because Ozell's 1714 version of *Monsieur de Pourceaugnac* is merely a reprint of the 1704 *Squire*. But, as Hodges also notes, (1) Ozell himself, in his 1714 dedication, admits that at least two other translations in his complete Molière are the work of other hands. (2) The same Ozell was sharply satirized in the first version of the *Dunciad*, in which, by what would seem to be at least a curious coincidence, it is stated that any piece—"past, vamp'd, future, old," or "new"—of Congreve, *et al.*, served Ozell's purposes as a confirmed "borrower from Congreve and other dramatists." (Among these others, as Mrs. Dorothy Canfield Fisher—*Corneille and Racine in England*, 1904, pp. 195-97—has shown, was Corneille. In 1715, a year after Ozell's complete Molière, "appeared the *Cid*, translated from . . . Corneille by J. Ozell." For almost 200 years this enjoyed "the curious eminence of being at the same time one of the most impudent of literary cheats and one of the most successful . . . for this translation is nothing more or less than a reprint of the *Cid* of good old [Joseph] Rutter of the time of Charles I." Rutter's translation had been acted in London at least "as late as 1662.") (3) It is possible "that Ozell borrowed from the acted *Squire Trelooby* more than he admitted," if only (4) because he certainly borrowed therefrom not only its title and its Cornish setting and *characterization* but also the Prologue, Epilogue, and the list of actors who actually appeared in the piece. The title page of the printed play distinctly describes it as "*Squire Trelooby*, Acted at the . . . Theatre Royal . . . March 30, 1704," where the collaborators' version was twice repeated within a few weeks after the publication. Ozell (i.e., the writer of the Preface) states that he had *previously* made his own translation, "designed for the . . . stage" but "prevented" by the collaborators. (This statement does not check with Congreve's, who says: "Somebody thought it worth his while to translate it *again*"—i.e., *after* it was acted?—"and print it as it was acted.") For the rest, the Preface claims two things only: (1) that the printed play restores portions of two scenes not acted (a restoration which perhaps explains Congreve's belief that someone had taken the trouble to translate "again"); (2) that the "author" had "justify'd the Title Page of this Play, wherein I say, acted at . . . Lincoln's Inn Fields, etc." To what extent this justification was achieved also by detailed borrowing from the text of the playhouse copy, or even by a virtual substitution thereof, cannot be determined. The Preface, at all events, minimizes this consideration by urging that the acting version, like the printed one, was a literal translation. All in all, there seems not much reason to doubt that the "justification" was approximately achieved; i.e., that the printed *Squire* is not far removed

whether the printed play fairly represents the acting version in which Congreve, Vanbrugh and Walsh certainly collaborated. The chances are, however, that it is not far removed therefrom.¹ Summers² is justified, at all events, in describing the printed play as "a racy bit of work, and one of which none of the famous names concerned need have been in any way ashamed."³ Some of its horseplay and caricature,⁴ indeed, seem to me almost unmistakably characteristic of Vanbrugh,⁵ and I shall indicate presently an interesting connection, not hitherto noted, between these elements of *Squire Trelooby* and *The Provok'd Wife*.⁶

The Relapse, The Confederacy, and A Journey to London.—

There is no denying the fact that *The Relapse* is a saucy play. Lord Foppington himself says so, and Vanbrugh would probably have admitted it (among friends, and when not under fire) of his other outstanding plays. But it is easy to make too much of this. Vanbrugh's best work has qualities other than sauciness

from the stage version. Nor does Congreve's good-natured disclaimer of responsibility for the printed version seriously disturb this conclusion. The collaboration, he says, was hasty work with "no great matter in it." The hasty publication (about two weeks after the presentation) was "none of ours"—clearly neither purposed nor openly sanctioned by the collaborators, who, still smarting from the Collier controversy, might well have hesitated to claim a "Party-Play" which, according to the Preface, had angered many London Cornishmen and physicians. Yet they would have been in no position, nor would they have had much desire, to take exception to an anonymous publication substantially approximating what they had written for the stage.

¹ See preceding note.

² *Complete Works of William Congreve*, I, 58.

³ This cannot be said of *The Cornish Squire* (1734), which James Ralph tried to pass off as the lost Congreve-Vanbrugh-Walsh version, with "Some inelegancies . . . alter'd." Stylistically and in other respects this piece is essentially an inferior rifacimento of *Squire Trelooby*.

⁴ Squire Trelooby, like Polidorus Hogstye in *Æsop* and Sir Francis Headpiece in *A Journey to London* (and more or less like Sir Tunbelly Clumsey of *The Relapse*) is one of Vanbrugh's favorite country squires come to town to seek "the mode of court" and the preferments thereof, only to meet with ridicule and hard knocks. (See also next note, and below, p. 423.)

⁵ The fact that Vanbrugh revised *Squire Trelooby* for the Haymarket in 1706 is a tacit intimation of his sense of proprietorship in the piece, for this was the time when he was frantically attempting, by writing or revising a whole series of his own plays—*The Confederacy*, *The Mistake*, *The Provok'd Wife*, and *Squire Trelooby*, between October, 1705 and January, 1706: four plays in as many months—to save the huge and acoustically impossible Haymarket from disaster.

⁶ See below, pp. 422-23.

to recommend it; but most critics, thanks to the continued influence of Jeremy Collier, have been too anxious to stand with decorum and morality to recognize properly Vanbrugh's positive contribution to English comedy. To have done with the other side: it is only fair to Vanbrugh to recall that his coarseness and his occasional indulgence in nasty realism (exemplified in the doings of Sir John Brute, of the vile Coupler in *The Relapse*, and the lecherous husbands of *The Confederacy*) has ordinarily, like the coarseness of Fielding, at least the negative merit of being outspoken and free from smirking innuendo. Nor is Vanbrugh consistently heartless, like the genteel Etherege. And in the last analysis even the indefensible bedroom scene of *The Relapse* is less insidiously immoral than the false heroics, the sudden, unfounded repentances and conversions of the sentimental drama. Vanbrugh's positive merits stand out clearly in the plays before us. He has above all things high animal spirits and an unflinching sense of fun, especially in portraying the broad or eccentric humor of character. His dialogue, certainly less brilliant but also less artificial than Congreve's, is at times as vigorous and weighty as Wycherley's, though rarely as ponderous. Some of it is not elegant, but it is always pungent, racy, unlabored. And one need only recall the Lord Foppington scenes or Miss Hoyden's in *The Relapse*, or those between Brass and Dick Amlet and his mother in *The Confederacy*, to agree with Professor Baker that Vanbrugh is more naturally at home in the theatre than almost any of his contemporaries. The cynical levity of some of the things done and said in these plays is undeniable, and so is the fact that Vanbrugh was often loose and careless in the management of his plots. His sure sense of theatrical values, like Sheridan's, is most clearly apparent in his management of individual scenes—such as the triumphant opening, and the watch scenes, of *The Provok'd Wife*—because in them he could deftly attain broad effects without sustained effort. It is to his credit, finally, that in *The Relapse*, *The Provok'd Wife*, and *A Journey to London* he raises solid questions of character and conduct. In the hands of a careful and conscientious artist these might have brought profoundly illuminating responses of the comic spirit, but it must be said that Vanbrugh did not

trouble himself to look into all their implications, certainly not to answer them comprehensively.

Even so, the critics have too often ignored the fact that besides gaiety of manner Vanbrugh has solidity of matter. It is still customary to speak of "the play of ideas" as though it were an invention of Ibsen and the moderns; yet Vanbrugh, like Congreve, Wycherley, and Farquhar, has plenty of ideas and problems for the thoughtful reader of comedy. *The Relapse*, for example, undoubtedly had its inception in a definite idea, even though Vanbrugh tired of it before he finished. Cibber had rounded off *Love's Last Shift* with a sentimental ending in which a rascally husband crowns an eight years' debauch by a sudden and impossible conversion which is gladly accepted by his innocent (and colorless) wife. Vanbrugh's primary impulse—somewhat like Fielding's in starting *Joseph Andrews* as a sequel to Richardson's *Pamela*—seems to have been to see what would happen if the characters were set in motion again without mawkish sentimentality as the propelling force. Incidentally he wanted to see more of Cibber's amusing fop, Sir Novelty Fashion, whom he translated into Lord Foppington, prince of all fops whatsoever. As for the main action, the inevitable happens: the scapegrace husband duly relapses. Unfortunately both Amanda, the wife, and Worthy, her steadfast would-be seducer, had also to be disposed of, and meanwhile Vanbrugh had become so engrossed in his own people,—Young Fashion and Sir Tunbelly, Miss Hoyden and the Nurse—and in their fine fooling of Lord Foppington, that the conclusion of the Amanda-Worthy affair finds room only as a labored after-thought. Perhaps Vanbrugh did not care to have a second relapse in the same play; perhaps these two merely bored him. At all events he ends by virtually taking a leaf out of Cibber's book, and allows the amiable Worthy's "gross desires" to be turned to pure adoration by the lady's "divine virtue." Vanbrugh saves his face by making Worthy wonder "how long this influence may last," but it is obvious that he begs the question, that the two parts of the plot are loosely articulated, and that the chief merit of the play lies in its sprightly dialogue and in the delightful antics of Foppington, the bubbling vivacities of the irrepressible Miss Hoyden,

the redolent bumpkinly downrightness of Sir Tunbely and his retinue,—in a word, in characterization.

Vanbrugh's last play, *A Journey to London*, though unfinished, is distinguished, like his first, by broad but clean-cut characterization and a substantial comic theme. Once more there are two loosely connected plots. One deals with the adventures of Sir Francis, "head of the Headpieces," and his family, who come from the country to enjoy the metropolis, to represent a rotten borough, and to retrieve the family fortunes by fat court appointments—only to meet with hard bumps on the way and the promise of being undone later by sharpers. The other concerns Lady Arabella, an incorrigible gambler and a devotee of all the fashionable frivolities. According to Cibber's report, Vanbrugh had by this time the courage of his convictions as a serious dramatist: he intended to give his fine lady her deserts and "actually to have made her husband turn her out of doors." Cibber thought "such violent measures . . . too severe for comedy." Accordingly, in finishing the piece, he "saves" the lady by making her turn a violent moral somersault in the last scene; in addition he smooths out all the difficulties of the Headpieces. If the author of *Pamela* had been called upon to finish *Joseph Andrews* or *Tom Jones* he could have achieved no finer stroke of unconscious comic irony than Colley Cibber did by thus settling his debt for the sequel of *Love's Last Shift*. Even so, Vanbrugh's confessedly "undigested" fragment contains some of his best writing. Its unpolished dialogue has an unequivocal tang in it which is the authentic smell of life in country and town; its maturely conceived satire smacks strongly of underlying good-nature; and such figures as Sir Francis and his lubberly son, John Moody the servant, and the pert Miss Betty, rank with the best of Vanbrugh's characters.

The Confederacy is something more than a free translation that distinctly outdoes its original. The excellent opening scene, for instance—which at once brings home to us the rich humor of honest Mrs. Amlet and of that "comfortable young man," her hopeful rogue of a son—is Vanbrugh's own, and so are one or two others. On the whole, however, Vanbrugh had only to invest with his own impudent humor a cleverly contrived plot and a diverting

group of characters. The latter he made indisputably his own, and the adventures of the precious necklace upon which the plot hangs lose nothing in his handling. The other side of the piece is sufficiently unpleasant. The intriguing ladies of this play are scribes' wives, but they and their miserly husbands are as frivolous and vile, respectively, as the most unprincipled fine ladies and gentlemen of Restoration comedy. Vanbrugh (having long since announced in his *Vindication* that it is the "business of comedy to shew people what they should do by representing them upon the stage doing what they should not") takes no pains here "to explain the moral to the audience," nor the fact that the rascals win all their desires in the end. He is too busy enjoying them, too heartily satisfied with good Mrs. Amlet, Dick of the cherubim's face, the matchless Brass, and the delightfully roguish Corinna—the best of his several eminently successful sixteen-year-old philosophers in petticoats, a type in which he excelled even such promising young persons as Congreve's Prue.

The Provok'd Wife: Theme.—*The Provok'd Wife* is the Blenheim Castle of Vanbrugh the dramatist, the most massive achievement of his comic muse. It treats with considerable power and certainly with broad humor (too broad, indeed, for squeamish tastes!) the always vital problem of ill-conceived and ill-sorted marriage. Its plot management is less faulty than usual with Vanbrugh. Its people, unbearable though they would be in real life, constitute one of the most vigorously drawn stage-groups in all the range of English comedy. The piece has, moreover, at least occasional insights and reflections upon life, satirical and otherwise, as searching or provocative as any to be found in Restoration comedy, and these are set forth in dialogue which with all its audacious spontaneity has also a degree of finish which tends to support the commonly accepted belief that this play profited by revision.¹ It has faults, but not even its worst detractors can deny that many of its scenes

¹ *The Provok'd Wife* is usually thought to be the play which Vanbrugh is said to have started in the Bastille (see *Life*). Cibber reports that Vanbrugh revised "its looser sheets" at the request of Charles Montague (later Earl of Halifax) for Betterton's company, after a private reading (cf. W. C. Ward, *Vanbrugh*, I, xxviii).

are uproariously and irresistibly funny.¹ On the whole it is, as Genest said, an excellent comedy.

The "seely wedded man" of *The Second Shepherds' Play* admonishes us to "beware well of wedding," since many a wedding has brought home "much silent suffering." The moans and the sly laughter of the more or less harmless household doves of Dryden and his contemporaries bear witness to the same purpose, and so do the smiles and tears of more recent sufferers in Midchannel or in the multitudinous Bills of Divorcement that crowd our theatres. Sir John Brute's sorrowing, to be sure, is anything but silent. In this respect as in others Vanbrugh gives fresh and abounding life to a theme which is always old and always new, but he deserves especial credit for producing a significant comic study of marriage at a time when that subject had been degraded into an intolerably hackneyed joke. Restoration comedy reeks with marital infidelity, laughs at or with it, or takes it for granted—but *The Provok'd Wife* for once looks into some of the whys and wherefores. Sir John, the provoking husband, is a man of humor as well as a coward and a bully: he is as brutally frank in analyzing his own motives as he is in persecuting his wife on the theory that persecution will keep her "honest." The lady, too, thinks and speaks plainly. They have married solely to obtain possession of one another's estate and person, respectively; the result is boredom and worse. Drinking, bullying, and roustering on Sir John's part, and his sprightly lady's frustrated inclination to yield to her lover, bring us merely to a conclusion in which nothing is concluded. Richard Cumberland's objection² that Vanbrugh has "overcharged the odious picture," that he does not "uphold the wife in purity and patience," and that if he had, Doctors-Commons would have furnished a remedy at law, begs the question as completely as Vanbrugh's own attempt, in his *Vindication*, to read into the play a fine moral for brutal husbands.³ Like his immediate dramatic descendant, Squire Sullen

¹ The opening scenes of Acts I and III, for example, and those in which Sir John beats up the watch, scandalizes the clergy, and baffles the honest magistrate.

² Critique on *The Provok'd Wife*, *British Drama*, London, 1817, vol. XIV.

³ "The fable may be a useful admonition to men who have wives not to build

in *The Beaux' Stratagem*, Sir John would have known how to protect himself against any charges at law that might have been brought against him,¹ and the moral of *The Provok'd Wife*, if it has any, is simply that an immoral marriage, in the words of the Second Shepherd, "grief gives . . . as long as one lives." But obvious moralizing, after all, is not a matter of supreme importance. Good comedy does not, as Vanbrugh properly observes,² require a philosopher standing by, "like an interpreter at a puppet-show, to explain the moral . . . The mystery is seldom so deep but the pit and boxes can dive into it." Vanbrugh provided food for thought for those in the pit and boxes who wanted it.

Characterization and Dialogue.—In addition he surrounds his matchless grotesque, Sir John, and that gentleman's excellent gang of drunken lords and colonels, with a group of characters who, at worst, give him every opportunity to shine. At their best they often do, or at least say, good things for themselves. Witness, for example, Lady Brute's comment upon the ingenuous Bellinda's little habit of blowing her nose when embarrassing things are said in the plays ("You must blow your nose half off then, at some plays"), or the more serious but no less keen exchange of views between these two, and between Heartfree and Constant, on the relative "modesty," "virtue," and "wickedness" of the sexes. These two men, the downright "heartfree" one who speedily belies his name, and the constant but none too delectable squire of dames unhappily married, represent types sufficiently familiar in Restoration comedy, and so do the fine ladies. Lady Brute, however, has a better head on her shoulders than most of her kind, and Bellinda bears a slight but refreshing family resemblance to her younger cousins, Miss Hoyden and Corinna. Razor and Made-moiselle, the usual clever servants, and the flustered and fluttering magistrate, are originals as well as types, whereas Lady Fancyfull merely fills a theatrically effective but artificial character part

their security so entirely upon their lady's principles as to pull from under her all the political props of her virtue" (*Vindication*, Ward, II, 406).

¹ Though he might have been willing to consider divorce if he could have fastened the odium of the statutory offense upon his wife (see III, i, p. 461).

² *Vindication*, Ward, II, 396. For another pertinent observation of his, see below, p. 510, n. 3.

on the order of Melantha's in Dryden's *Marriage à la Mode*. Once or twice, perhaps, the persons of the play do and say things that tempt one, with Bellinda, to blow one's nose. When that is done, however, the air is sufficiently clear and clean. These characters are not, as Richard Cumberland has it, "degrading to human nature," for human nature fortunately has a saving sense of humor which responds to broad caricature. "We laugh," says Sir Philip Sidney, "at deformed creatures wherein certainly we cannot delight." We continue to laugh at Sir John in his many reincarnations, from Squire Sullen to Sir Pitt Crawley.

Structure. The Supplementary Scenes.—Structurally *The Provok'd Wife* stands somewhere between the loose-jointed double action of *The Relapse* and the well-wrought *Confederacy*. The several intrigues unfold on familiar lines; ¹ the action—which Vanbrugh did not find ready-made for translation this time—creaks at times, but does not make altogether impossible claims upon one's credulity. Curiously enough, Vanbrugh was never strong in the architectonics of playmaking, but here as elsewhere the excellence of his individual scenes compensates for faults in the larger design. Lady Fancyfull's final masquerading and her malicious letter to Heartfree are thin devices for the critical part of the play in which they stand, but one forgets them in Razor's effective turn-about-face a moment after and in the excellent fooling of Sir John at home and abroad.

In response, perhaps, to one of Jeremy Collier's chief objections, Vanbrugh, in the 1706 revival of the play, took the sting out of the scenes in which Sir John Brute scandalized the clergy—by the simple device of taking him out of the doctor of the parish's gown and putting him into Lady Brute's. Most readers nowadays will agree heartily with Genest that no respectable clergyman need have taken offense at Parson Hiccup, but the remarkable thing about the revision is that Sir John thus translated is, if anything, funnier than ever. I believe that the change from one gown to the other suggested itself to Vanbrugh when, in January, 1706,

¹The Lady Fancyfull-Heartfree-Bellinda triangle, and Lady Fancyfull's descent upon the others at Spring Gardens, may owe something to the central situation in Etherege's *Man of Mode*.

he was revising *Squire Trelooby*, also for the Haymarket, where it re-appeared with one act ¹ entirely rewritten a week after the new version of *The Provok'd Wife*.² In the third act of the original version of the *Squire*, that gentleman, "drest like a woman," struts about, stands lustily by his virtue, and "mimicks the way of a woman of quality" with an unsympathetic watch and constable—for all the world like Sir John himself.³ Sir John's assumption of his lady's gown, then, would seem to suggest that Vanbrugh like other good dramatists, knew how to borrow effectively from himself.

Stage History. Vanbrugh and Collier.—The stage history of our play, so far as we can trace it, might well serve as a text for moralists; incidentally it furnishes a puzzling commentary upon the vagaries of fame in the theatre. Undoubtedly Collier's attack and the rule of sentimentalism and decorum in the next age counted heavily against the play then as now. Mr. John Palmer rightly suggests that in one sense Vanbrugh had only himself to blame for this. Collier brought home the fact that the Restoration stage reflected unblushingly the fashionable licentiousness of the age, and that the dramatists did not trouble themselves to mete out moral or poetic justice to their clever rascals. Vanbrugh's *Vindication*, one of the sprightliest of the many would-be replies to Collier, is disarming by virtue of its good-nature and its brazen humor, but inconsequential in its reasoning. He laughs effectively at the parson's excessive zeal and lack of humor, but for the rest he blunders egregiously. Forgetting his own contention that it is not the function of the dramatist to play the puppet-show raisonneur, he seeks in vain to read *ex post facto* moral lessons into his plays. Above all, forgetting that comic laughter, precious as it is, is not the only test of truth, he refused to take the parson seriously. Posterity went to the other extreme, and Vanbrugh's reputation and English comedy suffered the consequences.

¹ The "last," according to *The Daily Courant* (Jan. 28, etc.); Genest says Act II.

² Revived Jan. 19; acted three times. *Squire Trelooby* revived Jan. 28 (Genest, II, 347).

³ The gentlewomanly Squire longs "to break the neck" of the coachman, cries a rape, etc. Sir John, in the same position, shouts: "Hands off, you ruffians! My honour's dearer to me than my life," etc. (See close of Additional Sc. I, below, p. 527.)

One of the immediate effects of Collier's "tragical outcries" was the temporary eclipse of *The Provok'd Wife*. The *Short View* appeared in March, 1698, when the play was in its lusty youth, Betterton, Mrs. Barry, and Mrs. Bracegirdle having given it an excellent start in 1697. It seems not to have found its way back to the stage until 1706, and even then, in spite of the disappearance of Parson Hiccup, it remained for but three performances. During the next ninety years it fared better, and enlisted the services of many of the ruling monarchs of the stage. Colley Cibber and Macklin, Mrs. Clive and Mrs. Abington, Ned Shuter and Henderson, but above all Quin and Garrick—who, with Mrs. Bellamy and Peg Woffington to help, played Sir John against each other at Covent Garden and Drury Lane—kept the play alive and the spectators in "continual glee." Even so, however, Genest records less than a score of revivals—not all of them successful—up to 1797, after which it virtually¹ disappeared as an acting play, whereas many an inferior piece has survived almost to our time.² Incapable of sugar-coating, *The Provok'd Wife* has proved itself too strong, in one sense or another, to appeal to the taste or capacity of modern actors and audiences.

Vanbrugh's Position in English Comedy.—To measure Vanbrugh's contribution to English comedy by his immediate influence upon its development is to do him less than justice. He was undeniably of the decline, but the actual fall, the submersion of the comic spirit, is chargeable immediately to the sentimentalists and ultimately to the inevitable ebb and flow of things. His reaction to the new morality, Palmer to the contrary notwithstanding, was not "wilful." Careless it may have been, in part; in the large it certainly grew naturally out of his honest sense of humor and his instinctive knowledge of what is "ultimately right" in the theatre. He might perhaps have been a better dramatist if he

¹ Genest has no further mention of it, nor have I been able to trace it in nineteenth-century playbills, English and American. More recently, however (January 12, 1912), the piece has been revived by the Stage Society, at King's Hall, Covent Garden (cf. Dobrée and Webb, *Vanbrugh*, I, 112), and by The Phoenix Society, on January 12 and 14, 1919 (Summers, *The Restoration Theatre*, p. 325).

² *The Provok'd Husband* was played year after year until after 1850; *The Confederacy* was revived in 1825; *The Relapse*, in various and sundry adaptations has appeared in England and America as late as 1870.

had taken the theatre more seriously, but to hold with Palmer that by so doing he might have "started English comedy upon a fresh career" is to ignore two patent facts,—first, that English comedy at the end of the seventeenth century was not ready for a fresh start; second, that the characteristic freshness and strength of Vanbrugh's work is that of the man himself: that if he had taken more conscious pains as a dramatic artist he might have had less energy left for the cultivation of the many other interests which are reflected in the broad, bold, and happy vigor of his plays. He might have been different but he would probably not have been Vanbrugh. Being himself, he holds a less important place in English comedy than greater artists such as Congreve or sturdier moralists such as Wycherley. Yet his position is secure. Like Shadwell before him and Farquhar after him he helped to enlarge the *dramatis personæ* and to extend the range of the comedy of manners. To the usual beaux and belles and fops he adds such originals as Sir John Brute and Sir Tunbely, the Amlets and the Headpieces. On more occasions than one he shifts the scene from London, replacing the brilliant wit of Congreve's drawing-rooms with the fun and broad humor of the country. He does not forget, finally, that it is an important part of the comic dramatist's business to provide lively action, and he packs into his best plays much solid food for thoughtful laughter.

Previous Editions and the Present Text.—This text is based on the first edition, the quarto of 1697 (Q1) in the Library of the University of California, collated with the Harvard College Library copies of the two later quartos, of 1698 (Q2) and 1709 (Q3) respectively. These follow Q1 with few material variations, and so do the several later prints of the play in Bell's *British Theatre* and other familiar play collections of the nineteenth century. In accordance with the rules of this series, my text reproduces the spelling (but not the eccentricities of punctuation and style of capitals) of the *editio princeps*. The additional scenes for Act IV are here printed from the Dublin edition (D.) printed "by Edw. Bate for James Kelburn, Bookseller" ¹ in 1743, when these scenes,

¹ W. C. Ward (*Vanbrugh*, I, 272 ff.), prints these scenes from an edition, also of Dublin, 1743, "printed by S. Powell for George Risk," the title page of which

so far as is known, were first printed. I am indebted to the Library of Yale University for the use of its rare copy of this edition. W. C. Ward (W.) in 1893 (*Sir John Vanbrugh*), and Brander Matthews and Paul R. Lieder in 1924 (*Chief British Dramatists*), have provided good modernized texts of the play. Somewhat less reliable is A. E. H. Swain's text in the Mermaid edition (M.). The sumptuous edition of Vanbrugh's *Complete Works* (1927-28) by Bonamy Dobrée and Geoffrey Webb appeared after the preparation of the present text.¹ Mr. Dobrée's text, on the whole, is admirable, though it adopts the "corrected" spelling of Q3 and allows a few slight inaccuracies to creep in. I have inserted occasional cross references to his notes.

ALWIN THALER.

also states that the additional scenes were "never before printed." I have not seen a copy bearing this imprint, but Ward's reprint of it indicates that except for very slight variations (for which see notes) it is identical with the version printed for Kelburn.

¹ As did also Paul Mueschke and Jeannette Fleisher's "Re-Evaluation of Vanbrugh," in *PMLA* XLIX, 848 ff. (September, 1934).

T H E
Provok'd Wife :
A
COMEDY,

As it is Acted at the
New Theatre,
IN
Little Lincolns-Inn-Fields.

By the Author of a New Comedy call'd the *Relapse*, or
Virtue in Danger.

L O N D O N ,
Printed by J. O. for R. Wellington, at the Lute in St. Paul's Church
Yard, and Sam. Briscoe, in Covent-Garden 1697.

ADVERTISEMENT.

Prologue

To the Provok'd Wife, spoke by Mistress Bracegirdle.¹

Since 'tis the intent and business of the stage,
To copy out the follies of the age;
To hold to every man a faithful glass,
And shew him of what species he's an ass:
I hope the next that teaches in the school, 5
Will shew our author he's a scribbling fool.
And that the satyr² may be sure to bite,
Kind Heav'n, inspire some venom'd priest³ to write,
And grant some ugly lady⁴ may indite!
For I wou'd have him lash'd, by heavens! I wou'd, 10
Till his presumption swam away in blood.
Three plays at once⁵ proclaims a face of brass—
No matter what they are; that's not the case—
To write three plays, ev'n that's to be an ass.
But what I least forgive—he knows it too, 15
For to his cost he lately has known you.⁵
Experience shews, to many a writers smart,
You hold a court where mercy ne're had part;
So much of the old serpent's sting you have,
You love to damn, as Heav'n delights to save. 20

¹ See below, p. 537.

² satire.

³ As though prophetic of Jeremy Collier (see Critical Essay), and perhaps reminiscent of Vanbrugh's rejoinder (Preface, *The Relapse*) to certain clergymen, "saints, thorough-pac'd . . . with skrew'd faces and wry mouths," who "love nothing but their altars and themselves." They had apparently objected to *The Relapse*.

⁴ Possibly the same as "a certain lady (let no one take it to herself that is handsome)" who had "highly blamed" *The Relapse* for "the barrenness" of its conclusion (Preface, *Relapse*). Perhaps this ugly lady was the heroine of Vanbrugh's one surviving poem, "To a Lady More Cruel Than Fair" (cf. Dametz, *Vanbrugh's Leben und Werke*, pp. 22-23).

⁵ *The Relapse*, *Æsop*, and *The Provok'd Wife*, acted December, 1696, January, 1697, and April or May, 1697, respectively. *Æsop* was unsuccessful.

In foreign parts, let a bold voluntiere
For publick good, upon the stage appear,
He meets ten thousand smiles to dissipate his fear.

All tickle on th' adventuring young beginner,
And only scourge th' incorragible sinner; 25

They touch indeed his faults, but with a hand
So gentle, that his merit still may stand:
Kindly they buoy the follies of his pen,
That he may shun 'em when he writes again.

But 'tis not so in this good-natur'd town; 30
All's one, an ox, a poet, or a crown:

Old England's play was always knocking down.

Drammatis Personæ

CONSTANT

HEARTFREE

SIR JOHN BRUTE

TREBLE, *a Singing Master*

RASOR, *Vallet de Chambre to Sir J. B.*

Justice of the Peace

LORD RAKE, } *Companions to Sir J. B.*

Coll. BULLY, }

Constable *and* Watch.

Mr. Verbrugen.

Mr. Hudson.

Mr. Betterton.

Mr. Bowman.

Mr. Bowen.

Mr. Bright.

LADY BRUTE

BELLINDA, *her Neice*

LADY FANCYFULL

Madamoiselle

COR[NET] *and* PIPE, *Servants to* LADY FANCY[FULL].

Mrs. Barry.

Mrs. Bracegirdle.

Mrs. Bowman.

Mrs. Willis.

[SCENE: London.]

THE Provok'd Wife

Act the First. Scene [I]. *Sir John Brute's House.*

Enter SIR JOHN, solus.

What cloying meat is love—when matrimony's the sauce to it! Two years marriage has debauch't my five senses. Every thing I see, every thing I hear, every thing I feel, every thing I smell, and every thing I taste—methinks has Wife in't. No boy was ever so weary of his tutor, no girl of her bib, no nun of doing penance nor old maid of being chaste, as I am of being married. Sure there's a secret curse entail'd upon the very name of wife.¹ My lady is a young lady, a fine lady, a witty lady, a virtuous lady—and yet I hate her. There is but one thing on earth I loath beyond her: that's fighting. Wou'd my courage come up but to a fourth part of my ill-nature, I'd stand buff² to her relations, and thrust her out of doors. But marriage has sunk me down to such an ebb of resolution, I dare not draw my sword, tho even to get rid of my wife. But here she comes.

Enter LADY BRUTE.

Lady Brute. Do you dine at home to day, Sir John? 15

Sir John. Why, do you expect I shou'd tell you what I don't know my self?

Lady Brute. I thought there was no harm in asking you.

Sir John. If thinking wrong were an excuse for impertinence, women might be justifi'd in most things they say or do. 20

Lady Brute. I'm sorry I have said any thing to displease you.

¹ Cf. on this theme Byron, *Don Juan*, III, viii.

² firm or unflinchingly against.

Sir John. Sorrow for things past is of as little importance to me, as my dining at home or abroad ought to be to you.

Lady Brute. My enquiry was only that I might have provided what you lik'd. 25

Sir John. Six to four you had been in the wrong there again; for what I lik'd yesterday I don't like to day, and what I like to day, 'tis odds I mayn't like to morrow.

Lady Brute. But if I had ask'd you what you lik'd?

Sir John. Why then there would have been more asking about it than the thing was worth. 31

Lady Brute. I wish I did but know how I might please you.

Sir John. Ay, but that sort of knowledge is not a wife's talent.

Lady Brute. What e'er my talent is, I'm sure my will has ever been to make you easie. 35

Sir John. If women were to have their wills, the world wou'd be finely govern'd.

Lady Brute. What reason have I given you to use me as you do of late? It once was otherwise: you married me for love.

Sir John. And you me for money: so you have your reward, and I have mine. 41

Lady Brute. What is it that disturbs you?

Sir John. A parson.

Lady Brute. Why, what has he done to you?

Sir John. He has married me. 45

[Exit SIR JOHN.]

LADY BRUTE *sola.*

The devil's in the fellow, I think!—I was told before I married him, that thus 'twou'd be: but I thought I had charms enough to govern him; and that where there was an estate, a woman must needs be happy; so my vanity has deceiv'd me, and my ambition has made me uneasie. But ¹ some comfort still! If one wou'd be reveng'd of him, these are good times; a woman may have a gallant, and a separate maintenance too.—The surly puppy!—Yet he's a fool for't, for hitherto he has been no monster: but who knows how far he may provoke me? I never lov'd him, yet I have been

¹ Eds. (unnecessarily) insert "there's."

ever true to him; and that, in spite of all the attacks of art and nature upon a poor weak womans heart, in favour of a tempting lover. Methinks so noble a defence as I have made, shou'd be rewarded with a better usage.—Or who can tell?—Perhaps a good part of what I suffer from my husband, may be a judgment upon me for my cruelty to my lover.—Lord, with what pleasure cou'd I indulge that thought, were there but a possibility of finding arguments to make it good!—And how do I know but there may?—Let me see.—What opposes?—My matrimonial vow?—Why, what did I vow? I think I promis'd to be true to my husband. Well; and he promis'd to be kind to me. But he han't kept his word.—Why then I'm absolv'd from mine.—Ay, that seems clear to me. The argument's good between the king¹ and the people; why not between the husband and the wife? O, but that condition was not exprest.—No matter, 'twas understood. Well, by all I see, if I argue the matter a little longer with my self, I shan't find so many bugbears in the way as I thought I shou'd. Lord, what fine notions of virtue do we women take up upon the credit of old foolish philosophers! Virtue's it's own reward, virtue's this, virtue's that;—virtue's an ass, and a gallant's worth forty on't.

Enter BELLINDA.

Lady Brute. Good-morrow, dear cousin. 75

Bel. Good-morrow, madam; you look pleas'd this morning.

Lady Brute. I am so.

Bel. With what, pray?

Lady Brute. With my husband.

Bel. Drown husbands; for your's is a provoking fellow: as he went out just now, I pray'd him to tell me what time of day 'twas; and he ask'd me if I took him for the church-clock, that was oblig'd to tell all the parish. 83

Lady Brute. He has been saying some good obliging things to me too. In short, Bellinda, he has us'd me so barbarously of late, that I cou'd almost resolve to play the down-right wife—and cuckold him. 87

¹ I.e., a constitutional monarch, governing by consent of the governed, as contrasted later (II, i, p. 448) with "an absolute king" who would do violence to Magna Charta.

Bel. That wou'd be down-right indeed.

Lady Brute. Why, after all, there's more to be said for't than you'd imagine, child. I know, according to the strict statute law of religion, I shou'd do wrong; but if there were a Court of Chancery¹ in Heaven, I'm sure I shou'd cast him. 92

Bel. If there were a House of Lords, you might.

Lady Brute. In either I shou'd infallibly carry my cause. Why, he is the first aggressor. Not I. 95

Bel. Ay, but you know, we must return good for evil.

Lady Brute. That may be a mistake in the translation.—Prethee be of my opinion, Bellinda; for I'm positive I'm in the right; and if you'll keep up the prerogative of a woman, you'll likewise be positive you are in the right, when ever you do any thing you have a mind to. But I shall play the fool, and jest on, till I make you begin to think I'm in earnest. 102

Bel. I sha'n't take the liberty, madam, to think of any thing that you desire to keep a secret from me.

Lady Brute. Alas, my dear, I have no secrets. My heart cou'd never yet confine my tongue. 106

Bel. Your eyes, you mean; for I'm sure I have seen them gadding, when your tongue has been lockt up safe enough.

Lady Brute. My eyes gadding? Prethee after who, child?

Bel. Why, after one that thinks you hate him, as much as I know you love him. 111

Lady Brute. Constant, you mean.

Bel. I do so.

Lady Brute. Lord, what shou'd put such a thing into your head?

Bel. That which puts things into most peoples heads, observation. 116

Lady Brute. Why, what have you observ'd, in the name of wonder?

Bel. I have observ'd you blush when you meet him; force yourself away from him; and then be out of humour with every thing about you: in a word, never was poor creature so spurr'd on by desire, and so rein'd in with fear. 122

Lady Brute. How strong is fancy!

¹ I.e., of equity.

Bel. How weak is woman!

Lady Brute. Prethee, neice, have a better opinion of your aunt's inclination. 126

Bel. Dear aunt, have a better opinion of your neice's understanding.

Lady Brute. You'll make me angry.

Bel. You'll make me laugh. 130

Lady Brute. Then you are resolv'd to persist?

Bel. Positively.

Lady Brute. And all I can say—

Bel. Will signifie nothing.

Lady Brute. Tho' I should swear 'twere false— 135

Bel. I shou'd think it true.

Lady Brute. Then let us both forgive; [*kissing her*—for we have both offended: I, in making a secret; you, in discovering it.

Bel. Good-nature may do much: but you have more reason to forgive one, than I have to pardon t'other. 140

Lady Brute. 'Tis true, Bellinda, you have given me so many proofs of your friendship, that my reserve has been indeed a crime. But that you may more easily forgive me, remember, child, that when our nature prompts us to a thing our honour and religion have forbid us, we wou'd (were't possible) conceal even from the soul it self, the knowledge of the bodies weakness. 146

Bel. Well, I hope, to make your friend amends, you'll hide nothing from her for the future, tho' the body shou'd still grow weaker and weaker.

Lady Brute. No, from this moment I have no more reserve; and for a proof of my repentance, I own, Bellinda, I'm in danger. Merit and wit assault me from without; nature and love sollicite me within; my husbands barbarous usage piques me to revenge; and Sathan, catching at the fair occasion, throws in my way that vengeance, which of all vengeance pleases women best. 155

Bel. 'Tis well Constant don't know the weakness of the fortifications; for, o' my conscience, he'd soon come on to the assault!

Lady Brute. Ay, and I'm afraid carry the town too. But whatever you may have observ'd, I have dissembled so well as to keep him ignorant. So you see I'm no coquet, Bellinda: and if you

follow my advice, you'll never be one neither. 'Tis true, coquetry is one of the main ingredients in the natural composition of a woman; and I, as well as others, cou'd be well enough pleas'd to see a crowd of young fellows ogling, and glancing, and watching all occasions to do forty foolish officious things. Nay, shou'd some of 'em push on, even to hanging or drowning, why—faith—if I shou'd let pure woman alone,¹ I shou'd e'en be but too well pleas'd with it. 168

Bel. I'll swear 'twou'd tickle me strangely.

Lady Brute. But after all, 'tis a vicious practice in us, to give the least encouragement but where we design to come to a conclusion. For 'tis an unreasonable thing to engage a man in a disease, which we before-hand resolve we never will apply a cure to.

Bel. 'Tis true; but then a woman must abandon one of the supream blessings of her life. For I am fully convinc'd, no man has half that pleasure in possessing a mistress, as a woman has in jilting a gallant. 177

Lady Brute. The happiest woman then on earth must be our neighbour.

Bel. O the impertinent composition! She has vanity and affectation enough to make her a ridiculous original,² in spite of all that art and nature ever furnisht to any of her sex before her.

Lady Brute. She concludes all men her captives; and whatever course they take, it serves to confirm her in that opinion.

Bel. If they shun her, she thinks 'tis modesty, and takes it for a proof of their passion. 186

Lady Brute. And if they are rude to her, 'tis conduct, and done to prevent town talk.

Bel. When her folly makes 'em laugh, she thinks they are pleased with her wit. 190

Lady Brute. And when her impertinence makes 'em dull, concludes they are jealous of her favours.

Bel. All their actions and their words, she takes for granted, aim at her.

Lady Brute. And pities all other women, because she thinks they envy her. 196

¹ let mere feminine love of flattery rule.

² eccentric.

Bel. Pray, out of pity to our selves, let us find a better subject, for I'm weary of this. Do you think your husband inclin'd to jealousy?

Lady Brute. O, no; he do's not love me well enough for that.—Lord, how wrong men's maxims are! They are seldom jealous of their wives, unless they are very fond of 'em; whereas they ought to consider the women's¹ inclinations; for there depends their fate. Well, men may talk; but they are not so wise as we—that's certain. 205

Bel. At least in our affairs.

Lady Brute. Nay, I believe we shou'd out do 'em in the business of the state too: for me thinks they do and undo, and make but mad² work on't.

Bel. Why then don't we get into the intrigues of government as well as they? 211

Lady Brute. Because we have intrigues of our own that make us more sport, child. And so let's in and consider of 'em. [*Exeunt.*]

Scene [II]. *A Dressing Room.*

Enter LADY FANCYFULL, Mademoiselle, and CORNET.

Lady Fan. How do I look this morning?

Cor. Your ladyship looks very ill, truly.

Lady Fan. Lard, how ill-natur'd thou art, Cornet, to tell me so, tho the thing shou'd be true! Don't you know that I have humility enough to be but too easily out of conceit with my self? Hold the glass; I dare swear that will have more manners than you have. Mademoiselle, let me have your opinion too. 7

Madam. My opinion pe, matam, dat your ladyship never look so well in your life.

Lady Fan. Well, the French are the prettiest, obliging people; they say the most acceptable, well-manner'd things—and never flatter. 12

Madam. Your ladyship say great justice inteed.

Lady Fan. Nay, every thing's just in my house but Cornet.

¹ Q1 "womans."

² So Q1; D., W., and M., "bad."

The very looking-glass gives her the *dementi*. But I'm almost afraid it flatters me, it makes me look so very engaging. 16

[*Looking affectedly in the glass.*]

Madam. Inteed, matam, your face pe hansomer den all de looking-glass in tee world, croyiez-moy.

Lady Fan. But is it possible my eyes can be so languishing—and so very full of fire? 20

Madam. Matam, if de glass was burning-glass, I believe your eyes set de fire in de house.

Lady Fan. You may take that night-gown, mademoiselle.—Get out of the room, Cornet; I can't endure you. This wench, methinks, does look so unsufferably ugly. [Exit COR.]

Madam. Every ting look ugly, matam, dat stand by your latiship. 27

Lady Fan. No really, mademoiselle, methinks you look mighty pretty.

Madam. Ah matam; de moon have no eclat ven de sun appear.

Lady Fan. O pretty expression! Have you ever been in love, mademoiselle? 32

Madam. Ouy, matam. [Sighing.]

Lady Fan. And were you belov'd again?

Madam. No, matam. 35

Lady Fan. O ye gods! What an unfortunate creature shou'd I be in such a case! But Nature has made me nice, for my own defence: I'm nice, strangely nice, mademoiselle; I believe were the merit of whole mankind bestow'd upon one single person, I shou'd still think the fellow wanted something to make it worth my while to take notice of him; and yet I could love; nay, fondly love, were it possible to have a thing made on purpose for me: for I'm not cruel, mademoiselle; I'm only nice. 43

Madam. Ah matam, I wish I was fine gentelman for your sake. I do all de ting in de world to get leetel way into your heart. I make song, I make verse, I give you de serenade, I give great many present to mademoiselle; I no eat, I no sleep, I be lean, I be mad, I hang my self, I drown my self. Ah ma chere dame, que je vous aimerois! [Embracing her.]

Lady Fan. Well, the French have strange obliging ways with 'em; you may take those two pair of gloves, mademoiselle. 51

Madam. Me humbly tanke my sweet lady.

Enter CORNET.

Cor. Madam, here's a letter for your ladyship by the penny-post.

Lady Fan. Some new conquest, I'll warrant you. For without vanity, I look'd extreamly clear last night when I went to the Park.¹—O agreeable! Here's a new song made of me. And ready set too! O thou welcome thing! [*Kissing it.*—Call Pipe hither, she shall sing it instantly. 58

Enter PIPE.

Here, sing me this new song, Pipe.

SONG.

I.

Fly, fly, you happy shepherds, fly; 60
Avoid Philira's charms;
The rigour of her heart denies
The heaven that's in her arms.
Ne'er hope to gaze, and then retire,
Nor yielding, to be blest: 65
Nature, who form'd her eyes of fire,
Of ice compos'd her breast.

II.

Yet, lovely maid, this once believe
A slave whose zeal you move;
The gods, alas, your youth deceive, 70
Their heaven consists in love.
In spite of all the thanks you owe,
You may reproach 'em this:
That where they did their form bestow,
They have deny'd their bliss. 75

¹ St. James's Park. Its popular promenades and drives, improved and opened to the public by Charles II, served as a favorite rendezvous for fashionable lovers (see text below, p. 442).

Lady Fan. Well, there may be faults, mademoiselle, but the design is so very obliging, 'twou'd be a matchless ingratitude in me to discover 'em.

Madam. Ma foy, madame, I tink de gentelman's song tell you de trute. If you never love, you never be happy—Ah—que j'aime¹ l'amour moy! 81

Enter Servant with another letter.

Ser. Madam, here's another letter for your ladyship.

Lady Fan. 'Tis thus I am importun'd every morning, madamoiselle. Pray how do the French ladies when they are thus accablées? 85

Madam. Matam, dey never complain. Au contraire, when one Frense laty have got hundred lover—den she do all she can—to get hundred more.

Lady Fan. Well, strike me dead, I think they have le gout bon. For 'tis an unutterable pleasure to be ador'd by all the men, and envy'd by all the women—Yet I'll swear I'm concerned at the torture I give 'em. Lard, why was I form'd to make the whole creation uneasy? But let me read my letter. [*Reads.*]

"If you have a mind to hear of your faults, instead of being praised for your virtues, take the pains to walk in the Green walk in St. James's² with your woman an hour hence. You'll there meet one who hates you for some things, as he cou'd love you for others, and therefore is willing to endeavour your reformation.—If you come to the place I mention, you'll know who I am; if you don't, you never shall: so take your choice." 100

This is strangely familiar, mademoiselle; now have I a provoking fancy to know who this impudent fellow is.

Madam. Den take your scarf and your mask, and go to de rendezvous. De Frense laty do justement comme sa.

Lady Fan. Rendezvous! What, rendezvous with a man, madamoiselle! 106

Madam. Eh, pourquoy non?

¹ Q1 (incorrectly) "l'aime."

² See above, p. 441, n.

Lady Fan. What, and a man perhaps I never saw in my life?

Madam. Tant mieux: c'est donc quelque chose de nouveau.

Lady Fan. Why, how do I know what designs he may have? He may intend to ravish me, for aught I know. 111

Madam. Ravish!—Bagatelle. I would fain see one impudent rogue ravish mademoiselle! Ouy, je le voudrois.

Lady Fan. O, but my reputation, mademoiselle! My reputation! Ah ma chere reputation! 115

Madam. Matam, Quand on l'a une fois perdue—on n'en est plus embarrassée.

Lady Fan. Fe, mademoiselle, fe! Reputation is a jewel.

Madam. Qui coute bien chere, matam.

Lady Fan. Why sure you would not sacrifice your honour to your pleasure? 121

Madam. Je suis philosophe.

Lady Fan. Bless me, how you talk! Why, what if honour be a burden, mademoiselle, must it not be born?

Madam. Chaque un a sa fason ¹—Quand quelque chose m'incommode moy—je m'en défais, vite. 126

Lady Fan. Get you gone, you little naughty French woman, you; I vow and swear I must turn you out of doors if you talk thus.

Madam. Turn me out of doors!—Turn your self out of doors, and go see what de gentelman have to say to you—Tenez. Voila [*Giving her her things hastily*—vostre esharpe, voila vostre quoife, voila vostre masque, voila tout. Hey, Mercure, Coquin! Call one chair for matam, and one oder [*calling within*—for me: Va t'en vite. [*Turning to her lady, and helping her on hastily with her things*.—Alons, madame, depechez-vous donc. Mon Dieu, quelles scrupules! 136

Lady Fan. Well, for once, mademoiselle, I'll follow your advice, out of the intemperate desire I have to know who this ill bred fellow is. But I have too much delicatessen, to make a practice on't.

Madam. Belle chose vraiment que la delicatessen, lors qu'il s'agit de se devertir—à za ²—Vous voila équipéee, partons.—He bien!—q'avez vous donc? 142

Lady Fan. J'ay peur.

¹ fason.

² ça.

Madam. J' n'en ay point moy.

Lady Fan. I dare not go.

145

Madam. Demeurez donc.

Lady Fan. Je suis poltrone.

Madam. Tant pis pour vous.

Lady Fan. Curiosity's a wicked devil.

Madam. C'est une charmante sainte.

150

Lady Fan. It ruin'd our first parents.

Madam. Elle a bien diverti leurs enfants.

Lady Fan. L'honneur est contre.

Madam. Le plaisir est pour.

Lady Fan. Must I then go?

155

Madam. Must you go?—Must you eat? Must you drink? Must you sleep? Must you live? De nature bid you do one; de nature bid you do toder. Vous me ferez enragier.

Lady Fan. But when reason corrects nature, mademoiselle!—

Madam. Elle est donc bien insolente. C'est sa sœur aînée.

160

Lady Fan. Do you then prefer your nature to your reason, mademoiselle?

Madam. Ouy da.

Lady Fan. Pourquoi?

Madam. Because my nature make me merry, my reason make me mad.

166

Lady Fan. Ah, la méchante Fransoise!

Madam. Ah, la belle Angloise!

[Forcing her lady off.]

THE END OF THE FIRST ACT.

Act the Second. Scene [I]. *St. James's Park.*

Enter LADY FANCYFULL *and* Mademoiselle.

Lady Fan. Well, I vow, mademoiselle, I'm strangely impatient to know who this confident fellow is.

Enter HEARTFREE.

Look, there's Heartfree. But sure it can't be him; he's a profess'd

woman-hater. Yet who knows what my wicked eyes may have done?
5

Madam. Il nous approche, madam.

Lady Fan. Yes, 'tis he: now will he be most intolerably cavalier, tho' he should be in love with me.

Heart. Madam, I'm your humble servant: I perceive you have more humility and good-nature than I thought you had. 10

Lady Fan. What you attribute to humility and good-nature, sir, may perhaps be only due to curiosity. I had a mind to know who 'twas had ill manners enough to write that letter.

[*Throwing him his letter.*

Heart. Well, and now, I hope, you are satisfied.

Lady Fan. I am so, sir: Good b'w'y¹ to ye. 15

Heart. Nay, hold there; tho' you have done your business, I han't done mine: by your ladship's leave, we must have one moments prattle together. Have you a mind to be the prettiest woman about town, or not? How she stares upon me! What! This passes for an impertinent question with you now, because you think you are so already? 21

Lady Fan. Pray, sir, let me ask you a question in my turn: by what right do you pretend to examine me?

Heart. By the same right that the strong govern the weak, because I have you in my power; for you cannot get so quickly to your coach, but I shall have time enough to make you hear every thing I have to say to you. 27

Lady Fan. These are strange liberties you take, Mr. Heartfree.

Heart. They are so, madam, but there's no help for it; for know that I have a design upon you. 30

Lady Fan. Upon me, sir!

Heart. Yes; and one that will turn to your glory, and my comfort, if you will but be a little wiser than—you use to be.

Lady Fan. Very well, sir.

Heart. Let me see—your vanity, madam, I take to be about some eight degrees higher than any womans in the town, let t'other be who she will; and my indifference is naturally about the same pitch. Now, cou'd you find the way to turn this indiffer-

¹ The normal form, in Vanbrugh's time, of "good-bye."

ence into fire and flames, methinks your vanity ought to be satisfied; and this, perhaps, you might bring about upon pretty reasonable terms. 41

Lady Fan. And pray at what rate would this indifference be bought off, if one shou'd have so deprav'd an appetite to desire it?

Heart. Why, madam, to drive a Quaker's bargain,¹ and make but one word with you, if I do part with it—you must lay me down—your affectation. 46

Lady Fan. My affectation, sir!

Heart. Why, I ask you nothing but what you may very well spare.

Lady Fan. You grow rude, sir. Come, mademoiselle, 'tis high time to be gone. 51

Madam. Alons, alons, alons.

Heart. [*stopping 'em*—Nay, you may as well stand still; for hear me you shall, walk which way you please.

Lady Fan. What mean you, sir? 55

Heart. I mean to tell you, that you are the most ungrateful woman upon earth.

Lady Fan. Ungrateful! To who?

Heart. To nature.

Lady Fan. Why, what has nature done for me? 60

Heart. What you have undone by art! It made you handsom; it gave you beauty to a miracle, a shape without a fault, wit enough to make them relish,—and so turn'd you loose to your own discretion; which has made such work with you, that you are become the pity of our sex, and the jest of your own. There is not a feature in your face, but you have found the way to teach it some affected convulsion; your feet, your hands, your very fingers ends are directed never to move without some ridiculous air or other; and your language is a suitable trumpet, to draw peoples eyes upon the raree-show. 70

Madam. [*aside*.—Est ce qu'on fait l'amour en Angleterre. comme sa?

¹ Quaker merchants held that they must always speak truth and deal fairly. Consequently they had no sliding scale of prices. They fixed a price and stuck to it without bargaining.

Lady Fan. [*aside.*—Now could I cry for madness, but that I know he'd laugh at me for it.

Heart. Now do you hate me for telling you the truth, but that's because you don't believe it is so; for were you once convinc'd of that, you'd reform for your own sake. But 'tis as hard to perswade a woman to quit any thing that makes her ridiculous, as 'tis to prevail with a poet to see a fault in his own play. 79

Lady Fan. Every circumstance of nice breeding must needs appear ridiculous to one who has so natural an antipathy to good manners. 82

Heart. But suppose I could find the means to convince you, that the whole world is of my opinion, and that those who flatter and commend you, do it to no other intent, but to make you persevere in your folly, that they may continue in their mirth? 86

Lady Fan. Sir, tho' you and all that world you talk of should be so impertinently officious, as to think to perswade me I don't know how to behave my self, I should still have charity enough for my own understanding, to believe my self in the right, and all you in the wrong. 91

Madam. Le voila mort.

[*Exeunt* LADY FANCYFULL and Mademoiselle.

Heart. [*gazing after her.*—There her single clapper¹ has publish'd the sense of the whole sex.—Well, this once I have endeavour'd to wash the blackamoor white, but henceforward I'll sooner undertake to teach sincerity to a courtier, generosity to an usurer, honesty to a lawyer, nay, humility to a divine, than discretion to a woman I see has once set her heart upon playing the fool. 98

Enter CONSTANT.

'Morrow, Constant.

Const. Good-morrow, Jack! What are you doing here this morning? 101

Heart. Doing! Guess, if thou canst.—Why I have been endeavouring to perswade my Lady Fancyfull, that she's the foolish-est woman about town.

¹ I.e., her tongue,—the familiar likeness (it appears in Shakespeare and elsewhere) between the tongue and a bell clapper.

Const. A pretty endeavour, truly! 105

Heart. I have told her in as plain English as I could speak, both what the town says of her, and what I think of her. In short, I have us'd her as an absolute king would do Magna Charta.

Const. And how does she take it?

Heart. As children do pills; bite 'em, but can't swallow 'em. 110

Const. But, prithee, what has put it into your head, of all mankind, to turn reformer?

Heart. Why one thing was, the morning hung upon my hands, I did not know what to do with my self; and another was, that as little as I care for women, I could not see with patience one that heaven had taken such wondrous pains about, be so very industrious to make her self the Jack Pudding of the creation. 117

Const. Well, now could I almost wish to see my cruel mistress make the self-same use of what heaven has done for her, that so I might be cur'd of a disease that makes me so very uneasie; for love, love is the devil, Heartfree. 121

Heart. And why do you let the devil govern you?

Const. Because I have more flesh and blood than grace and self-denial. My dear, dear mistress! 'Sdeath! that so genteel a woman should be a saint, when religion's out of fashion! 125

Heart. Nay, she's much in the wrong, truly; but who knows how far time and good example may prevail?

Const. O! they have play'd their parts in vain already. 'Tis now two years since that damn'd fellow her husband invited me to his wedding; and there was the first time I saw that charming woman, whom I have lov'd ever since, more than e'er a martyr did his soul; but she's cold, my friend, still cold as the northern star. 132

Heart. So are all women by nature, which makes 'em so willing to be warm'd.

Const. O don't prophane the sex! Prithee, think 'em all angels for her sake; for she's virtuous even to a fault. 136

Heart. A lover's head is a good accountable thing truly; he adores his mistress for being virtuous, and yet is very angry with her because she won't be lewd.

Const. Well, the only relief I expect in my misery, is to see thee

some day or other as deeply engag'd as myself, which will force me to be merry in the midst of all my misfortunes. 142

Heart. That day will never come, be assur'd, Ned. Not but that I can pass a night with a woman, and for the time, perhaps, make my self as good sport as you can do. Nay, I can court a woman too,—call her nymph, angel, goddess, what you please; but here's the difference 'twixt you and I: I perswade a woman she's an angel, and she perswades you she's one.—Prithee, let me tell you how I avoid falling in love; that which serves me for prevention, may chance to serve you for a cure. 150

Const. Well, use the ladies moderately then, and I'll hear you.

Heart. That using 'em moderately undoes us all; but I'll use 'em justly, and that you ought to be satisfied with.—I always consider a woman, not as the taylor, the shoo maker, the tire-woman, the sempstress, and (which is more than all that) the poet makes her; but I consider her as pure nature has contriv'd her, and that more strictly than I should have done our old grandmother Eve, had I seen her naked in the garden; for I consider her turn'd inside out. Her heart well examin'd, I find there pride, vanity, covetousness, indiscretion, but above all things, malice; plots eternally aforging to destroy one another's reputations, and as honestly to charge the levity of mens tongues with the scandal; hourly debates how to make poor gentlemen in love with 'em, with no other intent but to use 'em like dogs when they have done; a constant desire of doing more mischief, and an everlasting war wag'd against truth and good-nature. 166

Const. Very well, sir! An admirable composition, truly!

Heart. Then for her outside, I consider it merely as an outside; she has a thin tiffany covering over just such stuff as you and I are made on. As for her motion, her meen,¹ her airs, and all those tricks, I know they affect you mightily. If you should see your mistress at a coronation dragging her peacock's train, with all her state and insolence about her, 'twou'd strike you with all the awful thoughts that heaven itself could pretend to from you; whereas I turn the whole matter into a jest, and suppose her strutting in the

¹ mien.

self-same stately manner, with nothing on her but her stays and her under scanty quilted petticoat.¹ 177

Const. Hold thy profane tongue; for I'll hear no more!

Heart. What, you'll love on, then?

Const. Yes, to eternity. 180

Heart. Yet you have no hopes at all?

Const. None.

Heart. Nay, the resolution may be discreet enough; perhaps you have found out some new philosophy, that love's like virtue, its own reward: so you and your mistress will be as well content at a distance, as others that have less learning are in coming together.

Const. No; but if she should prove kind at last, my dear Heart-free— [Embracing him.]

Heart. Nay, prithee, don't take me for your mistress; for lovers are very troublesome. 190

Const. Well, who knows what time may do?

Heart. And just now he was sure time could do nothing.

Const. Yet not one kind glance in two years, is somewhat strange.

Heart. Not strange at all; she don't like you, that's all the business. 196

Const. Prithee, don't distract me.

Heart. Nay, you are a good handsome young fellow; she might use you better. Come, will you go see her? Perhaps she may have chang'd her mind; there's some hopes as long as she's a woman.

Const. O, 'tis in vain to visit her! Sometimes to get a sight of her, I visit that beast her husband; but she certainly finds some pretence to quit the room as soon as I enter. 203

Heart. It's much she don't tell him you have made love to her too; for that's another good-natur'd thing usual amongst women,² in which they have several ends. Sometimes 'tis to recommend their virtue, that they may be lewd with the greater security. Sometimes 'tis to make their husbands fight, in hopes they may be kill'd, when their affairs require it should be so: but most commonly 'tis to engage two men in a quarrel, that they may have the

¹ Cf. *Sartor Resartus*, "Adamitism."

² The point is illustrated in *The Relapse*, II, i.

credit of being fought for; and if the lover's kill'd in the business, they cry, *Poor fellow, he had ill luck*—and so they go to cards. 212

Const. Thy injuries to women are not to be forgiven. Look to't, if ever thou dost fall into their hands—

Heart. They can't use me worse than they do you, that speak well of 'em.—O ho! here comes the knight. 216

Enter SIR JOHN BRUTE.

Heart. Your humble servant, Sir John.

Sir John. Servant, sir.

Heart. How does all your family?

Sir John. Pox o' my family! 220

Const. How does your lady? I han't seen her abroad a good while.

Sir John. Do! I don't know how she does, not I; she was well enough yesterday; I ha'n't been at home to night.

Const. What, were you out of town? 225

Sir John. Out of town! No, I was drinking.

Const. You are a true Englishman; don't know your own happiness. If I were married to such a woman, I would not be from her a night for all the wine in France.

Sir John. Not from her!—'Oons!—what a time should a man have of that! 231

Heart. Why, there's no division, I hope?

Sir John. No; but there's a conjunction, and that's worse; a pox of the parson!—Why the plague don't you two marry? I fansie I look like the devil to you. 235

Heart. Why, you don't think you have horns, do you?

Sir John. No, I believe my wife's religion will keep her honest.

Heart. And what will make her keep her religion?

Sir John. Persecution; and therefore she shall have it.

Heart. Have a care, knight! Women are tender things. 240

Sir John. And yet, methinks, 'tis a hard matter to break their hearts.

Const. Fie, fie! You have one of the best wives in the world, and yet you seem the most uneasie husband.

Sir John. Best wives! The woman's well enough; she has no

vice that I know of, but she's a wife, and—damn a wife! If I were married to a hogshead of claret, matrimony would make me hate it.

Heart. Why did you marry, then? You were old enough to know your own mind. 249

Sir John. Why did I marry? I married because I had a mind to lie with her, and she would not let me. 251

Heart. Why did you not ravish her?

Sir John. Yes, and so have hedg'd my self into forty quarrels with her relations, besides buying my pardon. But more than all that, you must know, I was afraid of being damn'd in those days; for I kept sneaking, cowardly company, fellows that went to church, said grace to their meat, and had not the least tincture of quality about 'em. 258

Heart. But I think you are got into a better gang now?

Sir John. Zoons, sir, my Lord Rake and I are hand and glove: I believe we may get our bones broke together to night.—Have you a mind to share a frolick? 262

Const. Not I, truly; my talent lies to softer exercises.

Sir John. What, a doune-bed¹ and a strumpet? A pox of venery, I say! Will you come and drink with me this afternoon?

Const. I can't drink to day, but we'll come and sit an hour with you, if you will. 267

Sir John. Phugh, pox, sit an hour! Why can't you drink?

Const. Because I'm to see my mistress.

Sir John. Who's that? 270

Const. Why, do you use to tell?

Sir John. Yes.

Const. So won't I.

Sir John. Why?

Const. Because 'tis a secret. 275

Sir John. Would my wife knew it; 'twould be no secret long.

Const. Why, do you think she can't keep a secret?

Sir John. No more than she can keep Lent.

Heart. Prithee, tell it her to try, Constant.

Sir John. No, prithee, don't, that I mayn't be plagu'd with it.

Const. I'll hold you a guinea you don't make her tell it you.

¹ down bed.

Sir John. I'll hold you a guinea I do. 282

Const. Which way?

Sir John. Why, I'll beg her not to tell it me.

Heart. Nay, if any thing do's it, that will. 285

Const. But do you think, sir—

Sir John. Oons, sir, I think a woman and a secret are the two impertinentest themes in the universe! Therefore pray let's hear no more of my wife, nor your mistress. Damn 'em both with all my heart, and every thing else that daggles a petticoat, except four generous whores, with Betty Sands at the head of 'em, who are drunk with my Lord Rake and I ten times in a fortnight.

[*Exit SIR JOHN.*]

Const. Here's a dainty fellow for you! And the veriest coward too! But his usage of his wife makes me ready to stab the villain.

Heart. Lovers are short-sighted: all their senses run into that of feeling. This proceeding of his is the only thing on earth can make your fortune. If any thing can prevail with her to accept of a gallant, 'tis his ill usage of her; for women will do more for revenge, than they'll do for the Gospel. Prethee, take heart; I have great hopes for you: and since I can't bring you quite off of her, I'll endeavour to bring you quite on; for a whining lover is the damn'd'st companion upon earth. 302

Const. My dear friend, flatter me a little more with these hopes; for whilst they prevail, I have heaven within me, and cou'd melt with joy. 305

Heart. Pray, no melting yet: let things go farther first. This afternoon, perhaps, we shall make some advance. In the meanwhile, let's go dine at Locket's,¹ and let hope get you a stomach.

[*Exeunt.*]

Scene [II]. *Lady Fancyfull's House.*

Enter LADY FANCYFULL and Mademoiselle.

Lady Fan. Did you ever see any thing so importune, mademoiselle?

¹ A fashionable ordinary. Lord Foppington (cf. *The Relapse*, I, iii) and all his tribe dined there. Cf. p. 607, n. 1, below.

Madam. Inteed, matam, to say de trute, he wanted leetel good breeding.

Lady Fan. Good breeding! He wants to be cain'd,¹ madamoiselle. An insolent fellow!—And yet let me expose my weakness: 'tis the only man on earth I cou'd resolve to dispence my favours on, were he but a fine gentleman. Well; did men but know how deep an impression a fine gentleman makes in a lady's heart, they wou'd reduce all their studies to that of good breeding alone. 10

Enter CORNET.

Cor. Madam, here's Mr. Treble. He has brought home the verses your ladyship made, and gave him to set.

Lady Fan. O, let him come in by all means. Now, madamoiselle, am I going to be unspeakably happy.

Enter TREBLE.

So, Mr. Treble, you have set my little dialogue? 15

Treb. Yes, madam, and I hope your ladyship will be pleased with it.

Lady Fan. O, no doubt on't; for really, Mr. Treble, you set all things to a wonder. But your musick is in particular heavenly, when you have my words to cloath in't. 20

Treb. Your words themselves, madam, have so much musick in 'em, they inspire me.

Lady Fan. Nay, now you make me blush, Mr. Treble; but pray let's hear what you have done.

Treb. You shall, madam. 25

A SONG TO BE SUNG BETWEEN A MAN AND A WOMAN.

M. Ah lovely nymph, the world's on fire;
Veil,² veil those cruel Eyes:

W. The world may then in flames expire,
And boast that so it dies.

M. But when all mortals are destroy'd, 30
Who then shall sing your praise?

W. Those who are fit to be employ'd:
The gods shall altars raise.

¹ caned.

² Q1, "viel, veil."

Treb. How do's your ladyship ¹ like it, madam?

Lady Fan. Rapture, rapture, Mr. Treble! I'm all rapture! O wit and art, what power have you when join'd! I must needs tell you the birth of this little dialogue, Mr. Treble. It's father was a dream, and it's mother was the moon. I dreamt that by an unanimous vote, I was chosen Queen of that pale world; and that the first time I appear'd upon my throne—all my subjects fell in love with me. Just then I wak'd: and seeing pen, ink and paper lie idle upon the table, I slid into my morning gown, and writ this *in promptu*. 43

Treb. So I guess the dialogue, madam, is suppos'd to be between your Majesty and your first Minister of State. 45

Lady Fan. Just. He, as minister, advises me to trouble my head about the welfare of my subjects; which I, as sovereign, find a very impertinent proposal. But is the town so dull, Mr. Treble, it affords us never another new song?

Treb. Madam, I have one in my pocket, came out but yesterday, if your ladyship pleases to let Mrs. Pipe sing it. 51

Lady Fan. By all means. Here, Pipe, make what musique you can of this song, here.

SONG.

I.

*Not an angel dwells above,
Half so fair as her I love.* 55

*Heaven knows how she'll receive me:
If she smiles, I'm blest indeed;
If she frowns, I'm quickly freed;
Heaven knows she ne'er can grieve me.*

II.

*None can love her more than I,
Yet she ne'er shall make me die.
If my flame can never warm her,* 60

¹ Q1, "ladship."

*Lasting beauty I'll adore;
I shall never love her more,
Cruelty will so deform her.*

65

Lady Fan. Very well: This is Heartfree's poetry, without question.

Treb. Won't your ladyship please to sing your self this morning?

Lady Fan. O Lord, Mr. Treble, my cold is still so barbarous to refuse me that pleasure! He—he—hem. 70

Treb. I'm very sorry for it, madam: methinks all mankind should turn physicians for the cure on't.

Lady Fan. Why truly to give mankind their due, there's few that know me but have offer'd their remedy.

Treb. They have reason, madam; for I know no body sings so near a Cherubin as your ladyship. 76

Lady Fan. What I do I owe chiefly to your skill and care, Mr. Treble. People do flatter me, indeed, that I have a voice, and a je ne scai quoy in the conduct of it, that will make musick of any thing. And truly I begin to believe so, since what happen'd t'other night. Wou'd you think it, Mr. Treble? Walking pretty late in the Park, (for I often walk late in the Park, Mr. Treble) a whim took me to sing Chivy-Chase;¹ and, wou'd you believe it? Next morning I had three copies of verses, and six billet-doux at my levee upon it!

Treb. And without all dispute you deserv'd as many more, madam. Are there any further commands for your ladyship's humble servant? 87

Lady Fan. Nothing more at this time, Mr. Treble. But I shall expect you here every morning for this month, to sing my little matter there to me. I'll reward you for your pains. 90

Treb. O Lord, madam—

Lady Fan. Good morrow, sweet Mr. Treble.

Treb. Your ladyships most obedient servant. [Exit TREB.]

Enter Servant.

Ser. Will your ladyship please to dine yet?

Lady Fan. Yes, let 'em serve. [Exit Servant.—Sure this Heart-

¹The famous old ballad of Percy and Douglas which moved Sir Philip Sidney's heart "more than . . . a trumpet."

free has bewitch'd me, mademoiselle. You can't imagine how odly he mixt himself in my thoughts during my rapture e'en now. I vow 'tis a thousand pities he is not more polish'd: Don't you think so? 99

Madam. Matam, I tink it so great pity, dat if I was in your ladyship place, I take him home in my house, I lock him up in my closet, and I never let him go till I teach him every ting dat fine laty expect from fine gentelman. 103

Lady Fan. Why, truly, I believe I shou'd soon subdue his brutality; for without doubt, he has a strange penchant to grow fond of me, in spite of his aversion to the sex, else he wou'd ne'er have taken so much pains about me. Lord, how proud wou'd some poor creatures be of such a conquest! But I, alas! I don't know how to receive as a favour what I take to be so infinitely my due. But what shall I do to new mould him, mademoiselle? For till then he's my utter aversion. 111

Madam. Matam, you must laugh at him in all de place dat you meet him, and turn into de ridicule all he say, and all he do.

Lady Fan. Why, truly, satyr has ever been of wonderous use to reform ill manners. Besides, 'tis my particular talent to ridicule folks. I can be severe, strangely severe, when I will, mademoiselle—Give me the pen and ink—I find myself whimsicall—I'll write to him—[*Siting down to write.*—Or I'll let it alone, and be severe upon him that way.—[*Rising up again.*—Yet active severity is better than passive. [Siting down.—'Tis as good let alone, too; for every lash I give him, perhaps, he'll take for a favour. [Rising.—Yet 'tis a thousand pities so much satyr should be lost. [Siting.—But if it shou'd have a wrong effect upon him, 'twould distract me. [Rising.—Well, I must write, tho', after all. [Siting.—Or I'll let it alone, which is the same thing. [Rising.

Madam. La voilà déterminée.

[*Excunt.*

THE END OF THE SECOND ACT.

Act the Third. Scene [I] opens; Sir John, Lady Brute, Bellinda rising from the table.

Sir John. Here, take away the things; I expect company. But first bring me a pipe; I'll smoak. [To a Servant.]

Lady Brute. Lord, Sir John, I wonder you won't leave that nasty custom.

Sir John. Prithee, don't be impertinent. 5

Bel. [to LADY [BRUTE].] I wonder who those are he expects this afternoon?

Lady Brute. I'd give the world to know! Perhaps 'tis Constant; he comes here sometimes. If it does prove him, I'm resolved I'll share the visit. 10

Bel. We'll send for our work, and sit here.

Lady Brute. He'll choak us with his tobacco.

Bel. Nothing will choak us when we are doing what we have a mind to.—Lovewell!

Enter LOVEWELL.

Lov. Madam. 15

Lady Brute. Here; bring my cousin's work and mine hither.

[Exit LOVE. and re-enters with their work.]

Sir John. Whu! Pox! Can't you work somewhere else?

Lady Brute. We shall be carefull not to disturb you, sir.

Bel. Your pipe would make you too thoughtfull, uncle, if you were left alone; our prittle-prattle will cure your spleen. 20

Sir John. Will it so, Mrs. Pert? Now I believe it will so increase it, [sitting and smoaking—I shall take my own house for a paper-mill.]

Lady Brute. [to BEL. aside.—Don't let's mind him; let him say what he will. 25

Sir John. A woman's tongue a cure for the spleen!—Oons—[aside—If a man had got the head-ach, they'd be for applying the same remedy.]

Lady Brute. You have done a great deal, Bellinda, since yesterday. 30

Bel. Yes, I have work'd very hard; how do you like it?

Lady Brute. O, 'tis the prettiest fringe in the world. Well, cousin, you have the happiest fancy: Prithee, advice me about altering my crimson petticoat.

Sir John. A pox o' your petticoat! Here's such a prating, a man can't digest his own thoughts for you. 36

Lady Brute. [*Aside.*—Don't answer him.—Well, what do you advise me?

Bel. Why, really, I would not alter it at all. Methinks 'tis very pretty as it is. 40

Lady Brute. Ay, that's true: But you know one grows weary of the prettiest things in the world, when one has had 'em long.

Sir John. Yes, I have taught her that.

Bel. [*Aside.*] Shall we provoke him a little?

Lady Brute. With all my heart.—Bellinda, don't you long to be married? 46

Bel. Why, there are some things in't I could like well enough.

Lady Brute. What do you think you shou'd dislike?

Bel. My husband, a hundred to one else.

Lady Brute. O ye wicked wretch! Sure you don't speak as you think? 51

Bel. Yes, I do: especially if he smoak'd tobacco.

[*He looks earnestly at 'em.*

Lady Brute. Why, that many times takes off worse smells.

Bel. Then he must smell very ill indeed.

Lady Brute. So some men will, to keep their wives from coming near 'em. 56

Bel. Then those wives shou'd cuckold 'em at a distance.

[*He rises in a fury, throws his pipe at 'em, and drives 'em out. As they run off, CONSTANT and HEARTFREE enter. LADY B[RUTE] runs against CONSTANT.*

Sir John. 'Oons! Get you gone up stairs, you confederating strumpets you, or I'll cuckold you, with a vengeance!

Lady Brute. O Lord, he'll beat us, he'll beat us! Dear, dear Mr. Constant, save us! [*Exeunt.*

Sir John. I'll cuckold you, with a pox. 62

Const. Heavens, Sir John! What's the matter?

Sir John. Sure, if woman had been ready created, the devil, instead of being kick'd down into hell, had been married. 65

Heart. Why, what new plague have you found now?

Sir John. Why these two gentlewomen did but hear me say, I expected you here this afternoon; upon which they presently resolved to take up the room,¹ o' purpose to plague me and my friends. 70

Const. Was that all? Why, we shou'd have been glad of their company.

Sir John. Then I should have been weary of yours, for I can't relish both together. They found fault with my smoaking tobacco, too; and said men stunk. But I have a good mind—to say something. 76

Const. No, nothing against the ladies, pray.

Sir John. Split the ladies! Come, will you sit down? Give us some wine, fellow.—You won't smoak?

Const. No, nor drink neither, at this time—I must ask your pardon. 81

Sir John. What, this mistress of yours runs in your head! I'll warrant it's some such squeamish minx as my wife, that's grown so dainty of late, she finds fault even with a dirty shirt.

Heart. That a woman may do, and not be very dainty, neither.

Sir John. Pox o' the women! Let's drink. Come, you shall take one glass, tho' I send for a box of lozenges to sweeten your mouth after it. 88

Const. Nay, if one glass will satisfy you, I'll drink it, without putting you to that expence. 90

Sir John. Why, that's honest. Fill some wine, sirrah: So, here's to you, gentlemen—A wife's the devil. To your being both married. [They drink.]

Heart. O, your most humble servant, sir.

Sir John. Well, how do you like my wine? 95

Const. 'Tis very good indeed.

Heart. 'Tis admirable.

Sir John. Then give us t'other glass.

¹ Q1, "roon."

Const. No, pray excuse us now. We'll come another time, and then we won't spare it. 100

Sir John. This one glass, and no more. Come, it shall be your mistresses health: and that's a great compliment from me, I assure you.

Const. And 'tis a vefy obliging one to me: so give us the glasses.

Sir John. So: let her live— [SIR JOHN coughs in the glass.

Heart. And be kind. 106

Const. What's the matter? Does't go the wrong way?

Sir John. If I had love enough to be jealous, I shou'd take this for an ill omen: For I never drank my wives health in my life, but I puk'd in the glass. 110

Const. O, she's too virtuous to make a reasonable man jealous.

Sir John. Pox of her virtue! If I could but catch her adulterating, I might be divorc'd from her by law.

Heart. And so pay her a yearly pension, to be a distinguish'd cuckold! 115

Enter Servant.

Serv. Sir, there's my Lord Rake, Colonel Bully, and some other gentlemen at the Blew-Posts,¹ desire your company.

Sir John. Cod's so, we are to consult about playing the devil to night.

Heart. Well, we won't hinder business. 120

Sir John. Methinks I don't know how to leave you, tho'. But for once I must make bold. Or look you! may be the conference mayn't last long: So, if you'll wait here half an hour, or an-hour; if I don't come then—why, then—I won't come at all.

Heart. [to CONST.—A good modest proposition truly! [Aside.

Const. But let's accept on't, however. Who knows what may happen? 127

Heart. Well, sir, to shew you how fond we are of your company, we'll expect your return as long as we can.

Sir John. Nay, may be I mayn't stay at all. But business, you know, must be done. So, your servant—Or hark you, if you have

¹ A tavern in the Haymarket, alluded to also in Farquhar's *Constant Couple* (cf. n. in Ewald's ed., III, i, p. 170), and famous for its excellent cooking.

a mind to take a frisk with us, I have an interest with my lord; I can easily introduce you. 133

Const. We are much beholding to you; but for my part, I'm engaged another way. 135

Sir John. What? To your mistress, I'll warrant. Prithee, leave your nasty punk to entertain her self with her own lewd thoughts, and make one with us to night.

Const. Sir, 'tis business that is to employ me.

Heart. And me; and business must be done, you know. 140

Sir John. Ay, women's business, tho' the world were consum'd for't. [Exit SIR JOHN.]

Const. Farewell, beast! And now, my dear friend, wou'd my mistress be but as complaisant as some mens wives, who think it a piece of good breeding to receive the visits of their husband's friends in his absence! 146

Heart. Why, for your sake I could forgive her, tho' she should be so complaisant to receive something else in his absence. But what way shall we invent to see her?

Const. O, ne'er hope it: invention will prove as vain as wishes.

Enter LADY BRUTE and BELLINDA.

Heart. What do you think now, friend? 151

Const. I think I shall swoon.

Heart. I'll speak first, then, whilst you fetch breath.

Lady Brute. We think ourselves oblig'd, gentlemen, to come and return you thanks for your knight errantry. We were just upon being-devour'd by the fiery dragon. 156

Bel. Did not his fumes almost knock you down, gentlemen?

Heart. Truly, ladies, we did undergo some hardships; and should have done more, if some greater hero's than our selves, had by, had not diverted him. 160

Const. Tho' I'm glad of the service you are pleas'd to say we have done you, yet I'm sorry we could do it in no other way, than by making our selves privy to what you wou'd perhaps have kept a secret.

Lady Brute. For Sir John's part, I suppose he design'd it no secret, since he made so much noise. And for my self, truly I'm

not much concern'd, since 'tis fallen only into this gentleman's hands and yours; who, I have many reasons to believe, will neither interpret nor report any thing to my disadvantage. 169

Const. Your good opinion, madam, was what I fear'd I never could have merited. 171

Lady Brute. Your fears were vain, then, sir; for I am just to every body.

Heart. Prithee, Constant, what is't you do to get the ladies good opinions; for I'm a novice at it? 175

Bel. Sir, will you give me leave to instruct you?

Heart. Yes, that I will, with all my soul, madam.

Bel. Why, then, you must never be slovenly, never be out of humour, fare well and cry roast-meat,¹ smoak tobacco, nor drink but when you are a-dry. 180

Heart. That's hard.

Const. Nay, if you take his bottle from him, you break his heart, madam.

Bel. Why, is it possible the gentleman can love drinking?

Heart. Only by way of antidote. 185

Bel. Against what, pray?

Heart. Against love, madam.

Lady Brute. Are you afraid of being in love, sir?

Heart. I should, if there were any danger of it.

Lady Brute. Pray why so? 190

Heart. Because I always had an aversion to being us'd like a dog.

Bel. Why, truly, men in love are seldom us'd better.

Lady Brute. But was you never in love, sir?

Heart. No, I thank heaven, madam. 195

Bel. Pray, where got you your learning, then?

Heart. From other peoples expence.

Bel. That's being a spunger, sir, which is scarce honest: if you'd buy some experience with your own mony, as 'twould be fairlyer got, so 'twould stick longer by you. 200

¹ I.e., "never blazon your good fortune from the housetops." Brewer (*Dict. of Phrase and Fable*) quotes a similar phrase from Terence; Wycherley uses it in *The Gentleman Dancing-Master* (I, ii; Mermaid ed., p. 150), and Charles Lamb in *Christ's Hospital*.

Enter Footman.

Foot. Madam, here's my Lady Fancyfull, to wait upon your ladyship.

Lady Brute. Shield me, kind Heaven! What an inundation of impertinence is here coming upon us!

Enter LADY FANCYFULL, who runs first to LADY BRUTE; then to BELLINDA; kissing 'em.

Lady Fan. My dear Lady Brute, and sweet Bellinda! Methinks 'tis an age since I saw you. 206

Lady Brute. Yet 'tis but three days; sure you have pass'd your time very ill, it seems so long to you.

Lady Fan. Why, really, to confess the truth to you, I am so everlastingly fatigu'd with the addresses of unfortunate gentlemen, that, were it not for the extravagancy of the example, I should e'en tear out these wicked eyes with my own fingers, to make both my self and mankind easie. What think you on't, Mr. Heartfree, for I take you to be my faithful adviser? 214

Heart. Why, truly, madam—I think—every project that is for the good of mankind ought to be encourag'd.

Lady Fan. Then I have your consent, sir?

Heart. To do whatever you please, madam. 218

Lady Fan. You had a much more limited complaisance this morning, sir. Would you believe it, ladies? The gentleman has been so exceeding generous, to tell me of about fifty faults, in less time than it was well possible for me to commit two of 'em.

Const. Why, truly, madam, my friend there is apt to be something familiar with the ladies. 224

Lady Fan. He is, indeed, sir; but he's wondrous charitable with it: he has had the goodness to design a reformation, even down to my fingers ends.—'Twas thus, I think, sir, [*Opening her fingers in an awkward manner*—you'd have had 'em stand.—My eyes, too, he did not like. How was't you wou'd have directed 'em? Thus, I think. [*Staring at him.*—Then there was something amiss in my gate, too: I don't know well how 'twas; but as I take it, he would have had me walk like him. Pray, sir, do me the favour to take a turn or two about the room, that the company may see you.—

He's sullen, ladies, and won't. But, to make short, and give you as true an idea as I can of the matter, I think 'twas much about this figure, in general, he would have moulded me to: but I was an obstinate woman, and could not resolve to make my self mistress of his heart, by growing as aukward as his fancy.

[She walks aukwardly about, staring and looking ungainly; then changes on a sudden to the extremity of her usual affectation.]

Heart. Just thus women do, when they think we are in love with 'em, or when they are so with us. 240

[Here CONSTANT and LADY BRUTE talk together apart.]

Lady Fan. 'Twould, however, be less vanity for me to conclude the former, than you the latter, sir.

Heart. Madam, all I shall presume to conclude, is, that if I were in love, you'd find the means to make me soon weary on't.

Lady Fan. Not by over-fondness, upon my word, sir. But pray let's stop here; for you are so much govern'd by instinct, I know you'll grow brutish at last. 247

Bel. *[aside.]*—Now am I sure she's fond of him: I'll try to make her jealous.—Well, for my part, I should be glad to find some-body would be so free with me, that I might know my faults, and mend 'em. 251

Lady Fan. Then pray let me recommend this gentleman to you: I have known him some time, and will be surety for him that upon a very limited encouragement on your side you shall find an extended impudence on his. 255

Heart. I thank you, madam, for your recommendation, but, hating idleness, I'm unwilling to enter into a place where I believe there would be nothing to do. I was fond of serving your ladyship, because I knew you'd find me constant employment.

Lady Fan. I told you he'd be rude, Bellinda. 260

Bel. O, a little bluntness is a sign of honesty, which makes me always ready to pardon it. So, sir, if you have no other exceptions to my service but the fear of being idle in't, you may venture to list yourself. I shall find you work, I warrant you.

Heart. Upon those terms I engage, madam; and this (with your leave) I take for earnest. *[Offering to kiss her hand.]*

Bel. Hold there, sir; I'm none of your earnest givers. But if I'm well serv'd, I give good wages and pay punctually. 268

[HEARTF. and BEL. seem to continue talking familiarly.]

Lady Fan. [*aside.*—I don't like this jesting between 'em.—Methinks the fool begins to look as if he were in earnest.—But then he must be a fool, indeed.—Lard, what a difference there is between me and her! [*Looking at BEL. scornfully.*—How I should despise such a thing, if I were a man!—What a nose she has!—What a chin!—What a neck!—Then her eyes!—And the worst kissing lips in the universe!—No, no, he can never like her; that's positive—Yet I can't suffer 'em together any longer. —Mr. Heart-free, do you know that you and I must have no quarrel for all this? I can't forbear being a little severe now and then: but women, you know, may be allowed any thing. 279

Heart. Up to a certain age, madam.

Lady Fan. Which I'm not yet past, I hope.

Heart. [*aside.*—Nor never will, I dare swear.

Lady Fan. [*to LADY BRUTE.*—Come, madam, will your ladyship be witness to our reconciliation?

Lady Brute. You agree, then, at last? 285

Heart. [*slightingly.*—We forgive.

Lady Fan. [*aside.*—That was a cold, ill-natur'd reply.

Lady Brute. Then there's no challenges sent between you?

Heart. Not from me, I promise. [*Aside to CONSTANT.*—But that's more than I'll do¹ for her; for I know she can as well be damn'd as forbear writing to me. 291

Const. That I believe. But I think we had best be going, lest she should suspect something, and be malicious.²

Heart. With all my heart.

Const. Ladies, we are your humble servants. I see Sir John is quite engag'd, 'twould be in vain to expect him. Come, Heart-free. [*Exit.*

Heart. Ladies, your servant. [*To BELLINDA.*—I hope, madam, you won't forget our bargain: I'm to say what I please to you.

[*Exit HEARTFREE.*

Bel. Liberty of speech entire, sir. 300

¹ promise.

² Qi, "maliciou."

Lady Fan. [*aside.*—Very pretty truly.—But how the blockhead went out—languishing at her, and not a look toward me!—Well, Churchmen may talk, but miracles are not ceas'd. For 'tis more than natural, such a rude fellow as he, and such a little impertinent as she, should be capable ¹ of making a woman of my sphere uneasy.—But I can bear her sight no longer—methinks she's grown ten times uglier than Cornet. I must go home, and study revenge. [*To LADY BRUTE.*—Madam, your humble servant; I must take my leave. 309

Lady Brute. What, going already, madam?

Lady Fan. I must beg you'll excuse me this once; for really I have eighteen visits to return this afternoon,—so you see I'm importun'd by the women as well as the men.

Bel. [*aside.*—And she's quits with 'em both.

Lady Fan. [*going.*—Nay, you shan't go one step out of the room. 316

Lady Brute. Indeed I'll wait upon you down.

Lady Fan. No, sweet Lady Brute; you know I swoon at ceremony.

Lady Brute. Pray give me leave. 320

Lady Fan. You know I won't.

Lady Brute. Indeed I must.

Lady Fan. Indeed you sha'n't.

Lady Brute. Indeed I will.

Lady Fan. Indeed you sha'n't. 325

Lady Brute. Indeed I will.

Lady Fan. Indeed you sha'n't. Indeed, indeed, indeed you sha'n't. [*Exit LADY FAN., running. They follow.*

Re-enter LADY BRUTE sola.

This impertinent woman has put me out of humour for a fortnight—What an agreeable moment has her foolish visit interrupted! Lord, how like a torrent love flows into the heart, when once the sluice of desire is open'd! Good gods! What a pleasure there is in doing what we shou'd not do! 333

¹ Q1, "capaceble."

Re-enter CONSTANT.

Ha! Here again?

Const. Tho' the renewing my visit may seem a little irregular, I hope I shall obtain your pardon for it, madam, when you know I only left the room lest the lady who was here shou'd have been as malicious in her remarks as she's foolish in her conduct.

Lady Brute. He who has discretion enough to be tender of a womans reputation, carries a virtue about him may atone for a great many faults. 341

Const. If it has a title to atone for any, its¹ pretentions must needs be strongest where the crime is love. I therefore hope I shall be forgiven the attempt I have made upon your heart, since my enterprize has been a secret to all the world but your self. 345

Lady Brute. Secrecy, indeed, in sins of this kind, is an argument of weight to lessen the punishment; but nothing's a plea for a pardon entire, without a sincere repentance.

Const. If sincerity in repentance consist² in sorrow for offending, no cloister ever enclosed so true a penitent as I should be. But I hope it cannot be reckon'd an offence to love where 'tis a duty to adore. 352

Lady Brute. 'Tis an offence, a great one, where it wou'd rob a woman of all she ought to be ador'd for—her virtue.

Const. Virtue?—Virtue, alas, is no more like the thing that's call'd so, than 'tis like vice itself. Virtue consists in goodness, honour, gratitude, sincerity, and pity; and not in peevish, snarling, streightlac'd chastity. True virtue, whereso'e'er it moves, still carries an intrinsique worth about it, and is in every place, and in each sex, of equal value. So is not continence, you see: that phantome of honour, which men in every age have so contemn'd, they have thrown it amongst the women to scabble for.³ 362

Lady Brute. If it be a thing of so very little value, why do you so earnestly recommend it to your wives and daughters?

Const. We recommend it to our wives, madam, because we

¹ Q1, "it's."

² So Q1. Eds. read "consists."

³ to struggle or scramble for (*N.E.D.*),—which quotes this passage as the earliest illustration of this sense of the phrase.

wou'd keep 'em to our selves; and to our daughters, because we wou'd dispose of 'em to others.

Lady Brute. 'Tis, then, of some importance, it seems, since you can't dispose of 'em without it.

Const. That importance, madam, lies in the humour of the country, not in the nature of the thing. 371

Lady Brute. How do you prove that, sir?

Const. From the wisdom of a neighb'ring nation in a contrary practice. In monarchies, things go by whimsie; but commonwealths ¹ weigh all things in the scale of reason. 375

Lady Brute. I hope we are not so very light a people, to bring up ² fashions without some ground.

Const. Pray what do's your ladiship think of a powder'd coat for deep mourning?

Lady Brute. I think, sir, your sophistry has all the effect that you can reasonably expect it should have: it puzzles, but don't convince. 382

Const. I'm sorry for it.

Lady Brute. I'm sorry to hear you say so.

Const. Pray why? 385

Lady Brute. Because, if you expected more from it, you have a worse opinion of my understanding than I desire you shou'd have.

Const. [*aside.*—I comprehend her: she would have me set a value upon her chastity, that I might think myself the more oblig'd to her when she makes me a present of it. [*To her.*—I beg you will believe I did but rally, madam; I know you judge too well of right and wrong, to be deceiv'd by arguments like those. I hope you'll have so favourable an opinion of my understanding too, to believe the thing call'd virtue has worth enough with me, to pass for an eternal obligation where're 'tis sacrific'd. 396

Lady Brute. It is, I think, so great a one as nothing can repay.

Const. Yes; the making the man you love your everlasting debtor.

Lady Brute. When debtors once have borrow'd all we have to lend, they are very apt to grow shy of their creditors company. 401

¹ Q1, "commonwealth's."

² to introduce and popularize (*N.E.D.*).

Const. That, madam, is only when they are forc'd to borrow of usurers, and not of a generous friend. Let us choose our creditors, and we are seldom so ungrateful to shun 'em.

Lady Brute. What think you of Sir John, sir? I was his free choice. 406

Const. I think he's marri'd, madam.

Lady Brute. Do's marriage, then, exclude men from your rule of constancy?

Const. It do's. Constancy's a brave, free, haughty, generous agent, that cannot buckle to the chains of wedlock. There's a poor sordid slavery in marriage, that turns the flowing tyde of honour, and sinks us to the lowest ebb of infamy. 'Tis a corrupted soil; Ill nature,¹ avarice, sloath, cowardice, and dirt, are all its product.

Lady Brute. Have you no exceptions to this general rule, as well as to'ther? 416

Const. Yes; I wou'd (after all) be an exception to it my self, if you were free in power and will to make me so.

Lady Brute. Compliments are well plac'd where 'tis impossible to lay hold on 'em. 420

Const. I wou'd to heaven 'twere possible for you to lay hold on mine, that you might see it is no compliment at all. But since you are already dispos'd on,² beyond redemption, to one who do's not know the value of the jewel you have put into his hands, I hope you wou'd not think him greatly wrong'd, tho' it shou'd sometimes be look'd on by a friend, who knows how to esteem it as he ought.

Lady Brute. If looking on't alone wou'd serve his turn, the wrong, perhaps, might not be very great.

Const. Why, what if he shou'd wear it now and then a day, so he gave good security to bring it home again at night? 430

Lady Brute. Small security, I fansie, might serve for that. One might venture to take his word.

Const. Then, where's the injury to the owner?

Lady Brute. 'Tis an injury to him, if he think it one. For if happiness be seated in the mind, unhappiness must be so too. 435

¹ Q1, "I'll nature."

² So Q1, Q2, and Q3; M. and W., "dispos'd of"; but "disposed on" in this sense was frequently used from the seventeenth century to the nineteenth (cf. *N.E.D.*).

Const. Here I close with you, madam, and draw my conclusive argument from your own position: if the injury lie in the fancy, there needs nothing but secrecy to prevent the wrong.

Lady Brute. [going.—A surer way to prevent it, is to hear no arguments in its behalf. 440

Const. [following her.—But, madam—

Lady Brute. But, sir, 'tis my turn to be discreet now, and not suffer too long a visit.

Const. [catching her hand.—By heaven, you shall not stir, till you give me hopes that I shall see you again at some more convenient time and place! 446

Lady Brute. I give you just hopes enough—[breaking from him—to get loose from you: and that's all I can afford you at this time. [Exit running.

CONSTANT *solus.*

Now, by all that's great and good, she is a charming woman! In what extasie of joy she has left me! For she gave me hope; did she not say she gave me hope?—Hope? Ay; what hope?—Enough to make me let her go—Why, that's enough in conscience. Or, no matter how 'twas spoke, hope was the word: it came from her, and it was said to me. 455

Enter HEARTFREE.

Ha, Heartfree! Thou hast done me noble service in prattling to the young gentlewoman without there; come to my arms, thou venerable bawd, and let me squeeze thee [embracing him eagerly—as a new pair of staves does a fat country girl, when she's carry'd to Court to stand for a Maid of Honour. 460

Heart. Why, what the devil's all this rapture for?

Const. Rapture! There's ground for rapture, man; there's hopes, my Heartfree; hopes, my friend!

Heart. Hopes? ¹ Of what?

Const. Why, hopes that my lady and I together (for 'tis more than one bodies work) should make Sir John a cuckold. 466

Heart. Prithee, what did she say to thee?

¹ Q1, "Hope's."

Const. Say? What did she not say? She said that—says she—she said—Zoons, I don't know what she said; but she look'd as if she said every thing I'd have her. And so, if thou'lt go to the tavern, I'll treat thee with any thing that gold can buy; I'll give all my silver amongst the drawers, make a bonfire before the door; say the plenipo's have sign'd the peace,¹ and the Bank of England's grown honest. [*Exeunt.*]

Scene [II—*The Blue Posts*—] *opens.* *Lord Rake, Sir John, &c., at a table, drinking.*

All. Huzza!

Lord Rake. Come, boys, charge again!—So—Confusion to all order! Here's liberty of conscience!

All. Huzza!

Lord Rake. I'll sing you a song I made this morning to this purpose. 6

Sir John. 'Tis wicked, I hope.

Col. Bully. Don't my lord tell you he made it?

Sir John. Well, then, let's ha't.

LORD RAKE *sings.*

I

What a pother of late 10

Have they kept in the state

About setting our consciences free! ²

A bottle has more

Dispensations in store,

Than the king and the state can decree. 15

II

When my head's full of wine,

I o'er flow with design,

¹ The peace of Ryswick (concluded September, 1697), which ended the War of the English Succession, followed upon negotiations begun four months before the play was acted.

² An allusion, perhaps, to the Toleration Act of 1689.

*And know no penal-laws¹ that can curb me:
 What e'er I devise
 Seems good in my eyes,* 20
And religion ne'er dares to disturb me.

III

*No saucy remorse
 Intrudes in my course,
 Nor impertinent notions of evil;
 So there's claret in store,* 25
*In peace I've my whore,
 And in peace I jog on to the devil.*
 [*All sing.*—*So there's claret, &c.*
 Lord Rake [*rep.*—*And in peace I jog on to the devil.*²

Well, how do you like it, gentlemen? 30

All. O, admirable!

Sir John. I would not give a fig for a song that is not full of sin and impudence.

Lord Rake. Then my muse is to your taste. But drink away; the night steals upon us: we shall want time to be lewd in.—Hey, page! Sally out, sirrah, and see what's doing in the camp; we'll beat up their quarters presently. 37

Page. I'll bring your lordship an exact account. [*Ex. Page.*

Lord Rake. Now let the spirit of clary³ go round! Fill me a brimmer. Here's to our forlorn hope! Courage, knight, victory attends you! 41

¹ Possibly an allusion to the notorious "Penal Code" of 1695, which undertook to "curb" Catholic Ireland; but see also note in Dobrée and Webb's *Vanbrugh*, I, 232.

² Swain (M., p. 328) prints from a collection of printed ballads at the British Museum (11621, i, ii, 1-37) a rather broad "Scotch Medley, Introduced in The Provok'd Wife,"—undated, and without indication of scene. As Swain notes, it would best fit in at this point. The first stanza follows:

We're gaily yet, and we're gaily yet,
 And we're no very fou, but we're gaily yet;
 Then sit ye a while, and tippie a bit,
 For we're no very fou, but we're gaily yet.

³ Spiced wine and honey. Cf. *The Way of the World*, IV, v (below, p. 634): "the most noble spirit of clary."

Sir John. And lawrells shall crown me; drink away and be damn'd!

Lord Rake. Again, boys; to'ther glass, and damn morality!

Sir John [*drunk.*—Ay—damn morality—and damn the watch!
And let the constable be married! 46

All. Huzza!

Re-enter Page.

Lord Rake. How are the streets inhabited, sirrah?

Page. My lord, it's Sunday night; they are full of drunken citizens. 50

Lord Rake. Along, then, boys; we shall have a feast.

Col. Bully. Along, noble knight.

Sir John. Ay—along, Bully; and he that says Sir John Brute is not as drunk and as religious as the drunkenest citizen of 'em all—is a liar, and the son of a whore. 55

Col. Bully. Why, that was bravely spoke, and like a free-born Englishman.

Sir John. What's that to you, sir, whether I am an English man or a French man?

Col. Bully. Zoons, you are not angry, sir? 60

Sir John. Zoons, I am angry, sir—for if I'm a free-born English man, what have you to do even to talk of my privileges?

Lord Rake. Why, prithee, knight, don't quarrel here; leave private animosities to be decided by daylight; let the night be employed against the publick enemy. 65

Sir John. My lord, I respect you because you are a man of quality. But I'll make that fellow know, I am within a hairs breadth as absolute by my priveleges, as the King of France is by his prerogative. He by his prerogative takes money where it is not his due; I by my privelege refuse paying it where I owe it. Liberty and property and Old England, Huzza! 71

All. Huzza! [*Exit SIR JOHN reeling; all following him.*

Scene [III]. *A Bed-chamber.**Enter* LADY BRUTE and BELLINDA.*Lady Brute.* Sure it's late, Bellinda? I begin to be sleepy.*Bel.* Yes, 'tis near twelve. Will you go to bed?*Lady Brute.* To bed, my dear? And by that time I'm fallen into a sweet sleep (or perhaps a sweet dream, which is better and better) Sir John will come home, roaring drunk, and be overjoy'd he finds me in a condition to be disturb'd. 6*Bel.* O, you need not fear him; he's in for all night. The servants say he's gone to drink with my Lord Rake?*Lady Brute.* Nay, 'tis not very likely, indeed, such suitable company should part presently.—What hogs men turn, Bellinda, when they grow weary of women! 11*Bel.* And what owles they are whilst they are fond of 'em!*Lady Brute.* But that we may forgive well enough, because they are so upon our accounts.*Bel.* We ought to do so, indeed; but 'tis a hard matter. For when a man is really in love, he looks so unsufferably silly, that tho' a woman lik'd him well enough before, she has then much ado to endure the sight of him.¹ And this I take to be the reason why lovers are so generally ill us'd.*Lady Brute.* Well, I own now, I'm well enough pleased to see a man look like an ass for me. 21*Bel.* Ay, I'm pleas'd he should look like an ass too;—that is, I'm pleased with my self for making him look so.*Lady Brute.* Nay, truly, I think if he'd find some other way to express his passion, 'twould be more to his advantage. 25*Bel.* Yes; for then a woman might like his passion and him too.*Lady Brute.* Yet, Bellinda, after all, a woman's life would be but a dull business, if 'twere not for men; and men that can look like asses, too. We shou'd never blame Fate for the shortness of our days; our time wou'd hang wretchedly upon our hands. 30*Bel.* Why, truly, they do help us off with a good share on't. For were there no men in the world, o' my conscience, I shou'd

¹Dobrée (I, 233-34) suggests that this speech and several others in the play are reminiscent of Congreve.

be no longer a dressing than I'm a saying my prayers; nay, tho' it were Sunday: for you know that one may go to church without stays on. 35

Lady Brute. But don't you think emulation might do something? For every woman you see desires to be finer than her neighbour.

Bel. That's only that the men may like her better than her neighbour. No: if there were no men, adieu fine petticoats; we should be weary of wearing 'em. 41

Lady Brute. And adieu plays; we shou'd be weary of seeing 'em.

Bel. Adieu Hide Park; ¹ the dust wou'd choak us.

Lady Brute. Adieu St. James's; ² walking wou'd tire us.

Bel. Adieu London; the smoak wou'd stifle us. 45

Lady Brute. And adieu going to church, for religion wou'd ne'er prevail with us.

Both. Ha! ha! ha! ha! ha!

Bel. Our confession is so very hearty, sure we merit absolution.

Lady Brute. Not unless we go through with't, and confess all. So, prithee, for the ease of our consciences, let's hide nothing. 51

Bel. Agreed.

Lady Brute. Why, then, I confess, that I love to sit in the fore-front of a box; for if one sits behind, there's two acts gone, perhaps, before one's found out. And when I am there, if I perceive the men whispering and looking upon me, you must know I cannot for my life forbear thinking they talk to my advantage; and that sets a thousand little tickling vanities on foot— 58

Bel. Just my case for all the world; but go on.

Lady Brute. I watch with impatience for the next jest in the play, that I may ³ laugh, and shew my white teeth. If the poet has been dull, and the jest be long a coming, I pretend to whisper one to my friend, and from thence fall into a little short ⁴ discourse, in which I take occasion to shew my face in all humours: brisk, pleas'd, serious, melancholy, languishing—Not that what we say to one another causes any of these alterations. But—

Bel. Don't trouble your self to explain. For if I'm not mis-

¹ See above, p. 53, n. 2.

² So Q1, W., etc.; M., "might."

³ See p. 479, n. 1; p. 587, n. 1.

⁴ So Q1; Q2, Q3, and later eds., "small."

taken, you and I have had some of these necessary dialogues before now with the same intention. 69

Lady Brute. Why, I'll swear, Bellinda, some people do give strange agreeable airs to their faces in speaking. Tell me true— Did you never practise in the glass? 72

Bel. Why, did you?

Lady Brute. Yes, 'faith, many a time.

Bel. And I too, I own it; both how to speak my self, and how to look when others speak. But my glass and I cou'd never yet agree what face I shou'd make when they come blurt ¹ out, with a nasty thing in a play: for all the men presently look upon the women, that's certain: so laugh we must not, tho' our stays burst for't, because that's telling truth, and owning we understand the jest. And to look serious is so dull, when the whole house is a laughing!— 82

Lady Brute. Besides, that looking serious do's really betray our knowledge in the matter, as much as laughing with the company wou'd do. For if we did not understand the thing, we shou'd naturally do like other people. 86

Bel. For my part, I always take that occasion to blow my nose.

Lady Brute. You must blow your nose half off, then, at some plays.

Bel. Why don't some reformer ² or other beat ³ the poet for't? 90

Lady Brute. Because he is not so sure of our private approbation as of our publick thanks. Well, sure there is not upon earth so impertinent a thing as womens modesty.

Bel. Yes: men's fantasque,⁴ that obliges us to it. If we quit our modesty, they say we lose our charms: and yet they know that very modesty is affectation, and rail at our hypocrisie. 96

Lady Brute. Thus, one wou'd think 'twere a hard matter to please 'em, neice; yet our kind Mother Nature has given us something that makes amends for all. Let our weakness be what it

¹ So all Qtos. and W.; M., "blunt." They come blurt = they come blurring. (*N.E.D.*, which cites this passage, compares "to go bang.")

² See Prologue, p. 429, n. 3.

³ So Q1, W., etc.; M., "be at."

⁴ Whim or fancy. (M. refers to the "Fantasque"—an eccentric Italian painter—in *The Spectator*, No. 83. See also *N.E.D.*)

will, mankind will still be weaker; and whilst there is a world, 'tis woman that will govern it. But, prithee, one word of poor Constant before we go to bed, if it be but to furnish matter for dreams: I dare swear he's talking of me now, or thinking of me at least, tho' it be in the middle of his prayers.

Bel. So he ought, I think; for you were pleas'd to make him a good round advance to day, madam. 106

Lady Brute. Why, I have e'en plagu'd him enough to satisfie any reasonable woman: he has besieg'd me these two years, to no purpose.

Bel. And if he besieg'd you two years more, he'd be well enough paid, so he had the plundering of you at last. 111

Lady Brute. That may be; but I'm afraid the town won't be able to hold out much longer: for to confess the truth to you, Bellinda, the garrison begins to grow mutinous.

Bel. Then the sooner you capitulate, the better. 115

Lady Brute. Yet, methinks, I wou'd fain stay a little longer to see you fix'd too, that we might start together, and see who cou'd love longest. What think you, if Heartfree shou'd have a month's mind¹ to you?

Bel. Why, faith, I cou'd almost be in love with him for despising that foolish, affected Lady Fancyfull; but I'm afraid he's too cold ever to warm himself by my fire. 122

Lady Brute. Then he deserves to be froze to death. Wou'd I were a man for your sake, my dear rogue! [Kissing her.]

Bel. You'd wish your self a woman again for your own, or the men are mistaken. But if I cou'd make a conquest of this son of Bacchus, and rival his bottle, what shou'd I do with him? He has no fortune. I can't marry him,—and sure you wou'd not have me commit fornication? 129

Lady Brute. Why, if you did, child 'twou'd be but a good friendly part; if 'twere only to keep me in countenance whilst I commit—you know what. 132

Bel. Well, if I can't resolve to serve you that way, I may perhaps some other, as much to your satisfaction. But pray how shall we contrive to see these blades again quickly? 135

¹ a passing inclination.

Lady Brute. We must e'en have recourse to the old way; make 'em an appointment 'twixt jest and earnest. 'Twill look like a frolick, and that you know's a very good thing to save a woman's blushes.

Bel. You advise well; but where shall it be? 140

Lady Brute. In Spring Garden.¹ But they shan't know their women, till their women pull off their masques; ² for a surprize is the most agreeable thing in the world: and I find myself in a very good humour, ready to do 'em any good turn I can think on.

Bel. Then pray write 'em the necessary billet, without farther delay. 146

Lady Brute. Let's go into your chamber, then, and whilst you say your prayers I'll do it, child. [*Exeunt.*]

THE END OF THE THIRD ACT.

Act IV. Scene [I].³ *Covent Garden.*⁴

Enter LORD RAKE, SIR JOHN, &c., with swords drawn.

Lord Rake. Is the dog dead?

Col. Bully. No, damn him! I heard him wheeze.

Lord Rake. How the witch his wife howl'd!

Col. Bully. Ay, she'll alarm the watch presently.

Lord Rake. Appear, knight, then; come, you have a good cause to fight for—there's a man murder'd. 6

¹ I.e., New Spring Gardens. The old Spring Gardens, near St. James's Park, had been a favorite "place of refreshment" in Charles I's time, before the Puritans closed it. The new Gardens, at Lambeth, Evelyn described (July 2, 1661) as "a pretty contriv'd plantation," and Pepys (May 28, 1667) found them "mighty divertising." So did Sir Roger de Coverley fifty years later (*Spectator*, No. 383), though he encountered "a loose tribe of people" there. The name of the resort was changed to Vauxhall Gardens in 1732, but its character, judging by the experiences of Jos Sedley, did not change materially. It was closed in 1859. (See also Strutt's *Sports and Pastimes* and Besant's *London in the Time of the Stuarts*.)

² See above, pp. 276-77, and cf. Pepys, June 12, 1663.

³ Vanbrugh later wrote two scenes, to replace this scene and the third one of this act. See below, pp. 521-32.

⁴ "The amorous and herbivorous parish of Covent Garden," in Vanbrugh's time one of the most fashionable quarters of London. Its centre of attraction was the famous Portico Walk or Piazza, originally built by Inigo Jones.

Sir John. Is there? Then let his ghost be satisfied; for I'll sacrifice a constable to it presently, and burn his body upon his wooden chair.

Enter a Taylor, with a bundle under his arm.

Col. Bully. How now? What have we got here? A thief? 10

Taylor. No, an't please you; I'm no thief.

Lord Rake. That we'll see presently: here, let the general examine him.

Sir John. Ay, ay, let me examine him, and I'll lay a hundred pound I find him guilty, in spite of his teeth—for he looks—like a—sneaking rascal. Come, sirrah, without equivocation or mental reservation, tell me of what opinion you are, and what calling; for by them—I shall guess at your morals. 18

Tayl. An't please you, I'm a dissenting journeyman taylor.

Sir John. Then, sirra, you love lying by your religion, and theft by your trade. And so, that your punishment may be suitable to your crimes—I'll have you first gagg'd—and then hang'd. 22

Tayl. Pray, good worthy gentlemen, don't abuse me; indeed I'm an honest man, and a good workman, tho' I say it, that shou'd not say it. 25

Sir John. No words, sirrah, but attend your fate.

Lord Rake. Let me see what's in that bundle.

Tayl. An't please you, it's the doctor of the parish's gown.

Lord Rake. The doctor's gown!—Heark you, knight, you won't stick at abusing the clergy, will you? 30

Sir John. No,—I'm drunk, and I'll abuse any thing—but my wife; and her I name—with reverence.

Lord Rake. Then you shall wear this gown, whilst you charge the watch; that tho' the blows fall upon you, the scandal may light upon the Church. 35

Sir John. A generous design—by all the gods!—Give it me.

[Takes the gown, and puts it on.]

Tayl. O dear gentlemen, I shall be quite undone, if you take the gown.

Sir John. Retire, sirrah; and since you carry off your skin—go home, and be happy. 40

Taylor. [*pausing.*—I think I had e'en as good follow the gentleman's friendly advice. For if I dispute any longer, who knows but the whim may take him to case ¹ me? These courtiers are fuller of tricks than they are of money; they'll sooner cut a man's throat, than pay his bill. [*Exit Taylor.*

Sir John. So, how d'ye like my shapes now? 46

Lord Rake. This will do to a miracle; he looks like a bishop going to the holy war. But to your arms, gentlemen: the enemy appears.

Enter Constable and Watch.

Watchman. Stand! Who goes there? Come before the constable. 51

Sir John. The constable's a rascal—and you are the son of a whore!

Watchman. A good civil answer for a parson, truly!

Constab. Methinks, sir, a man of your coat might set a better example. 56

Sir John. Sirrah, I'll make you know—there are men of my coat can set as bad examples—as you can do, you dog, you!

[*SIR JOHN strikes the Constable.*² *They knock him down, disarm him, and seize him.* LORD R[AKE], &c., *run away.*

Constab. So, we have secur'd the parson, however.

Sir John. Blood, and blood—and blood! 60

Watchman. Lord have mercy upon us! How the wicked wretch raves of blood! I'll warrant he has been murdering some body to night.

Sir John. Sirrah, there's nothing got by murder but a halter: my talent lies towards drunkenness and simony. 65

Watchman. Why, that now was spoke like a man of parts, neighbours; it's pity he shou'd be so disguis'd.

Sir John. You lye—I am not disguis'd; for I am drunk bare-fac'd.

Watchman. Look you there again!—This is a mad parson,

¹ skin.

² In connection with this and the preceding exploit, see Shadwell's *The Scourers*, and Ashton, *Social Life in the Reign of Queen Anne.*

Mr. Constable! I'll lay a pot of ale upon's head, he's a good preacher. 72

Constab. Come, sir, out of respect to your calling, I shan't put you into the round-house; but we must secure you in our drawing-room till morning, that you may do no mischief. So, come along. 75

Sir John. You may put me where you will, sirrah, now you have overcome me.—But if I can't do mischief, I'll think of mischief—in spite of your teeth, you dog, you! [*Exeunt.*]

Scene [II]. *A Bed-Chamber.*

Enter HEARTFREE solus.

What the plague ail's me?—Love? No, I thank you for that; my heart's rock still.—Yet 'tis Bellinda that disturbs me; that's positive.—Well, what of all that? Must I love her for being troublesome? At that rate I might love all the women I meet, I gad. But hold!—Tho' I don't love her for disturbing me, yet she may disturb me, because I love her.—Ay, that may be, faith! I have dream't of her, that's certain.—Well, so I have of my mother; therefore what's that to the purpose? Ay, but Bellinda runs in my mind waking—and so do's many a damn'd thing that I don't care a farthing for!—Methinks, tho', I would fain be talking to her, and yet I have no business.—Well, am I the first man that has had a mind to do an impertinent thing? 12

Enter CONSTANT.

Const. How now, Heartfree? What makes you up and dress'd so soon? I thought none but lovers quarrell'd with their beds; I expected to have found you snoring, as I us'd to do. 15

Heart. Why, faith, friend, 'tis the care I have of your affairs that makes me so thoughtful: I have been studying all night how to bring your matter about with Bellinda.

Const. With Bellinda?

Heart. With my lady, I mean: And, faith, I have mighty hopes on't. Sure you must be very well satisfy'd with her behaviour to you yesterday? 22

Const. So well, that nothing but a lover's fears can make me doubt of success. But what can this sudden change proceed from?

Heart. Why, you saw her husband beat her, did you not? 25

Const. That's true: a husband is scarce to be borne upon any terms, much less when he fights with his wife. Methinks, she shou'd e'en have cuckolded him upon the very spot, to shew that after the battel she was master of the field.

Heart. A council of war of women would infallibly have advis'd her to't. But, I confess, so agreeable a woman as Bellinda deserves better usage. 32

Const. Bellinda again?

Heart. My lady, I mean. What a pox makes me blunder so today? [*Aside.*—A plague of this treacherous tongue! 35

Const. Prithee, look upon me seriously, Heartfree—Now answer me directly: Is it my lady, or Bellinda, employs your careful thoughts thus?

Heart. My lady, or Bellinda?

Const. In love! By this light, in love! 40

Heart. In love?

Const. Nay, ne'er deny it; for thou'lt do it so aukerdly, 'twill but make the jest sit heavier about thee. My dear friend, I give thee much joy.

Heart. Why, prithee, you won't perswade me to it, will you? 45

Const. That she's mistress of your tongue, that's plain; and I know you are so honest a fellow, your tongue and heart always go together. But how—but how the devil? Pha! ha! ha! ha!—

Heart. Hey-dey! Why, sure you don't believe it in earnest?

Const. Yes, I do; because I see you deny it in jest. 50

Heart. Nay, but look you, Ned—a—deny in jest—a—gadzooks! You know I say—a—when a man denies a thing in jest—a—

Const. Pha! ha! ha! ha! ha!

Heart. Nay, then we shall have it. What, because a man stumbles at a word? Did you never make a blunder? 55

Const. Yes; for I am in love; I own it.

Heart. Then so am I!—Now laugh till thy soul's glutted with mirth! [*Embracing him.*—But, dear Constant, don't tell the town on't.

Const. Nay, then, 'twere almost pity to laugh at thee, after so honest a confession. But tell us a little, Jack, by what new-invented arms has this mighty stroak been given? 62

Heart. E'en by that unaccountable weapon call'd *je ne sçai quoy*: for every thing that can come within the virge of beauty, I have seen it with indifference. 65

Const. So in few words, then, the *je ne sçai quoy* has been too hard for the quilted petticoat.

Heart. Igad, I think the *je ne sçai quoy* is in the quilted petticoat; at least 'tis certain, I ne'er think on't without—a—a *je ne sçai quoy* in every part about me. 70

Const. Well, but have all your remedies lost their virtue? Have you turn'd her in-side out yet?

Heart. I dare not so much as think on't.

Const. But don't the two years fatigue I have had discourage you? 75

Heart. Yes: I dread what I foresee; yet cannot quit the enterprize. Like some soldiers whose courage dwells more in their honour than their nature—on they go, tho' the body trembles at what the soul makes it undertake.

Const. Nay, if you expect your mistress will use you as your profanations against her sex deserve, you tremble justly. But how do you intend to proceed, friend? 82

Heart. Thou know'st I'm but a novice; be friendly, and advise me.

Const. Why, look you, then: I'd have you—serenade and a—write a song—go to church—look like a fool—be very officious—ogle, write and lead out: and who knows but in a year or two's time you may be—call'd a troublesome puppy, and sent about your business?

Heart. That's hard! 90

Const. Yet thus it oft falls out with lovers, sir.

Heart. Pox on me for making one of the number!

Const. Have a care: say no saucy things; 'twill but augment your crime; and if your mistress hears on't, encrease your punishment. 95

Heart. Prithee say something, then, to encourage me; you know I help'd you in your distress.

Const. Why, then, to encourage you to perseverance, that you may be thoroughly ill-us'd for your offences, I'll put you in mind, that even the coyest ladies of 'em all are made up of desires, as well as we; and tho' they do hold out a long time, they will capitulate at last. For that thundering engenier, Nature, do's make such havock in the town, they must surrender at long run, or perish in their own flames.

Enter a Footman.

Foot. Sir, there's a porter without with a letter; he desires to give it into your own hands. 106

Const. Call him in.

Enter Porter.

Const. What, Jo! Is it thee?

Porter. An't please you, sir, I was order'd to deliver this into your own hands by two well-shap'd ladies, at the New-Exchange.¹ I was at your honour's lodgings, and your servants sent me hither.

Const. 'Tis well; are you to carry any answer? 112

Porter. No, my noble master. They gave me my orders, and whip, they were gone, like a maiden-head at fifteen.

Const. Very well; there. [*Gives him money.*]

Porter. God bless your honour. [*Exit Porter.*]

Const. Now let's see what honest, trusty Jo has brought us. [*Reads.*]

If you and your play-fellow can spare time from your business and devotions, don't fail to be at Spring-Garden² about eight in the evening. You'll find nothing there but women, so you need bring no other arms than what you usually carry about you. 121

So, play-fellow: here's something to stay your stomach till your mistresses dish is ready for you.

¹ "Britain's Burse," first built in 1608; rebuilt in 1667 (see Pepys, Oct. 23, 1667). The dangerous allurements of its shops—and shop-girls—are frequently mentioned in contemporary literature.

² See p. 479, n. 1; p. 489, n. 1.

Heart. Some of our old batter'd acquaintance. I won't go; not I.

Const. Nay, that you can't avoid; there's honour in the case; 'tis a challenge, and I want a second. 126

Heart. I doubt I shall be but a very useless one to you; for I'm so dishearten'd by this wound Bellinda has given me, I don't think I shall have courage enough to draw my sword.

Const. O, if that be all, come along; I'll warrant you find sword enough for such enemies as we have to deal withal. [*Exeunt.*]

[Scene III. *A Street before the Justice's House.*]

Enter Constable, &c., with SIR JOHN.

Constab. Come along, sir; I thought to have let you slip this morning, because you were a minister; but you are as drunk and as abusive as ever. We'll see what the Justice of the Peace will say to you.

Sir John. And you shall see what I'll say to the Justice of the Peace, sirrah. [*They knock at the door.*]

Enter Servant.

Constab. Pray, acquaint his worship, we have got an unruly parson here. We are unwilling to expose him, but don't know what to do with him. 9

Serv. I'll acquaint my master. [*Exit* Serv.]

Sir John. You—Constable—What damn'd justice is this?

Constab. One that will take care of you, I warrant you.

Enter Justice.

Just. Well, Mr. Constable, what's the disorder here?

Constab. An't please your Worship—

Sir John. Let me speak, and be damn'd: I'm a divine, and can unfold mysteries better than you can do. 16

Just. Sadness, sadness! A minister so over-taken! Pray, sir, give the constable leave to speak, and I'll hear you very patiently; I assure you, sir, I will.

Sir John. Sir—You are a very civil magistrate! Your most humble servant. 21

Constab. An't please your Worship, then; he has attempted to beat the watch to night, and swore—

Sir John. You lye!

Just. Hold, pray, sir, a little! 25

Sir John. Sir, your very humble servant.

Constab. Indeed, sir, he came at us without any provocation, call'd us whores and rogues, and laid us on with a great quarter-staff. He was in my Lord Rake's company. They have been playing the devil to night. 30

Just. Hem—hem—Pray, sir—May you be chaplain to my lord?

Sir John. Sir—I presume—I may if I will.

Just. My meaning, sir, is—Are you so?

Sir John. Sir—you mean very well.

Just. He, hem—hem—Under favour, sir, pray answer me directly. 36

Sir John. Under favour, sir—Do you use to answer directly when you are drunk?

Just. Good lack, good lack! Here's nothing to be got from him! Pray, sir, may I crave your name? 40

Sir John. Sir—My name's—[*he hycops*—Hycop, sir.

Just. Hycop? Doctor Hycop, I have known a great many country parsons of that name, especially down in the Fenns.¹ Pray where do you live, sir?

Sir John. Here—and there, sir. 45

Just. Why, what a strange man is this! Where do you preach, sir? Have you any cure?

Sir John. Sir—I have—a very good cure—for a clap, at your service.

Just. Lord have mercy upon us! 50

Sir John [*aside*].—This fellow do's ask so many impertinent questions, I believe, Igad, 'tis the justice's wife in the justice's clothes.

Just. Mr. Constable, I vow and protest, I don't know what to do with him. 55

¹ Low-lying districts in Cambridgeshire, Lincolnshire, and adjoining counties.

Constab. Truly, he has been but a troublesom guest to us all night.

Just. I think I had e'en best let him go about his business, for I'm unwilling to expose him.

Constab. E'en what your Worship thinks fit. 60

Sir John. Sir—not to interrupt Mr. Constable—I have a small favour to ask.

Just. Sir, I open both my ears to you.

Sir John. Sir, your very humble servant. I have a little urgent business calls upon me; and therefore I desire the favour of you to bring matters to a conclusion. 66

Just. Sir, if I were sure that business were not to commit more disorders, I wou'd release you.

Sir John. None—By my priesthood!

Just. Then, Mr. Constable, you may discharge him. 70

Sir John. Sir, your very humble servant. If you please to accept of a bottle—

Just. I thank you, kindly, sir; but I never drink in a morning. Good-buy to ye, sir, good-buy to ye.

Sir John. Good-buy t'ye, good sir. [*Exit Justice.*—So—now, Mr. Constable, shall you and I go pick up a whore together? 76

Constab. No, thank you, sir; my wife's enough to satisfie any reasonable man.

Sir John [*aside.*—He! he! he! he! he!—the fool is married, then.—Well, you won't go? 80

Constab. Not I, truly.

Sir John. Then I'll go by my self; and you and your wife may be damn'd. [*Exit SIR JOHN.*

Constable [*gazing after him.*—Why, God-a-marcy, parson!

[*Exit.*

Scene [IV]. *Spring-Garden.*

CONSTANT and HEARTFREE cross the Stage. As they go off, enter LADY FANCYFULL and Madamoiselle mask'd, and dogging 'em.

Const. So: I think we are about the time appointed; let us walk up this way. [*Exit.*

Lady Fan. Good: thus far I have dogg'd 'em without being discover'd! 'Tis infallibly some intrigue that brings them to Spring-Garden.¹ How my poor heart is torn and wrackt with fear and jealousy! Yet let it be any thing but that flirt Bellinda, and I'll try to bear it. But if it prove her, all that's woman in me shall be employ'd to destroy her. 8

[*Exeunt after* CONSTANT *and* HEARTFREE.

Re-enter CONSTANT *and* HEARTFREE. LADY FANCYFULL *and* Mademoiselle *still following at a distance.*

Const. I see no females yet, that have any thing to say to us. I'm afraid we are banter'd. 10

Heart. I wish we were; for I'm in no humour to make either them or my self merry.

Const. Nay, I'm sure you'll make them merry enough, if I tell 'em why you are dull. But prithee why so heavy and sad before you begin to be ill us'd? 15

Heart. For the same reason, perhaps, that you are so brisk and well pleas'd; because both pains and pleasures are generally more considerable in prospect, than when they come to pass.

Enter LADY B[RUTE] *and* BELLINDA, *mask'd and poorly dress'd.*

Const. How now! Who are these? Not our game, I hope.

Heart. If they are, we are e'en well enough serv'd, to come hunting here, when we had so much better game in chase elsewhere. 22

Lady Fan. [to Mademoiselle.—So, those are their ladies, without doubt. But I'm afraid that doily stuff² is not worn for want of better cloaths. They are the very shape and size of Bellinda and her aunt. 26

Madam. So day be inteed, matam.

Lady Fan. We'll slip into this close arbor, where we may hear all they say. [*Exeunt* LADY FANCYFULL *and* Mademoiselle.

Lady Brute. What, are you afraid of us, gentlemen? 30

¹ See above, pp. 479, 485, and notes.

² Inexpensive woollens—from Doiley, a London draper who grew rich by dealing in cheap but "genteel" stuffs (*N.E.D.*).

Heart. Why, truly, I think we may, if appearance don't lye.

Bel. Do you always find women what they appear to be, sir?

Heart. No, forsooth; but I seldom find 'em better than they appear to be.

Bel. Then the outside's best, you think? 35

Heart. 'Tis the honestest.

Const. Have a care, Heartfree; you are relapsing again.

Lady Brute. Why, does the gentleman use to rail at women?

Const. He has done formerly.

Bel. I suppose he had very good cause for't. They did not use you so well as you thought you deserv'd, sir. 41

Lady Brute. They made themselves merry at your expence, sir.

Bel. Laugh'd when you sigh'd—

Lady Brute. Slept while you were waking—

Bel. Had your porter beat— 45

Lady Brute. And threw your billet doux in the fire.

Heart. Hey-day, I shall do more than rail presently.

Bel. Why, you won't beat us, will you?

Heart. I don't know but I may.

Const. What the devil's coming here? Sir John in a gown—
And drunk, I'faith. 51

Enter SIR JOHN.

Sir John. What a pox!—here's Constant, Heartfree—and two whores, I gad—O you covetous rogues! What, have you never a spare punk for your friend?—But I'll share with you.

[*He seizes both the women.*]

Heart. Why, what the plague have you been doing, knight?

Sir John. Why, I have been beating the watch, and scandalizing the clergy. 57

Heart. A very good account, truly!

Sir John. And what do you think I'll do next?

Const. Nay, that no man can guess. 60

Sir John. Why, if you'll let me sup with you, I'll treat both your strumpets.

Lady Brute [*aside*].—O Lord, we are undone!

Heart. No, we can't sup together, because we have some

affairs elsewhere. But if you'll accept of these two ladies, we'll be so complaisant to you, to resign our right in 'em. 66

Bel. [*aside.*—Lord, what shall we do?

Sir John. Let me see; their cloaths are such damn'd cloaths, they won't pawn for the reckoning.

Heart. Sir John, your servant. Rapture attend you! 70

Const. Adieu, ladies! Make much of the gentleman.

Lady Brute. Why, sure, you won't leave us in the hands of a drunken fellow to abuse us?

Sir John. Who do you call a drunken fellow, you slut you? I'm a man of quality; the king has made me a knight. 75

[*HEART.* runs off.

Heart. Ay, ay, you are in good hands! Adieu, adieu!

Lady Brute. The devil's hands: let me go, or I'll—For heaven's sake, protect us!

[*She breaks from him, runs to CONSTANT, twitching off her mask, and clapping it on again.*

Sir John. I'll devil you, you jade you! I'll demolish your ugly face! 80

Const. Hold a little, knight; she swoons.

Sir John. I'll swoon her!

Const. Hey, Heartfree!

Re-enter HEARTFREE. BELLINDA runs to him, and shews her face.

Heart. O heavens! My dear creature, stand there a little.

Const. Pull him off, Jack. 85

Heart. Hold, mighty man; look ye, sir, we did but jest with you. These are ladies of our acquaintance that we had a mind to frighten a little, but now you must leave us.

Sir John. Oons, I won't leave you; not I.

Heart. Nay, but you must, though; and therefore make no words on't. 91

Sir John. Then you are a couple of damn'd uncivil fellows. And I hope your punks will give you sauce to your mutton!

[*Exit SIR JOHN.*

Lady Brute. Oh, I shall never come to my self again, I'm so frightned. 95

Const. 'Twas a narrow scape, indeed.

Bel. Women must have frolicks, you see, whatever they cost 'em.

Heart. This might have prov'd a dear one, tho'.

Lady Brute. You are the more oblig'd to us for the risque we run upon your accounts. 101

Const. And I hope you'll acknowledge something due to our knight errantry, ladies. This is the second time we have deliver'd you.

Lady Brute. 'Tis true; and since we see Fate has design'd you for our guardians, 'twill make us the more willing to trust our selves in your hands. But you must not have the worse opinion of us for our innocent frolick.

Heart. Ladies, you may command our opinions in every thing that is to your advantage. 110

Bel. Then, sir, I command you to be of opinion, that women are sometimes better than they appear to be.

[LADY BRUTE and CONSTANT talk apart.]

Heart. Madam, you have made a convert of me in every thing. I'm grown a fool: I cou'd be fond of a woman.

Bel. I thank you, sir, in the name of the whole sex. 115

Heart. Which sex nothing but your self cou'd ever have aton'd for.

Bel. Now has my vanity a devilish itch, to know in what my merit consists.

Heart. In your humility, madam, that keeps you ignorant it consists at all. 121

Bel. One other compliment with that serious face, and I hate you for ever after!

Heart. Some women love to be abus'd: is that it you wou'd be at? 125

Bel. No, not that, neither: but I'd have men talk plainly what's fit for women to hear; without putting 'em either to a real or an affected blush.

Heart. Why, then, in as plain terms as I can find to express my self, I cou'd love you even to—matrimony it self a-most, I-gad. 131

Bel. Just as Sir John did her ladyship there.—What think you? Don't you believe one month's time might bring you down to the same indifference, only clad in a little better manners, perhaps? Well, you men are unaccountable things: mad till you have your mistresses, and then stark mad till you are rid of 'em again. Tell me honestly, is not your patience put to a much severer tryal after possession than before? 138

Heart. With a great many, I must confess, it is, to our eternal scandal; but I—dear creature, do but try me! 140

Bel. That's the surest way, indeed, to know, but not the safest. [To LADY BRUTE.—Madam, are not you for taking a turn in the Great Walk? It's almost dark; no body will know us.

Lady Brute. Really I find myself something idle, Bellinda; besides, I dote upon this little odd private corner. But don't let my lazy fancy confine you. 146

Const. [*aside.*—So, she wou'd be left alone with me; that's well.

Bel. Well, we'll take one turn, and come to you again.

[To HEART.—Come, sir, shall we go pry into the secrets of the garden? Who knows what discoveries we may make? 150

Heart. Madam, I'm at your service.

Const. [to HEART. *aside.*—Don't make too much haste back; for, d'ye hear?—I may be busie.

Heart. Enough. [Exeunt BELLINDA and HEARTFREE.

Lady Brute. Sure you think me scandalously free, Mr. Constant. I'm afraid I shall lose your good opinion of me. 156

Const. My good opinion, madam, is like your cruelty—never to be remov'd.

Lady Brute. But if I shou'd remove my cruelty, then there's an end of your good opinion. 160

Const. There is not so strict an alliance between 'em, neither. 'Tis certain I shou'd love you then better (if that be possible) than I do now; and where I love, I always esteem.

Lady Brute. Indeed, I doubt you much. Why, suppose you had a wife, and she shou'd entertain a gallant? 165

Const. If I gave her just cause, how cou'd I justly condemn her?

Lady Brute. Ah! But you'd differ widely about just causes.

Const. But blows can bear no dispute.

Lady Brute. Nor ill manners much, truly. 170

Const. Then no woman upon earth has so just a cause as you have.

Lady Brute. O, but a faithful wife is a beautiful character.

Const. To a deserving husband, I confess it is.

Lady Brute. But can his faults release my duty? 175

Const. In equity, without doubt. And where laws dispense with equity, equity should dispense with laws.

Lady Brute. Pray, let's leave this dispute; for you men have as much witchcraft in your arguments as women have in their eyes. 180

Const. But whil'st you attack me with your charms, 'tis but reasonable I assault you with mine.

Lady Brute. The case is not the same. What mischief we do, we can't help, and therefore are to be forgiven.

Const. Beauty soon obtains pardon for the pain that it gives, when it applies the balm of compassion to the wound: but a fine face and a hard heart is almost as bad as an ugly face and a soft one; both very troublesom to many a poor gentleman. 188

Lady Brute. Yes, and to many a poor gentlewoman, too, I can assure you. But pray, which of 'em is it that most afflicts you?

Const. Your glass and conscience will inform you, madam. But for heaven's sake (for now I must be serious), if pity, or if gratitude can move you; [*Taking her hand*—if constancy and truth have power to tempt you; if love, if adoration can affect you; give me at least some hopes that time may do what you perhaps mean never to perform; 'twill ease my sufferings, tho' not quench my flame. 197

Lady Brute. Your sufferings eas'd, your flame wou'd soon abate: and that I would preserve; not quench it, sir.

Const. Wou'd you preserve it, nourish it with favours; for that's the food it naturally requires. 201

Lady Brute. Yet on that natural food 'twou'd surfeit soon, shou'd I resolve to grant all that you wou'd ask.

Const. And in refusing all, you starve it. Forgive me, therefore, since my hunger rages, if I at last grow wild, and in my

frenzy force at least this from you. [*Kissing her hand.*—Or if you'd have my flame soar higher still, then grant me this, and this, and this, and thousands more; [*Kissing first her hand; then her neck; Aside*—for now's the time,—she melts into compassion. 209

Lady Brute [*aside.*—Poor coward vertue, how it shuns the battle! O heavens! Let me go. 211

Const. Ay, go, ay: Where shall we go, my charming angel?—Into this private arbour.¹—Nay, let's lose no time—Moments are precious.

Lady Brute. And lovers wild. Pray let us stop here; at least for this time. 216

Const. 'Tis impossible; he that has power over you, can have none over himself.

[*As he is forcing her into the arbour, LADY FANCYFULL and Mademoiselle bolt out upon them, and run over the stage.*

Lady Brute. Ah! I'm lost!

Lady Fan. Fe! Fe! Fe! Fe! Fe! 220

Madam. Fe! Fe! Fe! Fe! Fe!

Const. Death and furies! Who are these?

Lady Brute. Oh heavens! I'm out of my wits; if they knew me, I'm ruin'd.

Const. Don't be frightned: ten thousand to one they are strangers to you. 226

Lady Brute. Whatever they are, I won't stay here a moment longer.

Const. Whither will you go?

Lady Brute. Home, as if the devil were in me! Lord, where's this Bellinda now? 231

Enter BELLINDA and HEARTFREE.

O! it's well you are come: I'm so frightned, my hair stands an end. Let's be gone for heaven's sake!

Bel. Lord, what's the matter?

Lady Brute. The devil's the matter; we are discovered. Here's

¹ A contemporary account states that "the thickets of Spring Gardens . . . seem to be contrived to all advantages of gallantry" (cf. Besant's *London in the Time of the Stuarts*, p. 312).

a couple of women have done the most impertinent thing. Away!
 Away! Away! Away! Away! [Exit running.]

Re-enter LADY FANCYFULL and Mademoiselle.

Lady Fan. Well, mademoiselle, 'tis a prodigious thing how women can suffer filthy fellows to grow so familiar with 'em.

Madam. Ah Matam, il n'y a rien desi naturel. 240

Lady Fan. Fe! Fe! Fe! But, oh my heart! O jealousy! O torture! I'm upon the rack. What shall I do? My lover's lost; I ne'er shall see him mine. [Pausing.—But I may be reveng'd; and that's the same thing. Ah sweet revenge! Thou welcome thought, thou healing balsam to my wounded soul! Be but propitious on this one occasion, I'll place my heaven in thee for all my life to come. 247

To woman how indulgent nature's kind!
 No blast of fortune long disturbs her mind:
 Compliance to her fate supports her still; 250
 If love won't make her happy—mischief will.

[Exit.]

THE END OF THE FOURTH ACT.

Act V. Scene [I]. *Lady Fancyfull's House.*

Enter LADY FANCYFULL and Mademoiselle.

Lady Fan. Well, mademoiselle, did you dogg the filthy things?

Madam. O que ouy, Matam.

Lady Fan. And where are they?

Madam. Au logis.

Lady Fan. What? Men and all? 5

Madam. Tous ensemble.

Lady Fan. O confidence! What, carry their fellows to their own house?

Madam. C'est que le Mari n'y est pas.

Lady Fan. No; so I believe, truly. But he shall be there, and

quickly too, if I can find him out. Well, 'tis a prodigious thing, to see when men and women get together, how they fortifie one another in their impudence. But if that drunken fool, her husband, be to be found in e'er a tavern in town, I'll send him amongst 'em. I'll spoil their sport!

Madam. En verite, madame, ce seroit damage. 15

Lady Fan. 'Tis in vain to oppose it, madamoiselle; therefore never go about it. For I am the steadiest creature in the world—when I have determin'd to do mischief. So, come along.

[*Exeunt.*]

Scene [II]. *Sir John Brute's House.*

Enter CONSTANT, HEARTFREE, LADY BRUTE, BELLINDA, and LOVEWELL.

Lady Brute. But are you sure you don't mistake, Lovewell?

Lov. Madam, I saw 'em all go into the tavern together, and my master was so drunk he cou'd scarce stand.

Lady Brute. Then, gentlemen, I believe we may venture to let you stay, and play at cards with us an hour or two: for they'll scarce part till morning. 6

Bel. I think 'tis pity they shou'd ever part.

Const. The company that's here, madam.

Lady Brute. Then, sir, the company that's here must remember to part it self in time. 10

Const. Madam, we don't intend to forfeit your future favours by an indiscreet usage of this. The moment you give us the signal, we sha'n't fail to make our retreat.

Lady Brute. Upon those conditions, then, let us sit down to cards. 15

Enter LOVEWELL.

Lov. O Lord, madam, here's my master just staggering in upon you; he has been quarrelsom yonder, and they have kick'd him out of the company.

Lady Brute. Into the closet, gentlemen, for heaven's sake; I'll wheedle him to bed, if possible. 20

[*CONST. and HEART. run into the Closet.*]

Enter SIR JOHN, all dirt and bloody.

Lady Brute. Ah—Ah—he's all over blood!

Sir John. What the plague do's the woman—squall for? Did you never see a man in pickle before?

Lady Brute. Lord, where have you been?

Sir John. I have been at—cuffs. 25

Lady Brute. I fear that is not all. I hope you are not wounded.

Sir John. Sound as a roche,¹ wife.

Lady Brute. I'm mighty glad to hear it.

Sir John. You know—I think you lye.

Lady Brute. I know you do me wrong to think so then. For heaven's my witness, I had rather see my own blood trickle down, than yours. 32

Sir John. Then will I be crucify'd.

Lady Brute. 'Tis a hard fate, I shou'd not be believ'd.

Sir John. 'Tis a damn'd atheistical age, wife. 35

Lady Brute. I am sure I have given you a thousand tender proofs how great my care is of you. Nay, spite of all your cruel thoughts, I'll still persist, and at this moment, if I can, perswade you to lie down and sleep a little.

Sir John. Why—do you think I am drunk—you slut, you? 40

Lady Brute. Heaven forbid I shou'd! But I'm afraid you are feaverish. Pray let me feel your pulse.

Sir John. Stand off, and be damn'd.

Lady Brute. Why, I see your distemper in your very eyes. You are all on fire. Pray, go to bed; let me intreat you. 45

Sir John. —Come kiss me, then.

Lady Brute [*kissing him.*—There: Now go. [*Aside.*—He stinks like poison.

Sir John. I see it go's damnably against your stomach—and therefore—kiss me again. 50

Lady Brute. Nay, now you fool me.

Sir John. Do't, I say.

Lady Brute [*aside.*—Ah, Lord have mercy upon me!—Well—there: now will you go?

¹ roach.

Sir John. Now, wife, you shall see my gratitude. You give me two kisses—I'll give you—two hundred. [*Kisses, and tumbles her.*]

Lady Brute. O Lord! Pray, Sir John, be quiet!—Heavens, what a pickle am I in! 58

Bel. [*aside.*—If I were in her pickle, I'd call my gallant out of the closet, and he shou'd cudgel him soundly. 60

Sir John. So; now you being as dirty and as nasty as my self, we may go pig together. But first I must have a cup of your cold tea, wife. [*Going to the Closet.*]

Lady Brute. O I'm ruin'd!—There's none there, my dear.

Sir John. I'll warrant you I'll find some, my dear. 65

Lady Brute. You can't open the door, the lock's spoil'd; I have been turning and turning the key this half hour to no purpose. I'll send for the smith to morrow.

Sir John. There's ne'er a smith in Europe can open a door with more expedition that I can do—As for example—Pou! [*He bursts open the door with his foot.*—How now! What the devil have we got here?—Constant!—Heartfree!—And two whores again, I gad—This is the worst cold tea—that ever I met with in my life.— 73

Enter CONSTANT and HEARTFREE.

Lady Brute [*aside.*—O Lord, what will become of us?

Sir John. Gentlemen—I am your very humble servant—I give you many thanks—I see you take care of my family—I shall do all I can to return the obligation. 77

Const. Sir, how odly soever this business may appear to you, you wou'd have no cause to be uneasie, if you knew the truth of all things; your lady is the most virtuous woman in the world, and nothing has past but an innocent frolick. 81

Heart. Nothing else, upon my honour, sir.

Sir John. You are both very civil gentlemen—and my wife, there, is a very civil gentlewoman; therefore I don't doubt but many civil things have past between you. Your very humble servant. 86

Lady Brute [*aside to CONST.*—Pray be gone: he's so drunk he can't hurt us to night, and to morrow morning you shall hear from us.

Const. I'll obey you, madam.—Sir, when you are cool, you'll understand reason better. So then I shall take the pains to inform you. If not—I wear a sword, sir, and so good-b'uy to you. Come along, Heartfree. [Exit.]

Sir John. Wear a sword, sir!—And what of all that, sir?—He comes to my house; eats my meat; lies with my wife; dishonours my family; gets a bastard to inherit my estate.—And when I ask a civil account of all this—Sir, says he, I wear a sword!—Wear a sword, sir? Yes, sir, says he, I wear a sword.—It may be a good answer at cross-purposes; but 'tis a damn'd one to a man in my whimsical circumstance.—Sir, says he, I wear a sword! [To LADY B[RUTE.]—And what do you wear now? Ha! Tell me! [Sitting down in a great chair.]—What? You are modest, and cant?—Why, then, I'll tell you, you slut, you. You wear—an impudent lewd face—a damn'd designing heart—and a tail—and a tail full of— 104

[He falls fast asleep, snoring.]

Lady Brute. So; thanks to kind heaven, he's fast for some hours.

Bel. 'Tis well he is so, that we may have time to lay our story handsomly; for we must lie like the devil, to bring our selves off.

Lady Brute. What shall we say, Bellinda?

Bel. [musing.]—I'll tell you: it must all light upon Heartfree and I. We'll say he has courted me some time, but, for reasons unknown to us, has ever been very earnest the thing might be kept from Sir John. That therefore hearing him upon the stairs, he run into the closet, tho' against our will, and Constant with him, to prevent jealousy. And to give this a good impudent face of truth, (that I may deliver you from the trouble you are in) I'll e'en (if he pleases) marry him. 116

Lady Brute. I'm beholding to you, cousin; but that wou'd be carrying the jest a little too far for your own sake: you know he's a younger brother, and has nothing. 119

Bel. 'Tis true: but I like him, and have fortune enough to keep above extremity. I can't say I wou'd live with him in a cell, upon love and bread and butter: but I had rather have the man I love, and a middle state of life, than that gentleman in the chair there, and twice your ladiship's splendour. 124

Lady Brute. In truth, niece, you are in the right on't; for I am

very uneasie with my ambition. But, perhaps, had I married as you'll do, I might have been as ill us'd.

Bel. Some risque, I do confess, there always is; but if a man has the least spark either of honour or good nature, he can never use a woman ill that loves him and makes his fortune both. Yet I must own to you, some little struggling I still have with this teazing ambition of ours; for pride, you know, is as natural to a woman as 'tis to a saint. I can't help being fond of this rogue; and yet it go's to my heart to think I must never whisk to Hide-Park with above a pair of horses; have no coronet upon my coach, nor a page to carry up my train. But above all—that business of place.—Well, taking place is a noble prerogative. 137

Lady Brute. Especially after a quarrel.—

Bel. Or of a rival. But pray say no more on't, for fear I change my mind; for, o' my conscience, were't not for your affair in the ballance, I shou'd go near to pick up some odious man of quality yet, and only take poor Heartfree for a gallant.

Lady Brute. Then him you must have, however things go?

Bel. Yes. 144

Lady Brute. Why, we may pretend what we will: but 'tis a hard matter to live without the man we love.

Bel. Especially when we are married to the man we hate.—Pray tell me, do the men of the town ever believe us virtuous, when they see us do so? 149

Lady Brute. O, no; nor indeed, hardly, let us do what we will. They most of 'em think, there is no such a thing as virtue, consider'd in the strictest notions of it; and therefore when you hear 'em say, such a one is a woman of reputation, they only mean she's a woman of discretion. For they consider we have no more religion than they have, nor so much morality; and between you and I, Bellinda, I'm afraid the want of inclination seldom protects any of us. 157

Bel. But what think you of the fear of being found out?

Lady Brute. I think that never kept any woman virtuous long. We are not such cowards, neither. No: let us once pass fifteen, and we have too good an opinion of our own cunning, to believe the world can penetrate into what we wou'd keep a secret. And

so, in short, we cannot reasonably blame the men for judging of us by themselves. 164

Bel. But sure we are not so wicked as they are, after all?

Lady Brute. We are as wicked, child, but our vice lies another way: men have more courage than we; so they commit more bold, impudent sins. They quarrel, fight, swear, drink, blaspheme, and the like; whereas we, being cowards, only backbite, tell lyes, cheat at cards, and so forth.—But 'tis late. Let's end our discourse for to night, and, out of an excess of charity, take a small care of that nasty, drunken thing there.—Do but look at him, Bellinda! 172

Bel. Ah—'tis a savoury dish.

Lady Brute. As savoury as 'tis, I'm cloy'd with't. Prithee call the butler to take it away. 175

Bel. Call the butler?—Call the scavenger! [*To a Servant within.*] Who's there? Call Razor! Let him take away his master, scower him clean with a little soap and sand, and so put him to bed.

Lady Brute. Come, Bellinda, I'll e'en lie with you to night; and in the morning we'll send for our gentlemen to set this matter even. 181

Bel. Withal my heart.

Lady Brute. Good night, my dear.

[*Making a low curtsy* [to SIR JOHN].

Both. Ha, ha, ha!

[*Exeunt.*

Enter RASOR.

Rasor. My lady there's a wag—my master there's a cuckold. Marriage is a slippery thing—Women have deprav'd appetites.—My lady's a wag; I have heard all; I have seen all; I understand all; and I'll tell all; for my little French-woman loves news dearly. This story'll gain her heart, or nothing will. [*To his Master.*—Come, sir, your head's too full of fumes at present, to make room for your jealousy; but I reckon we shall have rare work with you, when your pate's empty. Come; to your kennel, you cuckoldly drunken sot you! [*Carries him out upon his back.*

Scene [III]. *Lady Fancyfull's House.**Enter* LADY FANCYFULL *and* Mademoiselle.

Lady Fan. But, why did not you tell me before, mademoiselle, that Razor and you were fond?

Madam. De modesty hinder me, matam.

Lady Fan. Why, truly, modesty do's often hinder us from doing things we have an extravagant mind to. But do's he love you well enough yet, to do any thing you bid him? Do you think, to oblige you, he wou'd speak scandal? 7

Madam. Matam, to oblige your ladiship, he shall speak blasphemy.

Lady Fan. Why, then, mademoiselle, I'll tell you what you shall do. You shall engage him to tell his master all that past at Spring-Garden: I have a mind he shou'd know what a wife and a neice he has got. 13

Madam. Il le fera, Matam.

Enter a Footman, who speaks to Mademoiselle apart.

Foot. Mademoiselle, yonder's Mr. Razor desires to speak with you. 16

Madam. Tell him, I come presently. [*Exit Footman*]. Razor be dare, Matam.

Lady Fan. That's fortunate. Well, I'll leave you together. And if you find him stubborn, mademoiselle—heark you—don't refuse him a few little reasonable liberties to put him into humour.

Madam. Laissez moy faire. 22

[Exit LADY FANCYFULL.

[RASOR *peeps in; and seeing LADY FANCYFULL gone, runs to Mademoiselle, takes her about the neck, and kisses her.*

Madam. How now, confidence?

Razor. How now, modesty!

Madam. Who makes you so familiar, sirrah? 25

Razor. My impudence, hussy.

Madam. Stand off, rogue-face.

Rasor. Ah, Mademoiselle—great news at our house.

Madam. Wy, wat be de matter?

Rasor. The matter?—Why, uptails all's ¹ the matter. 30

Madam. Tu te mocque de moy.

Rasor. Now do you long to know the particulars: The time when—the place where—the manner how. But I won't tell you a word more.

Madam. Nay, den dou kill me, *Rasor.* 35

Rasor. Come, kiss me, then. [*Clapping his hands behind him.*]

Madam. Nay, pridee tell me.

Rasor. Good b'wy to ye. [*Going.*]

Madam. Hold, hold: I will kiss dee. [*Kissing him.*]

Rasor. So, that's civil. Why, now, my pretty pall,² my goldfinch, my little waterwagtail—you must know, that—Come, kiss me again. 42

Madam. I won't kiss dee no more.

Rasor. Good b'wy to ye. [*Going.*]

Madam. Doucement! Dare: es-tu content? [*Kissing him.*]

Rasor. So: Now I'll tell thee all. Why, the news is, that Cuckoldom in folio is newly printed; and Matrimony in quarto is just going into the press. Will you buy any books, mademoiselle? 48

Madam. Tu parle comme un Librair; de devil no understand dee. 50

Rasor. Why, then, that I may make my self intelligible to a waiting-woman, I'll speak like a vallet de chamber. My lady has cuckolded my master.

Madam. Bon.

Rasor. Which we take very ill from her hands, I can tell her that. We can't yet prove matter of fact upon her. 56

Madam. N'importe.

Rasor. But we can prove, that matter of fact had like to have been upon her.

Madam. Ouy da. 60

Rasor. For we have such bloody circumstances—

¹ "Uptails-all," an old game at cards; also (as here, equivocally) confusion, frolic.

² poll.

Madam. Sans doute.

Razor. That any man of parts may draw tickling conclusions from 'em.

Madam. Fort bien. 65

Razor. We have found a couple of tight, well-built gentlemen stuff into her ladships closet.

Madam. Le Diable!

Razor. And I, in my particular person, have discover'd a most damnable plot, how to perswade my poor master, that all this hide and seek, this will in the wisp, has no other meaning than a Christian marriage for sweet Mrs. Bellinda. 72

Madam. Un mariage?—Ah les droless!¹

Razor. Don't you interrupt me, hussy; 'tis agreed I say. And my innocent lady, to riggle her self out at the back-door of the business, turns marriage-bawd to her neice, and resolves to deliver up her fair body to be tumbled and mumbled by that young liquorish whipster, Heartfree. Now are you satisfy'd? 78

Madam. No.

Razor. Right woman; always gaping for more. 80

Madam. Dis be all, den, dat dou know?

Razor. All? Ay, and a great deal, too, I think.

Madam. Dou be fool, dou know noting. Ecoute, mon pauvre
Razor. Dou see des two eyes?—Des two eyes have see de devil.

Razor. The woman's mad. 85

Madam. In Spring-Garden, dat rogue Constant meet dy lady.

Razor. Bon.

Madam. —I'll tell dee no more.

Razor. Nay, prithee, my swan.

Madam. Come, kiss me den. 90

[Clapping her hands behind her as he had done before.]

Razor. I won't kiss you, not I.

Madam. Adieu.

[Going.]

Razor. Hold!—Now proceed. [Gives her a hearty kiss.]

Madam. A ça—I hide my self in one cunning place, where I hear all, and see all. First, dy drunken master come mal a propos; but de sot no know his own dear wife, so he leave her to her sport—

¹ drôlesses.

den de game begin. De lover say soft ting: de lady look upon de ground. [*As she speaks, RASOR still acts the man, and she the woman.*—He take her by de hand: she turn her head one oder way. Den he squeez very hard: den she pull—very softly. Den he take her in his arm: den she give him leetel pat. Den he kiss her tettons.¹ Den she say—pish! Nay! Fee! Den he tremble: den she—sigh. Den he pull her into de arbour: den she pinch him. 103

Rasor. Ay, but not so hard, you baggage you.

Madam. Den he grow bold: she grow weak. He tro her down; il tombe dessus; le diable assist; il emport tout. [*RASOR struggles with her, as if he wou'd throw her down.*—Stand off, sirrah! 107

Rasor. You have set me a fire, you jade you.

Madam. Den go to de river, and quench dy self.

Rasor. What an unnatural harlot 'tis! 110

Madam. *Rasor.* [*Looking languishingly on him.*

Rasor. Mademoiselle.

Madam. Dou no love me.

Rasor. Not love thee?—More than a Frenchman do's soupe.

Madam. Den dou will refuse noting dat I bid dee? 115

Rasor. Don't bid me be damn'd, then.

Madam. No, only tell dy master all I have tell dee of dy laty.

Rasor. Why, you little malicious strumpet, you; shou'd you like to be serv'd so?

Madam. Dou dispute den?—Adieu. 120

Rasor. Hold!—But why wilt thou make me such a rogue, my dear?

Madam. Voilà un vrai Anglois! Il est amoureux, et cependant il veut raisonner. Vat'en au Diable.

Rasor. Hold once more: in hopes thou'lt give me up thy body, I resign thee up my soul. 126

Madam. Bon, ecoute donc;—If dou fail me—I never see dee more—If dou obey me—[*She takes him about the neck, and gives him a smacking kiss*—Je m'abandonne à toy.

[*Exit Mademoiselle.*

Rasor [*licking his lips.*—Not be a rogue?—*Amor vincit Omnia.* 130

[*Exit RASOR.*

¹ tetons.

Enter LADY FANCYFULL *and* Mademoiselle.

Lady Fan. Marry, say ye? Will the two things marry?

Madam. On le va faire, Matam.

Lady Fan. Look you, mademoiselle—in short, I can't bear it—No; I find I can't—If once I see 'em a-bed together, I shall have ten thousand thoughts in my head will make me run distracted. Therefore run and call Razor back immediately; for something must be done to stop this impertinent wedding. If I can but defer it four and twenty hours, I'll make such work about town with that little pert sluts reputation, he shall as soon marry a witch.

Madam [*aside.*—La voilà bien intentionnée.

140

[*Exeunt.*

Scene [IV]. *Constant's Lodgings.*

Enter CONSTANT *and* HEARTFREE.

Const. But what dost think will become of this business?

Heart. 'Tis easier to think what will not come on't.

Const. What's that?

Heart. A challenge. I know the knight too well for that. His dear body will always prevail upon his noble soul to be quiet. 5

Const. But tho' he dare not challenge me, perhaps he may venture to challenge his wife.

Heart. Not if you whisper him in the ear, you won't have him do't; and there's no other way left, that I see. For as drunk as he was, he'll remember you and I were where we shou'd not be; and I don't think him quite blockhead enough yet to be perswaded we were got into his wife's closet only to peep in her prayer-book.

Enter Servant *with a letter.*

Serv. Sir, here's a letter; a porter brought it.

13

Const. O ho, here's instructions for us.

[*Reads.*

"The accident that has happen'd has touch'd our invention to the quick. We wou'd fain come off without your help; but find that's impossible. In a word, the whole business must be thrown upon a matrimonial intrigue between your friend and mine. But if the

parties are not fond enough to go quite through with the matter, 'tis sufficient for our turn they own the design. We'll find pretences enough to break the match. Adieu." 21

—Well, woman for invention! How long wou'd my blockhead have been a producing this!—Hey, Heartfree? What, musing, man? Prithee be chearful. What say'st thou, friend, to this matrimonial remedy? 25

Heart. Why, I say it's worse than the disease.

Const. Here's a fellow for you! There's beauty and money on her side, and love up to the ears on his; and yet—

Heart. And yet, I think, I may reasonably be allow'd to boggle at marrying the niece, in the very moment that you are a debauching the aunt. 31

Const. Why, truly, there may be something in that. But have not you a good opinion enough of your own parts to believe you cou'd keep a wife to your self?

Heart. I shou'd have, if I had a good opinion enough of hers to believe she cou'd do as much by me. For to do 'em right, after all, the wife seldom rambles, till the husband shews her the way.

Const. 'Tis true, a man of real worth scarce ever is a cuckold but by his own fault. Women are not naturally lewd; there must be something to urge 'em to it. They'll cuckold a churle, out of revenge; a fool, because they despise him; a beast, because they loath him. But when they make bold with a man they once had a well grounded value for, 'tis because they first see themselves neglected by him. 44

Heart. Nay, were I well assur'd that I shou'd never grow Sir John, I ne'er shou'd fear Bellinda'd play my lady. But our weakness, thou know'st, my friend, consists in that very change we so impudently throw upon (indeed) a steadier and more generous sex. 49

Const. Why, faith, we are a little impudent in that matter; that's the truth on't. But this is wonderful, to see you grown so warm an advocate for those (but t'other day) you took so much pains to abuse. 53

Heart. All revolutions run into extreams: the bigot makes the boldest atheist; and the coyest saint, the most extravagant strum-

pet. But, prithee, advise me in this good and evil, this life and death, this blessing and cursing, that is set before me. Shall I marry—or die a maid? 58

Const. Why, faith, Heartfree, matrimony is like an army going to engage. Love's the forlorn hope, which is soon cut off; the marriage-knot is the main body, which may stand buff¹ a long, long time; and repentance is the rear-guard, which rarely gives ground as long as the main battle² has a being.

Heart. Conclusion, then; you advise me to whore on, as you do. 65

Const. That's not concluded yet. For tho' marriage be a lottery in which there are a wondrous many blanks, yet there is one inestimable lot in which the only heaven on earth is written. Wou'd your kind fate but guide your hand to that, though I were wrapt in all that luxury it self could cloath me with, I still shou'd envy you. 71

Heart. And justly, too: for to be capable of loving one, doubtless is better than to possess a thousand. But how far that capacity's in me, alas, I know not!

Const. But you wou'd know? 75

Heart. I wou'd so.

Const. Matrimony will inform you.—Come, one flight of resolution carries you to the land of experience, where, in a very moderate time, you'll know the capacity of your soul and your body both, or I'm mistaken. [*Exeunt.*]

Scene [V]. *Sir John Brute's House.*

Enter LADY BRUTE and BELLINDA.

Bel. Well, madam, what answer have you from 'em?

Lady Brute. That they'll be here this moment. I fansie 'twill end in a wedding. I'm sure he's a fool if it don't. Ten thousand pound, and such a lass as you are, is no contemptible offer to a younger brother. But are not you under strange agitations? Prithee, how do's your pulse beat? 6

¹ See above, p. 433, n. 2.

² So Qtos. and W.; M., "body."

Bel. High and low: I have much ado to be valiant! [Sure it must] ¹ feel very strange to go to bed to a man?

Lady Brute. Um— it do's feel a little odd at first, but it will soon grow easy to you. 10

Enter CONSTANT *and* HEARTFREE.

Lady Brute. Good morrow, gentlemen! How have you slept after your adventure?

Heart. Some careful thoughts, ladies, on your accounts, have kept us waking.

Bel. And some careful thoughts on your own, I believe, have hindred you from sleeping. Pray how do's this matrimonial project relish with you? 17

Heart. Why, faith, e'en as storming towns does with soldiers, where the hope of delicious plunder banishes the fear of being knock'd on the head. 20

Bel. Is it then possible, after all, that you dare think of down-right lawful wedlock?

Heart. Madam, you have made me so fool-hardy, I dare do any thing.

Bel. Then, sir, I challenge you; and matrimony's the spot where I expect you. 26

Heart. 'Tis enough; I'll not fail. [*Aside.*—So, now, I am in for Hobs's Voyage; ² a great leap in the dark.³

Lady Brute. Well, gentlemen, this matter being concluded then, have you got your lessons ready? For Sir John is grown such an atheist of late, he'll believe nothing upon easie terms. 31

¹ Omitted in Qtos.; supplied by D.

² Possibly an allusion to *The Voyage of Ulysses* (1673), a rhymed translation of books IX–XII of the *Odyssey*, successfully published by the philosopher, Thomas Hobbes, at the great age of eighty-five, and followed two years later by his complete translation of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*.—Dobrée suggests that the phrase means "Hobson's choice." Each of these explanations, however, is something of a "leap in the dark."

³ It is worth observing that twenty-two years after the play—on July 1, 1719, six months after his own late but happy marriage—Vanbrugh conveyed the news to Tonson by stating that he had "taken this great Leap in the Dark, Marriage" (*Letters*, Dobrée and Webb, IV, III).

Const. We'll find ways to extend his faith, madam. But pray how do you find him this morning?

Lady Brute. Most lamentably morose, chewing the cud after last night's discovery, of which, however, he had but a confus'd notion e'en now. But I'm afraid his vallet de chamber has told him all, for they are very busie together at this moment. When I told him of Bellinda's marriage, I had no other answer but a grunt,—from which you may draw what conclusions you think fit.—But to your notes, gentlemen; he's here. 40

Enter SIR JOHN and RASOR.

Const. Good-morrow, sir.

Heart. Good-morrow, Sir John. I'm very sorry my indiscretion shou'd cause so much disorder in your family.

*Sir John.*¹ Disorders generally come from indiscretions, sir; 'tis no strange thing at all. 45

Lady Brute. I hope, my dear, you are satisfied there was no wrong intended you.

Sir John. None, my dove.

Bel. If not, I hope my consent to marry Mr. Heartfree will convince you. For as little as I know of amours, sir, I can assure you one intrigue is enough to bring four people together, without further mischief. 52

Sir John. And I know too, that intrigues tend² to procreation of more kinds than one. One intrigue will beget another, as soon as beget a son or a daughter. 55

Const. I am very sorry, sir, to see you still seem unsatisfy'd with a lady whose more than common vertue, I am sure, were she my wife, shou'd meet a better usage.

Sir John. Sir, if her conduct has put a trick upon her vertue, her vertue's the bubble, but her husband's the loser. 60

Const. Sir, you have receiv'd a sufficient answer already, to justify both her conduct and mine. You'll pardon me for meddling in your family affairs; but I perceive I am the man you are jealous of, and therefore it concerns me.

¹ Q1 gives this speech to Constant.

² Q, "tends."

Sir John. Wou'd it did not concern me, and then I shou'd not care who it concern'd. 66

Const. Well, sir, if truth and reason won't content you, I know but one way more, which, if you think fit, you may take.

Sir John. Lord, sir, you are very hasty! If I had been found at prayers in your wife's closet, I shou'd have allow'd you twice as much time to come to your self in. 71

Const. Nay, sir, if time be all you want, we have no quarrel.

Heart. I told you how the sword wou'd work upon him.

[SIR JOHN *muses.*

Const. Let him muze; however, I'll lay fifty pound our foreman brings us in, Not guilty. 75

Sir John [*Aside.*—'Tis well—'tis very well.—In spite of that young jade's matrimonial intrigue, I am a downright stinking cuckold—Here they are—Boo! [*Putting his hand to his forehead.*—Methinks, I could butt with a bull. What the plague did I marry her for? I knew she did not like me; if she had, she wou'd have lain with me; for I wou'd have done so, because I lik'd her. But that's past, and I have her. And now, what shall I do with her?—If I put my horns in my pocket, she'll grow insolent.—If I don't, that goat there, that stallion, is ready to whip me through the guts.—The debate then is reduced to this: shall I die a heroe or live a rascal?—Why, wiser men than I have long since concluded, that a living dog is better than a dead lion.—[*To CONST. and HEART.*—Gentlemen, now my wine and my passion are governable; I must own, I have never observ'd any thing in my wife's course of life, to back me in my jealousy of her: but jealousy's a mark of love; so she need not trouble her head about it, as long as I make no more words on't. 92

LADY FANCYFULL *enters disguis'd, and addresses to BELLINDA apart.*

Const. I am glad to see your reason rule at last. Give me your hand: I hope you'll look upon me as you are wont.

Sir John. Your humble servant. [*Aside.*—A wheedling son of a whore! 96

Heart. And that I may be sure you are friends with me too, pray give me your consent to wed your niece.

Sir John. Sir, you have it with all my heart: damn me if you han't. [*Aside.*—'Tis time to get rid of her: a young, pert pimp; she'll make an incomparable bawd in a little time. 101

Enter a Servant, who gives HEARTFREE a letter.

Bel. Heartfree your husband, say you? 'Tis impossible.

Lady Fan. Wou'd to kind heaven it were! But 'tis too true; and in the world there lives not such a wretch. I'm young; and either I have been flatter'd by my friends, as well as glass, or nature has been kind and generous to me. I had a fortune, too, was greater far than he could ever hope for; but with my heart I am robb'd of all the rest. I'm slighted and I'm beggar'd both at once. I have scarce a bare subsistence from the villain, yet dare complain to none; for he has sworn if e'er 'tis known I am his wife, he'll murder me. [*Weeping.*

Bel. The traitor!

112

Lady Fan. I accidentally was told he courted you. Charity soon prevail'd upon me to prevent your misery; and, as you see, I'm still so generous even to him, as not to suffer he should do a thing for which the law might take away his life.¹ [*Weeping.*

Bel. Poor creature! How I pity her!

117

[*They continue talking aside.*

Heart. [*Aside.*—Death and damnation!—Let me read it again. [*Reads.*—*Though I have a particular reason not to let you know who I am till I see you, yet you'll easily believe 'tis a faithful friend that gives you this advice.—I have lain with Bellinda. (Good!)—I have a child by her (Better and better!) which is now at nurse; (Heaven be prais'd!) and I think the foundation laid for another. (Ha!—Old Trupenny!)—No rack cou'd have tortur'd this story from me; but friendship has done it. I heard of your design to marry her, and cou'd not see you abus'd. Make use of my advice, but keep my secret till I ask you for't again. Adieu.* 127

[*Exit LADY FANCYFULL.*

Const. [*to BEL.*—Come, madam; shall we send for the parson? I doubt here's no business for the lawyer: younger brothers have

¹Under the English law from 1604 to 1828 bigamy was punishable by death (cf. Matthew Bacon, *New Abridgment of the Law*, 1843, II, 108-09).

nothing to settle but their hearts, and that I believe my friend here has already done very faithfully. 131

Bel. [*scornfully*].—Are you sure, sir, there are no old mortgages upon it?

Heart. [*coldly*].—If you think there are, madam, it mayn't be amiss to deferr the marriage till you are sure they are paid off. 135

Bel. [*aside*].—How the gall'd horse kicks! [*To HEART*].—We'll deferr it as long as you please, sir.

Heart. The more time we take to consider on't, madam, the less apt we shall be to commit oversights; therefore, if you please, we will put it off for just nine months. 140

Bel. Guilty consciences make men cowards; I don't wonder you want time to resolve.

Heart. And they make women desperate; I don't wonder you are so quickly determin'd.

Bel. What does the fellow mean? 145

Heart. What do's the lady mean?

Sir John. Zoons, what do you both mean?

[*HEART. and BEL. walk chafing about.*]

Razor [*Aside*].—Here is so much sport going to be spoil'd, it makes me ready to weep again. A pox o' this impertinent Lady Fancyfull, and her plots, and her French-woman too! She's a whimsical, ill-natur'd bitch, and when I have got my bones broke in her service, 'tis ten to one but my recompence is a clap.—I hear 'em tittering without still. I cod,¹ I'll e'en go lug 'em both in by the ears, and discover the plot, to secure my pardon. 154

[*Exit RASOR.*]

Const. Prithee, explain, Heartfree.

Heart. A fair deliverance; thank my stars and my friend.

Bel. 'Tis well it went no farther; a base fellow!

Lady Brute. What can be the meaning of all this?

Bel. What's his meaning, I don't know; but mine is, that if I had married him—I had had no husband. 160

Heart. And what's her meaning, I don't know; but mine is, that if I had married her—I had had wife enough.

Sir John. Your people of wit have got such cramp² ways of

¹ Ecod (Egad).

² cramped, difficult to understand.

expressing themselves, they seldom comprehend one another. Pox take you both! Will you speak that you may be understood? 165

Enter RASOR in sackcloth, pulling in LADY FANCYFULL and Mademoiselle.

Rasor. If they won't, here comes an interpreter.

Lady Brute. Heavens! What have we here?

Rasor. A villain,—but a repenting villain. Stuff which saints in all ages have been made of.

All. Rasor!

170

Lady Brute. What means this suddain metamorphose?

Rasor. Nothing, without my pardon.

Lady Brute. What pardon do you want?

Rasor. *Imprimis*, your ladships; for a damnable lye made upon your spotless virtue, and set to the tune of Spring-Garden. [*To SIR JOHN.*—Next, at my generous master's feet I bend, for interrupting his more noble thoughts with phantomes of disgraceful cuckoldom. [*To CONST.*—Thirdly, I to this gentleman apply, for making him the hero of my romance. [*To HEART.*—Fourthly, your pardon, noble sir, I ask, for clandestinely marrying you, without either bidding of banns, bishop's licence, friends consent—or your own knowledge. [*To BEL.*—And, lastly, to my good young ladies clemency I come, for pretending the corn was sow'd in the ground, before ever the plough had been in the field.

Sir John [*Aside.*—So that, after all, 'tis a moot point, whether I am a cuckold or not. 186

Bel. Well, sir, upon condition you confess all, I'll pardon you my self, and try to obtain as much from the rest of the company. But I must know, then, who 'tis has put you upon all this mischief? 190

Rasor. Sathan and his equipage: woman tempted me; lust weakened me,—and so the devil overcame me; as fell Adam, so fell I.

Bel. Then pray, Mr. Adam, will you make us acquainted with your Eve? 195

Rasor. [*To Madam.*—Unmask, for the honour of France.

All. Mademoiselle!

Madam. Me ask ten thousand pardon of all de good company.

Sir John. Why, this mystery thickens, instead of clearing up.

[*To RASOR.*—You son of a whore you, put us out of our pain. 200

Rasor. One moment brings sun-shine. [*Shewing Madam.*—
'Tis true, this is the woman that tempted me, but this is the serpent
that tempted the woman; and if my prayers might be heard, her
punishment for so doing shou'd be like the serpent's of old—
[*Pulls off LADY FANCYFULL's mask.*—She should lie upon her face
all the days of her life. 206

All. Lady Fancyfull!

Bel. Impertinent!

Lady Brute. Ridiculous!

All. Ha! Ha! Ha! Ha! Ha! 210

Bel. I hope your ladiship will give me leave to wish you joy,
since you have own'd your marriage your self.—Mr. Heartfree,
I vow 'twas strangely wicked in you to think of another wife,
when you had one already so charming as her ladiship.

All. Ha! Ha! Ha! Ha! Ha! 215

Lady Fan. [*Aside.*—Confusion seize 'em, as it seizes me!

Madam. Que le diable e toute ¹ ce maraut de Rasor.

Bel. Your ladiship seems disorder'd: a breeding qualm, perhaps.
Mr. Heartfree, your bottle of Hungry ² water to your lady. Why,
madam, he stands as unconcern'd as if he were your husband in
earnest. 221

Lady Fan. Your mirth's as nauseous as your self, Bellinda.
You think you triumph o'er a rival now! Helas, ma pauvre
fille! Where e'er I'm rival, there's no cause for mirth. No, my
poor wretch, 'tis from another principle I have acted. I knew that
thing there wou'd make so perverse a husband, and you so im-
pertinent a wife, that lest your mutual plagues shou'd make you
both run mad, I charitably wou'd have broke the match. He! he!
he! he! he! [*Exit, laughing affectedly, Mademoiselle following her.*

Madam. He! He! He! He! He! 230

All. Ha! Ha! Ha! Ha! Ha!

¹ So Qtos. and D.; W. and M., "étouffe" (choke).

² Hungary water (first made for a queen of Hungary), distilled from "rosemary
flowers infused in rectified spirit of wine" (N.E.D.).

Sir John [*aside*.—Why, now, this woman will be married to somebody, too.

Bel. Poor creature! What a passion she's in! But I forgive her. 235

Heart. Since you have so much goodness for her, I hope you'll pardon my offence, too, madam.

Bel. There will be no great difficulty in that, since I am guilty of an equal fault.

Heart. Then pardons being past on all sides, pray let's to church to conclude the day's work. 241

Const. But before you go, let me treat you, pray, with a song a new married lady made within this week; it may be of use to you both.

SONG.

I

WHEN yeilding first to Damon's flame 245
 I sunk into his arms,
 He swore he'd ever be the same,—
 Then rifled all my charms.
 But fond of what he'd ¹ long desir'd,
 Too greedy of his prey, 250
 My shepherds flame, alas, expir'd
 Before the virge of day.

II

My innocence in lovers wars
 Reproach'd his quick defeat;
 Confus'd, asham'd, and bath'd in tears, 255
 I mourn'd his cold retreat.
 At length, Ah shepherdess, cry'd he.
 Wou'd you my fire renew,
 Alas, you must retreat like me,
 I'm lost if you pursue. 260

¹ Qtos. and D., "h'ad."

Heart. So, madam; now had the parson but done his business—

Bel. You'd be half weary of your bargain.

Heart. No, sure, I might dispense with one night's lodging.

Bel. I'm ready to try, sir.

Heart. Then let's to church:

265

And if it be our chance to disagree—

Bel. Take heed—the surly husband's fate you see.

[*Exeunt omnes.*]

FINIS

Epilogue,¹

By another Hand.

Spoken by Lady Brute and Bellinda.

Lady Brute. No epilogue!

Bel. I swear I know of none.

Lady Brute. Lord! How shall we excuse it to the town?

Bel. Why, we must e'en say something of our own.

Lady Brute. Our own! Ay, that must needs be precious stuff. 5

Bel. I'll lay my life, they'll like it well enough.

Come, faith, begin—

Lady Brute. Excuse me, after you.

Bel. Nay, pardon me for that, I know my cue.

Lady Brute. O for the world, I would not have precedence. 10

Bel. O Lord!

Lady Brute. I swear—

Bel. O fye!

Lady Brute. I'm all obedience.

First then, know all, before our doom is fixt, 15

The third day is for us—

Bel. Nay, and the sixt.²

Lady Brute. We speak not from the poet now, nor is it

His cause—(I want a rhyme)

Bel. That we solícite. 20

Lady Brute. Then sure you cannot have the hearts to be severe
And damn us—

Bel. Damn us! Let 'em if they dare.

Lady Brute. Why, if they should, what punishment remains?

Bel. Eternal exile from behind our scenes.³ 25

¹ Qtos. print this immediately after the Prologue.

² Vanbrugh had given his benefit nights to the actors. (On players' and playwrights' benefits, see Thaler, *Shakspeare to Sheridan*, pp. 25 ff., 81 ff.)

³ Cf. Summers, *Restoration Theatre*, pp. 55 ff.

Lady Brute. But if they're kind, that sentence we'll recal.
We can be grateful—

Bel. And have wherewithall.

Lady Brute. But at grand treaties hope not to be trusted,
Before preliminaries are adjusted.

30

Bel. You know the time, and we appoint this place;
Where, if you please, we'll meet and sign the peace.

Vanbrugh's Additional Scenes

—Later substituted for Act IV, i and iii—

From the Dublin edition of 1743

In which they first appeared.¹

¹ Cf. *Critical Essay*, pp. 422–26.

T H E

Provok'd WIFE;

A

COMEDY.

As it is Acted at the

T H E A T R E S

I N

L O N D O N and D U B L I N.

In which is inferted, an Original
SCENE, never before printed.

Written by Sir JOHN VANBRUGH.

D U B L I N :

Printed by EDW. BATE,
For JAMES KELBURN, Bookseller, at the *Three*
Golden Balls in *George's-lane.*

MDCCLXIII.

Act IV. Scene [I]. *Covent-Garden.*

Enter LORD RAKE, SIR JOHN, &c., with swords drawn.

Lord Rake. Is the dog dead?

Col. Bully. No, damn him, I heard him wheeze.

Lord Rake. How the witch his wife howl'd!

Col. Bully. Aye, she'll alarm the watch presently.

Lord Rake. Appear, knight, then. Come, you have a good cause to fight for: there's a man murder'd. 6

Sir John. Is there? Then let his ghost be satisfy'd: for I'll sacrifice a constable to it presently, and burn his body upon his wooden chair.

Enter a Taylor, with a bundle under his arm.

Col. Bully. How now, what have we got here? A thief? 10

Taylor. No, an't please you, I'm no thief.

Lord Rake. That we'll see presently. Here—let the general examine him.

Sir John. Ay, ay, let me examine him; and I'll lay a hundred pound I find him guilty in spite of his teeth—for he looks—like a—sneaking rascal. Come, sirrah, without equivocation or mental reservation, tell me of what opinion you are, and what calling; for by them—I shall guess at your morals. 18

Tayl. An't please you, I'm a dissenting journeyman¹ taylor.

Sir John. Then, sirrah, you love lying by your religion, and theft by your trade. And so, that your punishment may be suitable to your crimes—I'll have you first gagg'd—and then hang'd.

Tayl. Pray, good worthy gentlemen, don't abuse me; indeed I'm an honest man, and a good workman, tho' I say it, that shou'd not say it. 25

Sir John. No words, sirrah, but attend your fate.

Lord Rake. Let me see what's in that bundle.

¹ M. inserts "woman's."

Tayl. An't please you, it is my lady's short cloak and wrapping gown.¹

Sir John. What lady, you reptile you? 30

Tayl. My Lady Brute, your honour.

Sir John. My Lady Brute! My wife! The robe of my wife—with reverence let me approach it! The dear angel is always taking care of me in danger, and has sent me this suit of armour to protect me in this day of battle. On they go! 35

*All.*² O brave knight!

Lord Rake. Live Don Quixot the Second!

Sir John. Sancho, my squire, help me on with my armour.

Tayl. O dear gentlemen! I shall be quite undone if you take the gown.³ 40

Sir John. Retire, sirrah; and since you carry off your skin, go home and be happy.

Tayl. I think I'd e'en as good follow the gentleman's advice, for if I dispute any longer, who knows but the whim may take 'em to case me—These courtiers are fuller of tricks than they are of money: they'll sooner break a man's bones, than pay his bill. 46

[*Exit.*

Sir John. So! How do you like my shapes now?

Lord Rake. To a miracle! He looks like a queen of the Amazons—But to your arms, gentlemen! The enemy's upon their march—here's the watch. 50

Sir John. Oons! If it were Alexander the Great, at the head of his army, I wou'd drive him into a horse-pond.

All. Huzza! O brave knight!

Sir John. See! Here he comes, with all his Greeks about him—Follow me, boys. 55

Enter Watch.

I. Watch. Hey Day! Who have we got here?—Stand.

Sir John. May hap not!

I. Watch. What are you all doing here in the street at this time of night? And who are you, madam, that seem to be at the head of this noble crew? 60

¹ So. D.; M. substitutes "sack."

² So all later eds.; D., "Om."

³ M., "sack."

Sir John. Sirrah, I am Bonduca,¹ Queen of the Welshmen; and with a leek as long as my pedigree, I will destroy your Roman legion in an instant.—Britons, strike home! [*Fights.*]

I. Watch. So! We have got the queen, however! We'll make her pay well for her ransom.—Come, madam, will your Majesty please to walk before the constable? 66

Sir John. The constable's a rascal! And you are a son of a whore!

I. Watch. A most princely² reply, truly! If this be her royal style, I'll warrant her maids of honour prattle prettily. But we'll teach you a little of our Court dialect before we part with you, princess.—Away with her to the round-house. 72

Sir John. Hands off, you ruffians! My honour's dearer to me than my life! I hope you won't be uncivil.

I. Watch. Away with her. 75

Sir John. O! My honour! My Honour!³ [*Exeunt.*]

Scene [III. *A Street before the Justice's House*].

Enter Constable and Watch, with SIR JOHN.

Constab. Come, forsooth; come along, if you please! I once in compassion thought to have seen you safe home this morning; but you have been so rampant and abusive all night, I shall see what the Justice of Peace will say to you.

Sir John. And you shall see what I'll say to the Justice of Peace. [*Watch knocks, a Servant enters.*]

Constab. Is Mr. Justice at home? 7

Serv. Yes.

Constab. Pray acquaint his Worship we have got an unruly woman here, and desire to know what he'll please to have done with her. II

Serv. I'll acquaint my master. [*Exit.*]

Sir John. Hark you, Constable, what cuckoldy Justice is this?

¹ Heroine of Purcell's opera, *Bonduca* (1696), based on Fletcher's play (cf. Genest, II, 72-73; Dobrée and Webb, I, 235-36).

² M., "noble."

³ M. omits this line.

Constab. One that will know how to deal with such ramps as you are, I'll warrant you. 15

Enter Justice.

Just. Well, Mr. Constable, what's the matter here?

Constab. An't please your worship, this here comical sort of a gentlewoman has committed great outrages to night. She has been frolicking with my Lord Rake and his gang; they attack'd the Watch, and I hear there has been a gentleman ¹ kill'd: I believe 'tis they have done't. 21

Sir John. There may have been murder, for ought I know; and 'tis a great mercy there has not been a rape too—for this ² fellow would have ravish'd me.

1. Watch. Ravish! I ³ ravish! O lud! O lud! O lud! I ravish her! Why, please your Honour,⁴ I heard Mr. Constable say he believed she was little better than a mophrodite.⁵ 27

Just. Why, truly, she does seem to be a little masculine about the mouth.

1. Watch. Yes, and about the hands too, an't please your Worship. I did but offer in mere civility to help her up the steps into our apartment, and with her gripen ⁶ fist—ay, just so, sir— 32

[SIR JOHN *knocks him down.*]

Sir John. I fell'd him to the ground like an ox.

Just. Out upon this boisterous woman! Out upon her!

Sir John. Mr. Justice, he wou'd have been uncivil! It was in defence of my honour, and I demand satisfaction. 36

1. Watch. I hope your Worship will satisfy her honour in Bridewell; that fist of her's will make an admirable hemp-beater.⁷

Sir John. Sir, I hope you will protect me against that libidinous rascal; I am a woman of quality and virtue too, for all I am in a sort of an undress this morning. 41

¹ M., "man."

² Instead of "for this," as in D. and W., M. reads "that."

³ M. omits "I" here and before "ravish" later in the line.

⁴ M., "Worship."

⁵ hermaphrodite.

⁶ D., "gippen."

⁷ Cf. Congreve, *Way of the World*, V, i, below, p. 646 and n. 6.

Just. Why, she really has the air of a sort of a woman a little somethingish out of the common.—Madam, if you expect I should be favourable to you, I desire I may know who you are.

Sir John. Sir, I am any body, at your service. 45

Just. Lady, I desire to know your name.

Sir John. Sir, my name's Mary.

Just. Ay, but your sirname, madam?

Sir John. Sir, my sirname's the very same with my husband's.

Just. A strange woman this! Who is your husband, pray? 50

Sir John. Why, Sir John.

Just. Sir John who?

Sir John. Why, Sir John Brute.

Just. Is it possible, madam, you can be my Lady Brute?

Sir John. That happy woman, sir, am I; only a little in my merriment to-night.¹ 56

Just. I'm concern'd for Sir John.

Sir John. Truly, so am I.

Just. I have heard he's an honest gentleman—

Sir John. As ever drank. 60

Just. Good lack! Indeed, lady, I am sorry he shou'd have such a wife.

Sir John. Sir, I am sorry he has any wife at all.

Just. And so perhaps may he—I doubt you have not given him a very good taste of matrimony. 65

Sir John. Taste, sir! Sir, I have scorn'd to stint him to a taste; I have given him a full meal of it.

Just. Indeed, I believe so! But pray, fair lady, may he have given you any occasion for this extraordinary conduct?—Does he not use you well? 70

Sir John. A little upon the rough, sometimes.

Just. Ay, any man may be out of humour now and then.

Sir John. Sir, I love peace and quiet, and when a woman don't find that at home, she's apt sometimes to comfort herself with a few innocent diversions abroad. 75

Just. I doubt he uses you but too well. Pray how does he as

¹ A slip by Vanbrugh, or else Sir John has not sobered down enough to know that it is morning. See first speech of the scene.

to that weighty thing, money? Does he allow you what's proper of that?

Sir John. Sir, I have generally enough to pay the reckoning, if this son of a whore the drawer wou'd bring his bill. 80

Just. A strange woman this—Does he spend a reasonable portion of his time at home, to the comfort of his wife and children?

Sir John. Never gave his wife cause to repine at his being abroad in his life.

Just. Pray, madam, how may he be in the grand matrimonial point?—Is he true to your bed? 86

Sir John. Chaste!—Oons! This fellow asks so many impertinent questions, egad, I believe it is the Justice's wife in the Justice's cloaths.

Just. 'Tis a great pity he shou'd have been thus disposed of.—Pray, madam, (and then I have done) what may be your ladyship's common method of life, if I may presume so far? 92

Sir John. Why, sir, much like that of a woman of quality.

Just. Pray how may you generally pass your time, madam? Your morning, for example? 95

Sir John. Sir, like a woman of quality—I wake about two a clock in the afternoon—I stretch—and then—make a sign for my chocolate.—When I have drank three cups—I slide down again upon my back, with my arms over my head, while my two maids puts ¹ on my stockings.—Then hanging upon their shoulders, I am trail'd to my great chair, where I sit—and yawn—for my breakfast.—If it don't come presently, I lie down upon my couch to say my prayers, while my maid reads me the play-bills. 103

Just. Very well, madam.

Sir John. When the tea is brought in, I drink twelve regular dishes, with eight slices of bread and butter.—And half an hour after, I send to the cook to know if the dinner is almost ready. 107

Just. So,² madam!

Sir John. By that time my head's half drest,³ I hear my husband swearing himself into a state of perdition, that the meat's

¹ So D.; W. and M., "put."

² D., "Soh."

³ M. quotes *The Spectator*, No. 265, on contemporary excesses in ladies' headgear.

all cold upon the table; to mend which, I come down in an hour more, and have it sent back to the kitchen, to be all drest over again. 113

Just. Poor man!

Sir John. When I have din'd, and my idle servants are presumptuously set down at their ease, to do so too, I call for my coach,—go to visit fifty dear friends, of whom I hope I never shall find one at home, while I shall live. 118

Just. So! There's the morning and afternoon pretty well disposed of.—Pray, madam, how do you pass your evenings?

Sir John. Like a woman of spirit, sir, a great spirit. Give me a box and dice ¹—Seven's the main! Oons, Sir, I set you a hundred pounds! Why, do you think women are married now a-days to sit at home and mend napkins? Sir, we have nobler ways of passing time. 125

Just. Mercy upon us, Mr. Constable, what will this age come to?

Constab. What will it come to, indeed, if such women as these are not set in the stocks?

Sir John. I have a little urgent business calls upon me; and therefore I desire the favour of you to bring matters to a conclusion. 132

Just. Madam, if I were sure that business were not to commit more disorders, I would release you.

Sir John. None—by my virtue. 135

Just. Then, Mr. Constable, you may discharge her.

Sir John. Sir, your very humble servant. If you please to accept of a bottle—

Just. I thank you, kindly, madam; but I never drink in a morning. Good-buy, madam, good-buy to ye. 140

Sir John. Good-buy t'ye, good sir. [*Exit Justice.*—So—now, Mr. Constable, shall you and I go pick up a whore together?

Constab. No, thank you, madam; my wife's enough to satisfy ² any reasonable man.

¹ On gambling by fashionable ladies, cf. *A Journey to London*, II, i.

² D., "satify."

Sir John [*aside*.—He! He! He! He! He!—the fool is married, then.—Well, you won't go? 146

Constab. Not I, truly.

Sir John. Then I'll go by myself; and you and your wife may be damn'd. [*Exit* SIR JOHN.]

Constable [*gazing after him*.—Why, God-a-mercy, my ¹ Lady.

[*Exeunt*.]

¹ So D.; W. and M. omit the word.

William Congreve

THE WAY OF THE WORLD

*Edited with Critical Essay and
Notes by George Rapall
Noyes, Professor in the
University of California*

CRITICAL ESSAY

Life.—William Congreve, the descendant of an old family of English gentry, was born in 1670¹ at Bardsey, near Leeds, in Yorkshire. His father soon removed to Ireland, where the boy was educated, first at Kilkenny and then at Trinity College, Dublin. In 1688 the family returned to England; in March, 1691, Congreve was enrolled as a student in the Middle Temple in London. His first published work, a novel, *Incognita*, appeared in February, 1692. He must quickly have become known in literary circles, for he contributed the *Eleventh Satire* to the co-operative version of Juvenal in which Dryden had the chief share, and which was ready for press early in 1692. At about the same time Dryden, Southerne, and Maynwaring joined in preparing for the stage Congreve's first comedy, *The Old Bachelor*, written, if we may trust Congreve's own statement, before his arrival in London; the veteran Dryden said of it that "he never saw such a first play in his life."² The triumph of the comedy at the Theatre Royal in January, 1693, confirmed the judgment of the experts. When the drama was printed, Southerne in a complimentary poem hailed Congreve as the legitimate successor of Dryden, Wycherley, Etherege, Otway, and Lee. Encouraged by his success, Congreve immediately wrote a second comedy, *The Double-Dealer*, which was acted in November, 1693. Though this play was a comparative failure on the stage, it won for its author high, indeed extravagant praise from Dryden, who in his poem, *To my dear friend Mr. Congreve, on his Comedy call'd "The Double-Dealer,"* asserted that Congreve had surpassed Jonson and Fletcher and had shown genius equal to that of Shakespeare.

The production of Congreve's next play, *Love for Love*, was delayed by a theatrical quarrel. The comedy "had been read and accepted of at the Theatre Royal."³ Then Betterton and other actors of that theatre seceded and with Congreve⁴ obtained a license to establish a new playhouse in Lincoln's Inn Fields; on April 30, 1695, they opened their "New

¹ See "On the Date of Congreve's Birth," by John C. Hodges, in *Modern Philology*, 1935, XXXIII, 83-85.

² Notes by Southerne, in Gosse, *Life of William Congreve* (London, 1924), p. 175.

³ Cibber, *Apology*, ch. 6.

⁴ Congreve is mentioned as one of the patentees by Downes (*Roscius Anglicanus*) and by Betterton (*History of the English Stage*, ch. 6), but is apparently not named in the official license: see Allardyce Nicoll, *A History of Restoration Drama, 1660-1700* (ed. 2, Cambridge, 1928), p. 301.

Theatre" with *Love for Love*. "This comedy being extraordinary well acted, . . . it took thirteen days successively."¹ Nor was this a fleeting triumph; *Love for Love* has remained the favorite among Congreve's works as an acting drama. It had a prominent place in the London repertory up to 1825 and has been revived with great success in the present century. After this bustling comedy Congreve turned aside to write a tragedy, *The Mourning Bride*, on which he was at work before October, 1695, but which did not reach the stage until February 28, 1697.² This drama "continued acting uninterrupted thirteen days together"³ and during the eighteenth century retained the admiration of readers and theatre goers; today it is rather unjustly neglected along with other declamatory tragedies of the same period.

Hitherto Congreve's career had been almost uniformly prosperous and untroubled. He was now attacked, together with Dryden and others, by the clergyman Jeremy Collier, in his *Short View of the Immorality and Profaneness of the English Stage*, published in April, 1698. Congreve was the most eminent of several men of letters who wrote replies to this bigoted, blundering, yet much-needed and essentially righteous book. His lame and ineffective pamphlet, *Amendments upon Mr. Collier's False and Imperfect Citations, &c., From the Old Batchelour, Double Dealer, Love for Love, Mourning Bride*, appeared in July; to it Collier retorted in November with a *Defence of the Short View of the Profaneness and Immorality of the English Stage*. Congreve, whose genius was not that of a pamphleteer, did not enhance his fame by entering this controversy. His dramatic practice was affected little if at all by Collier's strictures. His fourth and last comedy, *The Way of the World*, acted in March, 1700, is in moral tone no whit different from its predecessors.⁴ Though Congreve elaborated it with peculiar care, this masterpiece of all Restoration

¹ Downes.

² D. Crane Taylor, *William Congreve*, (London, 1924), p. 98.

³ Downes.

⁴ On this apparently easy question expert judges differ curiously. Mr. Archer writes: "In point of verbal decency or indecency *The Way of the World* is very much on a level with *The Double-Dealer* . . . ; while in the total absence of any standard of rectitude, or even of merely conventional honour, all four plays are entirely of a piece. There is thus no sign either of repentance or of bravado in the post-Collier comedy" (Introduction to *William Congreve*: New York, 1912). Mr. Summers is of another opinion: "I do not suppose that Fainall is more principled than Maskwell, that Mrs. Fainall is more chaste than Mrs. Frail, that Witwoud and Petulant have more morals than Brisk or Tattle. But a veil, no matter that it is an intellectual veil and thin as gossamer, has been drawn with the lightest hand over the libertinism of Lady Wishfort's household and company. The liaison between Mirabell and Mrs. Fainall is only alluded to with tact and delicacy; when

comedy had only "moderate success" (Dryden) on its first appearance. But it held the stage throughout the eighteenth century and has been triumphantly revived in our own time.

Thereafter Congreve virtually laid his pen aside. A masque, *The Judgment of Paris* (1701), a share in a translation of Molière's *Monsieur de Pourceaugnac*, under the title of *Squire Trelooby* (acted in 1704),¹ an opera, *Semele* (1707),² and a few occasional verses and bits of prose are the sum of his writing during the remaining twenty-nine years of his life. The reasons for his silence can only be guessed. He may have been discouraged by the reception of *The Way of the World*, but is more likely to have felt that he could do nothing that would surpass it. Most important, he was lazy by nature and, owing to government patronage and the income from frequent performances of his dramas, was in easy material circumstances, so that he was not forced to labor further as an author.

For some months in 1705 Congreve was manager, with Vanbrugh, of the Queen's Theatre in the Haymarket. His amiability, fine breeding, and literary genius brought him favor in the shape of various sinecure offices. The climax came in 1714, when he was appointed Secretary for Jamaica, and also an undersearcher of the customs in the port of London, enjoying from his two posts a revenue of about £800 a year.³ He was intimate with the circle of Pope, who paid him a magnificent compliment by dedicating to him his translation of the *Iliad*. Yet he seems to have affected a scorn of his early triumphs. Voltaire, who visited him in 1726, writes: "He spoke of his works as trifles that were beneath him, and hinted to me in our first conversation, that I should visit him upon no other foot than that of a gentleman who led a life of plainness and simplicity." Among women his chief friends were the actress Mrs. Bracegirdle, who had played leading parts in all his dramas, and the second Duchess of Marlborough, to whom he left the greater part of his fortune. During his later years Congreve was the victim of ill health; according to Swift

it is bruited in the fifth act Fainall attempts to use it as an instrument of terrorization and infamy. How different to the amours of Scandal and Mrs. Foresight, or the yet more impudent intrigue of Bellmour and Laetitia. In view of recent events it was bound to be thus" (Introduction to *Complete Works of William Congreve*, London, 1923, I, 54). This divergence of view may show how difficult is the decision on the subtler matters of literary history to be discussed later.

¹ See "The Authorship of *Squire Trelooby*," by John C. Hodges, in *The Review of English Studies*, 1928, IV, 404-13.

² Possibly never acted; apparently first printed in Congreve's *Works*, 1710. See Taylor, *op. cit.*, p. 198.

³ See "William Congreve in the Government Service," by John C. Hodges, in *Modern Philology*, 1929, XXVII, 183-92.

"he had the misfortune to squander away a very good constitution in his younger days." He died on January 19, 1729, and was buried in Westminster Abbey.

The Development of English Comedy of Manners.—The work of Congreve as a whole—and above all *The Way of the World*—shows the culmination and triumph of certain tendencies that are traceable all through the years 1660–1700, and that led to the adoption of a type of comedy similar in its technique to that of seventeenth-century France. Like much of the finest work of Molière, Congreve's masterpiece is almost pure comedy of manners, however much its spirit may differ from that of the French author. The development of the French-English comedy of which this is the finest example came about under two sets of influences, distinct in their nature, though inextricably mingled in their operation: first, an increased respect for formal critical rules and a sincere admiration for French dramatists (above all for Molière), who constructed their plays in accord with those rules; second, the limiting of comic plots to a more or less realistic treatment of the life of upper-class society, of people educated and refined in a conventional sense, blest with independent fortunes, and with no occupation in life but pleasure—that is, gaming, drinking, and above all love, or rather gallantry—and the pursuit of wealth by marriage.

The formal rules of the drama were the famous three unities, of action, time, and place, and the rule of the connection of scenes (*la liaison des scènes*). The three unities had been developed by Italian commentators on Aristotle, and had later become the common property of literary critics throughout Europe. In France, after *la querelle du Cid* in 1636, they had become guiding principles of a great dramatic literature. The unity of action prescribed that each play should consist of one central plot, not of a disjointed series of adventures such as is found in Shakespeare's *Henry IV*; liberally construed, it tolerated subordinate intrigues that were intimately connected with the main action. The spirit of this rule likewise prohibited the mingling of tragic and comic scenes in one play. The second unity required that the time occupied by the events represented in a play should closely correspond with that

of the actual performance of the play; that at most it should not exceed one day—whether of twelve or of twenty-four hours was a mooted point in criticism. To satisfy the unity of place, all the events of a drama must occur within one city and its environs; the ideal was to have the stage-setting remain unchanged throughout the play. According to the rule of the connection of scenes the place of action must not change within an act, and the stage must never be left without an actor present upon it, to insure continuity of action.

In Elizabethan times the three unities, and the classic dislike for the union of tragedy and comedy within a drama, had been well understood, but in practice they had been heeded only by a few classical enthusiasts like Ben Jonson. The plays of Shakespeare and of Beaumont and Fletcher repeatedly mingle tragic scenes with comic, and rarely pay any heed to the unities. The *liaison* was not observed even by Jonson, and may have been unknown to him; it is in direct conflict with the conditions of Elizabethan stage-setting.

The heightened regard for critical rules shown by English dramatists of the Restoration period was in large part due to the influence of French writers and French taste. The native English drama had gradually lost its hold on the great body of the nation, even before the closing of the theatres by the Puritan party in 1642. When the Cavaliers triumphed at the Restoration, their tastes were naturally predominant in the revived drama. The aristocracy, and particularly its more dissolute elements, though they were not the exclusive patrons of the Restoration stage, certainly set the tone of it. Lax in their morals, these higher circles of society were insistent on an artificial good breeding. Though destitute of high imagination, the courtiers of the later Stuart period and their imitators cultivated elegance of expression; their love poetry was no longer that of Sidney and Shakespeare, but that of Suckling and Waller (quoted by Millamant in *The Way of the World*). Their manners and tastes were modeled on those of France, the country in which many of them had spent years of exile, and which at this period was the most potent nation in Europe, politically, socially, and intellectually. With the lapse of

years, this French influence grew stronger instead of weakening. In fashionable literary discussion the French critics were authorities that inspired respect. But as a force in moulding English comedy, the genius of Molière was even more powerful than critical precepts; his comedies became subjects for continual adaptation and imitation by the new school of English dramatists. Restoration comedy is a result of the blending, under conditions imposed by the English society which it strove to reflect on the stage with some degree of realism, of these new French influences with the traditions of the older English drama.

The Elizabethan plays are hard to classify into definite types; they are a perplexed wilderness, not a trim garden divided into neat plots. But in Elizabethan comedy, as in that of every time and place, one may discern two main tendencies, the romantic and the realistic: a comedy that impresses us by its beauty and its strangeness, its difference from our every-day life; and a comedy that appeals to us by its truth and fidelity to this same prosaic existence. On the one hand are *As You Like It* and *The Winter's Tale*; on the other, *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, *The Shoemakers' Holiday*, and *The Alchemist*. Realistic comedies again may deal with low life or with high life, with boors or with gentlemen. In the former case they will inevitably tend to represent fundamental, essential traits of human character, and will readily pass into caricature; in the latter they will probably be much concerned with the portrayal of superficial manners, or social affectations. Thus we have the comedy of humors,¹ of which Jonson is the master, and the comedy of manners, such as may be found in Fletcher and Shirley. Or, to divide realistic comedy somewhat differently, such work rarely remains purely photographic; it is touched either with sympathy, which easily passes into sentiment, or with satire. Thus the tavern scenes of *Henry IV* are sympathetic comedy of the purest sort; in *The Shoemakers' Holiday* this jovial English comedy is on the way to become sentimental. Satire is the prevailing element in Jonson's comedy, but it is

¹ In my use of this term I have striven to be guided by Dryden and Congreve. Schelling in his *Elizabethan Drama* gives it a much less general application, and classes as comedies of manners, rather than of humors, even *Epicæne*, *Volpone*, and *The Alchemist*.

found also in Shakespeare and Fletcher and in almost all their contemporaries.

In some comedies, whether realistic or romantic, the mere plot, the succession of events, is more interesting and important than the characters who take part in it. Of such comedies of intrigue, *The Comedy of Errors* is a convenient example.

Finally, as has already been said, in Elizabethan drama there was a free union of tragic and comic scenes, whether in romantic tragedy such as *Antony and Cleopatra* or in approximately realistic "history" such as *Henry IV*. Only classicists like Ben Jonson kept the two sorts of work sharply distinct.

Such, in the baldest outline, are the trends of Elizabethan comedy that must be remembered in estimating its influence on that of Restoration times. The different tendencies had different fates. In the first place, as formal critical rules began to prevail over, or indeed to modify, native English taste, the mingling of comedy and tragedy within a single play must evidently go out of fashion; it died a lingering death in the hands of Dryden, whose dramatic career was a long struggle between his genuine respect for French rules and his desire to please English audiences—a desire that was reinforced by his hearty admiration for Shakespeare and for Beaumont and Fletcher.

Again, romantic comedy, such as *As You Like It*, could hardly flourish under the restraints imposed by the unities, still less in the general atmosphere of Restoration society. Its perfume was gone; in spirit it was as different from the work of the Restoration playwrights as were the lyrics of Shakespeare from those of Dryden. With an occasional half-exception like Dryden's *Rival Ladies*, the romantic drama of the Restoration was tragic, or at least serious; the most important division of it was the semi-operatic heroic plays, of which Dryden's *Conquest of Granada* is the most famous example. Romantic comedy yielded to comedy of intrigue, the interest of which lay in the contrivance of a succession of surprising turns of fortune, happening within the limits of the unities. The finest of these complicated "Spanish plots," as they were called, was Sir Samuel Tuke's *Adventures of Five Hours*, an adaptation from the Spanish of Coello.

This comedy of intrigue was the favorite type with the minor Restoration dramatists, nor was it disdained by their betters. Men like Lacy and Ravenscroft, who were destitute of imagination, but gifted with no small dramatic ingenuity, frequently constructed plays by piecing together two or more from Molière.¹ By this means they satisfied the English love of variety in plot and saved themselves the trouble of inventing new characters. For them Molière was the fountain, not of penetrating, philosophic social satire, but of amusing incident. To such patchwork drama Congreve never descended. Yet it is significant that his two most popular plays, those best fitted to the tastes of contemporary English audiences, were *The Old Bachelor* and *Love for Love*, in which the plot is the main source of interest, and the mere satirical representation on the stage of the manners of society is less prominent.

In the Restoration period, broadly speaking, the serious drama was romantic, comedy was realistic. Thus, while the spirit of the Elizabethan romantic drama disappeared from comedy but remained in tragedy and the heroic play, the traditions of Elizabethan realistic comedy had an enduring influence on its Restoration successor. But here too there was a shift of emphasis. Sentiment, like romance, was now prominent only in the serious drama; and even the jovial, sympathetic old English comedy sank into a subordinate position. The tone of Restoration comedy was predominantly satiric. While Dekker and his fellows were forgotten, Jonson, with his comedy of humors, became a powerful force in the newer comedy. Congreve has perhaps given the best definition of *humor* in the Jonsonian sense, terming it "a singular and unavoidable manner of doing or saying anything, peculiar and natural to one man only, by which his speech and actions are distinguished from those of other men."² Jonson's talent consists in creating a group of odd, eccentric persons, generally of low station in life, knaves and gulls, and in developing the ludicrous situations that result from their conflict. His spirit is satiric, not

¹ See D. H. Miles, *The Influence of Molière on Restoration Comedy*, New York, 1909: pp. 88-95; 102-07; Charlanne, *L'Influence française en Angleterre au XVII^e siècle*, Paris, 1906: ch. 9.

² Letter to Dennis (1695), *Concerning Humour in Comedy*.

in the least kindly or *humorous* in the modern sense. To this fact, and to his strict observance of the dramatic rules, quite as much as to his skill in the analysis of character and to his mastery of English style, Jonson owed his position of authority in the Restoration period. He influenced nearly all the dramatic writers of the time; in Shadwell he had a direct disciple of no mean powers.

In Restoration comedy the prevailing types were at first the comedy of intrigue and the comedy of humors, both of which have their roots in the national tradition, though even they were strongly affected by French literature. While Elizabethan playwrights turned for their plots to Italian *novelle*, their Restoration successors borrowed theirs from French dramatists. With plots they took types of character, such as the cunning valet and the pert serving-maid, though native models for such "humorous" creations were presumably in existence. In constructing their plays they at least heeded the unities, though they did not always obey them strictly.

But the type of comedy that represents the highest literary achievement of the Restoration dramatists is the comedy of manners. In this special field their best work is far superior to that of "the former age," as Dryden termed it. The pictures of vulgar folly drawn by Jonson and his imitators might long amuse the fine gentlemen who patronized the theatres of Drury Lane or Lincoln's Inn Fields, but they could not fully satisfy them. Inevitably comedy turned its attention away from the inborn eccentricities of men and women of low degree to the affectations of polite society. Etherege, Wycherley, and Congreve produced high comedy that somewhat resembles the work of Molière. The line between this new comedy of manners and the comedy of humors cannot be strictly drawn, but in general the contrast is clear. It is like that between Dickens and Meredith, a matter of breeding rather than of morality, or even of literary skill. One understands Dryden when he contrasts the coarseness of Shadwell with the refinement of Etherege.

Concerning the literary provenience of this Restoration comedy of manners opinions differ. The traditional view, expressed for instance by Thackeray in his lecture on Congreve, regards it as a

direct importation from France. "She was a disreputable, daring, laughing, painted French baggage, that Comic Muse. She came over from the continent with Charles at the Restoration." No serious student would now accept this statement, which disregards chronology, and fails to reckon with the fact that the comic spirit of Congreve is, as we shall see presently, essentially different from that of the French dramatists. Some scholars, such as Professor Saintsbury¹ and Mr. Dobrée,² find the main source of all Restoration drama, including the comedy of manners, in the English national tradition. Their opinion is correct, but it must not blind us to the constant French influence on the plots and on the form and technique of the new drama, including the comedy of manners. Finally, Mr. John Palmer thinks that Restoration comedy of manners "owed almost as little to France as to the English school it displaced." "It was an independent growth springing spontaneously from the impulse of English Restoration Society to view itself in reflection upon the stage."³ This is an almost paradoxical overstatement, making the comedy of manners written by Etherege and Congreve a thing in itself, utterly different from all the rest of the Restoration drama, which fairly teems with "influences" from preceding writers, both English and French. One may accept, however, Mr. Taylor's moderate assertion that the "material" of this comedy "is a reflection of contemporary life distorted for comic and satiric purposes."⁴

Shakespeare's *Twelfth Night*, with its poetic Illyrian romance in the rooms of state and its boisterous English fooling below stairs, is a fitting summary of the two most popular types of Elizabethan comedy. The earlier Elizabethan dramatists discussed high society either in tragedy or in romantic comedy; they did not make it the subject either of witty satire or of humorous jest. Romantic comedy derived its plots from Italian tales and laid its scenes in foreign lands. To be sure, the persons in such comedies, when their characters were clearly indicated, were often purely English, despite their foreign names, but they were always treated in a

¹ Introduction to edition of Dryden's plays in the *Mermaid Series*, pp. 7, 8.

² *Restoration Comedy*, Oxford, 1924, pp. 39-57.

³ *The Comedy of Manners*, London, 1913, p. 66.

⁴ *William Congreve*, p. 3.

tone of poetic idealization, not of mordant satire. When, as in Fletcher's *Wit without Money*, the scene was transferred to England, the poetic spirit of the comedy remained unaltered. The same poetic spirit remained even in the comedies of Shirley, some of which, like *Hyde Park* and *The Ball*, depended for their effect on their pictures of strictly contemporary manners, and were marked by a tone of mild satire. Perhaps, had there been no direct French influence, this sort of play would have been re-created and developed in the Restoration period; perhaps its poetic elements would have disappeared, its satire deepened, and a truly native English comedy of high society would have developed. To deny this would be hazardous. But such speculations are idle and fruitless. As a matter of fact, all the elder dramatists except Shakespeare, Jonson, and, above all, Beaumont and Fletcher, were neglected after the Restoration. The low repute into which Shirley had fallen by 1682 is apparent from Dryden's familiar sneer at Shadwell in *Mac Flecknoe*:

Heywood and Shirley were but types of thee,
Thou last great prophet of tautology.

And yet Shirley, more than any other dramatist of "the former age," approximated to the comedy of manners that Dryden so admired in Etherege, Wycherley, and Congreve. The ever-popular Beaumont and Fletcher were esteemed for their ultraromantic tone, their fertility of invention, and their poetic style, rather than for any groping attempts at the comedy of high society that may be found in them. They influenced primarily the moribund tragi-comedy and the bombastic heroic plays of the Restoration period. The new satiric comedy of manners, of which *The Way of the World* is the finest example, was written entirely in prose. It developed, as far as the complicated facts can be expressed in a crisp, dogmatic statement, from the older English comedy of humors, under conditions imposed by Restoration society of the higher circles, and under the strong influence of Molière. The influence of Molière at this time was comparable to that of Ibsen two hundred years later, but was far more potent and exclusive. To call Restoration comedy of manners "independent"

or "spontaneous" is to neglect facts that have been established by detailed investigations. Just as Molière furnished plots to Lacy and to Wycherley, he furnished situations to Congreve; but he gave Congreve more subtle aid by influencing the whole temper of his work. Congreve lacked Molière's philosophic insight into the essentials of human character, but in dealing with social affectations he showed skill comparable to that of his master.

Social affectations! In the interpretation of these words lies the central difference between the spirit and the style of Molière and the spirit and the style of Congreve. Both men sought to ridicule folly from the point of view of the gentleman. But they had different ideas of the gentleman. For Molière the gentleman was the well-trained man of strong practical sense, wide sympathy and moral probity; Molière's ideal might almost be accepted by Tennyson. For Congreve the gentleman was the man of conventional good breeding, guided by the motto: "Wit be my faculty and pleasure my occupation."¹ Congreve's temper was intellectual; for morals, at least in comedy, he had small use: wit was his ideal. Furthermore, his ideal of "true wit" was different from that of Molière. In England the traditions of *préciosité*, fanciful intellectual discussion that dealt with love themes in a more or less Platonic or anti-Platonic manner, lingered far longer than in France.² Introduced into England under Charles I, this elegant trifling with emotion found expression in love lyrics and in the drama (for instance in the *Aglaura* of Millamant's favorite, Suckling), and in the conversation of polite society. In Restoration comedy it became a mere play of wit, wit not accompanied by any high ideals of conduct, and not necessarily confined to love themes. Cultivated with grace, it was "true wit"; in clumsier hands it was affectation. A gallant such as Dorimant in Etherege's *Man of Mode* was distinguished from a mere beau like Sir Fopling Flutter not by his character but by his good taste in society, and in particular by his skill in amatory badinage. For Congreve a "manner" was "some distinguishing quality, as for example the

¹ The words of Bellmour, near the opening of *The Old Bachelor*.

² My treatment of this theme is based on the excellent study by Miss Kathleen M. Lynch, *The Social Mode of Restoration Comedy*, New York, 1926. Miles (*op. cit.*, pp. 161-91) handles the question more briefly.

bel air or *brillant* of Mr. Brisk . . . or something of his own that should look a little *je-ne-scaay-quoysh*.”¹ It differed from a “humor” in that it was not an essential characteristic of a man, but, to quote Mr. Nicoll, “a grace or a habit of refined culture.”² In France artificial word-fencing had gone out of fashion, and Molière had played a large part in banishing it. Thus much of Congreve’s most brilliant work, such as the famous scene in which Mirabell and Millamant match their wits against each other,³ represents a survival of a style against which Molière protested. In *The Way of the World* Congreve does not emphasize essential human characteristics, as Jonson does in characters from low life, or as Molière does in characters of a higher station; his “manners” are not *mores*.

Molière’s favorite characters mean what they say and do not try to be clever. In Congreve cleverness is the whole thing; the satire is on unskillful cleverness.⁴ Molière wrote “comedy of morals” as well as comedy of manners;⁵ Congreve wrote comedy which, brilliant though it be, is in the strictest sense of the word artificial.

The statement that comedy of manners developed from comedy of humors must be understood very loosely. Comedy of humors never disappeared from the stage. The two types existed side by side and blended with each other; the change of emphasis was gradual and almost unconscious. The first of Etherege’s plays, all three of which are predominantly comedies of manners, appeared as early as 1664: on Etherege Mr. Palmer founds his argument that the new development was independent and spontaneous. The comic portion of Dryden’s *Marriage à la Mode* (1672) is good work in comedy of manners, while that of his *Spanish Friar* (1680) is equally good comedy of humors. As early as 1672 in his *Defense of the Epilogue to the Conquest of Granada*, Dryden

¹ Spoken by Lady Froth, in *The Double-Dealer*, near the opening of Act II.

² *A History of Restoration Drama*, Cambridge, 1923, p. 184. I have followed Professor Nicoll in my quotation from Congreve just above.

³ See pp. 630-634.

⁴ “Congreve’s characters talk for talk’s sake, Molière’s because they are what they are.” H. T. E. Perry, *The Comic Spirit in Restoration Drama*, New Haven, 1925, p. 140.

⁵ Palmer, *op. cit.*, p. 66.

laid stress on the superior refinement of language in the contemporary drama as compared to that of "the former age," owing to the superior social position of the poets. Yet as late as 1695, his successor Congreve, despite his brilliant success with true comedy of manners in *The Double-Dealer*, still avowed his fidelity to the older humor comedy.¹ Only in 1700, in the dedication to *The Way of the World*, did he reverse his judgment, and pronounce "natural folly" a less appropriate topic for comic satire than "affected wit." His development was in miniature that of Restoration comedy as a whole.

Congreve's First Three Comedies.—Congreve's dramatic career is so short, and his work so scanty, that one hesitates to speak of a regular development within it. Yet some significant changes in his technique may be noted, such as increased attention to formal rules, more independent study of character and increased emphasis on it rather than on intrigue, and a transfer of attention from "humor" to "manners." His comedies fall into two pairs: (1) *The Old Bachelor* and *Love for Love*, and (2) *The Double-Dealer* and *The Way of the World*. The first two plays have much of the bustling action of the intrigue comedies, and hence won marked popular success; the other two concentrate the attention on one thread of action, which however has so many turns and windings that it is exceedingly difficult to follow even in reading. For this reason, in part at least, they had less success on the stage. But they excel in satiric pictures of society, which make them of somewhat the same type as the masterpieces of Molière, and which have won them the applause of the *judices nati*, the Drydens, Swinburnes, and Merediths.

When Congreve wrote *The Old Bachelor* the triumph of the formal rules was nearly complete; the young dramatist never thought of writing tragi-comedy and he adjusted himself to the unities as a matter of course. On the other hand, despite his clumsy expedient of making confidential conversations take place in the

¹"I don't say but that very entertaining and useful characters, and proper for comedy, may be drawn from affectations and those other qualities which I have endeavoured to distinguish from humour; but I would not have such imposed on the world for humour, nor esteemed of equal value with it." Letter to Dennis, *Concerning Humour in Comedy*.

street, he shifts the scene several times within an act.¹ The characters are types already made familiar by Wycherley; an elderly debauchee and a heartless young rake are the principal male figures. Though the conversation is bright and amusing, of a finer texture than in Wycherley, the play as a whole is a comedy of intrigue. Into the plot Congreve weaves no less than five distinct actions; one of the underplots, of Sir Joseph Wittol and his parasite Bluffe, is in a vein of purely Jonsonian humor.

Of his next comedy, *The Double-Dealer*, Congreve boasted in his dedication: "I designed the moral first, and to that moral I invented the fable, and do not know that I have borrowed one hint of it anywhere. I made the plot as strong as I could, because it was single; and I made it single, because I would avoid confusion, and was resolved to preserve the three unities of the drama." Here alone Congreve built upon a single idea, the dangers arising from deceit and hypocrisy; despite his assertion, one may suspect that he could not have written his play without having read Molière's *Tartuffe*. Of his two small minor intrigues, of which he is apparently oblivious in his dedication, one at least is connected closely with the main action.² The unities of time and place are exactly observed, since the events of the play take place in the course of a single afternoon and evening, and within a single mansion. Only once is there a change of scene within an act. In Sir Paul Plyant Congreve painted a new "humorous" portrait, but of a far less conventional sort than that of Sir Joseph Wittol of his first play; in the scenes where Lord and Lady Froth and Brisk play the leading parts he created comedy of manners of the highest order. The Froth family may have been suggested to him by *Les Femmes Savantes*, but Congreve completely naturalized them. These scenes of "humor" and of social satire compensate, as they would in Molière, for the slow progress of the action during the earlier acts. On the other hand in the last act the "single" intrigue becomes so intricate that it bewilders even a reader; on the stage it must have caused even greater perplexity. *The Double-Dealer*, owing to its consistency of tone, formal excellence of construction,

¹ Once each in Acts II, III, and V; three times in Act IV.

² See Schmid, *William Congreve* (Wien und Leipzig, 1897), pp. 90, 102.

and fine studies of character, stands second in literary merit among Congreve's comedies, immediately after *The Way of the World*; but as acting plays for English audiences both these dramas are inferior to *Love for Love*.¹

Probably taught by the small success of *The Double-Dealer*, Congreve in *Love for Love* reverted to something like his former methods. The events take place in two separate houses in London, and a night separates the third and fourth acts. Though the action, in a technical sense, has no more minor intrigues than the preceding play, it is more replete with incident; something is always happening. The general tone is that of rollicking "humor" comedy; the play is based on middle-class life and is full of portraits of ridiculous eccentrics, such above all as the old astrologer Foresight. A certain genial kindness, in the story of the love of Valentine and Angelica, forms a relief to Congreve's usual cynicism. Other figures, the rakes Tattle and Scandal, and Mrs. Frail, true to her name, with her sister Mrs. Foresight, bear witness to the author's satiric genius. Yet after all, though *Love for Love*, with its varied excellences, richly deserved its triumph, it is in general—except perhaps for its style—of a quality such as has been attained by other English writers. But only Congreve could have written *The Way of the World*. To that masterpiece one turns with delight, not unmixed with surprise.

The Way of the World.—*The Way of the World* has been termed by Swinburne "the unequalled and unapproached masterpiece of English comedy," and "the one play in our language which may fairly claim a place beside, or but just beneath the mightiest work of Molière."² If, leaving out of consideration the romantic comedy of Shakespeare, one measures all English comedy by the standard of Molière, this encomium commands respect, if not immediate assent.

In this play Congreve again shows an exaggerated respect for the formal rules of the drama. Under the list of *dramatis personæ* he proudly proclaims: "The time equal to that of the presentation." (One may remark that Sir Wilfull and his drunken comrades

¹ Mr. Archer (*op. cit.*) gives an excellent analysis of the reasons for this inferiority.

² See "Congreve," in *Encyclopædia Britannica*, ed. 9.

of Act IV are able to sober off with astonishing rapidity before their reappearance at the close of the play.) He places the entire action in London, and changes the scene but twice, between Acts I and II, and between Acts II and III. Thus he is obliged to make Lady Wishfort's toilet-room a sort of general rendezvous for all the people of the comedy. He but twice neglects the "connection of scenes,"¹ and then sins only against the dead letter of the rule. By his concentration of the entire action around one intrigue (of considerable complexity, to be sure), he for once obeys the very spirit of the unity of action, though his success in complying with this technical requirement doubtless injured his appeal to English audiences. But he did not shape his action about any central idea, as Molière does in his greatest comedies, and as he himself had done in *The Double-Dealer*—unless one may find an idea, trite and stale though it be, in the title of *The Way of the World*.²

Since writing *Love for Love*, as we have already seen, Congreve had changed his mind concerning the proper place of "humor" in comedy. He now finds "natural folly" "incorrigible, and therefore not proper for the stage," which, according to the then accepted theory, must teach the spectators as well as amuse them. In *The Way of the World* Sir Wilfull Witwoud is the only representative of the humor studies with which Congreve had delighted the public in *Love for Love*.³ To make amends for the loss, he gives continual scenes of wit: ludicrous, between Witwoud and Petulant; or refined and polished, between Mirabell and Millamant.⁴ *The Way*

¹ Act II, between scenes iii and iv; Act III, between scenes vi and vii.

² Compare Meredith's *Essay on Comedy*. But Mr. Taylor (*op. cit.*, pp. 150, 151) develops a rather curious thesis: "We shall find in it [*The Way of the World*], more than in any of his other plays, an expression of his own conception of life. His primary plea is for sincerity, both with one's self and in one's relations with others. Mirabell is far from perfect, but he is respected for his honesty. . . ." There may be a grain of truth in this interpretation.

³ Mr. Taylor (*op. cit.*, pp. 152-57) is of a directly contrary opinion.

⁴ Mr. Palmer (*op. cit.*, p. 86) notes Congreve's debt to Etherege's play, *The Man of Mode, or Sir Fopling Flutter*: "In the juxtaposition of Dorimant, the man of true wit and perfect fashion, with the fool or half-wit, who merely apes the smartness of the time, Etherege was setting a model for Congreve, whose *The Way of the World* almost entirely rests upon the subtle opposition of Mirabell and Witwoud."

of the *World* is true comedy of manners, dealing primarily with social affectations and habits; it is akin to Molière's *Les Femmes Savantes* and *Le Misanthrope*.

Like those two plays, *The Way of the World* is merely a series of conversations; the action stands still while Mirabell and Millamant match their wits against each other. The charm of the comedy depends not on the plot, which is a thin thread, "invented to serve the purpose of the play—that is, to satirize the foibles and vices of society,"¹ but on the brilliancy and wit of the dialogue, which is the absolute perfection of comic style, and on the drawing of the different characters, who are living beings, not mere types of the fine lady or the affected would-be gallant. These characters, again, are drawn more by what they say than by what they do; in fact, they do very little. Thus *The Way of the World*, depending as it does for its success almost entirely on style, requires rather a delicate literary sense for its full appreciation. Less adept readers than Swinburne and Meredith may need to peruse the comedy more than once in order to catch the full flavor of Congreve's style, "at once precise and voluble."² The scant success that the play won on the stage was due in large part to a literary craftsmanship that enhances its merits as a reading drama.

Congreve is indebted to Molière for certain features of his plot as well as for the general type of his comedy. Like him he employs "a long exposition taking up most of two acts" and "holds the interest to the close by deferring much of the incident till the final act."³ Millamant, surrounded by foolish suitors, reminds one of Célimène in *Le Misanthrope*, and her entrance is similarly delayed until comparatively late in the play, in order to whet the curiosity of the audience. The mock wooing of Lady Wishfort was doubtless suggested by *La Comtesse d'Escarbagnas*; and the disguise of Waitwell may be due to a recollection of *Les Précieuses Ridicules*. Mrs. Fainall's education was such as Molière holds up to scorn in *L'École des Maris* and *L'École des Femmes*. Sir Wilfull's journey to town has something in common with that of the hero in

¹ Miles, *op. cit.*, p. 201.

² Meredith, *op. cit.* Dobrée in his Introduction to *Comedies by William Congreve* (Oxford, 1925) gives an excellent discussion of the qualities of Congreve's style.

³ Miles, *op. cit.*, p. 200.

Monsieur de Pourceaugnac. Perhaps the cunning Foible is rather an imitation of the conventional *servante* of Molière than a reflection of actual English life. But, in however many details Congreve may be indebted to Molière, he has followed a different course from Ravenscroft and his fellows, or even from Wycherley. Ravenscroft's *Mamamouchi* is "a combination of *Le Bourgeois Gentilhomme* and *Monsieur de Pourceaugnac*, with an important addition from *L'Avare* and a hint from *Les Précieuses Ridicules*,"¹ pieced together in an ingeniously mechanical fashion; *The Plain Dealer*, despite the original vigor of Wycherley's talent, is primarily a debasement of *Le Misanthrope*;² but *The Way of the World*, notwithstanding the suggestions that Congreve has taken from the great master of the Restoration comic dramatists, is an independent, vitally original comedy.³

In dialogue, however, Congreve adopts a different technique from the Molière of *Le Misanthrope* and *Les Femmes Savantes*. Avoiding long set speeches, he strives to give in his comedies an idealized reproduction of the quick give-and-take of conversation between ladies and gentlemen in polite society. This gives him an opportunity to imitate now and then Molière's staccato prose dialogue.⁴ His ideal may be inferred from a passage in his letter to

¹ Miles, *op. cit.*, p. 105.

² For further discussion of this subject, see above, pp. 267-68.—*Gen. Eds.*

³ A German critic, Alexander Bennewitz, in an ingenious little volume, *Congreve und Molière* (Leipzig, 1890), has endeavored to prove that each of Congreve's plays is a mere cento of incidents and motives borrowed from Molière. *The Way of the World*, he finds, was compiled from *Le Misanthrope*, *Monsieur de Pourceaugnac*, *La Comtesse d'Escarbagnas*, *Le Malade Imaginaire*, *Les Femmes Savantes*, *L'Étourdi*, and (literally) a dozen other plays. He has shown some real resemblances, but for the most part exhibits a perverted ingenuity in discovering plagiarism under motives and incidents that are the common stock of all comic writers. Thus when Congreve makes Witwoud say of Petulant, "He will lie like a chambermaid" (p. 582), he must have had in mind, according to Bennewitz, the mendacious Toinette of *Le Malade Imaginaire*. The implied compliment to the honest and upright chambermaids of old England should win the hearts of British patriots. But the influence of at least *Le Misanthrope* and *La Comtesse d'Escarbagnas* seems certain. Bennewitz has failed to note two traits apparently taken from the latter play. Lady Wishfort's airs and graces on receiving the letter in "Sir Rowland's" presence (p. 642) are strikingly like those of the Comtesse in scene iv of Molière's play, and a remark by Mrs. Marwood, "If the root be honourable, why not the branches" (p. 625), perhaps owes something to M. Tibaudier's words in scene vii, "On ne peut pas aimer le tronc qu'on n'aime aussi les branches."

⁴ See Miles, *op. cit.*, pp. 163-65.

Dennis *Concerning Humour in Comedy*: "I believe if a poet should steal a dialogue of any length from the extempore discourse of the two wittiest men upon earth, he would find the scene but coldly received by the town." The tendency towards *préciosité* appears in a chastened form in Congreve. The language of his favorite characters is rarely elaborate or far-fetched; it imitates the real conversation of "gentlemen of wit and sense,"¹ but its imitation is that of portraiture, not photography.

The chief glory of *The Way of the World*, as we read it today, is the character of Millamant, the most delightful heroine of all English comedy since Shakespeare, and the most charming figure in English imaginative literature of the Restoration period. In each of his earlier comedies Congreve had inserted a girl who was meant to be charming by her maidenly purity, and whose part was always assigned to the admired Mrs. Bracegirdle. Of these heroines, Araminta (in *The Old Bachelor*) and Cynthia (in *The Double-Dealer*) are pale, shadowy figures that have only the slightest and most external connection with the corrupt society in which they live; they seem mere concessions to the stage tradition that descends from Imogen and Miranda. And even Angelica (in *Love for Love*), hearty, almost hoydenish, and genuine as she is, seems morally hardly a part of the play in which she figures. With Millamant all is changed. In her Congreve has created "a fine lady" essentially at home in her conscienceless environment, and yet not soiled by it; a heroine who is lovable and charming because of her very conventionality and artificiality.² Strip her of her wealth and social position, and, as Hazlitt remarks, nothing remains. "All her airs and affectations would be blown away with the first breath of misfortune. Envious in drawing rooms, adorable at her toilette, fashion, like a witch, has thrown its spell around her; but if that spell were broken, her power of fascination would be gone."³ And yet, as Dobrée indicates: "She is alive and breathing, hiding a real personality behind the

¹ The phrase is Shadwell's, in the list of *dramatis personæ* of *The Virtuoso*.

² Congreve's conception of his heroine may possibly be derived to some degree from Dryden's Melantha, of *Marriage à la Mode*, but his workmanship is infinitely superior to that of Dryden.

³ *Lectures on the English Comic Writers*.

only too necessary artifices of her sex. Once assured of Mirabell's love, she divests herself of her armour, and shows a perfect frankness." ¹

The Comic Spirit in Congreve.—Congreve's excellence in his peculiar field is beyond dispute. But what criticism of life does he give us in his brilliant comedies? Is the poet who produced the English comedy of manners nearest in literary merit to the great works of Molière really a man comparable to Molière in intellect, sympathy, insight? The answers to these vital questions have already been suggested. Great critics such as Taine and Meredith have pointed out the crudity and shallowness of the English comedy of manners compared with its French contemporary.

The comic dramatists of the Restoration, and Congreve among them, were in their moral point of view a bad lot;² and *The Way of the World*, for all its glitter, is no better than one of the wicked. In passing judgment on Restoration comedy, however, we are not obliged to adopt every article of Collier's puritanic literary creed, and to condemn the former because it shows the triumph of vice to be amusing, ridicules the clerical profession, and uses profane expressions. Even the first of these literary offenses, as readers of *Tom Sawyer* are aware, may be comparatively venial. Congreve's comedies are bad morally because esthetically they imply that what may be true of the part is true of the whole; that is, because they give a picture of a narrow, corrupt section of English society, not of English society as a whole, and because they portray incompletely even the narrow circle that they take for their subject-matter. ¹

The English theatre after the Restoration depended for its

¹ *Restoration Comedy*, Oxford, 1924, p. 147.

² Ever since Collier English critics have discussed this topic, in which moral, esthetic, and historical questions are involved. The opinions of Lamb (*On the Artificial Comedy of the Last Century*) and of Macaulay (*Comic Dramatists of the Restoration*) are famous; among notable later utterances are those of Street, Archer, Palmer, Canby (*Congreve as a Romanticist*: PMLA, Vol. XXXI, pp. 1-23: 1916), and Summers. Critics reacting against Victorianism have shown sophistical skill in justifying the ways of a drama that reacted against Puritanism. Summers becomes comic himself when he writes that Congreve, in opposition to Collier's "tyranny," "stands for culture, reasonable and reasoning liberty, poetry, wit, intelligence, the sweet amenities of life"! (*Op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 30.)

support to a great extent on courtiers and their imitators, the London "men about town," and the comedy of manners chose its topics, as well as its point of view, from the life of that class of society. Nor was its subject even the entire life of the men about town, but rather that side of their life of which they liked most to talk. There resulted a terrific and disheartening impoverishment of the subject-matter of comedy, so that practically nothing remained but adultery and gallantry. No better illustration could be found for Tolstoy's indictment of an art that ceases to be simple and serious, that deserts the great interests of all humanity for the special interests of a small clique. Gallantry and adultery may at times become proper subjects for comedy; when they become its sole subjects there is evidently something wrong with the society in which such comedy arises, and with the comedy itself.

Even the prevailing lechery of Congreve's comedies would not be so intolerable were it not combined with greed and absolute heartlessness. Congreve's men are not lecherous through any deep passion or any superabundance of animal spirits; they resemble neither the heroes of Malory nor those of Fielding. There is nothing wild or Bohemian in their composition; they sin by set rules, of malice aforethought, even as a duellist murders with formal precision. One cannot imagine Mirabell or Fainall making any sacrifice of property or social position for the sake of a woman who attracts him. "Love" for these creatures is in general a pastime, like drinking or dicing. Even when one of them sincerely loves a woman he is quite as fond of her fortune as of herself. Mirabell and Millamant, the pattern couple of *The Way of the World*, seem to have some genuine affection for each other. Yet Mirabell, to say nothing of his relations with Mrs. Fainall, is quite as anxious to secure Millamant's six thousand pounds as her affections. And even the delightful Millamant, when threatened with the loss of her property, apparently debates whether she had best not abandon Mirabell in favor of Sir Wilfull.¹ Truly, if poetry and the account book be incompatible, we have here one more proof that the Restoration period was an age of prose!

To this sweeping denial of fine and generous feeling in Con-

¹ See Mincing's speech, p. 648, ll. 10, 11.

greve's comedies one must make a few exceptions. In *Love for Love* Valentine offers to forego his fortune in order to win Angelica—but this may be a crafty trick rather than a sincere offer.¹ In *The Way of the World* Millamant rings true when, heedless of Mrs. Fainall's efforts to attract her attention, she exclaims: "Well, if Mirabell should not make a good husband, I am a lost thing—for I find I love him violently" (p. 635). And even Mirabell wins our regard when he accepts Millamant with the words: "Well, Heav'n grant I love you not too well; that's all my fear" (p. 662).

In moral tone Molière differs sharply from Congreve. Bourgeois by birth, and long a strolling actor by profession, he became intimate with the Parisian aristocracy only in his later years. His writings reflect the sound sense of French society as a whole, not the passion for gallantry of a few wealthy idlers. In only one of his comedies (*George Dandin*) is adultery the central theme. Of indecency there is not a little in his plays, but it is of an innocent sort; his work as a whole exalts honesty and truth, the love of husband and wife or of sister and brother, kindness, sincerity, loyalty, the spirit of charity and forbearance.

The true office of comedy, according to Meredith, is to kindle thoughtful laughter, rather than the indignation that is aroused by satire, or the kindly sympathy that springs from humor. Molière's spirit is that of elevated and enlightened common sense; he preaches no new gospel, and is in general quite satisfied with this world as it is, but he shows most thoughtfully and intelligently its follies and eccentricities. Congreve's spirit is that of a sense which is neither elevated nor enlightened, nor even common. He is quite satisfied with the little section of society in which he himself lives, and in which moral scruples play small part, though indeed "virtue" forbids a man to debauch the fifty-five-year-old widowed mother of his mistress (see p. 575). On those who fail to conform to the rules of good breeding current in this agreeable community he showers the arrows of his wit: a wit which rarely (and never in *The Way of the World*) degenerates into farce, which

¹ Mr. Street so understands it: see Introduction to *The Comedies of William Congreve* (London, 1895), p. xxiv.

most frequently shows itself as satire (as in the portraits of Lady Wishfort, Petulant, and Witwoud), which seldom (and never in *The Way of the World*) passes into kindly humor, but which often gleams with the radiance of true comedy, above all in the scenes between Mirabell and Millamant.

Such was the master of Restoration comedy. His influence, one may say without regret, was neither wide nor lasting. Soon came the rise of the sentimental school, and the hard glitter of Congreve's wit passed away. Beautiful, perfect as his work had been, it never took firm hold of the English mind as did the satires of Dryden and Pope, or the essays of Addison. When comedy found a new master in Sheridan, its guides were sentiment (though not sentimentality) and kindly upright morality, rather than satire and artificial good breeding.

Previous Editions and the Present Text.—*The Way of the World* was first published in quarto by Tonson in 1700; a "second edition, revised," followed in 1706; the play was next printed in the collected (but incomplete) edition of Congreve's *Works*, 1710. The preface of this collection, which presumably comes from Congreve himself, states: "This edition . . . is only recommended as the least faulty impression which has yet been printed; in which, care has been taken both to revise the press, and to review and correct many passages in the writing." The different plays have separate title-pages; a reproduction of that to *The Way of the World* is given herewith. The present text, except in a very few cases indicated in the notes, follows strictly, even in spelling, that in the collected edition of 1710 (C), which was printed from a revised copy of the quarto of 1706.¹ The variant readings of the quartos are recorded in the notes; Q1 standing for that of 1700, Q2 for that of 1706, Qtos. for the two collectively. (I regret that I have been unable to consult the third edition of the *Works*, 1719–20, which claims to be "revised by the author"; or a duodecimo edition of *The Way of the World* that Anderson is inclined to date in 1700.) The notes do not record insignificant variations of spelling such as *jealousie*: *jealousy*, *does*: *do's*, *niece*: *neice*. Capitals, italics, and punctuation are modified in accord

¹ This is proved by the repetition of certain misprints: see p. 591, l. 23; p. 640, l. 36.

with modern standards; since Ewald's Mermaid text was used as a basis for collation, traces of its punctuation doubtless remain in the present edition.

The division into scenes calls for special comment. In *The Way of the World*, if we understand the word *scene* in the traditional English fashion, each act consists of but one scene, since the place represented on the stage remains unaltered and no interval of time separates the different parts of the action. This arrangement is followed in the quartos, the entrances and exits being indicated in the manner made familiar to us by editions of Shakespeare. But in the edition of 1710 Congreve printed his plays in the French style, beginning a new scene with the entrance or exit of any character, however subordinate. At the head of each scene he gave a list of the persons taking part in it; he omitted the stage-directions *exit* and *exeunt*; *enter* he either omitted or (more frequently) substituted for it *to them*. (Dobrée writes, somewhat whimsically, that Congreve adopted this arrangement, "not to borrow a French habit, but to emphasize the change of tempo, and to allow each scene to be itself a separate jewel.")¹ The resulting style of printing, clumsy though it be, has been followed in the present edition, since it was Congreve's deliberate choice, and since in some cases (see pages 606, 655) he altered his text in order to avoid very short scenes. It has seemed needless, however, to record in the notes each omission in C of an *exit* of Qtos., or each substitution of *to them* for *enter*. In some cases (see page 639, line 24; page 661, line 38) where an *exit* is not marked in C, the change is merely in the style of printing, not in the actual stage business.

The first complete edition of Congreve's works was that edited by Montague Summers (four volumes, London, 1923). This prints the text of each play from the first edition, but without stating the date of that edition. It adds text variants; but these, at least in the case of *The Way of the World*, are scanty and inaccurate. It contains introductions and notes that are extremely valuable, particularly for the stage history of Congreve's dramas. Another complete edition is furnished by the two volumes edited

¹ *Comedies by William Congreve*, p. xviii.

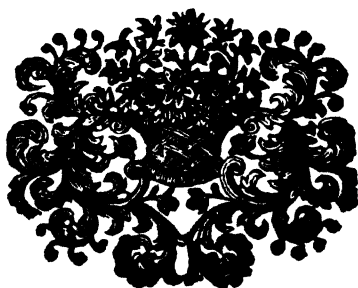
by Bonamy Dobrée: *Comedies by William Congreve and The Mourning Bride, Poems and Miscellanies*, by William Congreve (Oxford University Press, 1925 and 1928; in *The World's Classics*). It prints the comedies from the edition of 1710, but gives no text variants. The brief introductory essays are sympathetic and well written.

To the shame of English scholarship, no really critical edition of even a single play by Congreve has hitherto been published. It seems superfluous to list here the different reprints of *The Way of the World* (by itself or with other dramas), particularly since a bibliography of Congreve, by John P. Anderson, is printed in Gosse's *Life of William Congreve* (London, 1888), and another is included in *The Cambridge History of English Literature*, vol. viii. The latest separate edition is that of W. P. Barrett in the *Temple Dramatists*, London, 1933. The first modern edition of Congreve's plays was by Leigh Hunt, in *The Dramatic Works of Wycherley, Congreve, Vanbrugh, and Farquhar* (London, 1840). Convenient later collections are contained in the *Mermaid Series* (edited by A. C. Ewald: London, 1887); in Henley's series of *English Classics* (with an introduction by G. S. Street: two volumes, London, 1895); in the series *Masterpieces of the English Drama*, edited by F. E. Schelling (with an introduction by William Archer: New York, 1912); and in the *Modern Readers' Series* (edited with an introduction by J. W. Krutch: New York, 1927); the latest collection is that edited by F. W. Bateson (London, 1930).

GEORGE RAPALL NOYES.

THE
WAY of the WORLD.
A
COMEDY.

Audire est Opera pretium, procedere recte
Qui machis non vultis — Hor. Sat. 2. l. 1.
— *Metuat doti deprensa.* — Ibid.



Printed in the YEAR 1710.

The Latin mottos are from Horace, *Satires*, I. ii. 37, 38; 131: "It is worth your while to listen, you who would not have adulterers prosper in their course"; and, "Caught in the act, let her fear for her dowry." "*Mæchis*" is an error for "*mæchis*."

To¹

MR. CONGREVE,

occasion'd by his

Comedy

call'd

The Way of the World.

WHEN pleasure's falling to the low delight,
In the vain joys of the uncertain sight;
No sense of wit when rude spectators know,
But in distorted gesture, farce and show;
How could, great author, your aspiring mind 5
Dare to write only to the few refin'd?
Yet tho' that nice ambition you pursue,
'Tis not in Congreve's power to please but few.
Implicitly devoted to his fame,
Well-dress'd barbarians know his awful name; 10
Tho' senseless they're of mirth, but when they laugh,
As they feel wine, but when, 'till drunk, they quaff.
On you from fate a lavish portion fell
In ev'ry way of writing to excell.

¹ This poem is not found in Qtos.; it is inserted immediately after the title-page of vol. II of C.

Your muse applause to Arabella ¹ brings, 15
 In notes as sweet as Arabella sings.
 When e'er you draw an undissembled woe,
 With sweet distress your rural numbers flow:
 Pastora's ² the complaint of ev'ry swain,
 Pastora still the eccho of the plain! 20
 Or if your muse describe, with warming force,
 The wounded Frenchman falling from his horse;
 And her own William glorious in the strife,
 Bestowing on the prostrate foe his life:
 You the great act as gen'rously rehearse, 25
 And all the English fury's in your verse.³
 By your selected scenes and handsome choice,
 Ennobled Comedy exalts her voice;
 You check unjust esteem and fond desire,
 And teach to scorn what else we should admire: 30
 The just impression taught by you we bear;
 The player acts the world, the world the player;
 Whom still that world unjustly disesteems,
 Tho' he, alone, professes what he seems.
 But when your muse assumes her tragick part, 35
 She conquers and she reigns in ev'ry heart;
 To mourn with her men cheat their private woe,
 And gen'rous pity's all the grief they know.
 The widow, who, impatient of delay,
 From the town-joys must mask it to the play,⁴ 40
 Joyns with your Mourning-Bride's resistless moan,
 And weeps a loss she slighted when her own:
 You give us torment, and you give us ease,
 And vary our afflictions as you please.
 Is not a heart so kind as yours in pain, 45

¹ A reference to Congreve's "irregular ode," *On Mrs. Arabella Hunt, Singing*.

² A reference to Congreve's poem, *The Mourning Muse of Alexis, a Pastoral Lamenting the Death of Queen Mary*, in which a couplet mourning "Pastora dead" is six times repeated.

³ Congreve's poems, *To the King, on the Taking of Namure*, and, *The Birth of the Muse*, eulogize William III, but no passage in them corresponds exactly to Steele's allusion.

⁴ Cf. p. 594, n. 4.

The Way of the World

565

To load your friends with cares you only feign;
Your friends in grief, compos'd your self, to leave?
But 'tis the only way you'll e'er deceive.
Then still, great sir, your moving pow'r employ,
To lull our sorrow, and correct our joy.

50

R. STEELE.

To the Right Honourable
RALPH
EARL OF MOUNTAGUE,¹ &c.

MY LORD,

Whether the world will arraign me of vanity or not, that I have presum'd to dedicate this comedy to your Lordship, I am yet in doubt; tho' it may be it is some degree of vanity even to doubt of it. One who has at any time had the honour of your Lordship's conversation, cannot be suppos'd to think very meanly of that which he wou'd prefer to your perusal; yet it were to incur the imputation of too much sufficiency, to pretend to such a merit as might abide the test of your Lordship's censure.

Whatever value may be wanting to this play while yet it is mine, will be sufficiently made up to it, when it is once become your Lordship's; and it is my security, that I cannot have overrated it more by my dedication than your Lordship will dignifie it by your patronage.

That it succeeded on the stage, was almost beyond my expectation; for but little of it was prepar'd for that general taste which seems now to be predominant in the pallats of our audience.

Those characters which are meant to be ridicul'd² in most of our comedies, are of fools so gross, that, in my humble opinion, they shou'd rather disturb than divert the well-natur'd and reflecting part of an audience; they are rather objects of charity than contempt; and instead of moving our mirth, they ought very often to excite our compassion.

This reflection mov'd me to design some characters which shou'd appear ridiculous not so much thro' a natural folly (which is incorrigible, and therefore not proper for the stage) as thro' an affected wit; a wit which, at the same time that it is affected, is also false. As there is some difficulty in the formation of a character of this nature, so there is some hazard

¹ Ralph Montagu (1638?-1709), created Earl of Montagu (1689) and Duke of Montagu (1705), an intriguing politician whom Swift calls "as arrant a knave as any in his time" (*Works*, ed. Temple Scott, X. 275). As an unprincipled, well-bred fine gentleman, he doubtless deserved Congreve's compliments. Sir Walter Scott speaks very kindly of him (see note to Hamilton's *Memoirs of Count Grammont*, London, 1896, p. 134).

² Q1, "ridiculous."

which attends the progress of its success upon the stage; for many come to a play so over-charge'd with criticism, that they very often let fly their censure, when thro' their rashness they have mistaken their aim. This I had occasion lately to observe; for this play had been acted two or three days, before some of these hasty judges cou'd find the leisure to distinguish betwixt the character of a Witwoud and a Truewit.¹

I must beg your Lordship's pardon for this digression from the true course of this epistle; but that it may not seem altogether impertinent, I beg that I may plead the occasion of it, in part of that excuse of which I stand in need for recommending this comedy to your protection. It is only by the countenance of your Lordship, and the few so qualify'd, that such who write with care and pains can hope to be distinguish'd; for the prostituted name of *poet* promiscuously levels all that bear it.

Terence, the most correct writer in the world, had a Scipio and a Lelius, if not to assist him, at least to support him in his reputation; and notwithstanding his extraordinary merit, it may be their countenance was not more than necessary.

The purity of his stile, the delicacy of his turns,² and the justness of his characters, were all of them beauties which the greater part of his audience were incapable of tasting; some of the coarsest strokes of Plautus, so severely censur'd by Horace,³ were more likely to affect the multitude; such who come with expectation to laugh at ⁴ the last act of a play, and are better entertain'd with two or three unseasonable jests than with the artful solution of the *fable*.⁵

As Terence excell'd in his performances, so had he great advantages to encourage his undertakings; for he built most on the foundations of Menander; his plots were generally modell'd, and his characters ready drawn to his hand. He copied Menander, and Menander had no less light in the formation of his characters from the observations of Theophrastus, of whom he was a disciple; and Theophrastus, it is known, was not only the disciple, but the immediate successor of Aristotle, the first and greatest judge of poetry. These were great models to design by; and the further advantage which Terence possess'd, towards giving his plays the due ornaments of purity of stile and justness of manners, was not less con-

¹ A character in Jonson's *Epicæne*.

² Probably "phrasing," or "modes of expression," rather than the technical "turns of words" discussed by Dryden in his *Discourse concerning Satire* and elsewhere, and described by Puttenham as "a figure which the Latines call *Traductio*, and I the tranlacer: which is when ye turne and tranlace a word into many sundry shapes as the Tailor doth his garment . . ." (*The Arte of English Poesie*, ed. Arber, p. 213).

³ See *Ars Poetica*, 270-74.

⁴ Qtos., "out."

⁵ Plot.

siderable, from the freedom of conversation which was permitted him with Lelius and Scipio, two of the greatest and most polite men of his age. And indeed, the privilege of such a conversation is the only certain means of attaining to the perfection of dialogue.

If it has happen'd in any part of this comedy that I have gain'd a turn of stile, or expression more correct, or at least more corrigible, than in those which I have formerly written, I must, with equal pride and gratitude, ascribe it to the honour of your Lordship's admitting me into your conversation, and that of a society where every body else was so well worthy of you, in your retirement last summer from the town; for it was immediately after, that this comedy was written. If I have fail'd in my performance, it is only to be regretted, where there were so many not inferior either to a Scipio or a Lelius, that there shou'd be one wanting equal in ¹ capacity to ² a Terence.

If I am not mistaken, poetry is almost the only art which has not yet laid claim to your Lordship's patronage. Architecture and painting, to the great honour of our country, have flourish'd under your influence and protection. In the mean time, poetry, the eldest sister of all arts, and parent of most, seems to have resign'd her birth-right, by having neglected to pay her duty to your Lordship, and by permitting others of a later extraction to prepossess that place in your esteem to which none can pretend a better title. Poetry, in its nature, is sacred to the good and great; the relation between them is reciprocal, and they are ever propitious to it. It is the privilege of poetry to address to them, and it is their prerogative alone to give it protection.

This receiv'd maxim is a general apology for all writers who consecrate their labours to great men; but I could wish at this time that this address were exempted from the common pretence of all dedications; and that, as I can distinguish your Lordship even among the most deserving, so this offering might become remarkable by some particular instance of respect, which should assure your Lordship that I am, with all due sense of your extream worthiness and humanity,

My LORD,

*Your Lordship's most obedient
and most oblig'd humble servant.*

Will. Congreve.

¹ Qtos., "to the."

² Qtos., "of."

Prologue

Spoken by Mr. Betterton

OF those few fools who with ill stars are curst,
Sure scribbling fools, call'd poets, fare the worst:
For they're a sort of fools which Fortune makes,
And after she has made 'em fools, forsakes.
With Nature's oafs ¹ 'tis quite a diff'rent case, 5
For Fortune favours all *her* ² idiot-race:
In her own nest the cuckow-eggs we find,
O'er which she broods to hatch the changling-kind.
No portion for her own she has to spare,
So much she doats on her adopted care. 10
Poets are bubbles,³ by the town drawn in,
Suffer'd at first some trifling stakes to win;
But what unequal hazards do they run!
Each time they write they venture all they've won: }
The squire that's butter'd still,⁴ is sure to be undone. } 15
This author, heretofore, has found your favour;
But pleads no merit from his past behaviour.
To build on that might prove a vain presumption,
Shou'd grants to poets made admit resumption;
And in Parnassus he must lose his seat, 20
If that be found a forfeited estate.
He owns, with toil he wrought the following scenes;
But if they're naught, ne'er spare him for his pains;
Damn him the more; have no commiseration
For dulness on mature deliberation. 25

¹ An *oaf* (or *changeling*) was an ugly, stupid child left by the fairies in place of one stolen by them. Cf. p. 604, l. 12.

² Referring to *Nature*, whereas "her" in the next line refers to *Fortune*.

³ dupes.

⁴ continually bedaubed with flattery.

He swears he'll not resent one hiss'd-off scene, }
 Nor, like those peevish wits, his play maintain, }
 Who, to assert their sense, your taste arraign. }
 Some plot we think he has, and some new thought;
 Some humour too, no farce; but that's a fault.¹ 30
 Satire, he thinks, you ought not to expect;
 For so reform'd a town who dares correct?
 To please, this time, has been his sole pretence;
 He'll not instruct, lest it shou'd give offence.
 Shou'd he by chance a knave or fool expose, 35
 That hurts none here; sure here are none of those.
 In short, our play shall (with your leave to shew it)
 Give you one instance of a passive poet,
 Who to your judgments yields all resignation:
 So save or damn, after your own discretion. 40

¹ In Congreve's time the "etymological" *l* of this word was not pronounced.

Dramatis Personæ¹

MEN

FAINALL, ² <i>in love with</i> MRS. MARWOOD.	<i>Mr. Betterton.</i>
MIRABELL, ³ <i>in love with</i> MRS. MILLAMANT.	<i>Mr. Verbruggen.</i>
WITWOUND, } <i>followers of</i> MRS. MILLAMANT.	<i>Mr. Bowen.</i>
PETULANT, }	<i>Mr. Bowman.</i>
SIR WILFULL WITWOUND, <i>half brother to</i> WITWOUND, <i>and</i> <i>nephew to</i> LADY WISHFORT.	<i>Mr. Underhill.</i>
WAITWELL, <i>servant to</i> MIRABELL.	<i>Mr. Bright.</i>

WOMEN

LADY WISHFORT, ⁴ <i>enemy to</i> MIRABELL, <i>for having</i> <i>falsely pretended love to her.</i>	<i>Mrs. Leigh.</i>
MRS. ⁵ MILLAMANT, ⁶ <i>a fine lady, niece to</i> LADY WISH- FORT, <i>and loves</i> MIRABELL.	<i>Mrs. Bracegirdle.</i>
MRS. MARWOOD, <i>friend to</i> MR. FAINALL, <i>and likes</i> MIRABELL.	<i>Mrs. Barry.</i>
MRS. FAINALL, <i>daughter to</i> LADY WISHFORT, <i>and wife to</i> FAINALL, <i>formerly friend to</i> MIRABELL.	<i>Mrs. Bowman.</i>
FOIBLE, <i>woman to</i> LADY WISHFORT.	<i>Mrs. Willis.</i>
MINCING, <i>woman to</i> MRS. MILLAMANT.	<i>Mrs. Prince.</i>
<i>Dancers, Footmen, and Attendants.</i>	

SCENE: LONDON.

The time equal to that of the presentation.

¹ Qtos., "Personæ Dramatis."

² He who would *fain* have all.

³ A name borrowed from Fletcher's *Wild-Goose Chase*.

⁴ *Wish-for-it*; Q1 reads "Wishfor't," p. 658, l. 27.

⁵ In Congreve's time this prefix was used before the names of both married and unmarried women.

⁶ She of the *thousand lovers*.

THE Way of the World.¹

Act I. Scene I. *A Chocolate-House.*

MIRABELL *and* FAINALL, *rising from cards*; BETTY *waiting.*

Mira. You are a fortunate man, Mr. Fainall.

Fain. Have we done?

Mira. What you please. I'll play on to entertain you.

Fain. No, I'll give you your revenge another time, when you are not so indifferent; you are thinking of something else now, and play too negligently; the coldness of a losing gamester lessens the pleasure of the winner. I'd no more play with a man that slighted his ill fortune than I'd make love to a woman who undervalu'd the loss of her reputation. 9

Mira. You have a taste extremely delicate, and are for refining on your pleasures. 11

Fain. Prithee, why so reserv'd? Something has put you out of humour.

Mira. Not at all: I happen to be grave to day, and you are gay; that's all. 15

Fain. Confess, Millamant and you quarrell'd last night, after I left you; my fair cousin has some humours that wou'd tempt the patience of a Stoick. What, some coxcomb came in, and was well receiv'd by her, while you were by?

Mira. Witwoud and Petulant; and what was worse, her aunt, your wife's mother, my evil genius: or to sum up all in her own name, my old Lady Wishfort came in.— 22

Fain. O, there it is then!—She has a lasting passion for you, and with reason.—What, then my wife was there?

Mira. Yes, and Mrs. Marwood, and three or four more whom

¹ Q1 adds "a comedy."

I never saw before. Seeing me, they all put on their grave faces, whisper'd one another; then complain'd aloud of the vapours,¹ and after fell into a profound silence. 28

Fain. They had a mind to be rid of you.

Mira. For which reason I resolv'd not to stir. At last the good old lady broke thro' her painful taciturnity with an invective against long visits. I would not have understood her, but Millamant joining in the argument, I rose and with a constrain'd smile told her, I thought nothing was so easie as to know when a visit began to be troublesome; she reden'd, and I withdrew, without expecting² her reply. 36

Fain. You were too³ blame to resent what she spoke only in compliance with her aunt.

Mira. She is more mistress of her self than to be under the necessity of such a resignation. 40

Fain. What? tho' half her fortune depends upon her marrying with my lady's approbation?

Mira. I was then in such a humour that I shou'd have been better pleas'd if she had been less discreet.

Fain. Now I remember, I wonder not they were weary of you; last night was one of their cabal-nights; they have 'em three times a week, and meet by turns at one another's apartments, where they come together like the coroner's inquest, to sit upon the murder'd reputations of the week. You and I are excluded; and it was once propos'd that all the male sex shou'd be excepted; but some body mov'd that to avoid scandal there might be one man of the community; upon which motion Witwoud and Petulant were enroll'd members. 53

Mira. And who may have been the foundress of this sect? My Lady Wishfort, I warrant, who publishes her detestation of mankind; and full of the vigour of fifty five, declares for a friend and ratafia;⁴ and let posterity shift for it self, she'll breed no more. 57

Fain. The discovery of your sham addresses to her, to conceal

¹ dejection, the blues.

² awaiting.

³ Qtos., "to." "Too blame," as in Shakespeare, means blameworthy. But possibly the reading of C is merely a misprint.

⁴ "A cordial . . . flavoured with certain fruits or their kernels" (N.E.D.).

your love to her niece, has provok'd this separation. Had you dissembl'd better, things might have continu'd in the state of nature. 61

Mira. I did as much as man cou'd, with any reasonable conscience; I proceeded to the very last act of flattery with her, and was guilty of a song in her commendation. Nay, I got a friend to put her into a lampoon, and complement her with the imputation of an affair with a young fellow, which I carry'd so far that I told her the malicious town took notice that she was grown fat of a sudden; and when she lay in of a dropsie, persuaded her she was reported to be in labour. The devil's in't, if an old woman is to be flatter'd further, unless a man shou'd endeavour downright personally to debauch her; and that my virtue forbad me. But for the discovery of this ¹ amour I am indebted to your friend, or your wife's friend, Mrs. Marwood. 73

Fain. What shou'd provoke her to be your enemy, unless ² she has made you advances which you have slighted? Women do not easily forgive omissions of that nature. 76

Mira. She was always civil to me 'till of late. I confess I am not one of those coxcombs who are apt to interpret a woman's good manners to her prejudice, and think that she who does not refuse 'em ev'ry thing, can refuse 'em nothing. 80

Fain. You are a gallant man, Mirabell; and tho' you may have cruelty enough not to satisfie a lady's longing, you have too much generosity not to be tender of her honour. Yet you speak with an indifference which seems to be affected, and confesses you are conscious of a negligence. 85

Mira. You pursue the argument with a distrust that seems to be unaffected, and confesses you are conscious of a concern for which the lady is more indebted to you than is ³ your wife.

Fain. Fie, fie, friend; if you grow censorious I must leave you.—I'll look upon the gamesters in the next room. 90

Mira. Who are they?

Fain. Petulant and Witwoud.—Bring me some chocolate.⁴

Mira. Betty, what says your clock?

¹ Q1, "that."

² Qtos., "without."

³ Not in Qtos.

⁴ Qtos. insert "Exit."

Bet. Turn'd of the last canonical hour,¹ sir.²

Mira. How pertinently the jade answers me!—Ha? almost one a clock! [*Looking on his watch.*—O, y'are come! 96

Scene II.

MIRABELL and Footman.³

Mira. Well, is the grand affair over? You have been something tedious.

Serv. Sir, there's such coupling at Pancras⁴ that they stand behind one another, as 'twere in a country dance. Ours was the last couple to lead up, and no hopes appearing of dispatch; besides, the parson growing hoarse, we were afraid his lungs wou'd have fail'd before it came to our turn; so we drove round to Duke's-Place;⁵ and there they were rivetted in a trice. 8

Mira. So, so, you are sure they are married.

Serv. Married and bedded, sir; I am witness. 10

Mira. Have you the certificate?

Serv. Here it is, sir.

Mira. Has the tailor brought Waitwell's cloaths home, and the new liveries?

Serv. Yes, sir. 15

Mira. That's well. Do you go home again, d'ye⁶ hear, and adjourn the consummation 'till farther order; bid Waitwell shake his ears, and Dame Partlet⁷ rustle up her feathers, and meet me at one a clock by Rosamond's Pond,⁸ that I may see her

¹ The canonical hours are those within which a marriage can be legally performed in English parish churches.

² Qtos. insert "*Exit.*"

³ Qtos., "*Enter a Servant.*" C retains "*Serv.*" in the following speech-headings.

⁴ Summers quotes a passage from *Tom Essence*; or, *The Modish Wife* (1676), describing Pancras Church as "a place of Priviledge and Liberty to Marry without Licenses, and at any time."

⁵ St. James's Church in Duke's Place was famous as a "lawless church," where marriages could be performed without licence or banns: see Ashton, *Social Life in the Reign of Queen Anne*, New York, 1883; p. 28.

⁶ Qi, "dec," as frequently later.

⁷ The hen: the Pertelote of Chaucer's *Nun's Priest's Tale*.

⁸ A small pond in the south-west corner of St. James's Park.

before she returns to her lady; and as you tender your ears be secret.¹

21

Scene III.

MIRABELL, FAINALL, BETTY.

Fain. Joy of your success, Mirabell; you look pleas'd.

Mira. Ay; I have been engag'd in a matter of some sort of mirth, which is not yet ripe for discovery. I am glad this is not a cabal-night. I wonder, Fainall, that you who are married, and of consequence should be discreet, will suffer your wife to be of such a party.

Fain. Faith, I am not jealous. Besides, most who are engag'd are women and relations; and for the men, they are of a kind too contemptible to give scandal.

Mira. I am of another opinion. The greater the coxcomb, always the more the scandal; for a woman who is not a fool can have but one reason for associating with a man who is one.²

12

Fain. Are you jealous as often as you see Witwoud entertain'd by Millamant?

Mira. Of her understanding I am, if not of her person.

15

Fain. You do her wrong; for, to give her her due, she has wit.

Mira. She has beauty enough to make any man think so, and complaisance enough not to contradict him who shall tell her so.

Fain. For a passionate lover, methinks you are a man somewhat too discerning in the failings of your mistress.

20

Mira. And for a discerning man, somewhat too passionate a lover; for I like her with all her faults; nay, like her for her faults. Her follies are so natural, or so artful, that they become her; and those affectations which in another woman wou'd be odious serve but to make her more agreeable. I'll tell thee, Fainall, she once us'd me with that insolence, that in revenge I took her to pieces; sifted her, and separated her failings; I study'd 'em, and got 'em by rote. The catalogue was so large that I was not without hopes

¹ Qtos., "*Exit Servant*," and just below, "*Re-enter Fainall*." They omit to notice Betty's reappearance.

² Qtos., "man that is."

one day or other to hate her heartily: to which end I so us'd my self to think of 'em, that at length, contrary to my design and expectation, they gave me ev'ry hour less and less disturbance; 'till in a few days it became habitual to me to remember 'em without being displeas'd. They are now grown as familiar to me as my own frailties; and in all probability in a little time longer I shall like 'em as well. 35

Fain. Marry her, marry her! be half as well acquainted with her charms as you are with her defects, and my life on't, you are your own man again.

Mira. Say you so?

Fain. I, I,¹ I have experience: I have a wife, and so forth. 40

Scene IV.

[*To them*] Messenger.

Mess. Is one Squire Witwoud here?

Bet. Yes. What's your business?

Mess. I have a letter for him, from his brother Sir Wilfull, which I am charg'd to deliver into his own hands.

Bet. He's in the next room, friend—that way. 5

Scene V.

MIRABELL, FAINALL, BETTY.

Mira. What, is the chief of that noble family in town, Sir Wilfull Witwoud?

Fain. He is expected to day. Do you know him?

Mira. I have seen him. He promises to be an extraordinary person; I think you have the honour to be related to him. 5

Fain. Yes; he is half brother to this Witwoud by a former wife, who was sister to my Lady Wishfort, my wife's mother. If you marry Millamant, you must call cousins too.

Mira. I had rather be his relation than his acquaintance.

Fain. He comes to town in order to equip himself for travel. 10

Mira. For travel! Why, the man that I mean is above forty.

¹ aye, aye.

Fain. No matter for that; 'tis for the honour of England that all Europe should know we have blockheads of all ages.

Mira. I wonder there is not an act of parliament to save the credit of the nation, and prohibit the exportation of fools. 15

Fain. By no means; 'tis better as 'tis. 'Tis better to trade with a little loss, than to be quite eaten up with being overstock'd.

Mira. Pray, are the follies of this knight-errant, and those of the squire his brother, any thing related?

Fain. Not at all; Witwoud grows by the knight like a medlar grafted on a crab. One will melt in your mouth, and t'other set your teeth on edge; one is all pulp, and the other all core. 22

Mira. So one will be rotten before he be ripe, and the other will be rotten without ever being ripe at all.

Fain. Sir Wilfull is an odd mixture of bashfulness and obstinacy. —But when he's drunk, he's as loving as the monster in *The Tempest*,¹ and much after the same manner. To give t'other² his due, he has something of good nature, and does not always want wit. 29

Mira. Not always: but as often as his memory fails him, and his common place of comparisons. He is a fool with a good memory, and some few scraps of other folks wit. He is one whose conversation can never be approv'd, yet it is now and then to be endur'd. He has indeed one good quality, he is not exceptious; for he so passionately affects the reputation of understanding raillery, that he will construe an affront into a jest; and call downright rudeness and ill language, satire and fire. 37

Fain. If you have a mind to finish his picture, you have an opportunity to do it at full length. Behold the original!

Scene VI.

[*To them*] WITWOUD.

Wit. Afford me your compassion, my dears! pity me, Fainall! Mirabell, pity me!

¹ Not Caliban, but, as Summers points out, Sycorax, in Act III of the adaptation of *The Tempest* by Dryden and Davenant.

² Qtos., "the t'other."

Mira. I do from my soul.

Fain. Why, what's the matter?

Wit. No letters for me, Betty? 5

Bet. Did not a ¹ messenger bring you one but now, sir?

Wit. Ay, but no other?

Bet. No, sir.

Wit. That's hard, that's very hard.—A messenger, a mule, a beast of burden, he has brought me a letter from the fool my brother, as heavy as a panegyric in a funeral sermon, or a copy of commendatory verses from one poet to another. And what's worse, 'tis as sure a forerunner of the author, as an epistle dedicatory. 14

Mira. A fool, and your brother, Witwoud!

Wit. Ay, ay, my half brother. My half brother he is, no nearer upon honour.

Mira. Then 'tis possible he may be but half a fool. 18

Wit. Good, good, Mirabell, *le drole!* Good, good; hang him, don't let's talk of him.—Fainall, how does your lady? Gad, I say any thing in the world to get this fellow out of my head. I beg pardon that I shou'd ask a man of pleasure, and the town, a question at once so foreign and domestick. But I talk like an old maid at a marriage; I don't know what I say: but she's the best woman in the world. 25

Fain. 'Tis well you don't know what you say, or else your commendation wou'd go near to make me either vain or jealous.

Wit. No man in town lives well with a wife but Fainall.—Your judgment, Mirabell?

Mira. You had better step and ask his wife, if you wou'd be credibly inform'd. 31

Wit. Mirabell.

Mira. Ay.

Wit. My dear, I ask ten thousand pardons;—gad I have forgot what I was going to say to you. 35

Mira. I thank you heartily, heartily.

Wit. No, but prithee excuse me—my memory is such a memory.

Mira. Have a care of such apologies, Witwoud—for I never

¹ Qtos., "the."

knew a fool but he affected to complain, either of the spleen or his memory. 40

Fain. What have you done with Petulant?

Wit. He's reckoning his mony—my mony it was—I have no luck to day.

Fain. You may allow him to win of you at play—for you are sure to be too hard for him at repartee; since you monopolize the wit that is between you, the fortune must be his of course. 46

Mira. I don't find that Petulant confesses the superiority of wit to be your talent, Witwoud.

Wit. Come, come, you are malicious now, and wou'd breed debates.—Petulant's my friend, and a very honest fellow, and a very pretty fellow, and has a smattering—faith and troth a pretty deal of an odd sort of a small wit: nay, I'll do him justice. I'm his friend, I won't wrong him.¹—And if he had any ² judgment in the world—he wou'd not be altogether contemptible. Come, come, don't detract from the merits of my friend. 55

Fain. You don't take your friend to be over-nicely bred?

Wit. No, no, hang him, the rogue has no manners at all, that I must own—no more breeding than a bum-bailly,³ that I grant you.—'Tis pity; ⁴ the fellow has fire and life.

Mira. What, courage? 60

Wit. Hum, faith I don't know as to that—I can't say as to that.—Yes, faith, in a controversie he'll contradict any body.

Mira. Tho' 'twere a man whom he fear'd, or a woman whom he lov'd.

Wit. Well, well, he does not always think before he speaks—we have all our failings: you are ⁵ too hard upon him, you are, faith. Let me excuse him—I can defend most of his faults, except one or two: one he has, that's the truth on't; if he were my brother, I cou'd not acquit him—that indeed I cou'd wish were otherwise.

Mira. Ay marry, what's that, Witwoud? 70

Wit. O pardon me!—expose the infirmities of my friend!—No, my dear, excuse me there.

¹ Qtos., "him neither."

² Qtos., "but any."

³ A bailiff of the lowest order.

⁴ Qtos., "pity faith."

⁵ Qi, "you're."

Fain. What, I warrant he's unsincere, or 'tis some such trifle.

Wit. No, no; what if he be? 'Tis no matter for that, his wit will excuse that: a wit shou'd no more be sincere than a woman constant; one argues a decay of parts, as t'other of beauty. 76

Mira. May be you think him too positive?

Wit. No, no, his being positive is an incentive to argument, and keeps up conversation.

Fain. Too illiterate? 80

Wit. That! that's his happiness—his want of learning gives him the more opportunities to shew his natural parts.

Mira. He wants words?

Wit. Ay; but I like him for that now; for his want of words gives me the pleasure very often to explain his meaning. 85

Fain. He's impudent?

Wit. No, that's not it.

Mira. Vain?

Wit. No.

Mira. What! he speaks unseasonable truths sometimes, because he has not wit enough to invent an evasion? 91

Wit. Truths! ha! ha! ha! No, no; since you will have it—I mean, he never speaks truth at all—that's all. He will lie like a chambermaid, or a woman of quality's porter. Now that is a fault. 95

Scene VII.

[*To them*] Coachman.

Coach. Is Master Petulant here, mistress?

Bet. Yes.

Coach. Three gentlewomen in a ¹ coach would speak with him.

Fain. O brave Petulant! Three!

Bet. I'll tell him. 5

Coach. You must bring two dishes of chocolate and a glass of cinnamon-water.²

¹ Qtos., "the."

² "Spirit of cinnamon" is included in a list of liqueurs in an advertisement quoted by Besant, *London in the Eighteenth Century* (London, 1903), p. 299. Qtos. here read "Exit."

Scene VIII.

MIRABELL, FAINALL, WITWOUD.

Wit. That should be for two fasting strumpets, and a bawd troubled with wind. Now you may know what the three are.

Mira. You are very free with your friend's acquaintance.

Wit. Ay, ay, friendship without freedom is as dull as love without enjoyment, or wine without toasting. But to tell you a secret, these are trulls whom ¹ he allows coach-hire, and something more by the week, to call on him once a day at publick places. 7

Mira. How!

Wit. You shall see he won't go to 'em, because there's no more company here to take notice of him.—Why this is nothing to what he us'd to do—before he found out this way, I have known him call for himself. 12

Fain. Call for himself? What dost thou ² mean?

Wit. Mean! Why, he wou'd slip you out of this chocolate-house, just when you had been talking to him—as soon as your back was turn'd—whip he was gone!—then trip to his lodging, clap on a hood and scarf, and a ³ mask, slap into a hackney-coach, and drive hither to the door again in a trice; where he wou'd send in for himself; that I mean, call for himself, wait for himself; nay, and what's more, not finding himself, sometimes leave a letter for himself. 21

Mira. I confess this is something extraordinary.—I believe he waits for himself now, he is so long a coming: O, I ask his pardon! ⁴

Scene IX.

PETULANT, MIRABELL, FAINALL, WITWOUD, BETTY.

Bet. Sir, the coach stays.

Pet. Well, well; I come.—'Sbud, a man had as good be a profess'd midwife as a profess'd whoremaster, at this rate; to be

¹ Qtos., "that."

² The singular pronoun indicates contemptuous familiarity.

³ Not in Qtos.

⁴ Qtos. insert "*Enter Petulant.*"

knock'd up and rais'd at all hours, and in all places. Pox on 'em, I won't come.—D'ye hear, tell 'em I won't come.—Let 'em snivel and cry their hearts out. 6

Fain. You are very cruel, Petulant.

Pet. All's one, let it pass—I have a humour to be cruel.

Mira. I hope they are not persons of condition that you use at this rate. 10

Pet. Condition! Condition's a dry'd fig, if I am not in humour!—By this hand, if they were your—a—a—your what-dee-call-'ems themselves, they must wait or rub off,¹ if I want appetite.

Mira. What-dee-call-'ems! What are they, Witwoud?

Wit. Empresses, my dear—by your what-dee-call-'ems he means sultana queens. 16

Pet. Ay, Roxolana's.²

Mira. Cry you mercy!³

Fain. Witwoud says they are—

Pet. What does he say th'are? 20

Wit. I? Fine ladies, I say.

Pet. Pass on, Witwoud.—Harkee, by this light, his relations—two coheiresses his cousins, and an old aunt, who⁴ loves catterwauling better than a conventicle.⁵

Wit. Ha! ha! ha! I had a mind to see how the rogue wou'd come off.—Ha! ha! ha! gad I can't be angry with him, if he had⁶ said they were my mother and my sisters. 27

Mira. No!

Wit. No; the rogue's wit and readiness of invention charm me.⁷ Dear Petulant! 30

Bet. They are gone, sir, in great anger.

Pet. Enough, let 'em trundel. Anger helps complexion, saves paint.

Fain. This continence is all dissembled; this is in order to have something to brag of the next time he makes court to Millamant, and swear he has abandoned the whole sex for her sake. 36

¹ make off, clear out.

² Roxolana was the wife of Solyman the Magnificent, of Turkey: cf. Davenant's *Siege of Rhodes*.

³ Beg your pardon!

⁴ Qtos., "that."

⁵ nonconformist meeting-house.

⁶ Not in Qtos.

⁷ Qtos. C have comma only.

Mira. Have you not left off your impudent pretensions there yet? I shall cut your throat, sometime or other, Petulant, about that business.

Pet. Ay, ay, let that pass—there are other throats to be cut.—

Mira. Meaning mine, sir? 41

Pet. Not I—I mean no body—I know nothing.—But there are uncles and nephews in the world—and they may be rivals—what then? All's one for that.—

Mira. How! harkee Petulant, come hither.—Explain, or I shall call your interpreter. 46

Pet. Explain! I know nothing.—Why, you have an uncle, have you not, lately come to town, and lodges by my Lady Wishfort's?

Mira. True.

Pet. Why, that's enough—you and he are not friends; and if he shou'd marry and have a child, you may be disinherited, ha? 51

Mira. Where hast thou stumbled upon all this truth?

Pet. All's one for that; why, then say I know something.

Mira. Come, thou art an honest fellow, Petulant, and shalt make love to my mistress, thou sha't, faith. What hast thou heard of my uncle? 56

Pet. I? nothing I. If throats are to be cut, let swords clash! Snug's the word, I shrug and am silent.

Mira. O raillery, raillery! Come, I know thou art in the womens secrets.—What, you're a cabalist; I know you staid at Millamant's last night, after I went. Was there any mention made of my uncle, or me? Tell me. If thou hadst but good nature equal to thy wit, Petulant, Tony Witwoud, who is now thy competitor in fame, would shew as dim by thee as a dead whiting's eye by a pearl of orient; he wou'd no more be seen by thee than ¹ Mercury is by the sun. Come, I'm sure thou wo't tell me. 66

Pet. If I do, will you grant me common sense then, for the future?

Mira. Faith, I'll do what I can for thee, and I'll pray that Heav'n may grant it thee in the mean time. 70

Pet. Well, harkee.

¹ Q1, "then," as occasionally later.

Fain. Petulant and you both will find Mirabell as warm a rival as a lover.

Wit. Pshaw! pshaw! that she laughs at Petulant is plain. And for my part—but that it is almost a fashion to admire her, I should—harkee—to tell you a secret, but let it go no further—between friends, I shall never break my heart for her. 77

Fain. How!

Wit. She's handsome; but she's a sort of an uncertain woman.

Fain. I thought you had dy'd for her. 80

Wit. Umh—no—

Fain. She has wit.

Wit. 'Tis what she will hardly allow any body else.—Now, demme, I shou'd hate that, if she were as handsome as Cleopatra. Mirabell is not so sure of her as he thinks for. 85

Fain. Why do you think so?

Wit. We staid pretty late there last night, and heard something of an uncle to Mirabell, who is lately come to town—and is between him and the best part of his estate. Mirabell and he are at some distance, as my Lady Wishfort has been told; and you know she hates Mirabell worse than a Quaker hates a parrot, or than a fishmonger hates a hard frost. Whether this uncle has seen Mrs. Millamant or not, I cannot say, but there were items of such a treaty being in embrio; and if it shou'd come to life, poor Mirabell wou'd be in some sort unfortunately fobb'd,¹ i'faith. 95

Fain. 'Tis impossible Millamant shou'd hearken to it.

Wit. Faith, my dear, I can't tell; she's a woman, and a kind of a humorist.

Mira. And this is the sum of what you cou'd collect last night?

Pet. The quintessence. May be Witwoud knows more, he stay'd longer—besides, they never mind him; they say any thing before him. 102

Mira. I thought you had been the greatest favourite.

Pet. Ay, *tete a tete*,² but not in publick, because I make remarks.

Mira. You do? ³ 105

Pet. Ay, ay; pox, I'm malicious, man. Now he's soft, you know;

¹ cheated.

² Qtos., "*teste a teste*."

³ Qtos., "Do you."

they are not in awe of him—the fellow's well bred; he's what you call a—what-d'ye-call-'em—a fine gentleman; but he's silly withal.

Mira. I thank you, I know as much as my curiosity requires.—
Fainall, are you for the Mall? ¹ 110

Fain. Ay, I'll take a turn before dinner.

Wit. Ay, we'll all walk in the Park; the ladies talk'd of being there.

Mira. I thought you were oblig'd to watch for your brother Sir Wilfull's arrival. 114

Wit. No, no; he comes ² to his aunt's, my lady Wishfort. Pox on him, I shall be troubled with him too; what shall I do with the fool?

Pet. Beg him for his estate, that I may beg you afterwards, and so have but one trouble with you both.

Wit. O rare Petulant! thou art as quick as fire ³ in a frosty morning; thou shalt to the Mall with us, and we'll be very severe.

Pet. Enough, I'm in a humour to be severe. 121

Mira. Are you? Pray then walk by your selves: let not us be accessory to your putting the ladies out of countenance with your senseless ribaldry, which you roar out aloud as often as they pass by you; and when you have made a handsome woman blush, then you think you have been severe. 126

Pet. What, what? Then let 'em either shew their innocence by not understanding what they hear, or else shew their discretion by not hearing what they wou'd not be thought to understand.

Mira. But hast not thou then sense enough to know that thou ought'st to be most asham'd thy self, when thou hast put another out of countenance? 132

Pet. Not I, by this hand!—I always take blushing either for a sign of guilt, or ill breeding.

Mira. I confess you ought to think so. You are in the right, that you may plead the error of your judgment in defence of your practice.

*Where modesty's ill manners, 'tis but fit
That impudence and malice pass for wit.*⁴

*How
Foolish
Pity*

END OF THE FIRST ACT.

¹ A fashionable walk in St. James's Park.

² C, "come's."

³ Qtos., "as a fire."

⁴ Qtos. add "Exeunt" at the close of Acts I-IV.

Act II. Scene I.

*St. James's Park.*MRS. FAINALL and MRS. MARWOOD.¹

Mrs. Fain. Ay, ay, dear Marwood, if we will be happy, we must find the means in our selves, and among our selves. Men are ever in extreams; either doating or averse. While they are lovers, if they have fire and sense, their jealousies are insupportable; and when they cease to love (we ought to think at least) they loath; they look upon us with horror and distaste; they meet us like the ghosts of what we were, and as from ² such, fly from us. 7

Mrs. Mar. True, 'tis an unhappy circumstance of life, that love shou'd ever die before us; and that the man so often shou'd out-live the lover. But say what you will, 'tis better to be left, than never to have been lov'd. To pass our youth in dull indifference, to refuse the sweets of life because they once must leave us, is as preposterous as to wish to have been born old, because we one day must be old. For my part, my youth may wear and waste, but it shall never rust in my possession. 15

Mrs. Fain. Then it seems you dissemble an aversion to mankind, only in compliance to ³ my mother's humour.

Mrs. Mar. Certainly. To be free,⁴ I have no taste of those insipid dry discourses with which our sex of force must entertain themselves, apart from men. We may affect endearments to each other, profess eternal friendships, and seem to dote like lovers; but 'tis not in our natures long to persevere. Love will resume his empire in our breasts; and every heart, or soon or late, receive and readmit him as its lawful tyrant. 24

Mrs. Fain. Bless me, how have I been deceiv'd! Why, you profess a libertine!

Mrs. Mar. You see my friendship by my freedom. Come, be as sincere, acknowledge that your sentiments agree with mine.

Mrs. Fain. Never!

Mrs. Mar. You hate mankind?

¹ Qtos. prefix "Enter."

² Not in Qtos.

³ Qtos., "with."

⁴ plain-spoken.

Mrs. Fain. Heartily, inveterately.

Mrs. Mar. Your husband?

Mrs. Fain. Most transcendently; ay, tho' I say it, meritoriously.

Mrs. Mar. Give me your hand upon it.

Mrs. Fain. There.

35

Mrs. Mar. I join with you; what I have said has been to try you.

Mrs. Fain. Is it possible? Dost thou hate those vipers, men?

Mrs. Mar. I have done hating 'em, and am now come to despise 'em; the next thing I have to do, is eternally to forget 'em.

40

Mrs. Fain. There spoke the spirit of an Amazon, a Penthesilea!¹

Mrs. Mar. And yet I am thinking sometimes, to carry my aversion further.

Mrs. Fain. How?

Mrs. Mar. Faith, by marrying; if I cou'd but find one that lov'd me very well, and would be thoroughly sensible of ill usage, I think I should do my self the violence of undergoing the ceremony.

48

Mrs. Fain. You would not make him a cuckold?

Mrs. Mar. No; but I'd make him believe I did, and that's as bad.

51

Mrs. Fain. Why had not you as good do it?

Mrs. Mar. O, if he shou'd ever discover it, he wou'd then know the worst, and be out of his pain; but I wou'd have him ever to continue upon the rack of fear and jealousy.

55

Mrs. Fain. Ingenious mischief! Wou'd thou wert married to Mirabell!

Mrs. Mar. Wou'd I were!

Mrs. Fain. You change colour.

Mrs. Mar. Because I hate him.

60

Mrs. Fain. So do I; but I can hear him nam'd. But what reason have you to hate him in particular?

Mrs. Mar. I never lov'd him; he is, and always was, insufferably proud.

Mrs. Fain. By the reason you give for your aversion, one

¹ Queen of the Amazons.

wou'd think it dissembled; for you have laid a fault to his charge of which his enemies must acquit him. 67

Mrs. Mar. O, then it seems you are one of his favourable enemies! Methinks you look a little pale, and now you flush again.

Mrs. Fain. Do I? I think I am a little sick o' the sudden. 70

Mrs. Mar. What ails you?

Mrs. Fain. My husband. Don't you see him? He turn'd short upon me unawares, and has almost overcome me.

Scene II.

[*To them*] FAINALL and MIRABELL.

Mrs. Mar. Ha! ha! ha! he comes opportunely for you.

Mrs. Fain. For you, for he has brought Mirabell with him.

Fain. My dear!

Mrs. Fain. My soul!

Fain. You don't look well to day, child. 5

Mrs. Fain. D'ye think so?

Mira. He is the only man that does, madam.

Mrs. Fain. The only man that wou'd tell me so at least; and the only man from whom I cou'd hear it without mortification.

Fain. O my dear, I am satisfy'd of your tenderness; I know you cannot resent any thing from me; especially what is an effect of my concern. 12

Mrs. Fain. Mr. Mirabell, my mother interrupted you in a pleasant relation last night; I wou'd fain hear it out.

Mira. The persons concern'd in that affair have yet a tolerable reputation.—I am afraid Mr. Fainall will be censorious. 16

Mrs. Fain. He has a humour more prevailing than his curiosity, and will willingly dispence with the hearing of one scandalous story, to avoid giving an occasion to make another by being seen to walk with his wife. This way, Mr. Mirabell, and I dare promise you will oblige us both. 21

Scene III.

FAINALL, MRS. MARWOOD.

Fain. Excellent creature! Well, sure if I shou'd live to be rid of my wife, I shou'd be a miserable man.

Mrs. Mar. Ay!

Fain. For having only that one hope, the accomplishment of it, of consequence, must put an end to all my hopes; and what a wretch is he who must survive his hopes! Nothing remains when that day comes, but to sit down and weep like Alexander, when he wanted other worlds to conquer. 8

Mrs. Mar. Will you not follow 'em?

Fain. Faith, I think not. 10

Mrs. Mar. Pray let us; I have a reason.

Fain. You are not jealous?

Mrs. Mar. Of whom?

Fain. Of Mirabell.

Mrs. Mar. If I am, is it inconsistent with my love to you that I am tender of your honour? 16

Fain. You wou'd intimate then, as if there were a fellow-feeling between my wife and him.

Mrs. Mar. I think she does not hate him to that degree she wou'd be thought. 20

Fain. But he, I fear, is too insensible.

Mrs. Mar. It may be you are deceiv'd.

Fain. It may be so. I do now ¹ begin to apprehend it.

Mrs. Mar. What?

Fain. That I have been deceiv'd, madam, and you are false.

Mrs. Mar. That I am false! What mean you? 26

Fain. To let you know I see through all your little arts.— Come, you both love him; and both have equally dissembl'd your aversion. Your mutual jealousies of one another have made you clash 'till you have both struck fire. I have seen the warm confession red'ning on your cheeks, and sparkling from your eyes.² 31

¹ So Q1; Q2 C, erroneously, "do not now."

² In this and some later speeches, pitched in a key more serious than that of the rest of the comedy, an iambic rhythm is perceptible.

Mrs. Mar. You do me wrong.

Fain. I do not.—'Twas for my ease to oversee¹ and wilfully neglect the gross advances made him by my wife; that by permitting her to be engag'd, I might continue unsuspected in my pleasures, and take you oftner to my arms in full security. But cou'd you think, because the nodding husband wou'd not wake, that e'er the watchful lover slept? 38

Mrs. Mar. And wherewithal can you reproach me?

Fain. With infidelity, with loving another,² with love of Mirabell. 41

Mrs. Mar. 'Tis false! I challenge you to shew an instance that can confirm your groundless accusation. I hate him.

Fain. And wherefore do you hate him? He is insensible, and your resentment follows his neglect. An instance! The injuries you have done him are a proof: your interposing in his love. What cause had you to make discoveries of his pretended passion? to undeceive the credulous aunt, and be the officious obstacle of his match with Millamant? 49

Mrs. Mar. My obligations to my lady urg'd me; I had profess'd a friendship to her, and cou'd not see her easie nature so abus'd by that dissembler. 52

Fain. What, was it conscience then? Profess'd a friendship! O, the pious friendships of the female sex!

Mrs. Mar. More tender, more sincere, and more enduring than all the vain and empty vows of men, whether professing love to us, or mutual faith to one another. 57

Fain. Ha! ha! ha! you are my wife's friend too.

Mrs. Mar. Shame and ingratitude! Do you reproach me? You, you upbraid me! Have I been false to her, thro' strict fidelity to you, and sacrific'd my friendship to keep my love inviolate? And have you the baseness to charge me with the guilt, unmindful of the merit! To you it shou'd be meritorious, that I have been vicious: and do you reflect that guilt upon me, which shou'd lie buried in your bosom? 65

Fain. You misinterpret my reproof. I meant but to remind

¹ overlook.

² Qtos., "of another."

you of the slight account you once cou'd make of strictest ties, when set in competition with your love to me.

Mrs. Mar. 'Tis false! You urg'd it with deliberate malice! —'Twas spoke in scorn, and I never will forgive it. 70

Fain. Your guilt, not your resentment, begets your rage. If yet you lov'd, you cou'd forgive a jealousy; but you are stung to find you are discover'd.

Mrs. Mar. It shall be all discover'd. You too shall be discover'd; be sure you shall. I can but be expos'd.—If I do it my self I shall prevent ¹ your baseness. 76

Fain. Why, what will you do?

Mrs. Mar. Disclose it to your wife; own what has past between us.

Fain. Frenzy! 80

Mrs. Mar. By all my wrongs I'll do't!—I'll publish to the world the injuries you have done me, both in my fame and fortune. With both I trusted you, you bankrupt in honour, as indigent of wealth.

Fain. Your fame I have preserv'd. Your fortune has been bestow'd as the prodigality of your love would have it, in pleasures which we both have shar'd. Yet, had not you been false, I had e'er this repaid it.—'Tis true—had you permitted Mirabell with Millamant to have stoll'n their marriage, my lady had been incens'd beyond all means of reconciliation: Millamant had forfeited the moiety of her fortune; which then wou'd have descended to my wife—and wherefore did I marry, but to make lawful prize of a rich widow's wealth, and squander it on love and you? 93

Mrs. Mar. Deceit and frivolous pretence!

Fain. Death, am I not married? What's pretence? Am I not imprison'd, fetter'd? Have I not a wife? nay a wife that was a widow, a young widow, a handsome widow; and wou'd be again a widow, but that I have a heart of proof, and something of a constitution to bustle thro' the ways of wedlock and this world! Will you yet be reconcil'd to truth and me? 100

Mrs. Mar. Impossible. Truth and you are inconsistent—I hate you, and shall for ever.

¹ anticipate.

Fain. For loving you?

Mrs. Mar. I loath the name of love after such usage; and next to the guilt with which you wou'd asperse me, I scorn you most. Farewell! 106

Fain. Nay, we must not part thus.

Mrs. Mar. Let me go.

Fain. Come, I'm sorry.

Mrs. Mar. I care not—let me go—break my hands, do!—I'd leave 'em to get loose. 111

Fain. I wou'd not hurt you for the world. Have I no other hold to keep you here?

Mrs. Mar. Well, I have deserv'd it all.

Fain. You know I love you. 115

Mrs. Mar. Poor dissembling!—O that—well, it is not yet—

Fain. What? what is it not? what is it not yet? It is not yet too late—¹

Mrs. Mar. No, it is not yet too late—I have that comfort.

Fain. It is, to love another. 120

Mrs. Mar. But not to loath, detest, abhor mankind, my self, and the whole treacherous world.

Fain. Nay, this is extravagance.—Come, I ask your pardon.—No tears—I was to blame, I cou'd not love you and be easie in my doubts.—Pray forbear—I believe you; I'm convinc'd I've² done you wrong; and any way, ev'ry way will make amends.—I'll hate my wife yet more, damn her!—I'll part with her, rob her of all she's worth, and we'll³ retire somewhere, any where, to another world. I'll marry thee—be pacify'd.—'Sdeath, they come; hide your face, your tears—you have a mask,⁴ wear it a moment. This way, this way—be persuaded. 131

¹ So Qtos. C. A question?

² Q2, "I have."

³ Qtos., "will."

⁴ "A substitute for the modern veil . . . in previous reigns it had been used generally out of doors. But in Anne's time it had got to be associated with disreputable females, so much so that at concerts . . . no person wearing a mask was admitted. They were still worn at the theatres, but scarcely by ladies. Still they were worn sometimes even by them, on the first night of a play, in case there might be any allusion, which might afterwards be excised, which would make them blush." (Ashton, *op. cit.*, p. 131.) Cf. p. 564, l. 40; p. 633 ll. 79, 83.

Scene IV. ¹

MIRABELL and MRS. FAINALL.

Mrs. Fain. They are here yet.*Mira.* They are turning into the other walk.*Mrs. Fain.* While I only hated my husband, I cou'd bear to see him; but since I have despis'd him, he's too offensive.*Mira.* O, you shou'd hate with prudence. 5*Mrs. Fain.* Yes, for I have lov'd with indiscretion.*Mira.* You shou'd have just so much disgust for your husband as may be sufficient to make you relish your lover.*Mrs. Fain.* You have been the cause that I have lov'd without bounds, and wou'd you set limits to that aversion of which you have been the occasion? Why did you make me marry this man?*Mira.* Why do we daily commit disagreeable and dangerous actions? To save that idol, reputation. If the familiarities of our loves had produc'd that consequence of which you were apprehensive, where cou'd you have fix'd a father's name with credit, but on a husband? I knew Fainall to be a man lavish of his morals, an interested and professing friend, a false and a designing lover; yet one whose wit and outward fair behaviour have gain'd a reputation with the town enough to make that woman stand excus'd who has suffer'd her self to be won by his addresses. A better man ought not to have been sacrific'd to the occasion; a worse had not answer'd to the purpose. When you are weary of him, you know your remedy. 23*Mrs. Fain.* I ought to stand in some degree of credit with you, Mirabell.*Mira.* In justice to you, I have made you privy to my whole design, and put it in your pow'r to ruin or advance my fortune.*Mrs. Fain.* Whom have you instructed to represent your pretended uncle?*Mira.* Waitwell, my servant. 30*Mrs. Fain.* He is an humble servant to Foible, my mother's woman, and may win her to your interest.¹C reads "SCENE III" and continues the misnumbering through the act.

Mira. Care is taken for that—she is won and worn by this time. They were married this morning.

Mrs. Fain. Who? 35

Mira. Waitwell and Foible. I wou'd not tempt my servant to betray me by trusting him too far. If your mother, in hopes to ruin me, shou'd consent to marry my pretended uncle, he might, like Mosca in *The Fox*,¹ stand upon terms; so I made him sure before-hand. 40

Mrs. Fain. So if my poor mother is caught in a contract, you will discover the imposture betimes, and release her by producing a certificate of her gallant's former marriage?

Mira. Yes, upon condition that² she consent to my marriage with her neice, and surrender the moiety of her fortune in her possession. 46

Mrs. Fain. She talk'd last night of endeavouring at a match between Millamant and your uncle.

Mira. That was by Foible's direction, and my instruction, that she might seem to carry it more privately. 50

Mrs. Fain. Well, I have an opinion of your success; for I believe my lady will do any thing to get an³ husband; and when she has this, which you have provided for her, I suppose she will submit to any thing to get rid of him.

Mira. Yes, I think the good lady wou'd marry any thing that resembl'd a man, though 'twere no more than what a butler could pinch out of a napkin. 57

Mrs. Fain. Female frailty! We must all come to it, if we live to be old, and feel the craving of a false appetite when the true is decay'd. 60

Mira. An old woman's appetite is deprav'd like that of a girl—'tis the green-sickness of a second childhood; and, like the faint offer of a latter spring, serves but to usher in the fall, and withers in an affected bloom.

Mrs. Fain. Here's your mistress. 65

¹ The parasite in Jonson's comedy, *Volpone; or, The Fox*, after aiding and abetting the plots of his villainous master Volpone, turns against him and attempts to cheat him of half his property or more.

² Not in Qtos.

³ Qtos., "a."

Scene V.

[*To them*] MRS. MILLAMANT, WITWOUND, MINCING.

Mira. Here she comes, i'faith, full sail, with her fan spread and streamers ¹ out, and a shoal ² of fools for tenders.—Ha, no, I cry her mercy!

Mrs. Fain. I see but one poor empty sculler; and he tows her woman after him. 5

Mira. You seem to be unattended, madam—you us'd to have the *beau-mond* throng after you; and a flock of gay fine perukes hovering round you.

Wit. Like moths about a candle.—I had like to have lost my comparison for want of breath. 10

Milla. O, I have deny'd my self airs to day. I have walk'd as fast through the croud—

Wit. As a favourite just disgraced; ³ and with as few followers.

Milla. Dear Mr. Witwound, truce with your similitudes; for I am as sick of 'em— 15

Wit. As a physician of a good air.—I cannot help it, madam, tho' 'tis against my self.

Milla. Yet again! Mincing, stand between me and his wit.

Wit. Do, Mrs. Mincing, like a skreen before a great fire. I confess I do blaze to day, I am too bright. 20

Mrs. Fain. But, dear Millamant, why were you so long?

Milla. Long! Lord, have I not made violent haste? I have ask'd every living thing I met for you; I have enquir'd after you, as after a new fashion.

Wit. Madam, truce with your similitudes.—No, you met her husband, and did not ask him for her. 26

Mira. By your leave, Witwound, that were like enquiring after an old fashion, to ask a husband for his wife.

Wit. Hum, a hit! a hit! a palpable hit! ⁴ I confess it.

Mrs. Fain. You were dress'd before I came abroad. 30

¹ Qtos., "her streamers." Cf. *Samson Agonistes*, 710–21.

² school, throng.

³ Qtos., "favourite in disgrace."

⁴ Of course an allusion to *Hamlet*, V. ii. 292.

Milla. Ay, that's true.—O, but then I had—Mincing, what had I? Why was I so long?

Minc. O mem, your laship staid to peruse a pacquet ¹ of letters.

Milla. O ay, letters—I had letters—I am persecuted with letters—I hate letters.—No body knows how to write letters, and yet one has 'em, one does not know why.—They serve one to pin up one's hair. 37

Wit. Is that the way? Pray, madam, do you pin up your hair with all your letters? I find I must keep copies.

Milla. Only with those in verse, Mr. Witwoud. I never pin up my hair with prose.²—I think I try'd once, Mincing. 41

Minc. O mem, I shall never forget it.

Milla. Ay, poor Mincing tift ³ and tift all the morning.

Minc. 'Till I had the cramp ⁴ in my fingers, I'll vow, mem. And all to no purpose. But when your laship pins it up with poetry, it sits so pleasant the next day as any thing, and is so pure and so crips.⁵ 47

Wit. Indeed, so crips?

Minc. You're such a critick, Mr. Witwoud.

Milla. Mirabell, did you ⁶ take exceptions last night? O ay, and went away.—Now I think on't I'm angry.—No, now I think on't I'm pleas'd—for I believe I gave you some pain. 52

Mira. Does that please you?

Milla. Infinitely; I love to give pain.

Mira. You wou'd affect a cruelty which is not in your nature; your true vanity is in the power of pleasing. 56

Milla. O, I ask your pardon for that—ones cruelty is ones power; and when one parts with ones cruelty, one parts with ones power; and when one has parted with that, I fancy one's old and ugly. 60

Mira. Ay, ay, suffer your cruelty to ruin the object of your

¹ Qi, "pecquet," indicating Mincing's vulgar pronunciation.

² Qi adds: "I fancy ones hair wou'd not curl if it were pinn'd up with prose."

³ To tift is to dress, arrange the coiffure.

⁴ Qi, "cremp," again indicating Mincing's pronunciation.

⁵ A variant of *crisp* still found in some southern English dialects. Witwoud makes fun of Mincing's provincialism.

⁶ Qtos., "did not you."

power, to destroy your lover—and then how vain, how lost a thing you'll be! Nay, 'tis true: you are no longer handsome when you've lost your lover; your beauty dies upon the instant; for beauty is the lover's gift; 'tis he bestows your charms—your glass is all a cheat. The ugly and the old, whom the looking-glass mortifies, yet after commendation can be flatter'd by it, and discover beauties in it; for that reflects our praises, rather than your face.¹

69

Milla. O, the vanity of these men!—Fainall, d'ye hear him? If they did not commend us, we were not handsome! Now you must know they cou'd not commend one, if one was not handsome. Beauty the lover's gift!—Lord, what is a lover, that it can give? Why, one makes lovers as fast as one pleases, and they live as long as one pleases, and they die as soon as one pleases: and then if one pleases one makes more.

76

Wit. Very pretty. Why, you make no more of making of lovers, madam, than of making so many card-matches.

Milla. One no more owes ones beauty to a lover, than ones wit to an eccho: they can but reflect what we look and say; vain empty things if we are silent or unseen, and want a being.

81

Mira. Yet, to those two vain empty things you owe two the greatest pleasures of your life.

Milla. How so?

Mira. To your lover you owe the pleasure of hearing your selves prais'd; and to an eccho the pleasure of hearing your selves talk.

87

Wit. But I know a lady that loves talking so incessantly, she won't give an eccho fair play; she has that everlasting rotation of tongue, that an eccho must wait 'till she dies, before it can catch her last words.

91

Milla. O fiction!—Fainall, let us leave these men.

Mira. Draw off Witwoud.

[*Aside to MRS. FAINALL.*

Mrs. Fain. Immediately.—I have a word or two for Mr. Witwoud.

95

¹ Here the iambic rhythm already noted (p. 591) reappears.

Scene VI.

MILLIMANT, MIRABELL, MINCING.

Mira. I woud beg a little private audience too.¹—You had the tyranny to deny me last night; tho' you knew I came to impart a secret to you that concern'd my love.

Milla. You saw I was engag'd.

Mira. Unkind! You had the leisure to entertain a herd of fools; things who visit you from their excessive idleness, bestowing on your easiness that time which is the incumbrance of their lives. How can you find delight in such society? It is impossible they shou'd admire you, they are not capable; or if they were, it shou'd be to you as a mortification; for sure to please a fool is some degree of folly. 11

Milla. I please my self.—Besides, sometimes to converse with fools is for my health.

Mira. Your health! Is there a worse disease than the conversation of fools?

Milla. Yes, the vapours; fools are physick for it, next to *assa-fatida*.

Mira. You are not in a course of fools? ²

Milla. Mirabell, if you persist in this offensive freedom—you'll displeas me.—I think I must resolve, after all, not to have you—we shan't agree. 21

Mira. Not in our physick, it may be.

Milla. And yet our distemper, in all likelihood, will be the same; for we shall be sick of one another. I shan't endure to be reprimanded, nor instructed: 'tis so dull to act always by advice, and so tedious to be told of ones faults—I can't bear it. Well, I won't have you, Mirabell—I'm resolv'd—I think—you may go.—Ha! ha! ha! What would you give that you cou'd help loving me? 29

Mira. I wou'd give something that you did not know I cou'd not help it.

¹ Qtos. postpone to this point the departure of Witwoud and Mrs. Fainall.

² i.e., "taking the fool-cure."

Milla. Come, don't look grave then. Well, what do you say to me?

Mira. I say that a man may as soon make a friend by his wit, or a fortune by his honesty, as win a woman with plain-dealing and sincerity. 36

Milla. Sententious Mirabell!—Prithee don't look with that violent and inflexible wise face, like Solomon at the dividing of the child in an old tapestry hanging.

Mira. You are merry, madam, but I would persuade you for a¹ moment to be serious. 41

Milla. What, with that face? No, if you keep your countenance, 'tis impossible I shou'd hold mine. Well, after all, there is something very moving in a love-sick face. Ha! ha! ha!—well, I won't laugh, don't be peevish.—Heigho! now I'll be melancholy, as melancholy as a watch-light. Well, Mirabell, if ever you will win me, woo me now.—Nay, if you are so tedious, fare you well—I see they are walking away. 48

Mira. Can you not find in the variety of your disposition one moment—

Milla. To hear you tell me² Foible's marry'd, and your plot like to speed—no.

Mira. But how you came to know it—

Milla. Without³ the help of the devil, you can't imagine; unless she should tell me her self. Which of the two it may have been, I will leave you to consider; and when you have done thinking of that, think of me. 57

Scene VII.

MIRABELL *alone.*

Mira. I have something more—Gone!—Think of you! To think of a whirlwind, tho' 'twere in a whirlwind, were a case of more steady contemplation; a very tranquility of mind and mansion. A fellow that lives in a windmill has not a more whimsical dwelling than the heart of a man that is lodg'd in a woman. There is no point of the compass to which they cannot turn, and by

¹ Qtos., "one."

² Q1, "me that."

³ Qtos., "unless by."

which they are not turn'd; and by one as well as another; for motion, not method, is their occupation. To know this, and yet continue to be in love, is to be made wise from the dictates of reason, and yet persevere to play the fool by the force of instinct.—O, here come my pair of turtles!—What, billing so sweetly! Is not Valentine's day over with you yet? 12

Scene VIII.

[To him] WAITWELL, FOIBLE.

Mira. Sirrah, Waitwell, why sure you think you were marry'd for your own recreation, and not for my conveniency.

Wait. Your pardon, sir. With submission, we have indeed been solacing in lawful delights; but still with an eye to business, sir. I have instructed her as well as I could. If she can take your directions as readily as my instructions, sir, your affairs are in a prosperous way. 7

Mira. Give you joy, Mrs. Foible.

Foib. O-las, sir, I'm so asham'd!—I'm afraid my lady has been in a thousand inquietudes for me. But I protest, sir, I made as much haste as I could. 11

Wait. That she did indeed, sir. It was my fault that she did not make more.

Mira. That I believe.

Foib. But I told my lady as you instructed me, sir. That I had a prospect of seeing Sir Rowland your uncle; and that I wou'd put her ladiship's picture in my pocket to shew him; which I'll be sure to say has made him so enamour'd of her beauty that he burns with impatience to lye at her ladiship's feet and worship the original. 20

Mira. Excellent Foible! Matrimony has made you eloquent in love.

Wait. I think she has profited, sir. I think so.

Foib. You have seen Madam Millamant, sir?

Mira. Yes. 25

Foib. I told her, sir, because I did not know that you might find an opportunity; she had so much company last night.

Mira. Your diligence will merit more—in the mean time—

[*Gives money.*]

Foib. O dear sir, your humble servant!

Wait. Spouse.

30

Mira. Stand off, sir, not a penny!—Go on and prosper, Foible—the lease shall be made good and the farm stock'd, if we succeed.

Foib. I don't question your generosity, sir; and you need not doubt of success. If you have no more commands, sir, I'll be gone; I'm sure my lady is at her toilet, and can't dress 'till I come.—O dear, I'm sure that [*looking out*] was Mrs. Marwood that went by in a mask; if she has seen me with you, I'm sure she'll tell my lady. I'll make haste home and prevent ¹ her. Your servant, sir.—B'w'y,² Waitwell.

39

Scene IX.

MIRABELL, WAITWELL.

Wait. Sir Rowland, if you please.—The jade's so pert upon her preferment she forgets her self.

Mira. Come, sir, will you endeavour to forget your self—and transform into Sir Rowland.

4

Wait. Why, sir, it will be impossible I shou'd remember my self.—Marry'd, knighted, and attended ³ all in one day! 'Tis enough to make any man forget himself. The difficulty will be how to recover my acquaintance and familiarity with my former self, and fall from my transformation to a reformation into Waitwell. Nay, I shan't be quite the same Waitwell neither—for now I remember me, I'm ⁴ marry'd, and can't be my own man again.

As there's my ⁵ grief; that's the sad change of life, 12
To lose my title, and yet keep my wife.

END OF THE SECOND ACT.

¹ anticipate. ² good-bye. ³ awaited, expected. ⁴ Q1, "I am." ⁵ Q1, "the."

Act III. Scene I. *A Room in Lady Wishfort's House.*

LADY WISHFORT *at her toilet*, PEG *waiting*.

Lady. Merciful! no news of Foible yet?

Peg. No, madam.

Lady. I have no more patience.—If I have not fretted my self 'till I am pale again, there's no veracity in me. Fetch me the red—the red, do you hear, sweet-heart?—An errant ash colour, as I'm a person!¹ Look you how this wench stirs! Why dost thou not fetch me a little red? Didst thou not hear me, mopus?² 7

Peg. The red ratafia³ does your ladiship mean, or the cherry-brandy?

Lady. Ratafia, fool! No, fool! Not the ratafia, fool—grant me patience!—I mean the Spanish paper,⁴ idiot—complexion, darling. Paint, paint, paint; dost thou understand that, change-ling,⁵ dangling thy hands like bobbins before thee? Why dost thou not stir, puppet? thou wooden thing upon wires! 14

Peg. Lord, madam, your ladiship is so impatient!—I cannot come at the paint, madam; Mrs. Foible has lock'd it up, and carry'd the key with her.

Lady. A pox take you both!—Fetch me the cherry-brandy then. 19

Scene II.

LADY WISHFORT.

I'm as pale and as faint, I look like Mrs. Qualmsick, the curate's wife, that's always breeding.—Wench, come, come, wench, what art thou doing? sipping, tasting?—Save thee, dost thou not know the bottle?

¹ woman of distinction, personage.

² mope, drone, stupid person.

³ Q1, "ratifia"; its spelling of the word varies. See p. 574, note 4.

⁴ Ashton (*op. cit.*, p. 97) mentions "Spanish wool and papers" among the cosmetics of this period.

⁵ Cf. p. 569, note 1.

Scene III.

LADY WISHFORT, PEG *with a bottle and china cup.*

Peg. Madam, I was looking for a cup.

Lady. A cup, save thee! and what a cup hast thou brought!—Dost thou take me for a fairy, to drink out of an acorn? Why didst thou not bring thy thimble? Hast thou ne'er a brass-thimble clinking in thy pocket with a bit of nutmeg? I warrant thee. Come, fill, fill!—So—again.—See who that is. [*One knocks.*] Set down the bottle first.—Here, here, under the table.—What, wou'dst thou go with the bottle in thy hand, like a tapster? As I'm a person, this wench has liv'd in an inn upon the road, before she came to me, like Maritornes the Asturian¹ in *Don Quixote!*—No Foible yet? II

Peg. No, madam; Mrs. Marwood.

Lady. O, Marwood; let her come in.—Come in, good Marwood.

Scene IV.

[*To them*] MRS. MARWOOD.

Mrs. Mar. I'm surpriz'd to find your ladiship in *dishabillé*² at this time of day.

Lady. Foible's a lost thing; has been abroad since morning, and never heard of since.

Mrs. Mar. I saw her but now, as I came mask'd through the park, in conference with Mirabell. 6

Lady. With Mirabell!—You call my blood into my face, with mentioning that traitor. She durst not have the confidence! I sent her to negotiate an affair in which if I'm detected, I'm undone. If that wheadling villain has wrought upon Foible to detect me, I'm ruin'd. Oh my dear friend, I'm a wretch of wretches if I'm detected. 12

¹ "There likewise served in the inne an Asturian wench, who was broad-faced, flat-pated, saddle-nosed, blinde of one eye, and the other almost out." (*Don Quixote*, Shelton's trans., part I, bk. iii, ch. 2.)

² Q1, "*dishabilie.*"

Mrs. Mar. O madam, you cannot suspect Mrs. Foible's integrity. 14

Lady. O, he carries poison in his tongue that wou'd corrupt integrity it self! If she has given him an opportunity, she has as good as put her integrity into his hands. Ah, dear Marwood, what's integrity to an opportunity?—Hark! I hear her.¹—Dear friend, retire into my closet,² that I may examine her with more freedom.—You'll pardon me, dear friend; I can make bold with you.—There are books over the chimney—Quarles³ and Pryn,⁴ and the *Short View of the Stage*,⁵ with Bunyan's works, to entertain you.—Go, you thing, and send her in. [To PEG.]

Scene V.

LADY WISHFORT, FOIBLE.

Lady. O Foible, where hast thou been? What hast thou been doing?

Foib. Madam, I have seen the party.

Lady. But what hast thou done?

Foib. Nay, 'tis your ladship has done, and are to do; I have only promis'd. But a man so enamour'd—so transported!⁶—Well, if worshipping of pictures be a sin⁷—poor Sir Rowland, I say. 8

¹ Here Qtos. read, "Go, you thing and send her in. [Exit Peg.," and conclude Lady Wishfort's speech with "entertain you." The change in C was made to avoid another very short scene.

² private inner room.

³ A religious poet (1592–1644) best known by his *Emblems*. In Congreve's time he was out of fashion: see Pope, *First Epistle of the Second Book of Horace*, 386–89; *Dunciad*, i. 139, 140.

⁴ A Puritan pamphleteer (1600–69); his notorious *Histrio-Mastix* (1632) was a voluminous attack upon the theatre.

⁵ By Jeremy Collier: see *Critical Essay*, p. 536 above. Congreve sneers at him by mentioning him between two Puritans who would be repugnant to Collier's high-church tastes.

⁶ Here Q1 adds: "Well, here it is, all that is left; all that is not kiss'd away." Possibly Congreve later omitted these words because he decided to have Foible leave the picture with "Sir Rowland." But below (p. 609, l. 85) Lady Wishfort evidently has the picture before her; to be consistent, that passage also should have been altered in Q2C.

⁷ Alluding to the Protestant condemnation of the church worship of images and pictures.

Lady. The miniature has been counted like.—But hast thou not betray'd me, Foible? Hast thou not detected me to that faithless Mirabell?—What hadst thou to do with him in the Park? Answer me, has he got nothing out of thee? 12

Foib. So, the devil has been before-hand with me. What shall I say?—Alas, madam, cou'd I help it, if I met that confident thing? Was I in fault? If you had heard how he us'd me, and all upon your ladiship's account, I'm sure you wou'd not suspect my fidelity. Nay, if that had been the worst, I cou'd have born; but he had a fling at your ladiship too; and then I cou'd not hold; but i'faith I gave him his own.

Lady. Me? What did the filthy fellow say? 20

Foib. O madam! 'tis a shame to say what he said—with his taunts and his fleers, tossing up his nose. “Humh!” says he, “what, you are a hatching some plot,” says he; “you are so early abroad, or catering,” says he, “ferreting for some disbanded officer, I warrant.—Half pay is but thin subsistence;” says he—“Well, what pension does your lady propose? Let me see,” says he, “what, she must come down pretty deep now, she's superannuated,” says he “and—” 28

Lady. Ods my life, I'll have him, I'll have him murder'd! I'll have him poison'd! Where does he eat? I'll marry a drawer to have him poison'd in his wine! I'll send for Robin from Lockets¹ —immediately!

Foib. Poison him? Poisoning's too good for him. Starve him, madam, starve him; marry Sir Rowland, and get him disinherited. O, you wou'd bless your self, to hear what he said! 35

Lady. A villain! “superannuated”!

Foib. “Humh,” says he, “I hear you are laying designs against me too,” says he, “and Mrs. Millamant is to marry my uncle” (he does not suspect a word of your ladiship); “but,” says he, “I'll fit you for that; I warrant you,” says he, “I'll hamper you for that,” says he; “you and your old frippery² too,” says he; “I'll handle you—” 42

¹“The most fashionable tavern was Locket's at Charing Cross” (W. Besant, *London in the Time of the Stuarts*, p. 292).

²Old clothes, cast-off garments.

Lady. Audacious villain! "handle" me; wou'd he durst!—"Frippery? old frippery"! Was there ever such a foul-mouth'd fellow? I'll be marry'd to morrow, I'll be contracted to night. 45

Foib. The sooner the better, madam.

Lady. Will Sir Rowland be here, say'st thou? When, Foible?

Foib. Incontinently, madam. No new sheriff's wife expects the return of her husband after knighthood with that impatience in which Sir Rowland burns for the dear hour of kissing your ladi-ship's hand ¹ after dinner. 51

Lady. "Frippery! superannuated frippery"! I'll frippery the villain; I'll reduce him to frippery and rags! A tatterdemallion!—I hope to see him hung with tatters, like a Long-Lane ² pent-house ³ or a gibbet-thief. A slander-mouth'd railer! I warrant the spendthrift prodigal's in debt as much as the million lottery, ⁴ or the whole court upon a birth-day. I'll spoil his credit with his tailor. Yes, he shall have my neice with her fortune, he shall!

Foib. He! I hope to see him lodge in Ludgate ⁵ first, and angle into Black-Fryars for brass farthings with an old mitten. 60

Lady. Ay, dear Foible; thank thee for that, dear Foible. He has put me out of all patience. I shall never recompose my features to receive Sir Rowland with any oeconomy of face. This wretch has fretted me that I am absolutely decay'd. Look, Foible.

Foib. Your ladi-ship has frown'd a little too rashly, indeed, madam. There are some cracks discernable in the white vernish.

Lady. Let me see the glass.—Cracks, say'st thou?—Why, I am arrantly flea'd ⁶—I look like an old peel'd wall. Thou must repair me, Foible, before Sir Rowland comes, or I shall never keep up to my picture. 70

Foib. I warrant you, madam; a little art once made your picture

¹ Q1, "hands."

² Running out of West Smithfield, and "noted for the sale of old clothes" (Ewald).

³ Shed, stall under a sloping roof.

⁴ An act of parliament authorized a government lottery "to be held in 1694 and succeeding years, by which a million pounds was to be raised by the sale of lottery tickets" (N.E.D.).

⁵ One of the two prisons devoted solely to debtors. Ashton (*op. cit.*, p. 433) describes it as "more comfortable and rather more aristocratic" than the Fleet. It was situated on Blackfriars; a man at a grated window there solicited money for the prisoners (Besant, *op. cit.*, p. 581). ⁶ flayed.

like you; and now a little of the same art must make you like your picture. Your picture must sit for you, madam.

Lady. But art thou sure Sir Rowland will not fail to come? Or will a not fail when he does come? Will he be importunate, Foible, and push? For if he shou'd not be importunate—I shall never break decorums—I shall die with confusion, if I am forc'd to advance.—Oh no, I can never advance!—I shall swoon if he should expect advances. No, I hope Sir Rowland is better bred than to put a lady to the necessity of breaking her forms. I won't be too coy neither.—I won't give him despair—but a little disdain is not amiss; a little scorn is alluring. 82

Foib. A little scorn becomes your ladiship.

Lady. Yes, but tenderness becomes me best—a sort of a dyingness—you see that picture has a sort of a—ha, Foible? a swimmingness¹ in the eyes.—Yes, I'll look so—my niece affects it; but she wants features. Is Sir Rowland handsome? Let my toilet be remov'd—I'll dress above. I'll receive Sir Rowland here. Is he handsome? Don't answer me. I won't know; I'll be surpriz'd. I'll be taken by surprize. 90

Foib. By storm, madam. Sir Rowland's a brisk man.

Lady. Is he! O, then he'll importune, if he's a brisk man. I shall save decorums if Sir Rowland importunes. I have a mortal terror at the apprehension of offending against decorums.² O, I'm glad he's a brisk man. Let my things be remov'd, good Foible.

Scene VI.

MRS. FAINALL, FOIBLE.

Mrs. Fain. O Foible, I have been in a fright, lest I shou'd come too late. That devil Marwood saw you in the Park with Mirabell, and I'm afraid will discover it to my lady.

Foib. Discover what, madam?

Mrs. Fain. Nay, nay, put not on that strange face. I am privy to the whole design, and know that Waitwell, to whom thou³ wert

¹ Q1, "swimminess."

² Q1 adds, "Nothing but importunity can surmount decorums."

³ Used to express a shade of condescension or contempt, rather than merely be-

this morning marry'd, is to personate Mirabell's uncle, and as such, winning my lady, to involve her in those difficulties from which Mirabell only must release her, by his making his conditions to have my cousin and her fortune left to her own disposal.

Foib. O dear madam, I beg your pardon. It was not my confidence in your ladiship that was deficient; but I thought the former good correspondence between your ladiship and Mr. Mirabell might have hinder'd his communicating this secret. 14

Mrs. Fain. Dear Foible, forget that.¹

Foib. O dear madam, Mr. Mirabell is such a sweet winning gentleman—but your ladiship is the pattern of generosity.—Sweet lady, to be so good! Mr. Mirabell cannot chuse but be grateful. I find your ladiship has his heart still. Now, madam, I can safely tell your ladiship our success: Mrs. Marwood had told my lady; but I warrant I manag'd my self. I turn'd it all for the better. I told my lady that Mr. Mirabell rail'd at her. I laid horrid things to his charge, I'll vow; and my lady is so incens'd that she'll be contracted to Sir Rowland to night, she says—I warrant I work'd her up, that he may have her for asking for, as they say of a Welsh maiden-head. 26

Mrs. Fain. O rare Foible!

Foib. Madam, I beg your ladiship to acquaint Mr. Mirabell of his success. I would be seen as little as possible to speak to him—besides, I believe Madam Marwood watches me.—She has a month's mind; ² but I know Mr. Mirabell can't abide her.—*[Calls.]* ³ John—remove my lady's toilet.—Madam, your servant. My lady is so impatient, I fear she'll come for me if I stay. 33

Mrs. Fain. I'll go with you up the back stairs, lest I shou'd meet her.

cause Foible is a servant; in her previous speech and in the last speech of this scene Mrs. Fainall uses *you*.

¹ Mrs. Fainall here evidently gives Foible money.

² an inclination (of course for Mirabell).

³ Qtos., substitute "*[Enter Footman.]*."

Scene VII.

MRS. MARWOOD *alone*.

Mrs. Mar. Indeed, Mrs. Engine, is it thus with you? Are you become a go-between of this importance? Yes, I shall watch you. Why, this wench is the *pass-par-toute*,¹ a very master-key to every body's strong box. My friend Fainall, have you carry'd it so swimmingly? I thought there was something in it; but it seems it's over with you. Your loathing is not from a want of appetite, then, but from a surfeit. Else you could never be so cool to fall from a principal to be an assistant; to procure for him! A pattern of generosity, that I confess. Well, Mr. Fainall, you have met with your match.—O man, man! woman, woman! The devil's an ass: if I were a painter, I would draw him like an idiot, a driveler with a bib and bells. Man shou'd have his head and horns, and woman the rest of him. Poor simple fiend!—"Madam Marwood has a month's mind, but he can't abide her."—"Twere better for him you had not been his confessor in that affair, without you could have kept his counsel closer. I shall not prove another pattern of generosity²—he has not oblig'd me to that with those excesses of himself; and now I'll have none of him. Here comes the good lady, panting ripe; with a heart full of hope, and a head full of care, like any chymist upon the day of projection."³ 20

Scene VIII.

[*To her*] LADY WISHFORT.

Lady. O dear Marwood, what shall I say for this rude forgetfulness?—But my dear friend is all goodness.

Mrs. Mar. No apologies, dear madam. I have been very well entertain'd.

¹ Qtos., "*pass-par-tout*."

² Qtos. add, "and stalk for him, till he takes his stand to aim at a fortune."

³ "The casting of the powder of philosophers' stone . . . upon a metal in fusion to effect its transmutation into gold or silver" (*N.E.D.*).

Lady. As I'm a person, I am in a very chaos to think I shou'd so forget my self—but I have such an olio¹ of affairs, really I know not what to do.—[*Calls.*] Foible!—I expect my nephew, Sir Wilfull, ev'ry moment too.—Why,² Foible!—He means to travel for improvement. 9

Mrs. Mar. Methinks Sir Wilfull shou'd rather think of marrying than travelling at his years. I hear he is turn'd of forty.

Lady. O, he's in less danger of being spoil'd by his travels—I am against my nephew's marrying too young. It will be time enough when he comes back, and has acquir'd discretion to chuse for himself. 15

Mrs. Mar. Methinks Mrs. Millamant and he wou'd make a very fit match. He may travel afterwards. 'Tis a thing very usual with young gentlemen.

Lady. I promise you I have thought on't—and since 'tis your judgment, I'll think on't again. I assure you I will; I value your judgment extreamly. On my word, I'll propose it. 21

Scene IX.

[*To them*] FOIBLE.

Lady. Come, come, Foible—I had forgot my nephew will be here before dinner—I must make haste.

Foib. Mr. Witwoud and Mr. Petulant are come to dine with your ladship.

Lady. O dear, I can't appear 'till I am³ dress'd.—Dear Marwood, shall I be free with you again, and beg you to entertain 'em? I'll make all imaginable haste. Dear friend, excuse me.

Scene X.

MRS. MARWOOD, MRS. MILLAMANT, MINCING.

Milla. Sure never any thing was so unbred as that odious man!—Marwood, your servant.

Mrs. Mar. You have a colour; what's the matter?

¹ hodge-podge.

² Expressing an impatient call, as sometimes in Shakespeare.

³ Q1, "I'm."

Milla. That horrid fellow, Petulant, has provok'd me into a flame—I have broke my fan.—Mincing, lend me yours.—Is not all the powder out of my hair? 6

Mrs. Mar. No. What has he done?

Milla. Nay, he has done nothing; he has only talk'd—nay, he has said nothing neither; but he has contradicted ev'ry thing that has been said. For my part, I thought Witwoud and he wou'd have quarrell'd. 11

Minc. I vow, mem, I thought once they wou'd have fitt.

Milla. Well, 'tis a lamentable thing, I¹ swear, that one has not the liberty of chusing one's acquaintance as one does ones cloaths. 15

Mrs. Mar. If we had that² liberty, we shou'd be as weary of one set of acquaintance, tho' never so good, as we are of one suit, tho' never so fine. A fool and a doily³ stuff wou'd now and then find days of grace, and be worn for variety.

Milla. I could consent to wear 'em, if they wou'd wear alike; but fools never wear out—they are such *drap-de-berry*⁴ things! Without one cou'd give 'em to ones chamber-maid after a day or two. 23

Mrs. Mar. 'Twere better so indeed. Or what think you of the play-house? A fine gay glossy⁵ fool shou'd be given there, like a new masking habit, after the masquerade is over, and we have done with the disguise. For a fool's visit is always a disguise; and never admitted by a woman of wit, but to blind her affair with a lover of sense. If you wou'd but appear bare-fac'd now, and own Mirabell, you might as easily put off Petulant and Witwoud as your hood and scarf. And indeed 'tis time, for the town has found it; the secret is grown too big for the pretence: 'tis like Mrs. Primly's great belly; she may lace it down before, but it burnishes on her hips. Indeed, Millamant, you can no more conceal it than my Lady Strammel can her face; that goodly face,

¹ Q1, "I'll."

² Qtos., "the."

³ "A woollen stuff 'at once cheap and genteel,' introduced for summer wear in the latter part of the seventeenth century" (*N.E.D.*).

⁴ Qtos., "drap-du-berry." A sort of woollen cloth from Berry in France.

⁵ So Q1; Q2C, "glosly," probably a misprint. See *glossly* in *N.E.D.*

which, in defiance of her Rhenish-wine tea, will not be comprehended in a mask. 37

Milla. I'll take my death, Marwood, you are more censorious than a decay'd beauty, or a discarded toast.—Mincing, tell the men they may come up.—My aunt is not dressing here; ¹ their folly is less provoking than your malice. 41

Scene XI.

MILLAMANT, MARWOOD.

Milla. "The town has found it!"² What has it found? That Mirabell loves me is no more a secret, than it is a secret that you discover'd it to my aunt, or than the reason why you discover'd it is a secret.

Mrs. Mar. You are nettl'd. 5

Milla. You're mistaken. Ridiculous!

Mrs. Mar. Indeed, my dear, you'll tear another fan, if you don't mitigate those violent airs.

Milla. O silly! ha! ha! ha! I cou'd laugh immoderately. Poor Mirabell! His constancy to me has quite destroy'd his complaisance for all the world beside. I swear, I never enjoin'd it him to be so coy.—If I had the vanity to think he wou'd obey me, I wou'd command him to shew more gallantry—'tis hardly well bred to be so particular on one hand, and so insensible on the other. But I despair to prevail, and so let him follow his own way. Ha! ha! ha! Pardon me, dear creature, I must laugh, ha! ha! ha! tho' I grant you 'tis a little barbarous, ha! ha! ha! 17

Mrs. Mar. What pity 'tis, so much fine railery, and deliver'd with so significant gesture, shou'd be so unhappily directed to miscarry! 20

Milla. Hæ! Dear creature, I ask your pardon—I swear I did not mind you.

Mrs. Mar. Mr. Mirabell and you both may think it a thing impossible, when I shall tell him by telling you—

Milla. O dear, what? for it is the same thing if I hear it—ha! ha! ha! 26

¹ Not in Qtos.

² After these words Qtos. read "[Exit Mincing]."

Mrs. Mar. That I detest him, hate him, madam.

Milla. O madam, why so do I—and yet the creature loves me, ha! ha! ha! How can one forbear laughing to think of it!—I am a sybil if I am not amaz'd to think what he can see in me. I'll take my death, I think you are handsomer—and within a year or two as young.—If you cou'd but stay for me, I shou'd overtake you—but that cannot be.—Well, that thought makes me melancholick.¹—Now I'll be sad. 34

Mrs. Mar. Your merry note may be chang'd sooner than you think.

Milla. D'ye say so? Then I'm resolv'd I'll have a song to keep up my spirits.

Scene XII.

[*To them*] MINCING.

Minc. The gentlemen stay but to comb,² madam, and will wait on you.

Milla. Desire Mrs. —, that is in the next room, to sing the song I wou'd have learnt yesterday.—You shall hear it, madam—not that there's any great matter in it—but 'tis agreeable to my humour. 6

SONG.

*Set by Mr. John Eccles.*³

I

Love's but the frailty of the mind,
When 'tis not with ambition join'd;
A sickly flame, which, if not fed, expires,
And feeding, wastes in self-consuming fires. 10

¹ Q1, "melancholly"; Q2, "melancholy."

² i.e., their perukes (Summers).

³ Qtos. add, "*and sung by Mrs. Hodgson*"; Q1 gives this direction before "SONG."—John Eccles was a popular composer of this period, who contributed to "no less than forty-six plays" (*D.N.B.*). He set to music Congreve's *St. Cecilia's Day* and *Semele*, and gained the second prize in the competition for compositions of his *Judgment of Paris*.

II

'Tis not to wound a wanton boy
 Or am'rous youth, that gives the joy;
 But 'tis the glory to have pierc'd a swain
 For whom inferior beauties sigh'd in vain.

III

Then I alone the conquest prize, 15
 When I insult a rival's eyes:
 If there's delight in love, 'tis when I see
 That heart which others bleed for, bleed for me.

Scene XIII.

[*To them*] PETULANT, WITWOOD.

Milla. Is your animosity compos'd, gentlemen?

Wit. Raillery, raillery, madam; we have no animosity—we hit off a little wit now and then, but no animosity.—The falling out of wits is like the falling out of lovers—we agree in the main, like treble and base.—Ha, Petulant? 5

Pet. Ay, in the main—but when I have a humour to contradict—

Wit. Ay, when he has a humour to contradict, then I contradict too. What, I know my cue. Then we contradict one another like two battle-dores; for contradictions beget one another like Jews.

Pet. If he says black's black—if I have a humour to say 'tis blue—let that pass—all's one for that. If I have a humour to prove it, it must be granted. 12

Wit. Not positively must—but it may—it may.

Pet. Yes, it positively must, upon proof positive.

Wit. Ay, upon proof positive it must; but upon proof presumptive it only may.—That's a logical distinction now, madam. 16

Mrs. Mar. I perceive your debates are of importance, and very learnedly handled.

Pet. Importance is one thing, and learning's another; but a debate's a debate, that I assert. 20

Wit. Petulant's an enemy to learning; he relies altogether on his parts.

Pet. No, I'm no enemy to learning; it hurts not me.

Mrs. Mar. That's a sign indeed it's ¹ no enemy to you.

Pet. No, no, it's no enemy to any body but them that have it. 25

Milla. Well, an illiterate man's my aversion. I wonder at the impudence of any illiterate man, to offer to make love.

Wit. That I confess I wonder at too.

Milla. Ah! to marry an ignorant! that can hardly read or write. 30

Pet. Why should a man be any ² further from being marry'd, tho' he can't read, than ³ he is from being hang'd? The ordinary's ⁴ paid for setting the psalm, and the parish-priest for reading the ceremony. And for the rest which is to follow in both cases, a man may do it without book—so all's one for that. 35

Milla. D'ye hear the creature?—Lord, here's company; I'll be gone.⁵

Scene XIV.

SIR WILFULL WITWOUND *in a riding dress*, MRS. MARWOOD,
PETULANT, WITWOUND, FOOTMAN.

Wit. In the name of Bartlemew and his fair,⁶ what have we here?

Mrs. Mar. 'Tis your brother, I fancy. Don't you know him?

Wit. Not I.—Yes, I think it is he—I've almost forgot him; I have not seen him since the Revolution. 5

Foot. Sir, my lady's dressing. Here's company; if you please to walk in, in the mean time.

¹ Qtos. C, "its"; but in the next speech, "it's."

² Qtos., "ever the."

³ Qtos., "any more than."

⁴ "A diocesan officer appointed to give criminals their neck-verses and to prepare them for death" or "the chaplain of Newgate prison" (*N.E.D.*).

⁵ Qtos. read, "*Exeunt Millamant and Mincing.*" Three speeches below, after "Revolution," they read, "*Enter Sir Wilfull Witwound in a country riding habit, and Servant to Lady Wishfort.*" The speech-headings following are "*Serv.*" instead of "*Foot.*" The rearrangement in C avoids a short scene of three speeches.

⁶ Held annually in West Smithfield; at it giants, dwarfs, and all sorts of monstrosities were exhibited: see Henry Morley, *Memoirs of Bartholomew Fair*, ch. xvi.

Sir Wil. Dressing! What, it's but morning here, I warrant, with you in London; we shou'd count it towards afternoon in our parts, down in Shropshire.—Why then belike my aunt han't din'd yet—ha, friend? 11

Foot. Your aunt, sir?

Sir Wil. My aunt, sir! Yes, my aunt, sir, and your lady, sir; your lady is my aunt, sir.—Why, what, do'st thou not know me, friend? Why, then send some body hither ¹ that does. How long hast thou liv'd with thy lady, fellow, ha? 16

Foot. A week, sir; longer than any body in the house, except my lady's woman.

Sir Wil. Why, then belike thou dost not know thy lady, if thou see'st her, ha friend? 20

Foot. Why, truly, sir, I cannot safely swear to her face in a morning, before she is dress'd. 'Tis like I may give a shrewd guess at her by this time.

Sir Wil. Well, prithee try what thou canst do; if thou canst not guess, enquire her out, do'st hear, fellow? And tell her, her nephew, Sir Wilfull Witwoud, is in the house. 26

Foot. I shall, sir.

Sir Wil. Hold ye, hear me, friend; a word with you in your ear: prithee who are these gallants?

Foot. Really, sir, I can't tell; here come so many here, 'tis hard to know 'em all. 31

Scene XV.

SIR WILFULL WITWOUND, PETULANT, WITWOUND, MRS. MARWOOD.

Sir Wil. Oons, this fellow knows less than a starling; I don't think a' knows his own name.

Mrs. Mar. Mr. Witwoud, your brother is not behind hand in forgetfulness—I fancy he has forgot you too.

Wil. I hope so.—The devil take him that remembers first, I 5 say.

Sir Wil. Save you, gentlemen and lady!

¹ Qtos., "here."

Mrs. Mar. For shame, Mr. Witwoud; why won't you speak to him?—And you, sir.

Wit. Petulant, speak. 10

Pet. And you, sir.

Sir Wil. No offence, I hope. [Salutes MARWOOD.¹

Mrs. Mar. No, sure, sir.

Wit. This is a vile dog, I see that already. No offence! Ha! ha! ha! to him; to him, Petulant, smoke² him. 15

Pet. It seems as if you had come a journey, sir; hem, hem. [Surveying him round.

Sir Wil. Very likely, sir, that it may seem so.

Pet. No offence, I hope, sir.

Wit. Smoke the boots, the boots; Petulant, the boots: ha! ha! ha!

Sir Wil. May be not, sir; thereafter³ as 'tis meant, sir. 20

Pet. Sir, I presume upon the information of your boots.

Sir Wil. Why, 'tis like you may, sir: if you are not satisfy'd with the information of my boots, sir, if you will step to the stable, you may enquire further of my horse, sir.

Pet. Your horse, sir! Your horse is an ass, sir! 25

Sir Wil. Do you speak by way of offence, sir?

Mrs. Mar. The gentleman's merry, that's all, sir.—S'life, we shall have a quarrel betwixt an horse and an ass, before they find one another out.—You must not take any thing amiss from your friends, sir. You are among your friends, here, tho' it may be you don't know it.—If I am not mistaken, you are Sir Wilfull Witwoud.

Sir Wil. Right, lady; I am Sir Wilfull Witwoud, so I write my self; no offence to any body, I hope; and nephew to the Lady Wishfort of this mansion. 34

Mrs. Mar. Don't you know this gentleman, sir?

Sir Wil. Hum! What, sure 'tis not—yea by'r Lady, but 'tis.—'Sheart, I know not whether 'tis or no.—Yea, but 'tis, by the Rekin.⁴ Brother Antony! What, Tony,⁵ i'faith! What, do'st

¹ "The other day entering a room adorned with the fair sex, I offered, after the usual manner, to each of them a kiss; but one, more scornful than the rest, turned her cheek." Steele, *Spectator*, No. 272.

² quiz, ridicule to one's face.

³ according.

⁴ Correctly, *Wrekin*: a hill in Shropshire; cf. Farquhar, Dedication to *The Recruiting Officer*, below, p. 683.

⁵ Cant for *simpleton*: hence the name Tony Lumpkin in *She Stoops to Conquer*.

thou ¹ not know me? By'r Lady nor I thee, thou art so becravated and so ² beperriwig'd.—'Sheart, why do'st not speak? Art thou o'erjoy'd? 41

Wit. Odso, brother, is it you? Your servant, brother.

Sir Wil. Your servant! Why, yours, sir. Your servant again—'sheart, and your friend and servant to that—and a—(*puff*) and a flap dragon ³ for your service, sir! and a hare's foot, and a hare's scut ⁴ for your service, sir, an you be so cold and so courtly! 46

Wit. No offence, I hope, brother.

Sir Wil. 'Sheart, sir, but there is, and much offence!—A pox, is this your Inns o' Court breeding, not to know your friends and your relations, your elders, and your betters? 50

Wit. Why, brother Wilfull of Salop,⁵ you may be as short as a Shrewsbury cake, if you please. But I tell you 'tis not modish to know relations in town. You think you're in the country, where great lubberly brothers slabber and kiss one another when they meet, like a call of serjeants.—'Tis not the fashion here; 'tis not indeed, dear brother. 56

Sir Wil. The fashion's a fool; and you're a fop, dear brother. 'Sheart, I've suspected this—by'r Lady, I conjectur'd you were a fop, since you began to change the stile of your letters, and write in a scrap of paper gilt round the edges, no bigger ⁶ than a *subpæna*. I might expect this when you left off, "Honour'd brother;" and "hoping you are in good health," and so forth—to begin with a "Rat me, knight, I'm so sick of a last night's debauch"—o'ds heart, and then tell a familiar tale of a cock and a bull, and a whore and a bottle, and so conclude.—You cou'd write news before you were out of your time,⁷ when you liv'd with honest Pimple⁸-Nose the attorney of Furnival's Inn⁹—you cou'd in-

¹ Sir Wilfull uses the affectionate singular pronoun; his brother replies in the formal plural, and Sir Wilfull forthwith changes his tone and his pronoun.

² Not in Q1.

³ A raisin snatched from burning brandy and eaten; hence, a trifle, a fig.

⁴ short erect tail.

⁵ Shropshire, of which county Shrewsbury is the capital.

⁶ Qtos., "broader."

⁷ Before you had finished your term as apprentice.

⁸ Variant of *pimple*.

⁹ One of the subordinate Inns of Chancery, attached to Lincoln's Inn. In writing the passage Congreve doubtless remembered his own short career as a student of law.

treat to be remember'd then to your friends round the Rekin. We could have gazettes¹ then, and *Dawks's Letter*,² and the *Weekly Bill*,³ 'till of late days. 70

Pet. 'Slife, Witwoud, were you ever an attorney's clerk? of the family of the Furnivals? Ha! ha! ha!

Wit. Ay, ay, but that was but⁴ for a while. Not long, not long. Pshaw! I was not in my own power then—an orphan, and this fellow was my guardian; ay, ay, I was glad to consent to that man⁵ to come to London. He had the disposal of me then. If I had not agreed to that, I might have been bound prentice to a felt-maker in Shrewsbury; this fellow would have bound me to a maker of felts. 79

Sir Wil. 'Sheart, and better than to be bound to a maker of fops; where, I suppose, you have serv'd your time; and now you may set up for your self.

Mrs. Mar. You intend to travel, sir, as I'm inform'd.

Sir Wil. Belike I may, madam. I may chance to sail upon the salt seas, if my mind hold. 85

Pet. And the wind serve.

Sir Wil. Serve or not serve, I shan't ask license of you, sir; nor the weather-cock your companion. I direct my discourse to the lady, sir.—'Tis like my aunt may have told you, madam.—Yes, I have settl'd my concerns, I may say now, and am minded to see foreign parts. If an how that the peace holds,⁶ whereby that is taxes abate. 92

Mrs. Mar. I thought you had designed for France at all adventures.

Sir Wil. I can't tell that; 'tis like I may, and 'tis like I may not.

¹ news-sheets.

² *Dawks's News-Letter* "was printed from type in imitation of handwriting, and thus specially recommended in its prospectus: "This letter will be done upon good writing-paper, and blank space left that any gentleman may write his own private business. It . . . will be useful to improve the younger sort in writing a curious hand" (H. R. Fox-Bourne, *English Newspapers*, I. 59).

³ The official publication of the deaths occurring in and around London.

⁴ Not in Qtos.

⁵ The Mermaid text punctuates "that, man, to"—which may be what Congreve intended, though neither comma is found in Qtos. C.

⁶ The Peace of Ryswick (1697), broken in 1701, the year after the first acting of this play.

I am somewhat dainty in making a resolution—because when I make it I keep it. I don't stand shill I, shall I, then; if I say't, I'll do't; but I have thoughts to tarry a small matter in town, to learn somewhat of your lingo first, before I cross the seas. I'd gladly have a spice of your French, as they say, whereby to hold discourse in foreign countries. 101

Mrs. Mar. Here's ¹ an academy in town for that use.

Sir Wil. There is? 'Tis like there may.

Mrs. Mar. No doubt you will return very much improv'd.

Wit. Yes, refin'd like a Dutch skipper from a whale-fishing.

Scene XVI.

[*To them*] LADY WISHFORT and FAINALL.

Lady. Nephew, you are welcome.

Sir Wil. Aunt, your servant.

Fain. Sir Wilfull, your most faithful servant.

Sir Wil. Cousin Fainall, give me your hand.

Lady. Cousin Witwoud, your servant; Mr. Petulant, your servant.—Nephew, you are welcome again. Will you drink any thing after your journey, nephew, before you eat? Dinner's almost ready. 8

Sir Wil. I'm very well, I thank you, aunt—however, I thank you for your courteous offer. 'Sheart, I was afraid you wou'd have been in the fashion too, and have remember'd to have forgot your relations. Here's your cousin Tony, belike I mayn't call him brother for fear of offence. 13

Lady. O, he's a rallier, nephew—my cousin's a wit; and your great wits always rally their best friends to chuse.² When you have been abroad, nephew, you'll understand raillery better. 16

[*FAIN. and MRS. MARWOOD talk apart.*]

Sir Wil. Why, then let him hold his tongue in the mean time; and rail when that day comes.

¹ Qtos., "Here is."

² by choice, in preference.

Scene XVII.

[*To them*] MINCING.

Minc. Mem, I come to acquaint your laship that dinner is impatient.

Sir Wil. Impatient? Why, then belike it won't stay 'till I pull off my boots.—Sweet-heart, can you help me to a pair of slippers?—My man's with his horses, I warrant. 5

Lady. Fie, fie, nephew! you wou'd not pull off your boots here.—Go down into the hall—dinner shall stay for you.—My nephew's a little unbred; you'll pardon him, madam.—Gentlemen, will you walk? Marwood?

Mrs. Mar. I'll follow you, madam—before Sir Wilfull is ready.

Scene XVIII.

MARWOOD, FAINALL.

Fain. Why, then Foible's a bawd, an errant, rank, match-making bawd. And I, it seems, am a husband, a rank-husband; and my wife a very errant, rank-wife—all in *The Way of the World*. 'Sdeath, to be a cuckold by anticipation,¹ a cuckold in embrio! Sure I was born with budding antlers, like a young satyr, or a citizen's child.² 'Sdeath, to be out-witted—to be out-jilted—out-matrimony'd!—If I had kept my speed like a stag, 'twere somewhat—but to crawl after, with my horns, like a snail, and be³ out-stripp'd by my wife—'tis scurvy wedlock. 9

Mrs. Mar. Then shake it off; you have often wish'd for an opportunity to part—and now you have it. But first prevent⁴ their plot—the half of Millamant's fortune is too considerable to be parted with, to a foe, to Mirabell. 13

Fain. Dam him! that had been mine—had you not made that fond⁵ discovery—that had been forfeited, had they been married.

¹ Qtos., "an anticipated cuckold."

² In comedy the citizens' wives were conventionally regarded as the lawful prey of society "gentlemen."

³ Not in Q1.

⁴ anticipate.

⁵ foolish.

My wife had added lustre to my horns by that encrease of fortune; I cou'd have worn 'em tipt with gold, tho' my forehead had been furnish'd like a deputy-lieutenant's-hall. 18

Mrs. Mar. They may prove a cap of maintenance ¹ to you still, if you can away with your wife. And she's no worse than when you had her—I dare swear she had given up her game before she was marry'd. 22

Fain. Hum! that may be.²

Mrs. Mar. You married her to keep you; and if you can contrive to have her keep you better than you expected, why should you not keep her longer than you intended? 26

Fain. The means, the means.

Mrs. Mar. Discover to my lady your wife's conduct; threaten to part with her.—My lady loves her, and will come to any composition to save her reputation. Take the opportunity of breaking it, just upon the discovery of this imposture. My lady will be enrag'd beyond bounds, and sacrifice neice, and fortune, and all, at that conjuncture. And let me alone to keep her warm; if she shou'd flag in her part, I will not fail to prompt her.

Fain. Faith, this has an appearance. 35

Mrs. Mar. I'm sorry I hinted to my lady to endeavour a match between Millamant and Sir Wilfull: that may be an obstacle.

Fain. O, for that matter, leave me to manage him: I'll disable him for that; he will drink like a Dane; ³ after dinner I'll set his hand in. 40

Mrs. Mar. Well, how do you stand affected towards your lady?

Fain. Why, faith, I'm thinking of it.—Let me see—I am marry'd already, so that's over.—My wife has plaid the jade with me—well, that's over too.—I never lov'd her, or if I had, why that wou'd have been over too by this time.—Jealous of her I cannot be, for I am certain; ⁴ so there's an end of jealousy.—Weary of

¹ "A kind of cap, with two points like horns behind, borne in the arms of certain families . . . is described by heralds as a 'cap of maintenance'" (*N.E.D.*).

² Qtos. add, "She might throw up her cards, but I'll [Q1, 'Ile'] be hang'd if she did not put Pam in her pocket." "Pam" was the knave of clubs, the highest trump in a certain game of cards.

³ Cf. *Hamlet* I. iv. 8–22.

⁴ Cf. *The Spanish Friar*, p. 197, ll. 64–65, a passage on which Saintsbury com-

her, I am and shall be—no, there's no end of that—no, no, that were too much to hope. Thus far concerning my repose. Now for my reputation. As to my own, I marry'd not for it, so that's out of the question—and as to my part in my wife's—why, she had parted with hers before; so, bringing none to me, she can take none from me; 'tis against all rule of play that I should lose to one who has not wherewithal to stake. 53

Mrs. Mar. Besides, you forget, marriage is honourable. (53

Fain. Hum! Faith, and that's well thought on; marriage is honourable, as you say; and if so, wherefore should cuckoldom be a discredit, being deriv'd from so honourable a root? 57

Mrs. Mar. Nay, I know not; if the root be honourable, why not the branches? ¹

Fain. So, so; why, this point's clear—Well, how do we proceed?

Mrs. Mar. I will contrive a letter which shall be deliver'd to my lady at the time when that rascal who is to act Sir Rowland is with her. It shall come as from an unknown hand—for the less I appear to know of the truth, the better I can play the incendiary. Besides, I wou'd not have Foible provok'd if I could help it—because you know she knows some passages.—Nay, I expect all will come out—but let the mine be sprung first, and then I care not if I am ² discover'd. 68

Fain. If the worst come to the worst—I'll turn my wife to grass.—I have already a deed of settlement of the best part of her estate; which I wheatl'd out of her; and that you shall partake at least. 72

Mrs. Mar. I hope you are convinc'd that I hate Mirabell now: you'll be no more jealous? ³

Fain. Jealous! no—by this kiss—let husbands be jealous; but let the lover still believe: or if he doubt, let it be only to endear his pleasure, and prepare the joy that follows, when he proves his mistress true. But let husbands doubts convert to endless jealousy;

ments: "This retort brings out the proper sense of 'jealousy' (*suspicion of rivalry*), which is often lost or forgotten" (Scott-Saintsbury *Dryden*, VI. 474).

¹ of the cuckold's horns.

² Qtos., "I'm."

³ C punctuates as above; Q1, "Mirabell. now"; Q2, "Mirabell, now": neither has a question mark after "jealous."

or if they have belief, let it corrupt to superstition and blind credulity. I am single, and will herd no more with 'em. True, I wear the badge, but I'll disown the order. And since I take my leave of 'em, I care not if I leave 'em a common motto to their common crest:—

83

*All husbands must or pain or shame endure;
The wise too jealous are, fools too secure.*

END OF THE THIRD ACT.

Act IV. Scene I. [*Scene continues.*]

LADY WISHFORT and FOIBLE.¹

Lady. Is Sir Rowland coming, say'st thou, Foible? and are things in order?

Foib. Yes, madam. I have put wax-lights in the sconces, and plac'd the footmen in a row in the hall, in their best liveries, with the coachman and postilion to fill up the equipage. 5

Lady. Have you pullvill'd² the coachman and postilion, that they may not stink of the stable when Sir Rowland comes by?

Foib. Yes, madam.

Lady. And are the dancers and the musick ready, that he may be entertain'd in all points with correspondence to his passion? 10

Foib. All is ready, madam.

Lady. And—well—and how do I look, Foible?

Foib. Most killing well, madam.

Lady. Well, and how shall I receive him? In what figure shall I give his heart the first impression? There is a great deal in the first impression. Shall I sit?—No, I won't sit—I'll walk—ay, I'll walk from the door upon his entrance; and then turn full upon him.—No, that will be too sudden. I'll lye—ay, I'll lye down—I'll receive him in my little dressing-room, there's a couch—yes, yes, I'll give the first impression on a couch.—I won't lye neither, but loll and lean upon one elbow: with one foot a little dangling off, jogging in a thoughtful way—yes—and then as soon as he appears, start,

¹ Qtos., "*Enter Lady,*" etc.

² sprinkled with perfumed powder.

ay, start and be surpriz'd, and rise to meet him in a pretty disorder.—Yes—O, nothing is more alluring than a levee from a couch, in some confusion—it shews the foot to advantage, and furnishes with blushes, and re-composing airs beyond comparison. Hark! there's a coach. 27

Foib. 'Tis he, madam.

Lady. O dear, has my nephew made his addresses to Millamant? I order'd him.

Foib. Sir Wilfull is set in to ¹ drinking, madam, in the parlour.

Lady. Ods my life, I'll send him to her. Call her down, Foible; bring her hither. I'll send him as I go.—When they are together, then come to me, Foible, that I may not be too long alone with Sir Rowland. 35

Scene II.

MRS. MILLAMANT, MRS. FAINALL, FOIBLE.

Foib. Madam, I stay'd here to tell your ladship that Mr. Mirabell has waited this half hour for an opportunity to talk with you: tho' my lady's orders were to leave you and Sir Wilfull together. Shall I tell Mr. Mirabell that you are at leisure?

Milla. No—what wou'd the dear man have? I am thoughtful, and wou'd amuse my self—bid him come another time. 6

“There never yet was woman made,
Nor shall, but to be curs'd.”

[Repeating, and walking about.]

That's hard!

Mrs. Fain. You are very fond of Sir John Suckling ² to day, Millamant, and the poets. 11

Milla. He? Ay, and filthy verses—so I am.

Foib. Sir Wilfull is coming, madam. Shall I send Mr. Mirabell away?

Milla. Ay, if you please, Foible, send him away—or send him

¹ Qtos., “into.”

² Cavalier poet and dramatist (1609–42): see Hazlitt's edition (ed. 2, London, 1892), I. 19.

hither—just as you will, dear Foible.—I think I'll see him—shall I? Ay, let the wretch come.¹ 17

“Thyrsis, a youth of the inspired² train.”³

[*Repeating.*

Dear Fainall, entertain Sir Wilfull—thou hast philosophy to undergo a fool; thou art marry'd and hast patience—I would confer with my own thoughts. 21

Mrs. Fain. I am oblig'd to you, that you would make me your proxy in this affair; but I have business of my own.

Scene III.

[*To them*] SIR WILFULL.

Mrs. Fain. O Sir Wilfull, you are come at the critical instant. There's your mistress up to the ears in love and contemplation; pursue your point, now or never.

Sir Wil. Yes; my aunt will⁴ have it so—I would gladly have been encourag'd with a bottle or two, because I'm somewhat wary at first, before I am acquainted.—But I hope, after a time, I shall break my mind—that is, upon further acquaintance.—So for the present, cousin, I'll take my leave.—If so be you'll be so kind to make my excuse, I'll return to my company.—

{ *This while* MILLA.
walks about repeat-
ing to her self.

Mrs. Fain. O fie, Sir Wilfull! What, you must not be daunted.

Sir Wil. Daunted! No, that's not it, it is not so much for that—for if so be that I set on't, I'll do't. But only for the present, 'tis sufficient 'till further acquaintance, that's all—your servant.

Mrs. Fain. Nay, I'll swear you shall never lose so favourable an opportunity, if I can help it. I'll leave you together, and lock the door. 17

¹ Foible obviously goes out at this point, though no *exit* is marked in Qtos. C.

² Qtos. C, “inspir'd,” but cf. metre.

³ From Edmund Waller (1606–87), whose *Story of Phæbus and Daphne, Applied*, opens as follows:

Thyrsis, a youth of the inspired train,
Fair Sacharissa loved, but loved in vain.
Like Phæbus sung the no less amorous boy;
Like Daphne she, as lovely, and as coy!

⁴ Q1, “would.”

Scene IV.

SIR WILFULL, MILLAMANT.

Sir Wil. Nay, nay, cousin—I have forgot my gloves—what d’ye do?—’Sheart, a’has lock’d the door indeed, I think.—Nay, Cousin Fainall, open the door—pshaw, what a vixon trick is this!—Nay, now a’has seen me too.—Cousin, I made bold to pass thro’ as it were—I think this door’s enchanted! 5

Milla. [*Repeating.*]

“I prithee spare me, gentle boy,
Press me no more for that slight toy—”¹

Sir Wil. Anan?² Cousin, your servant.

Milla. “That foolish trifle of a heart—”

Sir Wilfull!

10

Sir Wil. Yes—your servant. No offence, I hope, cousin.

Milla. [*Repeating.*]

“I swear it will not do its part,
Tho’ thou dost thine, employ’st thy power and art.”

Natural, easie Suckling!

Sir Wil. Anan? *Suckling?* No such suckling neither, cousin, nor stripling: I thank Heav’n I’m no minor. 16

Milla. Ah, rustick! ruder than Gothick!

Sir Wil. Well, well, I shall understand your lingo one of these days, cousin; in the mean while I must answer in plain English.

Milla. Have you any business with me, Sir Wilfull? 20

Sir Wil. Not at present, cousin.—Yes, I made bold to see, to come and know if that how you were dispos’d to fetch a walk this evening; if so be that I might not be troublesome, I would have fought³ a walk with you.

Milla. A walk? What then? 25

Sir Wil. Nay, nothing—only for the walk’s sake, that’s all.—

Milla. I nauseate walking; ’tis a country diversion; I loath the country and every thing that relates to it.

¹ Suckling again: *ibid.*, p. 22.

² “What’s that?” or “What do you say?”

³ p.p. of *fetch*: one of Sir Wilfull’s provincialisms.

Sir Wil. Indeed! hah! Look ye, look ye, you do? Nay, 'tis like you may.—Here are choice of pastimes here in town, as plays and the like; that must be confess'd indeed.— 31

Milla. *Ah, l'etourdie!* I hate the town too.

Sir Wil. Dear heart, that's much.—Hah! that you should hate 'em both! Hah! 'tis like you may; there are some can't relish the town, and others can't away with the country—'tis like you may be one of those, cousin. 36

Milla. Ha! ha! ha! Yes, 'tis like I may.—You have nothing further to say to me?

Sir Wil. Not at present, cousin.—'Tis like when I have an opportunity to be more private—I may break my mind in some measure—I conjecture you partly guess.—However, that's as time shall try—but spare to speak and spare to speed, as they say. 42

Milla. If it is of no great importance, Sir Wilfull, you will oblige me to leave me; I have just now a little business.—

Sir Wil. Enough, enough, cousin: yes, yes, all a case¹—when you're dispos'd, when you're dispos'd. Now's as well as another time; and another time as well as now. All's one for that—yes, yes, if your concerns call you, there's no haste; it will keep cold, as they say.—Cousin, your servant.—I think this door's lock'd.

Milla. You may go this way, sir. 50

Sir Wil. Your servant; then with your leave I'll return to my company.²

Milla. Ay, ay; ha! ha! ha!

“Like Phœbus sung the no less am'rous boy.”

Scene V.

MILLAMANT, MIRABELL.

Mira. “Like Daphne she, as lovely and as coy.”

Do you lock your self up from me, to make my search more curious? Or is this pretty artifice contriv'd, to signifie that here the chace must end, and my pursuit be crown'd, for you can fly no further?— 5

¹ all the same, never mind.

² Qtos. add “*Exit.*”

³ careful, intricate.

Milla. Vanity! No—I'll fly and be follow'd to the last moment. Tho' I am upon the very verge of matrimony, I expect you should solicit me as much as if I were wavering at the grate of a monastery, with one foot over the threshold. I'll be solicited to the very last, nay and afterwards. 10

Mira. What, after the last?

Milla. O, I should think I was poor and had nothing to bestow, if I were reduc'd to an inglorious ease, and freed from the agreeable fatigues of solicitation.

Mira. But do not you know that when favours are conferr'd upon instant¹ and tedious solicitation, that they diminish in their value, and that both the giver loses the grace, and the receiver lessens his pleasure? 18

Milla. It may be in things of common application; but never sure in love. O, I hate a lover that can dare to think he draws a moment's air, independent on the bounty of his mistress. There is not so impudent a thing in nature as the sawcy look of an assured man, confident of success. The pedantick arrogance of a very husband has not so pragmatikal an air. Ah! I'll never marry, unless I am first made sure of my will and pleasure. 25

Mira. Would you have 'em both before marriage? Or will you be contented with the first now, and stay for the other 'till after grace?

Milla. Ah! don't be impertinent.—My dear liberty, shall I leave thee? My faithful solitude, my darling contemplation, must I bid you then adieu? Ay-h adieu—my morning thoughts, agreeable wakings, indolent slumbers, all ye *douceurs*, ye *someils du matin*, adieu—I can't do't, 'tis more than impossible.—Positively, Mirabell, I'll lye a-bed in a morning as long as I please. 34

Mira. Then I'll get up in a morning as early as I please.

Milla. Ah! idle creature, get up when you will.—And d'ye hear, I won't be call'd names after I'm marry'd; positively I won't be call'd names.

Mira. Names!

Milla. Ay, as wife, spouse, my dear, joy, jewel, love, sweetheart, and the rest of that nauseous cant in which men and their

¹ pressing, importunate.

wives are so fulsomly familiar—I shall never bear that.—Good Mirabell, don't let us be familiar or fond, nor kiss before folks, like my Lady Fadler and Sir Francis: nor go to Hide-Park together the first Sunday in a new chariot, to provoke eyes and whippers, and then never be ¹ seen there together again; as if we were proud of one another the first week, and asham'd of one another ever ² after. Let us never visit together, nor go to a play together; but let us be very strange and well bred: let us be as strange as if we had been marry'd a great while; and as well bred as if we were not marry'd at all. 51

Mira. Have you any more conditions to offer? Hitherto your demands are pretty reasonable.

Milla. Trifles!—As liberty to pay and receive visits to and from whom I please; to write and receive letters, without interrogatories or wry faces on your part; to wear what I please; and chuse conversation with regard only to my own taste; to have no obligation upon me to converse with wits that I don't like, because they are your acquaintance; or to be intimate with fools, because they may be your relations. Come to dinner when I please; dine in my dressing-room when I'm out of humour, without giving a reason. To have my closet inviolate; to be sole empress of my tea-table, which you must never presume to approach without first asking leave. And lastly, where-ever I am, you shall always knock at the door before you come in. These articles subscrib'd, if I continue to endure you a little longer, I may by degrees dwindle into a wife. 67

Mira. Your bill of fare is something advanc'd in this latter account. Well, have I liberty to offer conditions—that when you are dwindled into a wife, I may not be beyond measure enlarg'd into a husband? 71

Milla. You have free leave; propose your utmost, speak and spare not.

Mira. I thank you.—*Inprimis* then, I covenant that your acquaintance be general; that you admit no sworn confidant, or intimate of your own sex; no she friend to skreen her affairs under your countenance, and tempt you to make trial of a mutual

¹ Qtos., "to be."

² QI., "for ever."

secresie. No decoy-duck to wheadle you a fop—scrambling¹ to the play in a mask—then bring you home in a pretended fright, when you think you shall be found out—and rail at me for missing the play, and disappointing the frolick which you had to pick me up and prove my constancy.

Milla. Detestable *inprimis!* I go to the play in a mask!² 83

Mira. *Item*, I article that you continue to like your own face, as long as I shall; and while it passes currant with me, that you endeavour not to new coin it. To which end, together with all vizards for the day, I prohibit all masks for the night, made of oil'd-skins and I know not what—hog's bones, hare's gall, pig water,³ and the marrow of a roasted cat. In short, I forbid all commerce with the gentlewoman⁴ in What-d'ye-call-it Court. *Item*, I shut my doors against all bauds with baskets, and penny-worths of muslin, china, fans, attlasses,⁵ &c.—*Item*, when you shall be breeding— 93

Milla. Ah! name it not.

Mira. Which may be presum'd, with a blessing on our endeavours— 96

Milla. Odious endeavours!

Mira. I denounce against all strait lacing, squeezing for a shape, 'till you mould my boy's head like a sugar-loaf, and instead of a man-child, make me father⁶ to a crooked-billet. Lastly, to the dominion of the tea-table I submit.—But with *proviso* that you exceed not in your province; but restrain your self to native and simple tea-table drinks, as tea, chocolate, and coffee: as likewise to genuine and authoriz'd tea-table talk—such as mending of fashions, spoiling reputations, railing at absent friends, and so forth—but that on no account you encroach upon the mens pre-

¹ So punctuated in Qtos. C; the meaning seems to be, "obtain a fop for you by wheedling—slinking away to the play in a mask." Most modern editions read "fop-scrambling," the meaning of which is not easy to divine. Such a modification of the punctuation is supported only by the fact that Qtos. C italicize both words, thereby giving them an appearance of belonging together, though they are separated by a dash, not joined by a hyphen.

² See p. 594, note 4.

³ According to Summers, "the urine of young pigs, puppies, and some other small animals was commonly used as an ingredient in cosmetics."

⁴ Q2, "gentlewomen."

⁵ satins.

⁶ Qtos., "the father."

rogative, and presume to drink healths, or toast fellows; for prevention of which, I banish all foreign forces, all auxiliaries to the tea-table, as orange-brandy, all anniseed, cinamon, citron,¹ and Barbado's-waters,² together with ratafia and the most noble spirit of clary³—but for coustlip-wine, poppy-water, and all dormitives, those I allow.—These *proviso's* admitted, in other things I may prove a tractable and complying husband. 113

Milla. O horrid *proviso's*! filthy strong waters! I toast fellows, odious men! I hate your odious *proviso's*.

Mira. Then we're ⁴ agreed. Shall I kiss your hand upon the contract? And here comes one to be a witness to the sealing of the deed.

Scene VI.

[*To them*] MRS. FAINALL.

Milla. Fainall, what shall I do? Shall I have him? I think I must have him.

Mrs. Fain. Ay, ay, take him, take him—what shou'd you do?

Milla. Well then—I'll take my death I'm in a horrid fright—Fainall, I shall never say it.—Well—I think—I'll endure you. 5

Mrs. Fain. Fy! fy! have him, have him, and tell him so in plain terms: for I am sure you have a mind to him.

Milla. Are you? I think I have—and the horrid man looks as if he thought so too.—Well, you ridiculous thing you, I'll have you—I won't be kiss'd, nor I won't be thank'd.—Here, kiss my hand tho'.—So, hold your tongue now, don't ⁵ say a word. 11

Mrs. Fain. Mirabell, there's a necessity for your obedience—you have neither time to talk nor stay. My mother is coming; and in my conscience, if she shou'd see you, wou'd fall into fits, and may be not recover, time enough to return to Sir Rowland, who, as Foible tells me, is in a fair way to succeed. Therefore spare your

¹ "Citron-water, a liquor made from brandy flavoured with citron- or lemon-peel" (*N.E.D.*).

² "A cordial flavoured with orange- and lemon-peel" (*N.E.D.*).

³ "A sweet liquor consisting of a mixture of wine, clarified honey, and various spices" (*N.E.D.*).

⁴ Q1, "wee're."

⁵ Qtos., "and don't."

extacies for another occasion, and slip down the back stairs, where Foible waits to consult you. 18

Milla. Ay, go, go. In the mean time I suppose you have said something to please me.

Mira. I am all obedience.

Scene VII.

MILLAMANT, MRS. FAINALL.

Mrs. Fain. Yonder Sir Wilfull's drunk, and so noisie that my mother has been forc'd to leave Sir Rowland to appease him; but he answers her only with singing and drinking—what they may¹ have done by this time I know not; but Petulant and he were upon quarelling as I came by. 5

Milla. Well, if Mirabell should not make a good husband, I am a lost thing—for I find I love him violently.

Mrs. Fain. So it seems; for² you mind not what's said to you.—If you doubt him, you had best take up with Sir Wilfull.

Milla. How can you name that superannuated lubber? foh!

Scene VIII.

[*To them*] WITMOUD *from drinking.*

Mrs. Fain. So, is the fray made up, that you have left 'em?

Wit. Left 'em? I could stay no longer—I have laugh'd like ten christnings—I am tipsie with laughing—if I had staid any longer I should have burst—I must have been let out and piec'd in the sides like an unsiz'd³ camlet.⁴—Yes, yes, the fray is compos'd; my lady came in like a *noli prosequi*, and stopt the⁵ proceedings. 6

Milla. What was the dispute?

Wit. That's the jest; there was no dispute. They could neither of 'em speak for rage, and so fell a sputt'ring at one another like two roasting apples. 10

¹ Not in Qtos.

² Qtos., "when."

³ badly fitted.

⁴ "A name originally applied to some beautiful and costly eastern fabric, afterwards to imitations and substitutes the nature of which has changed many times over" (*N.E.D.*).

⁵ Qtos., "their."

Scene IX.

[*To them*] PETULANT, *drunk*.

Wit. Now, Petulant? all's over, all's well? Gad, my head begins to whim it ¹ about.—Why dost thou not speak? Thou art both as drunk and as mute as a fish.

Pet. Look you, Mrs. Millamant—if you can love me, dear nymph—say it—and that's the conclusion—pass on, or pass off—that's all. 6

Wit. Thou hast utter'd volumes, folio's, in less than *decimo sexto*, my dear Lacedemonian. Sirrah, Petulant, thou art an epitomizer of words.

Pet. Witwoud—you are an annihilator of sense. 10

Wit. Thou art a retailer of phrases; and dost deal in remnants of remnants, like a maker of pincushions—thou art in truth (metaphorically speaking) a speaker of short-hand.

Pet. Thou art (without a figure) just one half of an ass and Baldwin ² yonder, thy half brother, is the rest.—A *Gemini* of asses split would make just four of you. 16

Wit. Thou dost bite, my dear mustard-seed; kiss me for that.

Pet. Stand off!—I'll kiss no more males—I have kiss'd your twin yonder in a humour of reconciliation, 'till he [*hiccup*] rises upon my stomach like a radish. 20

Milla. Eh! filthy creature!—what was the quarrel?

Pet. There was no quarrel—there might have been a quarrel.

Wit. If there had been words enow between 'em to have express'd provocation, they had gone together by the ears like a pair of castanets. 25

Pet. You were the quarrel.

Milla. Me!

Pet. If I have a humour to quarrel, I can make less matters conclude premises.—If you are not handsom, what then, if I have a humour to prove it?—If I shall have my reward, say so; if not, fight for your face the next time your self—I'll go sleep. 31

Wit. Do, wrap thy self up like a wood-louse, and dream re-

¹ spin, swim.

² The name given to the ass in some versions of the story of Reynard the Fox.

venge—and hear me, if thou canst learn to write by to-morrow morning, pen me a challenge.—I'll carry it for thee.

Pet. Carry your mistress's monkey a spider!—Go flea dogs, and read romances!—I'll go to bed to my maid.¹ 36

Mrs. Fain. He's horridly drunk.—How came you all in this pickle?

Wit. A plot! a plot! to get rid of the knight—your husband's advice; but he sneak'd off. 40

Scene X.

SIR WILFULL *drunk*, LADY WISHFORT, WITWOUND, MILLAMANT,
MRS. FAINALL.

Lady. Out upon't, out upon't! At years of discretion, and comport your self at this rantipole² rate!

Sir Wil. No offence, aunt.

Lady. Offence? As I'm a person, I'm ashamed of you—fogh! how you stink of wine! D'ye think my neice will ever endure such a borachio!³ You're an absolute borachio. 6

Sir Wil. Borachio!

Lady. At a time when you shou'd commence an amour, and put your best foot foremost—

Sir Wil. 'Sheart, an you grutch⁴ me your liquor, make a bill.— Give me more drink, and take my purse.— 11

[Sings.] “Prithee fill me the glass,
 'Till it laugh⁵ in my face,
With ale that is potent and mellow;
 He that whines for a lass,
 Is an ignorant ass, 15
For a bumper has not its fellow.”

But if you wou'd have me marry my cousin—say the word, and

¹ Qtos. add “*Exit.*”

² wild, disorderly.

³ Originally a leathern bottle for wine; then, wine-bag, drunkard (cf. *Much Ado About Nothing*, III, iii, 110-12).

⁴ grudge.

⁵ Q2, “laughs.”

I'll do't—Wilfull will do't, that's the word—Wilfull will do't, that's my crest—my motto I have forgot. 20

Lady. My nephew's a little overtaken,¹ cousin—but 'tis with drinking your health.—O' my word you are oblig'd to him.

Sir Wil. *In vino veritas*, aunt.—If I drunk your health to day, cousin—I am a borachio. But if you have a mind to be marry'd, say the word, and send for the piper; Wilfull will do't. If not, dust it away, and let's have t'other round.—Tony!—Ods-heart, where's Tony!—Tony's an honest fellow; but he spits after a bumper, and that's a fault.— 28

[*Sings.*] “We'll drink, and we'll never ha' done, boys,
Put the glass then around with the sun, boys; 30
Let Apollo's example invite us;
For he's drunk ev'ry night,
And that makes him so bright,
That he's able next morning to light us.”

The sun's a good pimple,² an honest soaker; he has a cellar at your Antipodes. If I travel, aunt, I touch at your Antipodes—your Antipodes are a good, rascally sort of topsie turvy fellows—if I had a bumper, I'd stand upon my head and drink a health to 'em.—A match or no match, cousin with the hard name?³—Aunt, Wilfull will do't. If she has her maidenhead, let her look to't; if she has not, let her keep her own counsel in the mean time, and cry out at the nine months end. 42

Milla. Your pardon, madam, I can stay no longer—Sir Wilfull grows very powerful. Egh! how he smells! I shall be overcome if I stay.—Come, cousin.

Scene XI.

LADY WISHFORT, SIR WILFULL WITWOUND, MR. WITWOUND, FOIBLE.⁴

Lady. Smells! he would poison a tallow-chandler and his family! Beastly creature, I know not what to do with him!—Travel,

¹ overpowered, intoxicated.

² Farmer and Henley (*Slang and its Analogues*, copied by N.E.D.) explain as “a boon companion,” but cite only the present passage in support of this definition.

³ No question mark in Qtos. C.

⁴ Qtos. do not note the appearance of Foible until line 20 below.

quoth a! ay, travel, travel, get thee gone, get thee but far enough, to the Saracens, or the Tartars, or the Turks!—for thou art not fit to live in a Christian commonwealth, thou beastly pagan! 5

Sir Wil. Turks, no; no Turks, aunt: your Turks are infidels, and believe not in the grape. Your Mahometan, your Mussulman, is a dry stinkard—no offence, aunt. My map says that your Turk is not so honest a man as your Christian—I cannot find by the map that your Mufti is orthodox—whereby it is a plain case that orthodox is a hard word, aunt, and [*hiccup*] Greek for claret. 11

[*Sings.*] “To drink is a Christian diversion,
Unknown to the Turk or ¹ the Persian:
Let Mahometan fools
Live by heathenish rules, 15
And be damn’d over tea-cups and coffee!
But let British lads sing,
Crown a health to the king,
And a fig for your sultan and sophy!” ²

Ah, Tony! [FOIBLE *whispers* LADY W.³

Lady. Sir Rowland impatient? Good lack! what shall I do with this beastly tumbrel? ⁴—Go lie down and sleep, you sot!—or, as I’m a person, I’ll have you bastinado’d with broom-sticks.—Call up the wenches with broom-sticks.⁵

Sir Wil. Ahey? Wenches, where are the wenches? 25

Lady. Dear Cousin Witwoud, get him away, and you will bind me to you inviolably. I have an affair of moment that invades me with some precipitation—you will oblige me to all futurity.

Wit. Come, knight.—Pox on him, I don’t know what to say to him.—Will you go to a cock-match? 30

Sir Wil. With a wench, Tony? Is she a shake-bag,⁶ sirrah? Let me bite your cheek for that.

¹ Qtos., “and.”

² “A former title or designation of the supreme ruler of Persia; the Shah” (N.E.D.).

³ Qtos., “Enter Foible, and *whispers* Lady.”

⁴ dung-cart.

⁵ Qtos. omit “with broom-sticks,” and here mark Foible’s *exit*.

⁶ “A game-cock of the largest size” (*Eng. Dial. Dict.*).

Wit. Horrible! He has a breath like a bagpipe!—Ay, ay; come, will you march, my Salopian? ¹

Sir Wil. Lead on, little Tony—I'll follow thee, my Anthony, my Tantony; sirrah, thou shalt ² be my Tantony, and I'll be ³ thy pig.⁴ 37

“And a fig for your sultan and sophy.” ⁵

Lady. This will never do. It will never make a match—at least before he has been abroad. 40

Scene XII.

LADY WISHFORT; WAITWELL, *disguis'd as for* Sir ROWLAND.

Lady. Dear Sir Rowland, I am confounded with confusion at the retrospection of my own rudeness—I have more pardons to ask than the pope distributes in the year of jubile. But I hope, where there is likely to be so near an alliance—we may unbend the severity of decorum, and dispense with a little ceremony. 5

Wait. My impatience, madam, is the effect of my transport—and 'till I have the possession of your adorable person, I am tantaliz'd on the ⁶ rack; and do but hang, madam, on the tenter of expectation.

Lady. You have excess of gallantry, Sir Rowland, and press things to a conclusion with a most prevailing vehemence.—But a day or two for decency of marriage— 12

Wait. For decency of funeral, madam! The delay will break my heart—or, if that should fail, I shall be poison'd. My nephew will get an inkling of my designs, and poison me—and I would willingly starve him before I die—I would gladly go out of the world with that satisfaction.—That would be some comfort to me, if I could but live so long as to be reveng'd on that unnatural viper. 19

Lady. Is he so unnatural, say you? Truly I would contribute

¹ Cf. p. 620, l. 51.

² Qtos., “sha't.”

³ So Q1; Q2C, “by.”

⁴ Cf. Mr. Pollard's note on Heywood's *Johan Johan* (*Rep. Eng. Com.* I. 65): “The *New Eng. Dict.* quotes from Fuller's *Worthies*: ‘St. Anthonie is notoriously known for the patron of hogs, having a pig for his page in all pictures.’”

⁵ Qtos. add, “Exit singing with Witwoud.”

⁶ Q1, “a.”

much both to the saving of your life, and the accomplishment of your revenge.—Not that I respect my self, tho' he has been a perfidious wretch to me. 23

Wait. Perfidious to you!

Lady. O Sir Rowland, the hours that he has dy'd away at my feet, the tears that he has shed, the oaths that he has sworn, the palpitations that he has felt, the trances and the tremblings, the ardors and the ecstacies, the kneelings and the risings, the heart-heavings and the hand-gripings, the pangs and the pathetick regards of his protesting eyes!—Oh, no memory can register! 30

Wait. What, my rival! Is the rebel my rival?—a' dies.

Lady. No, don't kill him at once, Sir Rowland; starve him gradually, inch by inch.

Wait. I'll do't. In three weeks he shall be bare-foot; in a month out at knees with begging an alms—he shall starve upward and upward, 'till he has nothing living but his head, and then go out in a stink like a candle's end upon a save-all.¹ 37

Lady. Well, Sir Rowland, you have the way—you are no novice in the labyrinth of love—you have the clue.—But as I am a person, Sir Rowland, you must not attribute my yielding to any sinister appetite, or indigestion of widow-hood; nor impute my complacency to any lethargy of continence—I hope you do not think me prone to any iteration of nuptials.— 43

Wait. Far be it from me.—

Lady. If you do, I protest I must recede—or think that I have made a prostitution of decorums; but in the vehemence of compassion, and to save the life of a person of so much importance— 47

Wait. I esteem it so.—

Lady. Or else you wrong my condescension.—

Wait. I do not, I do not!— 50

Lady. Indeed you do.

Wait. I do not, fair shrine of virtue!

Lady. If you think the least scruple of carnality was an ingredient—

¹“A small pan . . . having a sharp point in the middle, fitted to the socket of a candlestick, to allow the short socket-end of a candle to be burnt out without waste” (*Cent. Dict.*).

Wait. Dear madam, no. You are all camphire ¹ and frankincense, all chastity and odour. 56

Lady. Or that—

Scene XIII.

[*To them*] FOIBLE.

Foib. Madam, the dancers are ready; and there's one with a letter, who must deliver it into your own hands.

Lady. Sir Rowland, will you give me leave? Think favourably, judge candidly, and conclude you have found a person who would suffer racks in honour's cause, dear Sir Rowland, and will wait on you incessantly.²

Scene XIV.

WAITWELL, FOIBLE.

Wait. Fie, fie!—What a slavery have I undergone! Spouse, hast thou any cordial?—I want spirits.

Foib. What a washy rogue art thou, to pant thus for a quarter of an hours lying and swearing to a fine lady!

Wait. O, she is the antidote to desire! Spouse, thou wilt fare the worse for't—I shall have no appetite to iteration ³ of nuptials—this eight and forty hours.—By this hand I'd rather be a chair-man in the dog-days—than act Sir Rowland 'till this time to morrow!

Scene XV.

[*To them*] LADY, with a letter.

Lady. Call in the dancers.—Sir Rowland, we'll sit, if you please, and see the entertainment. [*Dance.*]

Now, with your permission, Sir Rowland, I will peruse my letter.—I would open it in your presence, because I would not make you uneasy. If it should make you uneasy, I would burn

¹ Cf. *Spanish Friar*, p. 160, l. 175.

² instantly, immediately.

³ Qtos., "iteration" (misprint).

it.—Speak, if it does—but you may see, the ¹ superscription is ² like a woman's hand.

Foib. By Heav'n! Mrs. Marwood's, I know it.—My heart akes—get it from her. 7
[To him.]

Wait. A woman's hand? No, madam, that's no woman's hand; I see that already. That's some body whose throat must be cut. 11

Lady. Nay, Sir Rowland, since you give me a proof of your passion by your jealousy, I promise you I'll make a ³ return, by a frank communication.—You shall see it—we'll open it together—look you here.—[*Reads.*]—“Madam, though unknown to you”—Look you there, 'tis from no body that I know—“I have that honour for your character, that I think my self oblig'd to let you know you are abus'd. He who pretends to be Sir Rowland is a cheat and a rascal.”—Oh Heav'ns! what's this?

Foib. Unfortunate! all's ruin'd! 20

Wait. How, how, let me see, let me see!—[*reading.*] “A rascal, and disguis'd and suborn'd for that imposture,”—O villany! O villany!—“by the contrivance of—”

Lady. I shall faint, I shall die,⁴ oh!

Foib. Say 'tis your nephew's hand.—Quickly, his plot, swear, swear it! [To him.]

Wait. Here's a villain! Madam, don't you perceive it, don't you see it? 28

Lady. Too well, too well! I have seen too much.

Wait. I told you at first I knew the hand.—A woman's hand? The rascal writes a sort of a large hand; your Roman ⁵ hand—I saw there was a throat to be cut presently. If he were my son, as he is my nephew, I'd pistol him!

Foib. O treachery!—But are you sure, Sir Rowland, it is his writing? 35

Wait. Sure? Am I here? do I live? do I love this pearl of India? I have twenty letters in my pocket from him, in the same character.

Lady. How!

Foib. O, what luck it is, Sir Rowland, that you were present at this juncture!—This was the business that brought Mr. Mirabell dis-

¹ Qtos., “by the.”

² Qtos., “it is.”

³ Qtos., “make you a.”

⁴ QI repeats, “I shall die.”

⁵ round and bold.

guis'd to Madam Millamant this afternoon. I thought something was contriving, when he stole by me and would have hid his face.

Lady. How, how!—I heard the villain was in the house indeed; and now I remember, my niece went away abruptly, when Sir Willfull was to have made his addresses. 45

Foib. Then, then, madam, Mr. Mirabell waited for her in her chamber; but I would not tell your ladship to discompose you when you were to receive Sir Rowland.

Wait. Enough, his date is short.

Foib. No, good Sir Rowland, don't incur the law. 50

Wait. Law! I care not for law. I can but die, and 'tis in a good cause.—My lady shall be satisfy'd of my truth and innocence, tho' it cost me my life.

Lady. No, dear Sir Rowland, don't fight; if you should be kill'd I must never shew my face; or hang'd—O, consider my reputation, Sir Rowland!—No, you shan't fight—I'll go in and examine my niece; I'll make her confess. I conjure you, Sir Rowland, by all your love, not to fight. 58

Wait. I am charm'd, madam, I obey. But some proof you must let me give you—I'll go for a black box which contains the writings of my whole estate, and deliver that into your hands. 61

Lady. Ay, dear Sir Rowland, that will be some comfort; bring the black box.

Wait. And may I presume to bring a contract to be sign'd this night? May I hope so far? 65

Lady. Bring what you will; but come alive, pray come alive. O, this is a happy discovery!

Wait. Dead or alive, I'll come—and married we will be in spite of treachery; ay, and get an heir that shall defeat the last remaining glimpse of hope in my abandon'd nephew. Come, my buxom widow:— 71

*E'er long you shall substantial proof receive,
That I'm an arrant¹ knight—*

Foib.

Or arrant knave.

END OF THE FOURTH ACT.

¹ variant of *errant* (wandering).

Act V. Scene I. [*Scene continues.*]LADY WISHFORT and FOIBLE.¹

Lady. Out of my house, out of my house, thou *viper!* thou *serpent*, that I have foster'd! thou bosom traitress, that I rais'd from nothing!—Begone! begone! begone! go! go!—That I took from washing of old gauze and weaving of dead hair, with a bleak blue nose, over a chafing-dish of starv'd embers, and dining behind a traver's² rag, in a shop no bigger than a bird-cage!—Go, go! starve again, do, do! 7

Foib. Dear madam, I'll beg pardon on my knees.

Lady. Away! out! out!—Go set up for your self again!—Do, drive a trade, do, with your three-penny-worth of small ware flaunting upon a packthread, under a brandy-seller's bulk,³ or against a dead wall by a ballad-monger! Go, hang out an old frisoner⁴-gorget,⁵ with a yard of yellow colberteen⁶ again; do; an old gnaw'd mask, two rows of pins, and a child's fiddle; a glass necklace with the beads broken, and a quilted night-cap with one ear. Go, go, drive a trade!—These were your commodities, you treacherous trull! this was the⁷ merchandize you dealt in, when I took you into my house, plac'd you next my self, and made you governante of my whole family. You have forgot this, have you, now you have feather'd your nest? 20

Foib. No, no, dear madam. Do but hear me, have but a moment's patience—I'll confess all. Mr. Mirabell seduc'd me; I am not the first that he has wheadled with his dissembling tongue; your ladship's own wisdom has been deluded by him; then how should I, a poor ignorant, defend my self? O madam, if you knew but what he promis'd me, and how he assur'd me your ladship should come to no damage!—Or else the wealth of the Indies

¹ Q2, "Enter Lady," etc.

² rag used as a traverse (screen).

³ stall.

⁴ Apparently some sort of woolen stuff.

⁵ An article of woman's dress covering the neck and breast.

⁶ "A kind of open lace with a square ground," according to *N.E.D.*, where the quotations show that it was not highly esteemed.

⁷ Qtos., "your."

should not have brib'd me to conspire against so good, so sweet, so kind a lady as you have been to me. 29

Lady. No damage? What, to betray me, to marry me to a cast-servant-man? to make me a receptacle, an hospital for a decay'd pimp? No damage? O thou frontless impudence, more than a big-belly'd actress! 33

Foib. Pray do but hear me, madam; he could not marry your ladiship, madam.—No indeed, his marriage was to have been void in law, for he was marry'd to me first, to secure your ladiship. He could not have bedded your ladiship; for if he had consummated with your ladiship, he must have run the risque of the law, and been put upon his clergy.¹—Yes indeed, I enquir'd of the law in that case before I would meddle or make.² 40

Lady. What, then I have been your property, have I? I have been convenient to you, it seems!—While you were catering for Mirabell; I have been brooker for you? What, have you made a passive bawd of me?—This exceeds all precedent; I am brought to fine uses, to become a botcher of second-hand marriages between Abigail's and Andrew's!³—I'll couple you! Yes, I'll baste you together, you and your Philander! I'll Duke's-Place⁴ you, as I'm a person! Your turtle is in custody already: you shall coo in the same cage, if there be constable or warrant in the parish.⁵ 49

Foib. O that ever I was born! O that I was ever marry'd!—A bride!—ay, I shall be a Bridewell⁶-bride.—Oh!

¹ "Originally the privilege of exemption from trial by a secular court, allowed to or claimed by clergymen arraigned for felony; in later times the privilege of exemption from the sentence, which, in the case of certain offences, might be pleaded on his first conviction by every one who could read" (*N.E.D.*).

² Here a synonym of "meddle." The emphatic phrase "meddle or make" is used even by writers of the nineteenth century.

³ *Abigail*, as a term for a waiting-maid, is derived from Beaumont and Fletcher's *Scornful Lady*; *Andrew*, as Summers points out, comes similarly from *The Elder Brother*; and *Philander*, as Bateson indicates, is the lover in *The Laws of Candy*.

⁴ Cf. p. 576, l. 7.

⁵ Qtos. add, "Exit."

⁶ A notorious prison. One of the scenes in Hogarth's *Harlot's Progress* shows women beating hemp in Bridewell.

Scene II.

MRS. FAINALL, FOIBLE.

Mrs. Fain. Poor Foible, what's the matter?

Foib. O madam, my lady's gone for a constable; I shall be had to a justice, and put to Bridewell to beat hemp; poor Waitwell's gone to prison already.

Mrs. Fain. Have a good heart, Foible; Mirabell's gone to give security for him. This is all Marwood's and my husband's doing.

Foib. Yes, yes; I know it, madam: she was in my lady's closet, and over-heard all that you said to me before dinner. She sent the letter to my lady; and that missing effect, Mr. Fainall laid this plot to arrest Waitwell, when he pretended to go for the papers; and in the mean time Mrs. Marwood declar'd all to my lady. 11

Mrs. Fain. Was there no mention made of me in the letter?—My mother does not suspect my being in the confederacy? I fancy Marwood has not told her, tho' she has told my husband.

Foib. Yes, madam; but my lady did not see that part: we stifled the letter before she read so far. Has that mischievous devil told Mr. Fainall of your ladiship then? 17

Mrs. Fain. Ay, all's out—my affair with Mirabell—every thing discover'd. This is the last day of our living together, that's my comfort. 20

Foib. Indeed, madam; and so 'tis a comfort if you knew all.—He has been even with your ladiship; which I cou'd have told you long enough since, but I love to keep peace and quietness by my good will: I had rather bring friends together than set 'em at distance. But Mrs. Marwood and he are nearer related than ever their parents thought for. 26

Mrs. Fain. Say'st thou so, Foible? Canst thou prove this?

Foib. I can take my oath of it, madam; so can Mrs. Mincing. We have had many a fair word from Madam Marwood, to conceal something that passed in our chamber one evening when you were at Hide-Park—and we were thought to have gone a walking; but we went up unawares—tho' we were sworn to secresie too; Madam Marwood took a book and swore us upon it; but it was but a book

of poems ¹—so long ² as it was not a Bible-oath, we may break it with a safe conscience.

Mrs. Fain. This discovery is the most opportune thing I cou'd wish.—Now, Mincing? 35

Scene III.

[*To them*] MINCING.

Minc. My lady wou'd speak with Mrs. Foible, mem. Mr. Mirabell is with her; he has set your spouse at liberty, Mrs. Foible, and wou'd have you hide your self in my lady's closet 'till my old lady's anger is abated. O, my old lady is in a perilous passion at something Mr. Fainall has said; he swears, and my old lady cries. There's a fearful hurricane, I vow. He says, mem, how that he'll have my lady's fortune made over to him, or he'll be divorc'd. 7

Mrs. Fain. Does your lady or ³ Mirabell know that?

Minc. Yes, mem; they have sent me to see if Sir Wilfull be sober, and to bring him to them. My lady is resolved to have him, I think, rather than lose such a vast sum as six thousand pound.—O, come, Mrs. Foible, I hear my old lady. 12

Mrs. Fain. Foible, you must tell Mincing that she must prepare to vouch when I call her.

Foib. Yes, yes, madam. 15

Minc. O yes, mem, I'll vouch any thing for your ladship's service, be what it will.

Scene IV.

MRS. FAINALL, LADY WISHFORT, MARWOOD.

Lady. O my dear friend, how can I enumerate the benefits that I have receiv'd from your goodness? To you I owe the timely discovery of the false vows of Mirabell; to you I owe ⁴ the detection of the impostor Sir Rowland. And now you are become an intercessor with my son-in-law, to save the honour of my house, and

¹ Qtos., "verses and poems."

² Q1, "so as long."

³ Qtos., "and."

⁴ "I owe," not in Qtos.

compound for the frailties of my daughter. Well, friend, you are enough to reconcile me to the bad world, or else I would retire to desarts and solitudes, and feed harmless sheep by groves, and purling streams. Dear Marwood, let us leave the world, and retire by our selves and be shepherdesses. 10

Mrs. Mar. Let us first dispatch the affair in hand, madam. We shall have leisure to think of retirement afterwards. Here is one who is concerned in the treaty.

Lady. O daughter, daughter, is it possible thou should'st be my child, bone of my bone, and flesh of my flesh, and, as I may say, another me, and yet transgress the most minute particle of severe virtue? Is it possible you should lean aside to iniquity, who have been cast in the direct mold of virtue? I have not only been a mold but a pattern for you, and a model for you, after you were brought into the world. 20

Mrs. Fain. I don't understand your ladiship.

Lady. Not understand? Why, have you not been naught? Have you not been sophisticated?¹ Not understand? Here I am ruin'd to compound for your caprices and your cuckoldoms. I must pawn my plate and my jewels, and ruin my neice, and all little enough— 26

Mrs. Fain. I am wrong'd and abus'd, and so are you. 'Tis a false accusation, as false as hell, as false as your friend there, ay, or your friend's friend, my false husband.

Mrs. Mar. My friend, Mrs. Fainall? Your husband my friend! What do you mean? 31

Mrs. Fain. I know what I mean, madam, and so do you; and so shall the world at a time convenient.

Mrs. Mar. I am sorry to see you so passionate, madam. More temper² would look more like innocence. But I have done. I am sorry my zeal to serve your ladiship and family should admit of misconstruction, or make me liable to affronts. You will pardon me, madam, if I meddle no more with an affair in which I am not personally concern'd. 39

Lady. O dear friend, I am so asham'd that you should meet with such returns!—You ought to ask pardon on your knees, ungrateful

¹corrupted.

²self-command.

creature; she deserves more from you than all your life can accomplish.—O, don't leave me destitute in this perplexity!—No, stick to me, my good genius. 44

Mrs. Fain. I tell you, madam, you're abus'd.—Stick to you? Ay, like a leach, to suck your best blood—she'll drop off when she's full. Madam, you shan't¹ pawn a bodkin, nor part with a brass counter,² in composition for me. I defie 'em all. Let 'em prove their aspersions; I know my own innocence, and dare stand a³ trial. 50

Scene V.

LADY WISHFORT, MARWOOD.

Lady. Why, if she should be innocent, if she should be wrong'd after all, ha?—I don't know what to think—and I promise you, her education has been unexceptionable.—I may say it; for I chiefly made it my own care to initiate her very infancy in the rudiments of virtue, and to impress upon her tender years a young odium and aversion to the very sight of men—ay, friend, she would ha' shriek'd if she had but seen a man, 'till she was in her teens. As I'm a person 'tis true—she was never suffer'd to play with a male-child, tho' but in coats; nay, her very babies⁴ were of the feminine gender.—O, she never look'd a man in the face but her own father, or the chaplain, and him we made a shift to put upon her for a woman, by the help of his long garments and his sleek face, 'till she was going in her fifteen. 13

Mrs. Mar. 'Twas much she should be deceiv'd so long.

Lady. I warrant you, or she would never have born to have been catechiz'd by him; and have heard his long lectures against singing and dancing, and such debaucheries; and going to filthy plays, and prophane musick-meetings, where the lewd trebles squeek nothing but bawdy, and the bases roar blasphemy. O, she would have swoon'd at the sight or name of an obscene play-book!—

¹ QI, "sha'not."

² "A token used to represent a real coin; hence often rhetorically contrasted with real coins" (*N.E.D.*).

³ Qtos., "stand by a."

⁴ dolls.

And can I think, after all this, that my daughter can be naught? What, a whore? and thought it excommunication to set her foot within the door of a play-house! O dear ¹ friend, I can't believe it, no, no! As she says, let him prove it, let him prove it. 24

Mrs. Mar. Prove it, madam? What, and have your name prostituted in a publick court; yours and your daughter's reputation worry'd at the bar by a pack of bawling lawyers? To be usher'd in with an *O yes* ² of scandal; and have your case open'd by an old fumbling leacher in a quoif ³ like a man midwife, to bring your daughter's infamy to light; to be a theme for legal punsters and quiblers by the statute; and become a jest against a rule of court, where there is no precedent for a jest in any record—not even in *Dooms-Day-Book*; to discompose the gravity of the bench, and provoke naughty interrogatories in more naughty law Latin; while the good judge, tickl'd with the proceeding, simpers under a grey beard, and figes ⁴ off and on his cushion as if he had swallow'd cantharides,⁵ or sate ⁶ upon cow-itch? ⁷ 37

Lady. O, 'tis very hard!

Mrs. Mar. And then to have my young revellers of the Temple ⁸ take notes, like prentices ⁹ at a conventicle; ¹⁰ and after talk it over ¹¹ again in commons, or before drawers in an eating-house. 41

Lady. Worse and worse.

Mrs. Mar. Nay, this is nothing; if it would end here 'twere well. But it must after this be consign'd by the short-hand writers to the publick press; ¹² and from thence be transferr'd to the hands, nay

¹ Qtos., "O my dear."

² Q1, "*O yez.*" Referring to the word *oyez* or *oyes* ("hear ye") used by criers in court to secure silence before making a proclamation.

³ Coif; "a white cap formerly worn by lawyers as a distinctive mark of their profession" (*N.E.D.*).

⁴ fidgets; Qtos., "fidges."

⁵ "A medicinal preparation of Spanish flies, used for blistering," etc. (*Cent. Dict.*).

⁶ Q1, "sat."

⁷ Cowage; "the stinging hairs of the pod of a tropical plant, *Mucuna pruriens*" (*N.E.D.*).

⁸ Congreve had himself been a law student at the Middle Temple.

⁹ Cf. *Spanish Friar*, p. 141, l. 21, and note.

¹⁰ Cf. p. 584, l. 24, and note.

¹¹ Qtos., "it all over."

¹² Which, by the lapse of the Licensing Act in 1695, had been freed from the re-

into the throats and lungs of hawkers, with voices more licentious than the loud flounder-man's:¹ and this you must hear 'till you are stunn'd; nay, you must hear nothing else for some days. 48

Lady. O, 'tis insupportable! No, no, dear friend; make it up, make it up; ay, ay, I'll compound. I'll give up all, my self and my all, my niece and her all—any thing, every thing for composition.

Mrs. Mar. Nay, madam, I advise nothing; I only lay before you, as a friend, the inconveniencies which perhaps you have overseen.² Here comes Mr. Fainall; if he will be satisfy'd to huddle up all in silence, I shall be glad. You must think I would rather congratulate than condole with you. 56

Scene VI.

FAINALL, LADY WISHFORT, MRS. MARWOOD.

Lady. Ay, ay, I do not doubt it, dear Marwood; no, no, I do not doubt it.

Fain. Well, madam; I have suffer'd my self to be overcome by the importunity of this lady your friend; and am content you shall enjoy your own proper estate during life, on condition you oblige your self never to marry, under such penalty as I think convenient.

Lady. Never to marry? 7

Fain. No more Sir Rowlands—the next imposture may not be so timely detected.

Mrs. Mar. That condition, I dare answer, my lady will consent to, without difficulty; she has already but too much experienc'd the perfidiousness of men.—Besides, madam, when we retire to our pastoral solitude we shall bid adieu to all other thoughts. 13

Lady. Ay, that's true; but in case of necessity, as of health, or some such emergency—

strictions weighing upon it. The passage alludes also to the early successes of the English in stenography. Cf. Schmid, *op. cit.*, p. 173.

¹Qtos. add, "or the woman that cries grey-pease." Summers cites the following passage from Davies, *Dramatic Miscellanies*, III. 365: "From King William's days to almost the end of George I, there was a fellow, who distinguished himself, above all others in crying flounders in the streets of London. His voice was loud, but not unmusical: the tones, in lengthening out the word flounders, were so happily varied, that people heard him with surprise and some degree of pleasure."

²overlooked.

Fain. O, if you are prescrib'd marriage, you shall be consider'd; I will only reserve to my self the power to chuse for you. If your physick be wholesome, it matters not who is your apothecary. Next, my wife shall settle on me the remainder of her fortune, not made over already; and for her maintenance depend entirely on my discretion. 21

Lady. This is most inhumanly savage; exceeding the barbarity of a Muscovite husband.

Fain. I learn'd it from his Czarish majesty's retinue,¹ in a winter evening's conference over brandy and pepper, amongst other secrets of matrimony and policy, as they are at present practis'd in the northern hemisphere. But this must be agreed unto, and that positively. Lastly, I will be endow'd, in right of my wife, with that six thousand pound which is the moiety of Mrs. Millamant's fortune in your possession; and which she has forfeited (as will appear by the last will and testament of your deceas'd husband, Sir Jonathan Wishfort) by her disobedience in contracting her self against your consent or knowledge; and by refusing the offer'd match with Sir Wilfull Witwoud, which you, like a careful aunt, had provided for her. 35

Lady. My nephew was *non compos*, and could not make his addresses.

Fain. I come to make demands—I'll hear no objections.

Lady. You will grant me time to consider?

Fain. Yes, while the instrument is drawing, to which you must set your hand 'till more sufficient deeds can be perfected: which I will take care shall be done with all possible speed. In the mean while I will go for the said instrument, and 'till my return you may ballance this matter in your own discretion. 44

Scene VII.

LADY WISHFORT, MRS. MARWOOD.

Lady. This insolence is beyond all precedent, all parallel; must I be subject to this merciless villain?

¹ Peter the Great had made a three months' visit in England early in 1698. Brandy and pepper was a drink that he enjoyed inflicting on his companions: cf. Merezhkovsky, *Peter and Alexis* (New York, 1906), p. 37.

Mrs. Mar. 'Tis severe indeed, madam, that you shou'd smart for your daughter's wantonness.

Lady. 'Twas against my consent that she marry'd this barbarian, but she wou'd have him, tho' her year was not out.—Ah! her first husband, my son Languish, wou'd not have carry'd it thus. Well, that was my choice, this is hers: she is match'd now with a witness.¹—I shall be mad!—Dear friend, is there no comfort for me? Must I live to be confiscated at this rebel-rate?—Here come two more of my Egyptian plagues too. II

Scene VIII.

[*To them*] MILLAMANT, SIR WILFULL.

Sir Wil. Aunt, your servant.

Lady. Out, *caterpillar*, call not me aunt! I know thee not!

Sir Wil. I confess I have been a little in disguise,² as they say.—'Sheart! and I'm sorry for't. What wou'd you have? I hope I committed no offence, aunt—and if I did I am willing to make satisfaction; and what can a man say fairer? If I have broke any thing I'll pay for't, an it cost a pound. And so let that content for what's past, and make no more words. For what's to come, to pleasure you I'm willing to marry my cousin. So pray let's all be friends; she and I are agreed upon the matter before a witness. IO

Lady. How's this, dear niece? Have I any comfort? Can this be true?

Milla. I am content to be a sacrifice to your repose, madam; and to convince you that I had no hand in the plot, as you were misinform'd, I have laid my commands on Mirabell to come in person, and be a witness that I give my hand to this flower of knighthood; and for the contract that pass'd between Mirabell and me, I have oblig'd him to make a resignation of it in your ladship's presence.—He is without, and waits your leave for admittance.

Lady. Well, I'll swear I am something reviv'd at this testimony of your obedience; but I cannot admit that traitor—I fear I cannot fortifie my self to support his appearance. He is as terrible to me

¹ palpably, with a vengeance.

² drunk.

as a Gorgon; if I see him I fear I shall turn to stone, petrify incessantly.¹ 24

Milla. If you disoblige him, he may resent your refusal, and insist upon the contract still. Then 'tis the last time he will be offensive to you.

Lady. Are you sure it will be the last time?—If I were sure of that—shall I never see him again?

Milla. Sir Wilfull, you and he are to travel together, are you not? 31

Sir Wil. 'Sheart, the gentleman's a civil gentleman, aunt, let him come in; why, we are sworn brothers and fellow-travellers.—We are to be Pylades and Orestes, he and I—he is to be my interpreter in foreign parts. He has been over-seas once already; and with *proviso* that I marry my cousin, will cross 'em once again, only to bear me company.—'Sheart, I'll call him in—an I set on't once, he shall come in; and see who'll hinder him.

[*Goes to the door and hems.*]²

Mrs. Mar. This is precious fooling, if it wou'd pass; but I'll know the bottom of it. 40

Lady. O dear Marwood, you are not going?

Mrs. Mar. Not far, madam; I'll return immediately.

Scene IX.³

LADY WISHFORT, MILLAMANT, SIR WILFULL, MIRABELL.

Sir Wil. Look up, man, I'll stand by you; 'sbud an she do frown, she can't kill you—besides—harkee, she dare not frown desperately, because her face is none of her own; 'sheart, an she shou'd, her forehead wou'd wrinkle like the coat of a cream-cheese; but mum for that, fellow-traveller. 5

Mira. If a deep sense of the many injuries I have offer'd to so good a lady, with a sincere remorse and a hearty contrition, can but obtain the least glance of compassion, I am too happy.—Ah

¹ Cf. p. 642, note 2.

² Qtos., "*Exit,*" instead of this stage-direction. Below, after "immediately," they read, "*Re-enter Sir Willfull and Mirabell.*" The change in C avoids a short scene of four lines.

³ Misnumbered VIII in C; the error continues through Scene XIII (XII).

madam, there was a time!—but let it be forgotten—I confess I have deservedly forfeited the high place I once held, of sighing at your feet. Nay, kill me not by turning from me in disdain—I come not to plead for favour—nay, not for pardon; I am a suppliant only for pity ¹—I am going where I never shall behold you more.—

Sir Wil. How, fellow-traveller! You shall go by your self then. 15

Mira. Let me be pitied first, and afterwards forgotten—I ask no more.

Sir Wil. By'r lady, a very reasonable request, and will cost you nothing, aunt!—Come, come, forgive and forget, aunt; why, you must, an you are a Christian. 20

Mira. Consider, madam, in reality you cou'd not receive much prejudice; it was an innocent device; tho' I confess it had a face of guiltiness.—It was at most an artifice which love contriv'd—and errors which love produces have ever been accounted venial. At least think it is punishment enough, that I have lost what in my heart I hold most dear, that to your cruel indignation I have offer'd up this beauty, and with her my peace and quiet; nay, all my hopes of future comfort. 28

Sir Wil. An he does not move me, wou'd I may ² never be o' the quorum! ³—An it were not as good a deed as to drink, to give her to him again—I wou'd I might never take shipping!—Aunt, if you don't forgive quickly, I shall melt, I can tell you that. My contract went no farther ⁴ than a little mouth-glew, and that's hardly dry—one doleful sigh more from my fellow-traveller, and 'tis dissolv'd. 35

Lady. Well, nephew, upon your account—ah, he has a false insinuating tongue!—Well, sir, I will stifle my just resentment at my nephew's request.—I will endeavour what I can to forget—but on *proviso* that you resign the contract with my neice immediately. 40

Mira. It is in writing, and with papers of concern; but I have sent my servant for it, and will deliver it to you, with all acknowledgments for your transcendent goodness.

¹ Qtos., "your pity."

² Qtos., "might."

³ That is, a justice of the peace.

⁴ Qtos., "further."

Lady. Oh, he has witchcraft in his eyes and tongue!—When I did not see him, I cou'd have brib'd a villain to his assassination; but his appearance rakes the embers which have so long lain smother'd in my breast.— [Aside.¹]

Scene X.

[To them] FAINALL, MRS. MARWOOD.

Fain. Your date of deliberation, madam, is expir'd. Here is the instrument; are you prepar'd to sign?

Lady. If I were prepar'd, I am not impower'd. My neice exerts a lawful claim, having match'd her self by my direction to Sir Wilfull. 5

Fain. That sham is too gross to pass on me—tho' 'tis impos'd on you, madam.

Milla. Sir, I have given my consent.

Mira. And, sir, I have resign'd my pretensions.

Sir Wil. And, sir, I assert my right; and will maintain it in defiance of you, sir, and of your instrument. S'heart, an you talk of an instrument, sir, I have an old fox² by my thigh shall hack your instrument of ram vellam³ to shreds, sir!—it shall not be sufficient for a *mittimus*⁴ or a tailor's measure. Therefore withdraw your instrument, sir, or by'r lady I shall draw mine. 15

Lady. Hold, nephew, hold!

Milla. Good Sir Wilfull, respite your valour.

Fain. Indeed? Are you provided of your⁵ guard, with your single beef-eater⁶ there? But I'm prepared for you, and insist upon my first proposal. You shall submit your own estate to my management, and absolutely make over my wife's to my sole use, as pursuant to the purport and tenor of this other covenant.—I

¹ Qtos., "*Apart.*"

² broadsword: cf. *Two Angry Women of Abington*, in *Rep. Eng. Com.* I. 581, l. 223.

³ parchment.

⁴ "A warrant . . . directed to the keeper of a prison, ordering him to receive into custody . . . the person . . . specified" (*N.E.D.*).

⁵ Qi, "a."

⁶ Yeoman of the Guard, in the royal household.

suppose, madam, your consent is not requisite in this case; nor, Mr. Mirabell, your resignation; nor, Sir Wilfull, your right.—You may draw your fox if you please, sir, and make a Bear-Garden flourish somewhere else; for here it will not avail. This, my Lady Wishfort,¹ must be subscrib'd, or your darling daughter's turn'd a-drift, like a leaky hulk, to sink or swim, as she and the current of this lewd town can agree. 29

Lady. Is there no means, no remedy, to stop my ruin? Ungrateful wretch! dost thou not owe thy being, thy subsistence, to my daughter's fortune? 32

Fain. I'll answer you when I have the rest of it in my possession.

Mira. But that you wou'd not accept of a remedy from my hands—I own I have not deserv'd you shou'd owe any obligation to me; or else perhaps I cou'd advise—² 36

Lady. O, what? what? To save me and my child from ruin, from want, I'll forgive all that's past; nay, I'll consent to any thing to come, to be deliver'd from this tyranny. 39

Mira. Ay, madam; but that is too late, my reward is intercepted. You have dispos'd of her who only cou'd have made me a compensation for all my services—but be it as it may, I am resolv'd I'll serve you; you shall not be wrong'd in this savage manner. 43

Lady. How! Dear Mr. Mirabell, can you be so generous at last! But it is not possible. Harkee, I'll break my nephew's match; you shall have my neice yet, and all her fortune, if you can but save me from this imminent danger. 47

Mira. Will you? I take you at your word. I ask no more. I must have leave for two criminals to appear.

Lady. Ay, ay; any body, any body! 50

Mira. Foible is one, and a penitent.

¹ Q1, "Wishfor't."

² C, "davisè" (misprint).

Scene XI.

[*To them*] MRS. FAINALL, FOIBLE, MINCING.

Mrs. Mar. O my shame! These corrupt things are brought ¹ hither to expose me. { [MIRA. and LADY go to
Mrs. FAIN. and FOIB.]
[*To FAIN.*

Fain. If it must all come out, why let ² 'em know it; 'tis but *The Way of the World.*³ That shall not urge me to relinquish or abate one tittle ⁴ of my terms; no, I will insist the more. 6

Foib. Yes indeed, madam; I'll take my Bible-oath of it.

Minc. And so will I, mem.

Lady. O Marwood, Marwood, art thou false? my friend deceive me? Hast thou been a wicked accomplice with that profligate man? II

Mrs. Mar. Have you so much ingratitude and injustice, to give credit against your friend to the aspersions of two such mercenary truls?

Minc. Mercenary, mem? I scorn your words. 'Tis true we found you and Mr. Fainall in the blue garret; by the same token, you swore us to secesie upon Messalinas's poems.⁵ Mercenary? No, if we wou'd have been mercenary, we shou'd have held our tongues; you wou'd have brib'd us sufficiently. 19

Fain. Go, you are an insignificant thing!—Well, what are you the better for this! Is this Mr. Mirabell's expedient? I'll be put off no longer.—You thing, that was a wife, shall smart for this! I will not leave thee ⁶ wherewithal to hide thy shame; your body shall be naked as your reputation. 24

Mrs. Fain. I despise you, and defie your malice!—You have aspers'd me wrongfully—I have prov'd your falsehood.—Go you

¹ Qtos., "are bought and brought."

² C repeats "let," by a misprint.

³ Q1, "*the way of the World*"; Q2C, "*the Way of the World*."

⁴ So Qtos.; C, "title."

⁵ No such book is known. Messalina was the dissolute wife of the Roman emperor Claudius. Mr. Dobrée probably solves the riddle when he comments: "Mincing was wittier than she knew. She meant *miscellaneous*."

⁶ Fainall in his rage mingles the contemptuous singular pronoun with the formal plural.

and your treacherous—I will not name it, but starve together—
perish! 28

Fain. Not while you are worth a groat, indeed, my dear.—
Madam, I'll be fool'd no longer.

Lady. Ah Mr. Mirabell, this is small comfort, the detection of
this affair. 32

Mira. O, in good time!—Your leave for the other offender and
penitent to appear, madam.

Scene XII.

[*To them*] WAITWELL, with a box of writings.

Lady. O Sir Rowland!—Well, rascal!

Wait. What your ladiship pleases.—I have brought the black-
box at last, madam.

Mira. Give it me.—Madam, you remember your promise.

Lady. Ay, dear sir. 5

Mira. Where are the gentlemen?

Wait. At hand, sir, rubbing their eyes—just risen from sleep.

Fain. S'death, what's this to me? I'll not wait your private
concerns.

Scene XIII.

[*To them*] PETULANT, WITWOUD.

Pet. How now? What's the matter? Who's hand's out?

Wit. Hey day! what are you all got together, like players at the
end of the last act?

Mira. You may remember, gentlemen, I once requested your
hands as witnesses to a certain parchment. 5

Wit. Ay, I do, my hand I remember.—Petulant set his mark.

Mira. You wrong him, his name is fairly written, as shall
appear.—You do not remember, gentlemen, any thing of what that
parchment contained? [Undoing the box.]

Wit. No. 10

Pet. Not I; I writ, I read nothing.

Mira. Very well, now you shall know.—Madam, your promise.

Lady. Ay, ay, sir, upon my honour.

Mira. Mr. Fainall, it is now time that you shou'd know that your lady, while she was at her own disposal, and before you had by your insinuations wheadl'd her out of a pretended settlement of the greatest part of her fortune—

17

Fain. Sir! pretended!

Mira. Yes, sir. I say that this lady, while a widow, having it seems receiv'd some cautions respecting your inconstancy and tyranny of temper, which from her own partial opinion and fondness of you she cou'd never have suspected—she did, I say, by the wholesome advice of friends and of sages learn'd ¹ in the laws of this land, deliver this same as her act and deed to me in trust, and to the uses within mention'd. You may read if you please—[*holding out the parchment*] tho' perhaps what is written ² on the back may serve your occasions.

27

Fain. Very likely, sir. What's here?—Damnation!³ [*Reads.*] “A deed of conveyance of the whole estate real of Arabella Languish, widow, in trust to Edward Mirabell.”—Confusion!

30

Mira. Even so, sir; 'tis *The Way of the World*, sir; of the widows of the world. I suppose this deed may bear an elder date than what you have obtain'd from your lady.

Fain. Perfidious fiend! then thus I'll be reveng'd.—

[*Offers to run at* MRS. FAIN.

Sir Wil. Hold, sir! now you may make your Bear-Garden flourish somewhere else, sir.

36

Fain. Mirabell, you shall hear of this, sir; be sure you shall.—Let me pass, oaf!⁴

Mrs. Fain. Madam, you seem to stifle your resentment; you had better give it vent.

40

Mrs. Mar. Yes, it shall have vent—and to your confusion; or I'll perish in the attempt.

¹ Q1, “learned.”

² Qtos., “inscrib'd.”

³ So Q1; Q2C, “Damnation?”

⁴ Cf. p. 569, l. 5. Qtos. add, “Exit.”

Scene the Last.

LADY WISHFORT, MILLAMANT, MIRABELL, MRS. FAINALL, SIR WILFULL, PETULANT, WITWOOD, FOIBLE, MINCING, WAITWELL.

Lady. O daughter, daughter, 'tis plain thou hast inherited thy mother's prudence.

Mrs. Fain. Thank Mr. Mirabell, a cautious friend, to whose advice all is owing.

Lady. Well, Mr. Mirabell, you have kept your promise—and I must perform mine.—First I pardon for your sake Sir Rowland there, and Foible.—The next thing is to break the matter to my nephew—and how to do that— 8

Mira. For that, madam, give your self no trouble—let me have your consent.—Sir Wilfull is my friend; he has had compassion upon lovers, and generously engag'd a volunteer in this action, for our service; and now designs to prosecute his travels. 12

Sir Wil. 'Sheart, aunt, I have no mind to marry. My cousin's a fine lady, and the gentleman loves her, and she loves him, and they deserve one another; my resolution is to see foreign parts—I have set on't—and when I'm set on't I must do't. And if these two gentlemen wou'd travel too, I think they may be spar'd. 17

Pet. For my part, I say little—I think things are best off or on.¹

Wit. I gad I understand nothing of the matter—I'm in a maze yet, like a dog in a dancing-school. 20

Lady. Well, sir, take her, and with her all the joy I can give you.

Milla. Why does not the man take me? Wou'd you have me give my self to you over again?

Mira. Ay, and over and over again; [*kisses her hand.*]² I wou'd have you as often as possibly I can. Well, Heav'n grant I love you not too well; that's all my fear. 26

Sir Wil. 'Sheart, you'll have time³ enough to toy after you're marry'd; or if you will toy now, let us have a dance in the mean time, that we who are not lovers may have some other employment besides looking on. 30

¹ either way.

² Q1 inserts "for" before the stage-direction.

³ Qtos., "have him time."

Mira. With all my heart, dear Sir Wilfull. What shall we do for musick?

Foib. O sir, some that were provided for Sir Rowland's entertainment are yet within call. [*A dance.*]

Lady. As I am a person, I can hold out no longer—I have wasted my spirits so to day already, that I am ready to sink under the fatigue; and I cannot but have some fears upon me yet, that my son Fainall will pursue some desperate course. 38

Mira. Madam, disquiet not your self on that account; to my knowledge his circumstances are such, he must of force comply. For my part, I will contribute all that in me lyes to a reunion; in the mean time, madam, [*to MRS. FAIN.*] let me before these witnesses restore to you this deed of trust; it may be a means, well manag'd, to make you live easily together.

From hence let those be warn'd, who mean to wed; 45
Lest mutual falshood stain the bridal-bed;
For each deceiver to his cost may find,
That marriage frauds too oft are paid in kind.

[*Exeunt omnes.*]

Epilogue

Spoken by Mrs. Bracegirdle

After our *Epilogue* this crowd dismisses,
I'm ¹ thinking how this play'll be pull'd to pieces.
But pray consider, e'er you doom its fall,
How hard a thing 'twould be to please you all.
There are some criticks so with spleen diseas'd, 5
They scarcely come inclining to be pleas'd:
And sure he must have more than mortal skill,
Who pleases any one against his will.
Then, all bad poets we are sure are foes,
And how their number's swell'd, the town well knows: 10
In shoals I've mark'd 'em judging in the pit;
Tho' they're on no pretence for judgment fit,
But that they have been damn'd for want of wit. }
Since when, they, by their own offences taught,
Set up for spies on plays, and finding fault.² 15
Others there are whose malice we'd prevent;
Such who watch plays with scurrilous intent }
To mark out who by characters are meant. }
And tho' no perfect likeness they can trace,
Yet each pretends to know the copy'd face. 20
These with false glosses feed their own ill-nature,³
And turn to libel what was meant a satire.
May such malicious fops this fortune find,
To think themselves alone the fools design'd:
If any are so arrogantly vain, 25
To think they singly can support a scene, }
And furnish fool enough to entertain. }

¹ Qr, "In."

² Cf. p. 570, l. 30.

³ Colloquially pronounced *nater*; *satire* was probably pronounced like *satyr*, with which it is continually confused in spelling in Congreve's time. Dryden has the same rhyme in *The Second Part of Absalom and Achitophel*, ll. 421-22.

For well the learn'd and the judicious know }
That satire scorns to stoop so meanly low, }
As any one abstracted fop to show. } 30
For, as when painters form a matchless face,
They from each fair one catch some diff'rent grace;
And shining features in one portrait blend,
To which no single beauty must pretend:
So poets oft do in one piece expose 35
Whole *belles assemblées*¹ of *cocquets* and *beaux*.

¹ Qtos., "assembles."

George Farquhar

THE RECRUITING OFFICER

*Edited with Critical Essay and
Notes by Tucker Brooke, Pro-
fessor in Yale University*

CRITICAL ESSAY

Life.—Our only trustworthy source of information concerning the early life of Farquhar is found in the following record of Trinity College, Dublin, for the year 1694:—

Die	Georgius	filius	Annos	Natus	Ibidem	Eu.
17 ^o	Farquhare	Gulielmi	17	London-	educatus	Lloyd
Julii	Sizator	Farquhare		derry	sub	
		Clerici			magistro	
					Walker	

From this we learn that the dramatist was born at Londonderry in North Ireland about 1677, the son of a Protestant clergyman, William Farquhare, and that, after preliminary schooling at Londonderry, he matriculated at Trinity as sizar or beneficiary of the foundation, on July 17, 1694 (the academic year began July 9), and was assigned to the tutorship of Master Eugene Lloyd.¹

Like Swift, who preceded him at Trinity by a dozen years, and like Goldsmith, who just fifty years later followed him thither, Farquhar left the college without a degree. Indeed, his residence lasted less than a year and a half, and seems to have been remembered chiefly for certain acts of frivolity which aroused the wrath of the authorities. After a brief period of service as "corrector of the press" the young Farquhar secured employment (in 1696) as an actor at the Smock Alley Theatre in Dublin, in the company headed by Robert Wilks. He is said to have made his *début* in *Othello*, and in the title rôle, which, if it can be true, would indicate that the part of the Moor was then regarded as much less important than that of Iago. He is reported to have performed the small part of Lenox in *Macbeth* and to have had somewhat more responsible assignments in plays by Beaumont and Fletcher (Dion in *Philaster* and Young Loveless in *The Scornful Lady*) and by the Restoration dramatists.

Farquhar's career as actor ended suddenly, according to anecdote, while he was representing Guyomar in the last act of Dryden's tragedy, *The Indian Emperor*. Absent-mindedly he assaulted his fellow-actor,

¹ The catalogue of Graduates of Trinity College, Dublin, compiled by J. H. Todd, shows that Eugene, or Owen, Lloyd graduated B.A. in 1681, became fellow in 1685, B.D. 1695, D.D. 1697.

Mr. Price (the Vasquez of the play), with a real sword instead of a stage weapon, and inflicted a wound which nearly proved mortal. The poet's tenderheartedness (as the reporters say), perhaps reinforced by the prudence of his colleagues, then caused him to look with favor upon Wilks' suggestion that his talents might be more profitably employed in writing plays than in acting them. Wilks advised him to try his fortune in London and made him a loan of ten pounds, to which was added the profits of a "free benefit" performance at the Dublin theatre.

It may be assumed that Farquhar reached London in 1697, at the age of about twenty. The period was not highly propitious for the advent of a new dramatist. Vanbrugh's popular early comedies, *The Relapse* (1696) and *The Provok'd Wife* (1697), were crowding out competitors; and the reaction against comic licentiousness, articulate in Jeremy Collier's *View of the Immorality and Profaneness of the English Stage* (March, 1698), was approaching its height. In spite of this Farquhar's first play, *Love and a Bottle*, was produced at Drury Lane in December, 1698, and enjoyed a successful run of nine nights. About the same time the author received, by the gift of the Earl of Orrery, a lieutenant's commission in the army, to which allusion is made in the Prologue to *Love and a Bottle*:

Come on then; Foot to Foot be boldly set,
And our young Author's new Commission wet.

A year later, about the close of the year 1699, Farquhar established his position as one of the leading playwrights of the age by his second comedy, *The Constant Couple, or A Trip to the Jubilee*, which was performed fifty-three times and remained one of the stock favorites through the eighteenth century. During the latter half of 1700 Farquhar visited Holland—doubtless on the profits of *The Constant Couple* and for the benefit of his health, which appears to have been already poor. Two letters to a friend, "Dear Sam," are dated respectively from "The Brill, August the 10th, 1700, New Stile" and from "Leyden, October 15, 1700." To the same general period belong several more or less serious love affairs, the progress of which can be dubiously guessed at by means of letters of the dramatist. One of the ladies addressed has been conjecturally identified with the great actress, Ann Oldfield, who later created the parts of Silvia in *The Recruiting Officer* and Mrs. Sullen in *The Beaux' Stratagem*, and whose latent talent Farquhar is said to have discovered when he overheard her reading *The Scornful Lady* to her aunt, hostess of the Mitre Tavern.

In 1701 Farquhar produced *Sir Harry Wildair*, an unworthy sequel to *The Constant Couple*, in which the characters of the earlier play degenerate and the plot is spoiled by excessive improbability. Early in 1702 he brought

out his revision of Fletcher's popular *Wild-Goose Chase* under the title of *The Inconstant, or The Way to Win Him*. The most remarkable innovation in this piece is a sensational situation in the last act, which, as Farquhar explains in his preface, "is an Adventure of Chevalier de Chastillon in Paris, and Matter of Fact." In 1702 also appeared a small volume called *Love and Business*, consisting of poems and letters by Farquhar, to which he appended his witty and incisive "Discourse upon Comedy in Reference to the English Stage." The production, on December 14, 1702, of *The Twin Rivals*, a melodrama, brought to a close the first of Farquhar's two periods of dramatic composition, a period of extraordinary copiousness and variety when compared with what any of his chief rivals produced in equally brief time.

Between 1702 and 1706 Farquhar accomplished no literary work except a poor epic in six cantos, entitled *Barcellona*, recounting the contemporaneous successes of Peterborough in Spain;¹ and a one-act farce called *The Stage Coach*, which he adapted from the French with the aid of Motteux, the translator of Rabelais and Cervantes. In 1703 he had married a lady from Yorkshire, of whom we know little except that her name was Margaret, that she bore him two daughters and survived him, and that she brought him no fortune. The early biographers report that his marriage was due to a trick which ought not to have deceived a comic dramatist. The lady fell in love with him, represented herself as a country heiress, and by means of this delusion gained his hand. He apparently accepted the situation like a humorist and continued to treat his penniless wife with civility and good feeling. His contemporaries regarded the story as evidencing an almost superhuman nobility of character.

Farquhar's fallow years, 1703-05, were spent in large part outside of London. We are told that he was in Dublin in 1704, where he reverted for the nonce to his old profession of acting and attempted to perform the main rôle of Sir Harry Wildair in his *Constant Couple*. The "benefit" gratuity brought him one hundred pounds, but he was said to have "failed greatly in his performance," in fact to have "murdered his own Sir Harry Wildair on the Dublin Stage." Meantime the War of the Spanish Succession was in progress and the early victories of Marlborough and Prince Eugene were being reported. Farquhar's commission in the army did not cause him to see active service abroad, any more than did that of his contemporary, Dick Steele; but the war was much more significantly reflected in Farquhar's later works than in Steele's. Like Aimwell and Archer in *The Beaux' Stratagem*, Farquhar appears at one time to have

¹ Barcelona was captured, September 28, 1705.

had a serious notion to "embark for Holland, bid adieu to Venus and welcome Mars." It is fair to assume that his health, as well as the necessities of his family, already precluded such employment. In any case we know that he was actively and happily engaged, within a year of Blenheim, in the duty of recruiting soldiers for the war. The preface to *The Recruiting Officer* thanks his Shropshire friends for their co-operation, which had "made recruiting, which is the greatest fatigue upon earth to others, to be the greatest pleasure in the world to me." An undertone of victorious war abroad fills the last two comedies—recruiting in Shrewsbury, French prisoners in Lichfield—and this adds much to their vigorous and hearty spirit.

The Recruiting Officer, frankly suggested by the author's late experiences, was produced at Drury Lane, April 8, 1706. It proved an immediate and lasting success, but the author's returns from it were quite insufficient to relieve him from his increasing financial worries. In order to pay his debts, he sold his commission, encouraged, it is said, by a subsequently unfulfilled promise of the Duke of Ormond to procure him another, and he sank at once into extreme destitution and despondency. The story runs that his constant friend, Wilks, found him in a garret, despairing, and encouraged him to resort once more to his only remaining source of income. In such circumstances, already attacked by mortal sickness, Farquhar rapidly sketched and wrote his tranquil masterpiece, *The Beaux' Stratagem*, which was first acted in the spring of 1707, about eleven months after the appearance of *The Recruiting Officer*. It is said to have been completed in six weeks and to have been written for the most part in bed. The Epilogue alludes with rather brutal directness to the dying state of the author:

If to our play your judgment can't be kind,
Let its expiring author pity find:
Survey his mournful case with melting eyes,
Nor let the bard be damn'd before he dies.

Farquhar was buried in the churchyard of St. Martin's in the Fields, May 3, 1707, and his name entered in the church register as "Mr. George Falkwere." He was about thirty years of age. The last sentence he wrote for publication was doubtless the "Advertisement" in four lines to the printed edition of *The Beaux' Stratagem*, in which he apologizes for faults in the play, "which my illness prevented the amending of," and acknowledges "the friendly and indefatigable care of Mr. Wilks, to whom I chiefly owe the success of the play." To Wilks he consigned, in a pathetic private letter, the care of his widow and orphans.

Farquhar's Position in English Comedy.—It has long been conventional to associate Farquhar with Wycherley (1640–1715), Vanbrugh (1664–1726), and Congreve (1670–1729) as an author of “Restoration Comedy.” The term is strictly correct only for Wycherley, who was born thirty-seven years before Farquhar. The latter, five years younger than Steele or Addison, and ten years younger than Swift, belongs to a much newer world than Wycherley's, and owes his significance as a dramatist to qualities which connect him spiritually, no less than chronologically, with the time of Queen Anne rather than with that of Charles the Second.

Perhaps it is a more romantic variety and a greater genuineness of feeling which best distinguish Farquhar from all the older playwrights I have named. As compared with Wycherley, Vanbrugh, or Congreve, he seems more a man of the world and less a man about town. The London scene counts for less in him than in the others. In his two masterpieces he forsakes it altogether; and even in his earlier plays he makes it appear less the inevitable setting for all the interesting things in life. When Farquhar's scenes do play in the conventional London drawing-room, he is apt to introduce atmosphere from the world outside. In his earliest comedy the hero, Roebuck, has just arrived from Ireland, along with several others of the cast; in his second Sir Harry Wildair and Lady Lurewell are just back from Paris, Colonel Standard just back from the wars—and already prepared to cry: “Away for Hungary to-morrow morning!”—while Clincher Junior is just up from the country and Clincher Senior on the point of setting off for the Jubilee at Rome.

Perhaps it follows from this that Farquhar deals less than the others with fixed types of thought and action. His greater richness in the kinds of characters he introduces has been often noted. His variety of plot and structure is equally characteristic. In the eight years or less of his literary career he explored a wider intellectual province than any other comic dramatist of his age. If *Love and a Bottle* reminds us chiefly of Wycherley, *The Constant Couple* foreshadows Lessing, and *The Beaux' Stratagem* Goldsmith. In fact the dynamic strenuousness of Farquhar's work seems almost

spectacular when viewed beside the desultory manner of his contemporaries. Wycherley and Congreve were lazy men. In a life of seventy-five years Wycherley produced four comedies, and little else; in a life of nearly sixty years Congreve produced four comedies and a tragedy. Vanbrugh and Steele led more active lives, but neither devoted himself with much serious purpose to the business of a dramatist. Farquhar on the other hand, dying as prematurely as Marlowe or as Shelley, left behind him seven comedies, which in the verve, variety, and flexibility of their total impression seem almost Elizabethan rather than Augustan.

Better scenes Farquhar could not, of course, write than the best of Congreve's or Vanbrugh's; nor did he produce a play more perfect in its particular kind than *The Country Wife*, *The Way of the World*, or *The Confederacy*. His great praise is that—without falling far behind his rivals in their peculiar field—he touched upon more various strings and injected into his plays the abiding virtue of a healthier and more fragrant humanity.

His Development as a Dramatist.—Professor Strauss remarks¹ that Farquhar's work "divides itself obviously and logically into three periods. In the first, which includes *Love and a Bottle*, *The Constant Couple*, and *Sir Harry Wildair*, he continued in the tradition of the times and wrote comedy of manners. In the second, he cast about and experimented in the endeavor to rescue comedy from the censure of the Puritans. The result was *The Inconstant* and *The Twin Rivals*, both failures, significant of his inability at that time to reform comedy and yet please the public. In his last year of life, constituting the third period, he produced two comedies, utterly unlike each other as to plot, situations, and characters, but far more unlike his previous efforts and those of his contemporaries."

Perhaps one might rather close the first period with *The Constant Couple* and the author's journey to Holland in 1700. In *Love and a Bottle* and *The Constant Couple* Farquhar achieved a distinguished popular success without much superficial departure from the comic pattern to which Etherege, Wycherley, and Congreve had accustomed their audiences. Yet even these early plays vary in

¹ *Belles Lettres* edition, p. xxxiii.

several important respects from the typical comedy of manners. As already said, the London scene is less essential, and so is the social position of the characters. That is, they are less strictly divided into fashionable and unfashionable types. Sparkling dialogue as such bears less of the play's weight, and "heart interest" much more. Farquhar is more concerned that his favorite characters shall seem likable and shall attain real happiness at the end than are the writers of regular comedy of manners. Cynicism with him is seldom more than a conversational device. In the conduct of his plots and the actions of his characters he shows himself, even from the beginning, an optimist and a romanticist.

A writer with such tendencies would be quickly susceptible to the moral reaction led by Collier. I think that Farquhar's conscientious effort to separate himself from the spirit of the comedy of manners can be observed in his third play, *Sir Harry Wildair*, as well as in *The Inconstant* and *The Twin Rivals*. The immediate result, as seen in *Sir Harry Wildair*, is disastrous to art. In this sequel to *The Constant Couple*, which naturally retains the outer form of comedy of manners, the saving amorality of the best Restoration comedy is quite gone. The inconstancy and selfishness of Sir Harry and Lady Lurewell have no longer much grace, and the risqué scenes between them are heavily ugly. Morality is championed by throwing the sympathy to the virtuous husband of Lurewell and to Sir Harry's wife, and by introducing a Puritan spokesman in Standard's attractive sailor brother, Captain Fireball.

In *The Inconstant* Farquhar somewhat similarly flattened out and moralized the gay recklessness of Fletcher's *Wild-Goose Chase*, producing a more decorous and less amusing play; and in *The Twin Rivals*, openly professing moral intention, he leaned heavily upon melodrama (already employed in the close of *Sir Harry Wildair* and *The Inconstant*) to wean his hearers from the flippant lewdness of the earlier mode. *The Twin Rivals*, like *The Inconstant*, was coldly received. Farquhar ascribed the comparative failure of the earlier piece to a momentary penchant of the public for French dancers and that of the other to its serious morality. In his preface to *The Twin Rivals* he acknowledges the

essential justice of Collier's criticism of the English stage, and says: "I have therefore in this Piece endeavour'd to shew, that an *English Comedy* may answer the strictness of Poetical Justice." *The Twin Rivals* is, in truth, an interesting melodrama, important as showing the change in dramatic fashion, and it carries poetic justice even to excess, but the characters are hardened and the plot repellent beyond the custom of Farquhar, or almost of Wycherley.

These three transitional plays are all inferior to *The Constant Couple*, and in some ways even to *Love and a Bottle*; but they bear witness to Farquhar's steady persistence at the task which his profession of dramatist imposed upon him—the task of adapting the inherited form of comedy to the real principles of his own nature and the changing standards of his time. The fusion was complete only when, after three years of fallow growth among fresh and lively country scenes, he again essayed drama and achieved the easy naturalness of *The Recruiting Officer* and *The Beaux' Stratagem*. It is essential to observe that, however we may please to divide his work into "periods," Farquhar's fundamental principles remained constant. The purpose of his work was always to present an optimistic, romantic, and ultimately moral interpretation of life by means of scenes gayly mirroring the mercurial and often licentious society of his age.

The Recruiting Officer is the most natural and hearty of Farquhar's plays. It is the one which contains most of his own experience and least of that society world in which, for all his adaptability, he was never so much at home as Wycherley, Congreve, and Vanbrugh. Compared with *The Beaux' Stratagem*, *The Recruiting Officer* seems less brilliant and more solid. Its characters are more attractive and more various, and its plot, though less ingenious, is more plausible, and makes a much stronger appeal to the sympathies, as opposed to the intellectual curiosity, of the reader.

The Text.—On February 12, 1706, nearly two months before the first production at Drury Lane, Farquhar sold the right to print *The Recruiting Officer* to the publisher Lintot for £16 2s 6d. Two editions appeared in 1706 and a third in 1707. The first quarto (Q), probably set up before the acting text was established, presents a

version inferior to that of the other of the same year, which is marked on the title-page as "The Second Edition Corrected." The alterations were evidently made by the author, who in many places has slightly revised the wording and in about a dozen has judiciously omitted or condensed ineffective bits of dialogue. Three more important changes also were made, as follows:—

(1) Near the opening of Act III, scene i, the first quarto makes Plume sing the following song, which was later omitted:

A SONG

I

Come, fair one, be kind,
 You never shall find
 A fellow so fit for a lover:
 The world shall view
 My passion for you,
 But never your passion discover.

2

I still will complain
 Of your frowns and disdain,
 Tho I revel thro' all your charms:
 The world shall declare,
 That I die with despair,
 When I only die in your arms.

3

I still will adore
 And love more and more,
 But, by Jove, if you chance to prove cruel:
 I'll get me a miss
 That freely will kiss,
 Tho I afterwards drink water-gruel.

(2) In Act IV, scene i, lines 56–79 of the final text are a substitution for the following passage of French dialogue in the first quarto:

Plume. Thou art a bloody impudent fellow—let her go, I say.

Sil. Do you let her go.

Plume. *Entendez vous Francois, mon petit garson?*

Sil. Ouy.

Plume. Si voulez vous donc vous enroller dans ma compagnie, la damoiselle sera a vous.

Sil. Avez vous couche avec elle?

Plume. Non.

Sil. Assurance?

Plume. Ma foi.

Sil. C'est assez—Je serai votre soldat.

Plume. La prenez donc.—I'll change a woman for a man at any time.

(3) At the opening of Act V the first quarto has the following brief but daring scene, which was entirely excised in the second and later editions:

ACT V

Scene, an Antichamber, with a Perrywig, Hat and Sword upon the Table.

Enter SILVIA in her Night Cap.

Sil. I have rested but indifferently, and I believe my Bedfellow was as little pleas'd; poor Rose! here she comes—

Enter ROSE.

Good morrow, my dear, how d'ye this Morning?

Rose. Just as I was last Night, neither better nor worse for you.

Sil. What's the matter? did you not like your Bedfellow?

Rose. I don't know whether I had a Bedfellow or not.

Sil. Did not I lye with you?

Rose. No—I wonder you could have the Conscience to ruine a poor Girl for nothing.

Sil. I have sav'd thee from Ruin, Child; don't be melancholy, I can give you as many fine things as the Captain can.

Rose. But you can't I'm sure.

[Knocking at the Door.

Sil. Ods! my Accoutrements *[Puts on her Perriwig, Hat and Sword.]* Who's at the Door?

Without. Open the Door, or we'll break it down.

Sil. Patience a little—

Enter Constable and Mob.

Con. We have 'um, we have 'um, the Duck and the Mallard both in the Decoy.

Sil. What means this Riot? Stand off *[Draws]* the Man dies that comes within reach of my Point.

Con. That is not the Point, Master, put up your Sword or I shall knock you down; and so I command the Queen's Peace.

Sil. You are some Blockhead of a Constable.

Con. I am so, and have a Warrant to apprehend the Bodies of you and your Whore there.

Rose. Whore! never was poor Woman so abus'd.

Enter BULLOCK, unbutton'd.

Bull. What's matter now?—O! Mr. *Bridewell*, what brings you abroad so early?

Con. This, Sir—[*Lays hold of BULLOCK*] you're the Queen's Prisoner.

Bull. Wauns, you lye, Sir, I'm the Queen's Soldier.

Con. No matter for that, you shall go before Justice *Ballance*.

Sil. *Ballance!* 'tis what I wanted—Here Mr. Constable, I resign my Sword.

Rose. Can't you carry us before the Captain, Mr. *Bridewell*.

Con. Captain! ha'n't you got your Belly full of Captains yet? Come, come, make way there. *[Exeunt.*

The present text is based upon the copy of the second quarto in the Library of Yale University. Since, however, the present edition does not attempt a diplomatic reproduction of Q₂, I have, while retaining the spelling, not adhered to the original use of capital letters, which is illustrated in the passage from Q₁ just quoted.

TUCKER BROOKE.

THE
Recruiting Officer.

A
COMEDY.

As it is Acted at the

THEATRE ROYAL

IN

DRURY - LANE,

By Her MAJESTY'S Servants.

Written by Mr. FARQUHAR.

The Second Edition Corrected.

—*Captique dolis, donisque coacti.*
Virg. Lib. II. Æneid.

LONDON:

Printed for BERNARD LINTOTT at the *Cross Keys* next
Nando's Coffee-House near *Temple-Bar*.

Price 1s. 6d.

The Latin motto (“ensnared by wiles and coerced by gifts”) is an adaptation of Virgil’s “captique dolis, lacrimisque coactis” (*Aeneid*, II, 196): “ensnared by wiles and forced tears.”

TO
All Friends round

THE
WREKIN ¹

My Lords and Gentlemen,

Instead of the mercenary expectations that attend addresses of this nature, I humbly beg that this may be received as an acknowledgement for the favours you have already confer'd. I have transgress'd the rules of dedication in offering you any thing in that style without first asking your leave: but the entertainment I found in Shropshire commands me to be grateful, and that's all I intend.

'Twas my good fortune to be order'd some time ago into the place which is made the scene of this comedy. I was a perfect stranger to every thing in Salop but its character of loyalty, the number of its inhabitants, the alacrity of the gentlemen in recruiting the army, with their generous and hospitable reception of strangers.

This character I found so amply verify'd in every particular that you made recruiting, which is the greatest fatigue upon earth to others, to be the greatest pleasure in the world to me.

The kingdom cannot shew better bodies of men, better inclinations for the service, more generosity, more good understanding, nor more politeness than is to be found at the foot of the Wrekin.

Some little turns of humour that I met with almost within the shade of that famous hill gave the rise to this comedy; and people were apprehensive that, by the example of some others, I would make the town merry at the expence of the country-gentlemen. But they forgot that I was to write a comedy, not a libel; and that whilst I held to nature no person of any character in your country cou'd suffer by being expos'd. I have drawn the justice and the clown in their *puris naturalibus*; the one an apprehensive, sturdy, brave blockhead; and the other a worthy, honest, generous gentleman, hearty in his country's cause, and of as good an understanding as I could give him, which, I must confess, is far short of his own.

I humbly beg leave to interline a word or two of the adventures of the

¹ A conspicuous hill, 1300 feet high, between Wellington and Shrewsbury.

Recruiting Officer upon the stage. Mr. Rich, who commands the company for which those recruits were rais'd, has desir'd me to acquit him before the world of a charge which he thinks lies heavy upon him, for acting this play on Mr. Durfey's third night.¹

Be it known unto all men by these presents, that it was my act and deed, or rather Mr. Durfey's; for he wou'd play his third night against the first of mine. He brought down a huge flight of frightful birds upon me, when (heaven knows) I had not a feather'd fowl in my play, except one single Kite. But I presently made Plume a bird, because of his name, and Brazen another, because of the feather in his hat; and with these three I engag'd his whole empire, which I think was as great a Wonder as any in the Sun.

But to answer his complaints more gravely: The season was far advanc'd; the officers that made the greatest figures in my play were all commanded to their posts abroad, and waited only for a wind, which might possibly turn in less time than a day. And I know none of Mr. Durfey's birds that had posts abroad but his *Woodcocks*, and their season is over; so that he might put off a day with less prejudice than the *Recruiting Officer* cou'd; who has this farther to say for himself, that he was posted before the other spoke, and could not with credit recede from his station.

These and some other rubs this comedy met with before it appear'd. But on the other hand, it had powerful helps to set it forward: The Duke of Ormond encourag'd the author, and the Earl of Orrery approv'd the play. My *Recruits* were reviewed by my *General* and my *Collonel*, and could not fail to *pass Muster*; and still to add to my success, they were rais'd among my Friends round the Wrekin.

This health has the advantage over our other celebrated toasts, never to grow worse for the wearing: 'tis a lasting beauty, old without age, and common without scandal. That you may live long to set it cheerfully round, and to enjoy the abundant pleasures of your fair and plentiful country, is the hearty wish of,

My Lords and Gentlemen,

Your most obliged

and most obedient Servant,

Geo. Farquhar.

¹ Thomas Durfey's comic opera, *Wonders in the Sun, or the Kingdom of the Birds*, was first acted at the rival theatre on April 5, 1706. On the third night, which coincided with the first of *The Recruiting Officer*, the profits of the performance went to the author. In the next paragraph Farquhar jokes at the two titles of Durfey's play.

THE Prologue

*In antient times, when Hellen's fatal charms
Rous'd the contending universe to arms,
The Græcian council happily deposes
The sly Ulysses forth—to raise recruits.
The artful captain found, without delay, 5
Where great Achilles a deserter lay.
Him Fate hath warn'd to shun the Trojan blows:
Him Greece requir'd—against their Trojan foes.
All the recruiting arts were needful here,
To raise this great, this tim'rous volunteer. 10
Ulysses well could talk—he stirs, he warms
The warlike youth.—He listens to the charms
Of plunder, fine lac'd coats, and glitt'ring arms. }
Ulysses caught the young aspiring boy,
And listed him who wrought the fate of Troy. 15
Thus by recruiting was bold Hector slain:
Recruiting thus fair Hellen did regain.
If for one Hellen such prodigious things
Were acted, that they ev'n listed kings;
If for one Hellen's artful, vicious charms, 20
Half the transported world was found in arms;
What for so many Hellens may we dare,
Whose minds, as well as faces, are so fair?
If by one Hellen's eyes old Greece cou'd find
It's Homer fir'd to write—ev'n Homer blind; 25
The Britains sure beyond compare may write,
That view so many Hellens every night.*

Dramatis Personæ

MEN

MR. BALLANCE, } MR. SCALE, } MR. SCRUPLE, } MR. WORTHY, <i>a Gentleman of Shropshire,</i> CAPTAIN PLUME, } CAPTAIN BRAZEN, } KITE, <i>Serjeant to PLUME,</i> BULLOCK, <i>a Country Clown,</i> COSTAR PEAR-MAIN, } THO. APPLE-TREE, }	Three Justices, Two Recruiting Officers, Two Recruits,	{ <i>Mr. Keen.</i> { <i>Mr. Phillips.</i> { <i>Mr. Kent.</i> { <i>Mr. Williams.</i> { <i>Mr. Wilks.</i> { <i>Mr. Cibber.</i> { <i>Mr. Estcourt.</i> { <i>Mr. Bullock.</i> { <i>Mr. Norris.</i> { <i>Mr. Fairbank.</i>
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WOMEN

MELINDA, <i>a Lady of Fortune,</i> SILVIA, <i>Daughter to BALLANCE, in love with PLUME,</i> LUCY, <i>MELINDA'S Maid,</i> ROSE, <i>a Country Wench,</i>	<i>Mrs. Rogers.</i> <i>Mrs. Oldfield.</i> <i>Mrs. Sapsford.</i> <i>Mrs. Mounifort.</i>
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Constable, Recruits, Mob, Servants, and Attendants.

SCENE SHREWSBURY.

THE Recruiting Officer

Act I. Scene I. Scene, *The Market-Place*. *Drum
beats the Granadeer-March.*¹

Enter SERJEANT KITE, *follow'd by the Mob.*

Kite [*making a speech*]. If any gentlemen souldiers, or others, have a mind to serve her majesty and pull down the French king; if any prentices have severe masters, any children have undutiful parents; if any servants have too little wages, or any husband too much wife: let them repair to the noble Serjeant Kite, at the sign of the *Raven* in this good town of Shrewsbury, and they shall receive present relief and entertainment.—Gentlemen, I don't beat my drums here to insnare or inveigle any man; for you must know, gentlemen, that I am a man of honour. Besides, I don't beat up for common souldiers; no, I list only granadeers, granadeers, gentlemen.—Pray, gentlemen, observe this cap—This is the cap of honour; it dubs a man a gentleman in the drawing of a tricker:² and he that has the good fortune to be born six foot high was born to be a great man.—Sir, will you give me leave to try this cap upon your head? 15

Mob. Is there no harm in't? Won't the cap list me?

Kite. No, no; no more than I can.—Come, let me see how it becomes you.

Mob. Are you sure there be no conjuration in it? no Gunpowder Plot upon me? 20

Kite. No, no, friend; don't fear, man.

¹ A march named after the Grenadier Guards. Mr. Archer points out that it was printed as early as 1686 in Playford's *Dancing Master*. The seventeenth edition of this popular book appeared in 1721.

² trigger.

Mob. My mind misgives me plaguily.—Let me see it.—[*Going to put it on.*] It smells woundily of sweat and brimstone. Pray, serjeant, what writing is this upon the face of it?

Kite. The crown,¹ or the bed of honour. 25

Mob. Pray now, what may be that same bed of honour?

Kite. O! a mighty large bed! bigger by half than the great bed of *Ware*—ten thousand people may lye in it together, and never feel one another.

Mob. My wife and I wou'd do well to lye in't, for we don't care for feeling one another.—But do folk sleep sound in this same bed of honour? 32

Kite. Sound! ay, so sound that they never wake.

Mob. Wauns! I wish again that my wife lay there.

Kite. Say you so? Then I find, brother— 35

Mob. Brother! hold there, friend; I am no kindred to you that I know of yet.—Look'ee, serjeant, no coaxing, no wheedling, d'ye see! If I have a mind to list, why so.—If not, why, 'tis not so.—Therefore take your cap and your brothership back again, for I am not dispos'd at this present writing.—No coaxing, no brothering me, faith. 41

Kite. I coax! I wheedle! I'm above it. Sir, I have serv'd twenty campaigns—But, sir, you talk well, and I must own that you are a man, every inch of you, a pretty young sprightly fellow.—I love a fellow with a spirit; but I scorn to coax; 'tis base. Tho' I must say that never in my life have I seen a man better built. How firm and strong he treads! He steps like a castle—but I scorn to wheedle any man.—Come, honest lad, will you take share of a pot? 49

Mob. Nay, for that matter, I'll spend my penny with the best he that wears a head, that is, begging your pardon, sir, and in a fair way. 52

Kite. Give me your hand then; and now, gentlemen, I have no more to say, but this—Here's a purse of gold, and there is a tub of humming ale at my quarters.—'Tis the queen's money, and the queen's drink.—She's a generous queen, and loves her subjects.—I hope, gentlemen, you won't refuse the queen's health? 57

¹ The badge of the Grenadier Guards.

All Mob. No, no, no.

Kite. Huzza then, huzza for the queen, and the honour of Shropshire! 60

All Mob. Huzza!

Kite. Beat drum. *[Exit, drum beating a Granadeers March.*

Enter PLUME in a riding habit.

Plume. By the Granadeer March, that shou'd be my drum; and by that shout, it shou'd beat with success.—Let me see—four a clock. *[Looking on his watch.]* At ten yesterday morning I left London.—A hundred and twenty miles in thirty hours is pretty smart riding, but nothing to the fatigue of recruiting. 67

Enter KITE.

Kite. Wellcome to Shrewsbury, noble Captain: from the banks of the Danube ¹ to the Severn side, noble Captain, you're wellcome.

Plume. A very elegant reception indeed, Mr. Kite: I find you are fairly enter'd into your recruiting strain.—Pray what success?

Kite. I have been here but a week, and I have recruited five.

Plume. Five! Pray, what are they? 73

Kite. I have listed the strong man of Kent,² the king of the Gipsies, a Scotch pedlar, a scoundrel attorney, and a Welsh parson.

Plume. An attorney! Wer't thou mad? List a lawyer! Discharge him, discharge him this minute. 77

Kite. Why, sir?

Plume. Because I will have no body in my company that can write; a fellow that can write can draw petitions.—I say, this minute discharge him. 81

Kite. And what shall I do with the parson?

Plume. Can he write?

Kite. Hum! He plays rarely upon the fiddle.

Plume. Keep him by all means.—But how stands the country affected? Were the people pleas'd with the news of my coming to town? 87

¹ Plume has just returned from the campaign of Blenheim (Aug. 17, 1704).

² Under this title a certain William Joy had lately made himself conspicuous as lessee of the ill-fated Dorset-Gardens Theatre.

Kite. Sir, the mob are so pleas'd with your honour, and the justices and better sort of people are so delighted with me, that we shall soon do our business.—But, sir, you have got a recruit here that you little think of. 91

Plume. Who?

Kite. One that you beat up for the last time you were in the country. You remember your old friend Molly at the Castle?

Plume. She's not with child, I hope? 95

Kite. No, no, sir;—she was brought to bed yesterday.

Plume. Kite, you must father the child.

Kite. And so her friends will oblige me to marry the mother.

Plume. If they shou'd, we'll take her with us; she can wash, you know, and make a bed upon occasion. 100

Kite. Ay, or unmake it upon occasion. But your honour knows that I am marry'd already.

Plume. To how many?

Kite. I can't tell readily—I have set them down here upon the back of the muster roll. [*Draws it out.*] Let me see—*Imprimis*, Mrs. Sheely Snikereyes; she sells potatoes upon Ormond-Key in Dublin—Peggy Guzzle, the brandy-woman at the Horse-guard at Whitehall—Dolly Waggon, the carrier's daughter at Hull—Madamoiselle Van-bottom-flat at the Buss ¹—Then Jenny Oakam, the ship-carpenter's widow at Portsmouth; but I don't reckon upon her, for she was marry'd at the same time to two lieutenants of marines and a man of war's boatswain. 112

Plume. A full company.—You have nam'd five.—Come, make 'em half a dozen, Kite.—Is the child a boy or a girl?

Kite. A chopping boy. 115

Plume. Then set the mother down in your list, and the boy in mine. Enter him a granadeer by the name of Francis Kite, absent upon furlow—I'll allow you a man's pay for his subsistance. And now go comfort the wench in the straw.

Kite. I shall, sir. 120

Plume. But hold, have you made any use of your German doctor's habit since you arriv'd?

Kite. Yes, yes, sir, and my fame's all about the country for the

¹ Bois-le-duc or Hertogenbosch, capital of North Brabant.

most faithful fortune-teller that ever told a lye.—I was oblig'd to let my landlord into the secret, for the convenience of keeping it so; but he's an honest fellow, and will be faithful to any roguery that is trusted to him. This device, sir, will get you men and me money, which, I think, is all we want at present.—But yonder comes your friend Mr. Worthy.—Has your honour any farther commands? 130

Plume. None at present. [*Exit KITE.*] 'Tis indeed the picture of Worthy, but the life's departed.

Enter WORTHY.

What, arms a-cross, Worthy! Methinks you should hold 'em open, when a friend's so near.—The man has got the vapours in his ears, I believe. I must expel this melancholly spirit. 135

Spleen, thou worst of fiends below,
Fly, I conjure thee by this magic blow.

[*Slaps WORTHY on the shoulder.*]

Wor. Plume! my dear Captain, welcome. Safe and sound return'd!

Plume. I 'scap'd safe from Germany, and sound, I hope, from London; you see I have lost neither leg, arm, nor nose: then for my inside, 'tis neither troubl'd with sympathies nor antipathies; and I have an excellent stomach for roast beef. 143

Wor. Thou art a happy fellow: once I was so.

Plume. What ails thee, man? No inundations nor earthquakes in Wales, I hope? Has your father rose from the dead, and reassum'd his estate? 147

Wor. No.

Plume. Then you are marry'd, surely.

Wor. No. 150

Plume. Then you are mad, or turning Quaker.

Wor. Come, I must out with it.—Your once gay roving friend is dwindl'd into an obsequious, thoughtful, romantick, constant coxcomb.

Plume. And, pray, what is all this for? 155

Wor. For a woman.

Plume. Shake hands, brother! If thou go to that, behold me as

obsequious, as thoughtful, and as constant a coxcomb as your worship.

Wor. For whom? 160

Plume. For a regiment.—But for a woman! S'death! I have been constant to fifteen at a time, but never melancholy for one; and can the love of one bring you into this condition? Pray, who is this wonderful Hellen?

Wor. A Hellen indeed, not to be won under a ten years siege; as great a beauty, and as great a jilt. 166

Plume. A jilt! Pho! Is she as great a whore?

Wor. No, no.

Plume. 'Tis ten thousand pities! But who is she? Do I know her? 170

Wor. Very well.

Plume. That's impossible.—I know no woman that will hold out a ten years siege.

Wor. What think you of Melinda?

Plume. Melinda! Why, she began to capitulate this time twelvemonth, and offer'd to surrender upon honourable terms; and I advis'd you to propose a settlement of five hundred pound a year to her, before I went last abroad. 178

Wor. I did, and she hearken'd to it, desiring only one week to consider.—When, beyond her hopes, the town was reliev'd, and I forc'd to turn my siege into a blockade. 181

Plume. Explain, explain.

Wor. My lady Richly, her aunt in Flintshire, dies, and leaves her, at this critical time, twenty thousand pounds.

Plume. Oh the devil! What a delicate woman was there spoil'd! But by the rules of war, now, Worthy, blockade was foolish.—After such a convoy of provisions was enter'd the place, you cou'd have no thought of reducing it by famine; you shou'd have redoubl'd your attacks, taken the town by storm, or have dy'd upon the breach. 190

Wor. I did make one general assault, and push'd it with all my forces; but I was so vigorously repuls'd that, despairing of ever gaining her for a mistress, I have alter'd my conduct, given my

addresses the obsequious and distant turn, and court her now for a wife.

Plume. So as you grew obsequious, she grew haughty; and because you approach'd her as a goddess, she us'd you like a dog.

Wor. Exactly.

Plume. 'Tis the way of 'em all.—Come, Worthy, your obsequious and distant airs will never bring you together; you must not think to surmount her pride by your humility. Wou'd you bring her to better thoughts of you, she must be reduc'd to a meaner opinion of her self.—Let me see: the very first thing that I wou'd do shou'd be to lie with her chamber-maid, and hire three or four wenches in the neighbourhood to report that I had got them with child.—Suppose we lampoon'd all the pretty women in town, and left her out; or what if we made a ball, and forgot to invite her with one or two of the ugliest?

Wor. These wou'd be mortifications, I must confess; but we live in such a precise, dull place, that we can have no balls, no lampoons, no—

Plume. What! no bastards! and so many recruiting officers in town! I thought 'twas a maxim among them, to leave as many recruits in the country as they carry'd out.

Wor. No body doubts your good will, noble Captain, in serving your country with your best blood; witness our friend Molley at the Castle.—There have been tears in town about that business, Captain.

Plume. I hope Silvia has not heard of it.

Wor. O sir! have you thought of her? I began to fancy you had forgot poor Silvia.

Plume. Your affairs had put mine quite out of my head. 'Tis true, Silvia and I had once agreed to go to bed together, cou'd we have adjusted preliminaries; but she wou'd have the wedding before consummation, and I was for consummation before the wedding; we cou'd not agree. She was a pert, obstinate fool, and wou'd lose her maiden-head her own way, so she may keep it for

Wor. But do you intend to marry upon no other conditions?

Plume. Your pardon, sir; I'll marry upon no condition at all.—

If I shou'd, I am resolv'd never to bind my self to a woman for my whole life, 'till I know whether I shall like her company for half an hour. Suppose I marry'd a woman that wanted a leg?—such a thing might be, unless I examin'd the goods before hand.—If people wou'd but try one another's constitutions before they engag'd, it wou'd prevent all these elopements, divorces, and the devil knows what. 237

Wor. Nay, for that matter, the town did not stick to say that—

Plume. I hate country towns for that reason.—If your town has a dishonourable thought of Silvia, it deserves to be burnt to the ground.—I love Sylvia; I admire her frank, generous disposition.—There's something in that girl more than woman; her sex is but a foil to her.—The ingratitude, dissimulation, envy, pride, avarice, and vanity of her sister females do but set off their contraries in her.—In short, were I once a general, I wou'd marry her.

Wor. Faith, you have reason;—for were you but a corporal, she wou'd marry you.—But my Melinda coquets it with every fellow she sees—I lay fifty pound she makes love to you. 248

Plume. I'll lay fifty pound that I return it, if she does.—Look'e, Worthy, I'll win her, and give her to you afterwards. 250

Wor. If you win her, you shall wear her, faith; I wou'd not value the conquest, without the credit of the victory.

Enter KITE.

Kite. Captain, Captain, a word in your ear.

Plume. You may speak out; here are none but friends.

Kite. You know, sir, that you sent me to comfort the good woman in the straw, Mrs. Molley—my wife, Mr. Worthy. 256

Wor. O ho! very well! I wish you joy, Mr. Kite.

Kite. Your worship very well may, for I have got both a wife and a child in half an hour.—But as I was saying;—you sent me to comfort Mrs. Molly—my wife, I mean.—But what d'ye think, sir? She was better comforted before I came. 261

Plume. As how?

Kite. Why, sir, a footman in a blue livery had brought her ten guineas to buy her baby-cloaths,

Plume. Who, in the name of wonder, cou'd send them? 265

Kite. Nay, sir, I must whisper that—Mrs. Silvia. [*Whispers.*]

Plume. Silvia! Generous creature!

Wor. Silvia! Impossible!

Kite. Here are the guineas, sir—I took the gold as part of my wifes portion. Nay, farther, sir, she sent word the child shou'd be taken all imaginable care of, and that she intended to stand god-mother. The same footman, as I was coming to you with this news, call'd after me, and told me that his lady wou'd speak with me.—I went, and upon hearing that you were come to town, she gave me half a guinea for the news; and order'd me to tell you that Justice Ballance, her father, who is just come out of the country, wou'd be glad to see you. 277

Plume. There's a girl for you, Worthy.—Is there any thing of woman in this? No, 'tis noble, generous, manly friendship; shew me another woman that wou'd lose an inch of her prerogative—that way, without tears, fits, and reproaches. The common jealousy of her sex, which is nothing but their avarice of pleasure, she despises; and can part with the lover, tho' she dies for the man.—Come, Worthy, where's the best wine? For there I'll quarter. 284

Wor. Horton has a fresh pipe of choice Barcelona, which I wou'd not let him pierce before, because I reserv'd the maiden-head of it for your welcome to town. 287

Plume. Let's away then.—Mr. Kite, wait on the lady with my humble service, and tell her I shall only refresh a little, and wait upon her. 290

Wor. Hold, Kite.—Have you seen the other recruiting captain?

Kite. No, sir.

Plume. Another! Who is he?

Wor. My rival, in the first place, and the most unaccountable fellow.—But I'll tell you more as we go. [*Exeunt.*]

Scene [II], *An Apartment [in Melinda's House].*

MELINDA and SILVIA meeting.

Mel. Welcome to town, cousin Silvia. [*Salute.*] I envy'd you your retreat in the country; for Shrewsbury, methinks, and all your heads of shires, are the most irregular places for living; here we

have smook, noise, scandal, affectation, and pretension; in short, every thing to give the spleen—and nothing to divert it.—Then, the air is intolerable. 6

Sil. O madam! I have heard the town commended for its air.

Mel. But you don't consider, Silvia, how long I have liv'd in't! for I can assure you that to a lady the least nice in her constitution, no air can be good above half a year. Change of air I take to be the most agreeable of any variety in life. 11

Sil. As you say, cousin Melinda, there are several sorts of airs.

Mel. Psha! I talk only of the air we breath, or, more properly, of that we taste.—Have not you, Silvia, found a vast difference in the taste of airs? 15

Sil. Pray, cousin, are not vapours a sort of air? Taste air! you might as well tell me I may feed upon air. But prithee, my dear Melinda, don't put on such an air to me. Your education and mine were just the same, and I remember the time when we never troubl'd our heads about air, but when the sharp air from the Welsh mountains made our fingers ake in a cold morning at the boarding school. 22

Mel. Our education, cousin, was the same, but our temperaments had nothing alike; you have the constitution of an horse.

Sil. So far as to be troubl'd with neither spleen, collick, nor vapours; I need no salts for my stomach, no harts-horn for my head, nor wash for my complexion. I can gallop all the morning after the hunting-horn, and all the evening after a fiddle. In short, I can do every thing with my father, but drink, and shoot flying; and I am sure I can do every thing my mother cou'd, were I put to the trial. 31

Mel. You are in a fair way of being put to't; for I am told your captain is come to town.

Sil. Ay, Melinda, he is come, and I'll take care he shan't go without a companion. 35

Mel. You are certainly mad, cousin.

Sil. And there's a pleasure in being mad, which none but mad-men know.¹

Mel. Thou poor romantick Quixote! Hast thou the vanity to

¹ Quoted from Dryden, *The Spanish Friar*, Act II, sc. ii; see above, p. 167.

imagine that a young sprightly officer that rambles o'er half the globe in half a year can confine his thoughts to the little daughter of a country justice, in an obscure part of the world? 42

Sil. Psha! What care I for his thoughts! I shou'd not like a man with confin'd thoughts; it shews a narrowness of soul. Constancy is but a dull, sleepy quality at best; they will hardly admit it among the manly virtues. Nor do I think it deserves a place with bravery, knowledge, policy, justice, and some other qualities that are proper to that noble sex.—In short, Melinda, I think a petticoat a mighty simple thing, and I am heartily tir'd of my sex. 49

Mel. That is, you are tir'd of an appendix to our sex that you can't so handsomely get rid of in petticoats as if you were in breeches.—O' my conscience, Silvia, had'st thou been a man, thou had'st been the greatest rake in Christendom. 53

Sil. I shou'd have endeavour'd to know the world, which a man can never do thoroughly without half a hundred friendships, and as many amours; but now I think on't, how stands your affair with Mr. Worthy? 57

Mel. He's my aversion.

Sil. Vapours!

Mel. What do you say, madam? 60

Sil. I say that you shou'd not use that honest fellow so inhumanly. He's a gentleman of parts and fortune; and besides that, he's my Plume's friend, and by all that's sacred, if you don't use him better, I shall expect satisfaction.

Mel. Satisfaction! You begin to fancy your self in breeches in good earnest.—But to be plain with you, I like Worthy the worse for being so intimate with your captain, for I take him to be a loose, idle, unmannerly coxcomb. 68

Sil. O, madam! you never saw him, perhaps, since you were mistress of twenty thousand pounds; you only knew him when you were capitulating with Worthy for a settlement, which perhaps might encourage him to be a little loose and unmannerly with you.

Mel. What do you mean, madam? 73

Sil. My meaning needs no interpretation, madam.

Mel. Better it had, madam, for methinks you are too plain.

Sil. If you mean the plainness of my person, I think your ladyship's as plain as me to the full. 77

Mel. Were I sure of that, I shou'd be glad to take up with a rakhelly officer, as you do.

Sil. Again! Look'e, madam, your'e in your own house. 80

Mel. And if you had kept in yours, I shou'd have excus'd you.

Sil. Don't be troubl'd, madam, I shan't desire to have my visit return'd.

Mel. The sooner, therefore, you make an end of this, the better.

Sil. I am easily persuaded to follow my inclinations; so, madam, your humble servant. [Exit.]

Mel. Saucy thing! 87

Enter LUCY.

Luc. What's the matter, madam?

Mel. Did not you see the proud nothing, how she swell'd upon the arrival of her fellow? 90

Luc. Her fellow has not been long enough arriv'd to occasion any great swelling, madam; I don't believe she has seen him yet.

Mel. Nor shan't if I can help it.—Let me see—I have it!—Bring me pen and ink—hold, I'll go write in my closet.

Luc. An answer to this letter, I hope, madam. [*Presents a letter.*]

Mel. Who sent it? 96

Luc. Your captain, madam.

Mel. He's a fool, and I'm tir'd of him; send it back unopen'd.

Luc. The messenger's gone, madam.

Mel. Then how shou'd I send an answer? Call him back immediately, while I go write. [*Exeunt.*]

Act II. Scene [I], *An Apartment [in the House of Justice Ballance].*

Enter JUSTICE BALLANCE and PLUME.

Ball. Look'e, Captain, give us but blood for our money, and you shan't want men. I remember that for some years of the last war ¹

¹ See above, *The Prook'd Wife*, p. 472, n. 1. The "blood" and "wounds" in the officers' mouths were the oaths.

we had no blood, no wounds, but in the officer's mouths; nothing for our millions but news-papers not worth a reading.—Our army did nothing but play at prison barrs and hide and seek with the enemy; but now ye have brought us colours, and standarts, and prisoners.—Ad's my life, Captain, get us but another marshal of France,¹ and I'll go my self for a souldier. 8

Plume. Pray, Mr. Ballance, how do's your fair daughter?

Ball. Ah, Captain! What is my daughter to a marshal of France! We're upon a nobler subject: I want to have a particular description of the battle of Hockstat.² 12

Plume. The battel, sir, was a very pretty battel as one shou'd desire to see, but we were all so intent upon victory that we never minded the battel: all that I know of the matter is, our general commanded us to beat the French, and we did so; and if he pleases but to say the word, we'll do't agen. But pray, sir, how do's Mrs. Silvia? 18

Ball. Still upon Silvia! For shame, Captain, you are engag'd already, wedded to the war; victory is your mistress, and it is below a soldier to think of any other. 21

Plume. As a mistress, I confess; but as a friend, Mr. Ballance—

Ball. Come, come, Captain, never mince the matter; wou'd not you debauch my daughter if you cou'd?

Plume. How, sir! I hope she's not to be debauch'd. 25

Ball. Faith but she is, sir, and any woman in England of her age and complexion, by a man of your youth and vigour. Look'e, Captain, once I was young, and once an officer as you are; and I can guess at your thoughts now, by what mine were then; and I remember very well that I wou'd have given one of my legs to have deluded the daughter of an old country gentleman as like me as I was then like you. 32

Plume. But, sir, was that country gentleman your friend and benefactor?

Ball. Not much of that. 35

Plume. There the comparison breaks; the favours, sir, that—

Ball. Pho, I hate speeches; if I have done you any service, Captain, 'twas to please my self, for I love thee; and if I could part

¹ Marshal Tallard, captured at Blenheim.

² Hochstadt or Blenheim.

with my girl, you shou'd have her as soon as any young fellow I know. But I hope you have more honour than to quit the service, and she more prudence then to follow the camp. But she's at her own disposal; she has fifteen hundred pound in her pocket, and so—Silvia, Silvia! [Calls.]

Enter SILVIA.

Sil. There are some letters, sir, come by the post from London; I left them upon the table in your closet. 45

Ball. And here is a gentleman from Germany. [*Presents PLUME to her.*] Captain, you'll excuse me; I'll go and read my letters, and wait on you. [Exit.]

Sil. Sir, you are welcome to England.

Plume. You are indebted to me a welcome, madam, since the hopes of receiving it from this fair hand was the principal cause of my seeing England. 52

Sil. I have often heard that soldiers were sincere; shall I venture to believe publick report?

Plume. You may, when 'tis back'd by private insurance; for I swear, madam, by the honour of my profession, that whatever dangers I went upon, it was with the hope of making myself more worthy of your esteem; and if I ever had thoughts of preserving my life, 'twas for the pleasure of dying at your feet. 59

Sil. Well, well, you shall dye at my feet, or where you will; but you know, sir, there is a certain will and testament to be made beforehand. 62

Plume. My will, madam, is made already, and there it is; and if you please to open that parchment, which was drawn the evening before the battel of Bleinheim, you will find whom I left my heir.

Sil. [*Opens the will and reads.*] Mrs. Silvia Ballance. Well, Captain, this is a handsome and a substantial complement; but I can assure you, I am much better pleas'd with the bare knowledge of your intention, than I shou'd have been in the possession of your legacy. But methinks, sir, you shou'd have left something to your little boy at the Castle. 71

Plume. [*Aside.*] That's home.—My little boy! Lack-a-day, madam, that alone may convince you 'twas none of mine; why,

the girl, madam, is my serjeant's wife, and so the poor creature gave out that I was father, in hopes that my friends might support her in case of necessity.—That was all, madam.—My boy! No, no, no.

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Enter a SERVANT.

Serv. Madam, my master has receiv'd some ill news from London, and desires to speak with you immediately; and he begs the Captain's pardon that he can't wait on him as he promis'd. 80

Plume. Ill news! Heavens avert it! nothing cou'd touch me nearer than to see that generous, worthy gentleman afflicted. I'll leave you to comfort him, and be assur'd that if my life and fortune can be any way serviceable to the father of my Silvia, he shall freely command both. 85

Sil. The necessity must be very pressing that wou'd engage me to endanger either. [*Exeunt severally.*]

Scene [II], *Another Apartment [in the House of Justice Ballance].*

Enter BALLANCE and SILVIA.

Sil. Whilst there is life, there is hopes, sir; perhaps my brother may recover.

Ball. We have but little reason to expect it; Doctor Kilman acquaints me here that before this comes to my hands, he fears I shall have no son.—Poor Owen!—But the decree is just; I was pleas'd with the death of my father, because he left me an estate, and now I am punish'd with the loss of an heir to inherit mine. I must now look upon you as the only hopes of my family, and I expect that the augmentation of your fortune will give you fresh thoughts and new prospects. 10

Sil. My desire of being punctual in my obedience requires that you wou'd be plain in your commands, sir.

Ball. The death of your brother makes you sole heiress to my estate, which you know is about twelve hundred pounds a year. This fortune gives you a fair claim to quality and a title; you must

set a just value upon your self, and in plain terms, think no more of Captain Plume. 17

Sil. You have often commended the gentleman, sir.

Ball. And I do so still; he's a very pretty fellow; but tho' I lik'd him well enough for a bare son-in-law, I don't approve of him for an heir to my estate and family. Fifteen hundred pounds, indeed, I might trust in his hands, and it might do the young fellow a kindness; but,—od's my life! twelve hundred pounds a year wou'd ruin him, quite turn his brain. A captain of foot worth twelve hundred pounds a year! 'tis a prodigy in nature. Besides this, I have five or six thousand pounds in woods upon my estate. Oh! that wou'd make him stark mad: for you must know that all captains have a mighty aversion to timber; they can't endure to see trees standing. Then I shou'd have some rogue of a builder, by the help of his damn'd magick art, transform my noble oaks and elms into cornishes, portalls, sashes, birds, beasts, and devils, to adorn some magotty, new-fashion'd bauble upon the Thames; and then you shou'd have a dog of a gardner bring a *Habeas Corpus* for my *Terra Firma*, remove it to Chelsea, or Twittenham, and clap it into grass-plats, and gravel-walks. 35

Enter a Servant.

Serv. Sir, here is one with a letter below for your worship, but he will deliver it into no hands but your own.

Ball. Come, shew me the messenger. [*Ex. with Servant.*]

Sil. Make the dispute between love and duty, and I am Prince Prettyman¹ exactly.—If my brother dies, ah poor brother! If he lives, ah poor sister! 'Tis bad both ways; I'll try it again:—Follow my own inclinations, and break my fathers heart; or obey his commands, and break my own; worse and worse. Suppose I take it thus? A moderate fortune, a pretty fellow, and a pad; or a fine estate, a coach and six, and an ass.—That will never do neither.

¹ A farcical character in Buckingham's play, *The Rehearsal* (1671). Archer notes that it is not Prince Prettyman but another character, Prince Volscius, who has the absurd dispute with himself concerning love and honor (Act III, sc. v). Strauss adds that Farquhar makes the same slip in one of his letters (*Love and Business*, p. 57).

Enter BALLANCE and Servant.

Ball. Put four horses into the coach. [*To a Servant, who goes out.*] Ho, Silvia! 47

Sil. Sir.

Ball. How old were you when your mother dy'd?

Sil. So young that I don't remember I ever had one; and you have been so careful, so indulgent to me since, that indeed I never wanted one. 52

Ball. Have I ever deny'd you any thing you ask'd of me?

Sil. Never that I remember.

Ball. Then, Silvia, I must beg that once in your life you wou'd grant me a favour. 56

Sil. Why shou'd you question it, sir?

Ball. I don't, but I wou'd rather counsel than command; I don't propose this with the authority of a parent, but as the advice of your friend; that you wou'd take the coach this moment, and go into the country. 61

Sil. Does this advice, sir, proceed from the contents of the letter you receiv'd just now?

Ball. No matter; I will be with you in three or four days, and then give you my reasons.—But before you go, I expect you will make me one solemn promise. 66

Sil. Propose the thing, sir.

Ball. That you will never dispose of your self to any man without my consent.

Sil. I promise. 70

Ball. Very well; and to be even with you, I promise I never will dispose of you without your own consent. And so, Silvia, the coach is ready; farewell. [*Leads her to the door, and returns.*] Now she's gone, I'll examine the contents of this letter a little nearer.

[*Reads.*

SIR,

75

My intimacy with Mr. Worthy has drawn a secret from him, that he had from his friend Captain Plume, and my friendship and relation to your family oblige me to give you timely notice of it: The captain has dishonourable designs upon my cousin Silvia. Evils of this

nature are more easily prevented than amended, and that you wou'd immediately send my cousin into the country, is the advice of, 81

SIR, your humble servant,

MELINDA.

Why, the devil's in the young fellows of this age; they are ten times worse than they were in my time; had he made my daughter a whore, and forswore it like a gentleman, I cou'd have almost pardon'd it; but to tell tales beforehand is monstrous.—Hang it, I can fetch down a woodcock or a snipe, and why not a hat and feather? I have a case of good pistols, and have a good mind to try. 90

Enter WORTHY.

Worthy! Your servant.

Wor. I am sorry, sir, to be the messenger of ill news.

Ball. I apprehend it, sir; you have heard that my son Owen is past recovery.

Wor. My letters say he's dead, sir. 95

Ball. He's happy, and I'm satisfy'd. The strokes of Heaven I can bear; but injuries from men, Mr. Worthy, are not so easily supported.

Wor. I hope, sir, you're under no apprehension of wrong from any body. 100

Ball. You know I ought to be.

Wor. You wrong my honour, sir, in believing I could know any thing to your prejudice, without resenting it as much as you shou'd.

Ball. This letter, sir, which I tear in pieces to conceal the person that sent it, informs me that Plume has a design upon Silvia, and that you are privy to't. 107

Wor. Nay then, sir, I must do my self justice, and endeavour to find out the author. [*Takes up a bit.*] Sir, I know the hand, and if you refuse to discover the contents, Melinda shall tell me. [*Going.*]

Ball. Hold, sir, the contents I have told you already, only with this circumstance, that her intimacy with Mr. Worthy had drawn the secret from him. 113

Wor. Her intimacy with me! Dear sir, let me pick up the

pieces of this letter; 'twill give me such a power over her pride to have her own an intimacy under her hand. 'Twas the luckiest accident! [*Gathering up the letter.*] The aspersion, sir, was nothing but malice, the effect of a little quarrel between her and Mrs. Silvia.

Ball. Are you sure of that, sir? 119

Wor. Her maid gave me the history of part of the battel, just now, as she overheard it. But I hope, sir, your daughter has suffer'd nothing upon the account. 122

Ball. No, no, poor girl! she's so afflicted with the news of her brother's death, that to avoid company, she beg'd leave to be gone into the country. 125

Wor. And is she gone?

Ball. I cou'd not refuse her, she was so pressing; the coach went from the door the minute before you came.

Wor. So pressing to be gone, sir!—I find her fortune will give her the same airs with Melinda, and then Plume and I may laugh at one another. 131

Ball. Like enough; women are as subject to pride as we are, and why, why mayn't great women, as well as great men, forget their old acquaintance?—But come, where's this young fellow? I love him so well, it would break the heart of me to think him a rascal—I'm glad my daughter's gone fairly off, tho'. [*Aside.*]—Where does the captain quarter? 137

Wor. At Horton's; I am to meet him there two hours hence, and we should be glad of your company.

Ball. Your pardon, dear Worthy, I must allow a day or two to the death of my son. The decorum of mourning is what we owe the world, because they pay it to us: afterwards ¹ I'm yours over a bottle, or how you will. 143

Wor. Sir, I'm your humble servant. [*Exeunt severally.*]

¹ Qtos. here insert a period and omit the pause before. Strauss defends this reading.

Scene [III], *the Street.*

Enter KITE with a mob ¹ *in each hand, drunk.*

Kite sings.

*Our prentice Tom may now refuse
To wipe his scoundrel master's shoes;
For now he's free to sing and play,
Over the hills and far away—Over, &c.*

The mob sing the chorus.

We shall lead more happy lives, 5
*By getting rid of brats and wives,
That scold and brawl both night and day;
Over the hills and far away—Over, &c.*²

Kite. Hey boys! Thus we soldiers live! Drink, sing, dance, play. We live, as one shou'd say—we live—'tis impossible to tell how we live.—We are all princes—why—why, you are a king—you are an emperor, and I'm a prince—now—an't we— 12

1st. Mob. No, Serjeant, I'll be no emperor.

Kite. No!

1st. Mob. No, I'll be a justice of peace. 15

Kite. A justice of peace, man!

1st. Mob. Ay, wauns will I; for since this pressing act,³ they are greater than any emperor under the sun.

Kite. Done: you are a justice of peace, and you are a king, and I am a duke, and a rum duke, an't I? 20

2d. Mob. Ay, but I'll be no king.

¹ Then a new word,—here signifying “one of the rabble.” Kite enters with two bumpkins, Costar Pairman and Thomas Appletree (cf. lines 171 ff.).

² Estcourt, who acted Kite at Bath, on Sept. 16, 1706, improvised the following additional stanza concerning a victory reported that day:

The noble Captain, Prince Eugene,
Has beat the French, Orleans and Marsin,
And march'd up and reliev'd Turin—
Over the hills and far away.

(Genest.)

³ The Mutiny and Impressment Acts passed at the opening of Queen Anne's reign gave to magistrates the powers which the dramatist represents in Act V, sc. iv.

Kite. What then?

2d. Mob. I'll be a queen.

Kite. A queen!

2d. Mob. Ay, queen of England, that's greater than any king of 'um all. 26

Kite. Bravely said, faith. Huzza for the Queen. [*Huzza!*] But heark'ee, you Mr. Justice, and you Mr. Queen, did you never see the queen's picture?

Mob. No, no, no. 30

Kite. I wonder at that; I have two of 'em set in gold, and as like her majesty, God bless the mark. See here, they are set in gold.

[*Takes two broad pieces out of his pocket, gives one to each mob.*]

1st. Mob. The wonderful works of nature! [*Looking at it.*]

2d. Mob. What's this written about? Here's a posy, I believe.

Ca-ro-lus—What's that, serjeant? 35

Kite. O! *Carolus!*—Why, *Carolus* is Latin for Queen Ann; that's all.

2d. Mob. 'Tis a fine thing to be a scollard.—Serjeant, will you part with this? I'll buy it on you, if it come within the compass of a crown. 40

Kite. A crown! never talk of buying; 'tis the same thing among friends, you know; I'll present 'em to you both: you shall give me as good a thing. Put 'em up, and remember your old friend, when I am over the hills and far-away. [*They sing, and put up the money.*]

Enter PLUME singing.

Plume. Over the hills, and o'er the main, 45
To Flanders, Portugal, or Spain:
The Queen commands, and we'll obey,
Over the hills, and far away.

Come on my men of mirth, away with it! I'll make one among ye.
Who are these hearty lads? 50

Kite. Off with your hats! Ounds, off with your hats! This is the Captain, the Captain.

1st Mob. We have seen captains afore now, mun.

2d Mob. Ay, and lieutenant-captains too; s'flesh! I'll keep on my nab.¹ 55

1st Mob. And I'se scarcely doff mine for any captain in England. My vether's a freeholder.

Plume. Who are these jolly lads, Serjeant?

Kite. A couple of honest brave fellows, that are willing to serve the queen. I have entertain'd 'em just now, as volunteers, under your honour's command. 61

Plume. And good entertainment they shall have. Volunteers are the men I want; those are the men fit to make souldiers, captains, generals.

1st Mob. Wounds, Tummas, what's this! are you listed? 65

2d. Mob. Flesh! not I. Are you, Costar?

1st Mob. Wounds, not I.

Kite. What! not listed! ha, ha, ha! a very good jest, faith.

1st. Mob. Come, Tummas, we'll go home.

2d. Mob. Ay, ay, come. 70

Kite. Home! for shame, gentlemen; behave yourselves better before your captain. Dear Tummas, honest Costar.

2d. Mob. No, no, we'll be gone.

Kite. Nay then, I command you to stay: I place you both centinels in this place, for two hours, to watch the motion of St. Mary's clock, you; and you the motion of St. Chad's. And he that dares stir from his post, till he be reliev'd, shall have my sword in his guts the next minute. 78

Plume. What's the matter, Serjeant? I'm afraid you are too rough with these gentlemen. 80

Kite. I'm too mild, sir! They disobey command, sir, and one of 'em shou'd be shot for an example to the other.

1st. Mob. Shot, Tummas!

Plume. Come, gentlemen, what's the matter?

1st. Mob. We don't know; the noble serjeant is pleas'd to be in a passion, sir,—but— 86

Kite. They disobey command, they deny their being listed.

2d. Mob. Nay, Serjeant, we don't downright deny it neither; that we dare not do, for fear of being shot. But we humbly conceive

¹ hat.

in a civil way, and begging your worship's pardon, that we may go home. 91

Plume. That's easily known; have either of you receiv'd any of the queen's money?

1st. Mob. Not a brass farthing, sir.

Kite. Sir, they have each of 'em receiv'd three and twenty shillings and six-pence, and 'tis now in their pockets. 96

1st. Mob. Wounds, if I have a penny in my pocket but a bent six-pence, I'll be content to be listed, and shot into the bargain.

2d. Mob. And I; look ye here, sir.

1st. Mob. Ay, here's my stock too: nothing but the queen's picture, that the serjeant gave me just now. 101

Kite. See there, a broad piece,¹ three and twenty shillings and sixpence; the t'other has the fellow on't.

Plume. The case is plain, gentlemen, the goods are found upon you. Those pieces of gold are worth three and twenty and sixpence each. 106

1st. Mob. So it seems that *Carolus* is three and twenty shillings and sixpence in Latine.

2d. Mob. 'Tis the same thing in the Greek, for we are listed.

1st. Mob. Flesh! but we an't, Tummas: I desire to be carry'd before the mayor, Captain. 111

[*Captain and Serjeant whisper the while.*

Plume. 'Twill never do, Kite.—Your damn'd trick will ruin me at last—I won't lose the fellows tho', if I can help it.—Well, gentlemen, there must be some trick in this; my serjeant offers to take his oath that you are fairly listed. 115

2d. Mob. Why, Captain, we know that you souldiers have more liberty of conscience than other folks; but for me, or neighbour Costar here to take such an oath, 'twou'd be downright perjury.

Plume. Look'e, rascal, you villain; if I find that you have impos'd upon these two honest fellows, I'll trample you to death, you dog.—Come, how was't? 121

2d. Mob. Nay then, we will speak; your serjeant, as you say, is a rogue, begging your worship's pardon—and—

¹ A gold twenty-shilling piece bearing the name of Charles I (*Carolus*). They were at a premium which Kite estimates at 3*s.* 6*d.*

1st. Mob. Nay, Tummas, let me speak; you know I can read.—
And so, sir, he gave us those two pieces of money for pictures of the
Queen, by way of a present. 126

Plume. How! by way of a present! The son of a whore! I'll
teach him to abuse honest fellows, like you! Scoundrel, rogue,
villain! [*Beats off the Serjeant, and follows.*]

Mob. O brave, noble Captain! Huzza! a brave captain, faith.

1st. Mob. Now, Tummas, *Carolus* is Latin for a beating. This
is the bravest captain I ever saw.—Wounds, I have a months mind
to go with him. 133

Enter PLUME.

Plume. A dog, to abuse two such honest fellows as you!—
Look'e, gentlemen, I love a pretty fellow; I come among you as an
officer to list souldiers, not as a kidnapper to steal slaves. 136

1st. Mob. Mind that, Tummas.

Plume. I desire no man to go with me, but as I went my self:
I went a volunteer, as you, or you, may do; for a little time carry'd
a musquet, and now I command a company. 140

2d. Mob. Mind that, Costar. A sweet gentleman.

Plume. 'Tis true, gentlemen, I might take an advantage of you;
the queen's money was in your pockets, my serjeant was ready to
take his oath you were listed; but I scorn to do a base thing; you
are both of you at your liberty. 145

1st. Mob. Thank you, noble Captain.—I cod, I can't find in my
heart to leave him, he talks so finely.

2d. Mob. Ay, Costar, wou'd he always hold in this mind.

Plume. Come, my lads, one thing more I'll tell you: you're both
young tight fellows, and the army is the place to make you men for
ever. Every man has his lot, and you have yours. What think
you now of a purse of French gold out of a monsieur's pocket, after
you have dash'd out his brains with the but of your fire-lock? eh!

1st. Mob. Wauns! I'll have it, Captain—Give me a shilling,
I'll follow you to the end of the world. 155

2d. Mob. Nay, dear Costar, do'na; be advis'd.

Plume. Here, my hero, here are two guineas for thee, as earnest
of what I'll do farther for thee.

2d. Mob. Do'na take it, do'na, dear Costar.

[Crys, and pulls back his arm.]

1st. Mob. I wull—I wull—Waunds, my mind gives me that I shall be a captain my self.—I take your money, sir, and now I am a gentleman. 162

Plume. Give me thy hand, and now you and I will travel the world o'er, and command it wherever we tread.—Bring your friend with you, if you can. *[Aside.]*

1st. Mob. Well, Tummas, must we part? 166

2d. Mob. No, Costar, I cannot leave thee.—Come, Captain, I'll e'en go along too; and if you have two honester, simpler lads in your company than we two been, I'll say no more.

Plume. Here, my lad. *[Gives him money.]* Now your name? 170

2d. Mob. Thummas Appletree.

Plume. And yours?

1st. Mob. Costar Pairman!

Plume. Born where?

1st. Mob. Both in Herefordshire. 175

Plume. Very well. Courage, my lads—Now we'll sing,

Over the hills and far-away.

Courage, boys, 'tis one to ten

But we return all gentlemen, &c. [Exeunt.]

Act III. Scene [I], *The Market-Place.*

Enter PLUME and WORTHY.

Wor. I cannot forbear admiring the equality of our two fortunes. We lov'd two ladies, they met us half way, and just as we were upon the point of leaping into their arms, fortune drops into their laps, pride possesses their hearts, a maggot fills their heads, madness takes 'em by the tails; they snort, kick up their heels, and away they run. 6

Plume. And leave us here to mourn upon the shore—a couple of poor melancholy monsters.—What shall we do?

Wor. I have a trick for mine; the letter, you know, and the fortune-teller. 10

Plume. And I have a trick for mine.

Wor. What is't?

Plume. I'll never think of her again.

Wor. No!

Plume. No. I think my self above administring to the pride of any woman, were she worth twelve thousand a year; and I han't the vanity to believe I shall ever gain a lady worth twelve hundred. The generous, good-natur'd Sylvia in her smock I admire; but the haughty, scornful Sylvia with her fortune I despise.¹—What, sneak out of town, and not so much as a word, a line, a complement!—'Sdeath! how far off does she live? I'll go and break her windows. 22

Wor. Ha, ha, ha! ay, and the window bars too, to come at her.—Come, come, friend, no more of your rough military airs.

Enter KITE.

Kite. Captain, sir! look yonder, she's a coming this way: 'tis the prettiest, cleanest little tit! 26

Plume. Now, Worthy, to shew you how much I am in love.—Here she comes: and what is that great country fellow with her?

Kite. I can't tell, sir.

*Enter ROSE and her brother BULLOCK, and chickens on her arms
in a basket, &c.*

Rose. Buy chickens, young and tender, young and tender chickens. 31

Plume. Here, you chickens!

Rose. Who calls?

Plume. Come hither, pretty maid.

Rose. Will you please to buy, sir?

Wor. Yes, child, we'll both buy. 35

Plume. Nay, Worthy, that's not fair; market for your self.—Come, child, I'll buy all you have.

Rose. Then all I have is at your service.

[*Court'sys.*

Wor. Then I must shift for my self, I find.

[*Exit.*

¹ Q1 here inserts a song, later omitted. See Introduction, page 677.

Plume. Let me see; young and tender, you say. 41
 [*Chucks her under the chin.*]

Rose. As ever you tasted in your life, sir.

Plume. Come, I must examine your basket to the bottom, my dear.

Rose. Nay, for that matter, put in your hand; feel, sir; I warrant my ware as good as any in the market. 46

Plume. And I'll buy it all, child, were it ten times more.

Rose. Sir, I can furnish you.

Plume. Come then, we won't quarrel about the price; they're fine birds.—Pray what's your name, pretty creature? 50

Rose. Rose, sir. My father is a farmer within three short mile o' the town; we keep this market; I sell chickens, eggs, and butter, and my brother Bullock there sells corn.

Bullock. Come, sister, haste; we shall be lait hoame.

[*Whistles about the stage.*]

Plume. Kite! [*Tips him the wink; he returns it.*] Pretty Mrs. Rose—you have—let me see—how many? 56

Rose. A dozen, sir, and they are richly worth a crown.

Bull. Come, Ruose, Ruose! I sold fifty strake¹ of barley to day in half this time; but you will higgle and higgle for a penny more than the commodity is worth. 60

Rose. What's that to you, oaf? I can make as much out of a groat as you can out of fourpence,² I'm sure.—The gentleman bids fair, and when I meet with a chapman, I know how to make the best of him.—And so, sir, I say, for a crown piece the bargain's yours. 65

Plume. Here's a guinea, my dear.

Rose. I can't change your money, sir.

Plume. Indeed, indeed, but you can.—My lodging is hard by, chicken, and we'll make change there. [*Goes off, she follows him.*]

Kite. So, sir, as I was telling you, I have seen one of these hussars eat up a ravelin³ for his breakfast, and afterwards pick'd his teeth with a palisado. 72

¹ I.e., "strike,"—bushel.

² A groat was fourpence. The saying seems to have been proverbial: "I can make as much of six as you can of half a dozen."

³ outwork in fortifications.

Bull. Ay, you soldiers see very strange things; but pray, sir, what is a ravelin?

Kite. Why, 'tis like a modern minc'd pye, but the crust is confounded hard, and the plumbs are somewhat hard of digestion.

Bull. Then your palisado, pray what may he be?—Come, Ruose, pray ha' done. 78

Kite. Your palisado is a pretty sort of bodkin, about the thickness of my leg. 80

Bull. That's a fibb, I believe. [*Aside.*]—Eh! Where's Ruose? Ruose! Ruose! 'sflesh, where's Ruose gone?

Kite. She's gone with the captain.

Bull. The captain! Wauns, there's no pressing of women, sure.

Kite. But there is, sir. 85

Bull. If the captain should press Ruose, I shou'd be ruin'd.—Which way went she? O! The devil take your rablins and palisadoes. [*Exit.*]

Kite. You shall be better acquainted with them, honest Bullock, or I shall miss of my aim. 90

Enter WORTHY.

Wor. Why thou art the most useful fellow in nature to your captain; admirable in your way, I find. 92

Kite. Yes, sir, I understand my business, I will say it.—You must know, sir, I was born a gipsey, and bred among that crew till I was ten years old; there I learn'd canting and lying. I was bought from my mother, Cleopatra, by a certain nobleman for three pistoles,¹ who, liking my beauty, made me his page; there I learn'd impudence and pimping. I was turn'd off for wearing my lord's linen, and drinking my lady's ratafia,² and then turn'd bayliff's follower; there I learn'd bullying and swearing. I at last got into the army, and there I learn'd whoring and drinking.—So that if your worship pleases to cast up the whole sum, *viz.*, canting, lying, impudence, pimping, bullying, swearing, whoring, drinking,

¹ Coins worth about a pound sterling. The word was often used of the French *Louis d'or*.

² a liqueur, ordinarily flavored with almonds or fruit kernels.

and a halbard, you will find the sum total will amount to a recruiting serjeant. 105

Wor. And pray what induc'd you to turn soldier?

Kite. Hunger and ambition: the fears of starving and hopes of a truncheon led me along to a gentleman with a fair tongue and fair perriwig, who loaded me with promises; but egad, it was the lightest load that ever I felt in my life.—He promis'd to advance me, and indeed he did so—to a garret in the Savoy. I ask'd him why he put me in prison; he call'd me lying dog, and said I was in garrison: and indeed 'tis a garrison that may hold out till Dooms-day before I shou'd desire to take it again. But here comes Justice Ballance. 115

Enter BALLANCE and BULLOCK.

Ball. Here, you, Serjeant, where's your captain? Here's a poor foolish fellow comes clamouring to me with a complaint that your captain has press'd his sister; do you know any thing of this matter, Worthy?

Wor. Ha, ha, ha! I know his sister is gone with Plume to his lodgings, to sell him some chickens. 121

Ball. Is that all? the fellow's a fool.

Bull. I know that, an please you; but if your worship pleases to grant me a warrant to bring her before you for fear of the worst.

Ball. Tho'rt mad, fellow; thy sister's safe enough. 125

Kite. I hope so too. [*Aside.*]

Wor. Hast thou no more sense, fellow, than to believe that the captain can list women?

Bull. I know not whether they list them, or what they do with them, but I am sure they carry as many women as men with them out of the country. 131

Ball. But how came you not to go along with your sister?

Bull. Lord, sir, I thought no more of her going than I do of the day I shall die; but this gentleman here, not suspecting any hurt neither, I believe—You thought no harm, friend, did you?

Kite. Lackaday, sir, not I—only that I believe I shall marry her to morrow. [*Aside.*]

Ball. I begin to smell powder. Well, friend, but what did that gentleman with you? 139

Bull. Why, sir, he entertain'd me with a fine story of a great fight between the Hungarians, I think it was, and the Irish; and so, sir, while we were in the heat of the battel—the captain carry'd off the baggage. 143

Ball. Serjeant, go along with this fellow to your captain, give him my humble service, and desire him to discharge the wench, tho' he has listed her. 146

Bull. Ay, and if he been't free for that, he shall have another man in her place.

Kite. Come, honest friend.—You shall go to my quarters instead of the captain's. [*Aside.*—*Exeunt* KITE and BULLOCK.]

Ball. We must get this mad captain his complement of men, and send him a packing, else he'll over-run the country. 152

Wor. You see, sir, how little he values your daughter's disdain.

Ball. I like him the better; I was just such another fellow at his age. I never set my heart upon any woman so much as to make my self uneasie at the disappointment; but what was very surprizing both to my self and friends, I chang'd o' th' sudden from the most fickle lover to the most constant husband in the world. But how goes your affair with Melinda? 159

Wor. Very slowly. Cupid had formerly wings, but I think in this age he goes upon crutches; or I fancy Venus had been dallying with her cripple Vulcan when my amour commenc'd, which has made it go on so lamely. My mistress has got a captain too, but such a captain! As I live, yonder he comes. 164

Ball. Who? that bluff fellow in the sash! I don't know him.

Wor. But I engage he knows you, and every body at first sight; his impudence were a prodigy, were not his ignorance proportionable. He has the most universal acquaintance of any man living, for he won't be alone, and no body will keep him company twice. Then he's a Caesar among the women: *Veni, Vidi, Vici*, that's all. If he has but talk'd with the maid, he swears he has lain with the mistress. But the most surprizing part of his character is his memory, which is the most prodigious and the most trifling in the world. 174

Ball. I have met with such men, and I take this good-for-nothing memory to proceed from a certain contexture of the brain, which is purely adapted to impertinencies, and there they lodge secure, the owner having no thoughts of his own to disturb them. I have known a man as perfect as a chronologer, as to the day and year of most important transactions, but be altogether ignorant in the causes or consequences of any one thing of moment. I have known another acquire so much by travel as to tell you the names of most places in Europe, with their distances of miles, leagues, or hours, as punctually as a post-boy; but for any thing else as ignorant as the horse that carries the mail.

Wor. This is your man, sir, add but the traveller's privilege of lying, and even that he abuses. This is the picture; behold the life. 188

Enter BRAZEN.

Braz. Mr. Worthy, I am your servant, and so forth.—Hark'e, my dear. 190

Wor. Whispering, sir, before company is not manners, and when no body's by, 'tis foolish.

Braz. Company! *Mor't de ma vie!* I beg the gentleman's pardon.—Who is he?

Wor. Ask him. 195

Braz. So I will. My dear, I am your servant, and so forth,—your name, my dear?

Ball. Very laconick, sir.

Braz. Laconick! A very good name, truly; I have known several of the Laconicks abroad. Poor Jack Laconick! He was kill'd at the battel of Landen.¹ I remember that he had a blew ribbon in his hat that very day, and after he fell we found a piece of neat's tongue in his pocket. 203

Ball. Pray, sir, did the French attack us, or we them, at Landen? 205

Braz. The French attack us! Oons, sir, are you a Jacobite?

Ball. Why that question?

Braz. Because none but a Jacobite cou'd think that the French

¹ A French victory in the previous war (July 29, 1693).

durst attack us.—No, sir, we attack'd them on the—I have reason to remember the time, for I had two and twenty horses kill'd under me that day. 211

Wor. Then, sir, you must have rid mighty hard.

Ball. Or perhaps, sir, like my countryman, you rid upon half a dozen horses at once.

Braz. What do you mean, gentlemen? I tell you they were kill'd, all torn to pieces by cannon shot, except six I stak'd to death upon the enemies *Chevaux de Frise*. 217

Ball. Noble Captain, may I crave your name?

Braz. Brazen, at your service.

Ball. Oh, Brazen, a very good name; I have known several of the Brazens abroad. 221

Wor. Do you know Captain Plume, sir?

Braz. Is he any thing related to Frank Plume in Northamptonshire?—Honest Frank! Many, many a dry bottle have we crack'd hand to fist. You must have known his brother Charles that was concern'd in the India company; he marry'd the daughter of old Tongue-Pad, the master in Chancery; a very pretty woman, only squinted a little. She dy'd in child-bed of her first child, but the child surviv'd; 'twas a daughter, but whether 'twas call'd Margaret or Margery, upon my soul, I can't remember. [*Looking on his watch.*] But gentlemen, I must meet a lady, a twenty thousand pounder, presently, upon the walk by the water.—Worthy, your servant; Laconick, yours. [*Exit.*]

Ball. If you can have so mean an opinion of Melinda, as to be jealous of this fellow, I think she ought to give you cause to be so.

Wor. I don't think she encourages him so much for gaining her self a lover, as to set me up a rival; were there any credit to be given to his words, I should believe Melinda had made him this assignation; I must go see. Sir, you'll pardon me. 239

Ball. Ay, ay, sir, you're a man of business.—But what have we got here? 241

Enter ROSE singing.

Rose. And I shall be a lady, a captain's lady, and ride single upon a white horse with a star, upon a velvet side-saddle; and I

shall go to London and see the tombs, and the lyons, and the queen. Sir, an' please your worship, I have often seen your worship ride through our grounds a hunting, begging your worship's pardon.—Pray what may this lace be worth a yard? 247

[*Shewing some lace.*]

Ball. Right Mechelin, by this light! Where did you get this lace, child?

Rose. No matter for that, sir; I came honestly by it. 250

Ball. [*Aside.*] I question it much.

Rose. And see here, sir; a fine turky-shell snuff-box, and fine mangere.¹—See here. [*Takes snuff affectedly.*] The captain learn'd me how to take it with an air.

Ball. Oho! the captain! Now the murther's out. And so the captain tought you to take it with an air. 256

Rose. Yes, and give it with an air too—Will your worship please to taste my snuff? [*Offers the box affectedly.*]

Ball. You are a very apt scholar, pretty maid. And pray, what did you give the captain for these fine things? 260

Rose. He's to have my brother for a soldier, and two or three sweet-hearts that I have in the country, they shall all go with the captain. O, he's the finest man, and the humblest withal: wou'd you believe it, sir? he carry'd me up with him to his own chamber with as much familiarity as if I had been the best lady in the land. 266

Ball. Oh! he's a mighty familiar gentleman, as can be.

Enter PLUME singing.

Plume. *But it is not so;
With those that go
Thro' frost and snow—* 270
 *Most apropos,
My maid with the milking-pail.*

[*Takes hold of ROSE.*]

How, the justice! Then I'm arraign'd, condemned, and executed.

Ball. O, my noble Captain!

Rose. And my noble Captain too, sir. 275

¹ A kind of snuff: perhaps Rose's error for the sort called "orangeree."

Plume. 'Sdeath, child! are you mad?—Mr. Ballance, I am so full of business about my recruits, that I ha'n't a moment's time to—I have just now three or four people to—

Ball. Nay, Captain, I must speak to you—

Rose. And so must I too, Captain.

280

Plume. Any other time, sir—I cannot for my life, sir—

Ball. Pray, sir—

Plume. Twenty thousand things—I wou'd—but—now, sir, pray—devil take me—I cannot—I must— [Breaks away.]

Ball. Nay, I'll follow you.

[Exit.]

Rose. And I too.

[Exit.]

Scene [II], *The Walk by the Severn side.*

Enter MELINDA and her maid LUCY.

Mel. And pray was it a ring, or buckle, or pendants, or knots, or in what shape was the almighty gold transform'd that has brib'd you so much in his favour?

Luc. Indeed, madam, the last bribe I had was from the captain, and that was only a small piece of Flanders edging for pinner.¹

Mel. Ay, Flanders lace is as constant a present from officers to their women as something else is from their women to them. They every year bring over a cargo of lace, to cheat the queen of her duty, and her subjects of their honesty.

9

Luc. They only barter one sort of prohibited goods for another, Madam.

11

Mel. Has any of 'em been bartering with you, Mrs. Pert, that you talk so like a trader?

Luc. Madam, you talk as peevishly to me as if it were my fault; the crime is none of mine, tho' I pretend to excuse it; tho' he shou'd not see you this week, can I help it? But as I was saying, madam—his friend, Captain Plume, has so taken him up this two days.

18

Mel. Psha! wou'd his friend the captain were ty'd upon his back. I warrant he has never been sober since that confounded captain came to town. The devil take all officers, I say—they

¹ A fashionable kind of coif or head covering of needlework.

do the nation more harm by debauching us at home than they do good by defending us abroad. No sooner a captain comes to town, but all the young fellows flock about him, and we can't keep a man to our selves. 25

Luc. One wou'd imagine, madam, by your concern for Worthy's absence, that you shou'd use him better when he's with you.

Mel. Who told you, pray, that I was concern'd for his absence? I'm only vex'd that I've had nothing said to me these two days. One may like the love, and despise the lover, I hope; as one may love the treason and hate the traytor. Oh! here comes another captain, and a rogue that has the confidence to make love to me; but indeed I don't wonder at that, when he has the assurance to fansie himself a fine gentleman. 34

Luc. If he shou'd speak o' th' assignation, I shou'd be ruin'd.

[*Aside.*]

Enter BRAZEN.

Braz. True to the touch, faith [*Aside.*].—Madam, I am your humble servant, and all that, madam—A fine river this same Severn.—Do you love fishing, madam?

Mel. 'Tis a pretty melancholy amusement for lovers. 39

Braz. I'll go buy hooks and lines presently; for you must know, madam, that I have serv'd in Flanders against the French, in Hungary against the Turks, and in Tangier against the Moors, and I was never so much in love before; and split me, madam, in all the campains I ever made, I have not seen so fine a woman as your ladyship. 45

Mel. And from all the men I ever saw I never had so fine a complement; but you soldiers are the best bred men, that we must allow.

Braz. Some of us, madam.—But there are brutes among us too, very sad brutes; for my own part, I have always had the good luck to prove agreeable—I have had very considerable offers, madam,—I might have marry'd a German princess, worth fifty thousand crowns a year, but her stove¹ disgusted me.—The

¹ overheated chamber (*Stube*): a common object of the contempt of English travellers in Germany.

daughter of a Turkish Bashaw fell in love with me too when I was prisoner among the infidels; she offer'd to rob her father of his treasure, and make her escape with me; but I don't know how, my time was not come; hanging and marriage, you know, go by destiny. Fate has reserv'd me for a Shropshire lady with twenty thousand pound.—Do you know any such person, madam? 59

Mel. Extravagant coxcomb!—To be sure, a great many ladies of that fortune wou'd be proud of the name of Mrs. Brazen. 61

Braz. Nay, for that matter, madam, there are women of very good quality of the name of Brazen.

Enter WORTHY.

Mel. O! are you there, gentlemen?—Come, Captain, we'll walk this way: give me your hand. 65

Braz. My hand, heart's blood and guts are at your service.—Mr. Worthy, your servant, my dear. [*Exit, leading* MELINDA.

Wor. Death and fire, this is not to be born.

Enter PLUME.

Plume. No more it is, faith.

Wor. What? 70

Plume. The March beer at the Raven; I have been doubly serving the Queen,—raising men, and raising the excise.—Recruiting and elections are rare friends to the excise.

Wor. You a'n't drunk?

Plume. No, no, whimsical only; I cou'd be mighty foolish, and fancy my self mighty witty. Reason still keeps its throne, but it nods a little, that's all. 77

Wor. Then you're just fit for a frolick?

Plume. As fit as close pinner for a punk in the pit.

Wor. There's your play then: recover me that vessel from that Tangerine. 81

Plume. She's well rig'd, but how is she mann'd?

Wor. By Captain Brazen that I told you of to day. She is call'd the Melinda, a first rate, I can assure you; she sheer'd off with him just now, on purpose to affront me, but according to

your advice I wou'd take no notice, because I wou'd seem to be above a concern for her behaviour. But have a care of a quarrel.

Plume. No, no, I never quarrel with any thing in my cups but an oyster wench, or a cook maid; and if they ben't civil, I knock 'em down. But heark'e, my friend, I'll make love, and I must make love. I tell you what, I'll make love like a platoon. 91

Wor. Platoon, how's that?

Plume. I'll kneel, stoop, and stand,¹ faith; most ladies are gain'd by platooning.

Wor. Here they come; I must leave you.

[*Exit.*

Plume. Soh! now must I look as sober and as demure as a whore at a christning. 97

Enter BRAZEN and MELINDA.

Braz. Who's that, madam?

Mel. A brother officer of yours, I suppose, sir.

Braz. Ay!—My dear. [*To PLUME.*

100

Plume. My dear.

[*Run and embrace.*

Braz. My dear boy, how is't? Your name, my dear? if I be not mistaken, I have seen your face.

Plume. I never see yours in my life, my dear.—But there's a face well known as the sun's that shines on all and is by all ador'd.

Braz. Have you any pretensions, sir.

106

Plume. Pretensions!

Braz. That is, sir, have you ever serv'd abroad?

Plume. I have serv'd at home, sir, for ages serv'd this cruel fair.—And that will serve the turn, sir. 110

Mel. [*Aside.*] So, between the fool and the rake, I shall bring a fine spot² of work upon my hands.—I see Worthy yonder—I cou'd be content to be friends with him, wou'd he come this way.

Braz. Will you fight for the lady, sir?

Plume. No, sir, but I'll have her notwithstanding.

115

*Thou peerless princess of Salopian plains,
Envy'd by nymphs and worship'd by the swains—*

¹ As platoons are taught to fire from three positions.

² Probably an idiom from embroidery: "spot" was a kind of stitch.

Braz. Oons, sir, not fight for her!

Plume. Prithee be quiet—I shall be out—

Behold how humbly do's the Severn glide, 120
To greet thee princess of the Severn side.

Braz. Don't mind him, madam.—If he were not so well drest, I shou'd take him for a poet.—But I'll shew the difference presently.—Come, madam,—we'll place you between us; and now the longest sword carries her. [Draws.]

Enter WORTHY.

Mel. [*shrieking*]. Oh, Mr. Worthy, save me from these mad men. [Ex[it] with WOR[THY].]

Plume. Ha, ha, ha! why don't you follow, sir? and fight the bold ravisher. 128

Braz. No, sir, you are my man.

Plume. I don't like the wages, and I won't be your man. 130

Braz. Then you're not worth my sword.

Plume. No! Pray what did it cost?

Braz. It cost me twenty pistoles in France, and my enemies thousands of lives in Flanders.

Plume. Then they had a dear bargain. 135

Enter SILVIA in man's apparel.

Sil. Save ye, save ye, gentlemen.

Braz. My dear! I'm yours.

Plume. Do you know the gentleman?

Braz. No, but I will presently.—Your name, my dear.

Sil. Wilful; Jack Wilful, at your service. 140

Braz. What, the Kentish Wilfuls, or those of Staffordshire?

Sil. Both, sir, both; I'm related to all the Wilfuls in Europe, and I'm head of the family at present.

Plume. Do you live in this country, sir?

Sil. Yes, sir, I live where I stand; I have neither home, house, nor habitation, beyond this spot of ground. 146

Braz. What are you, sir?

Sil. A rake.

Plume. In the army, I presume.

Sil. No, but intend to list immediately.—Look'e, gentlemen, he that bids me fairest has me. 151

Braz. Sir, I'll prefer you; I'll make you a corporal this minute.

Plume. Corporal! I'll make you my companion; you shall eat with me.

Braz. You shall drink with me. 155

Plume. You shall lie with me, you young rogue. [Kisses.

Braz. You shall receive your pay and do no duty.

Sil. Then you must make me a field officer.

Plume. Pho, pho! I'll do more than all this; I'll make you a corporal, and give you a brevet for serjeant. 160

Braz. Can you read and write, sir?

Sil. Yes.

Braz. Then your business is done.—I'll make you chaplain to the regiment.

Sil. Your promises are so equal that I'm at a loss to chuse; there is one Plume that I hear much commended in town; pray which of you is Captain Plume? 167

Plume. I am Captain Plume.

Braz. No, no, I'm Captain Plume.

Sil. Hey day! 170

Plume. Captain Plume! I'm your servant, my dear.

Braz. Captain Brazen! I am yours.—[*Aside.*] The fellow dare not fight.

Enter KITE.

Kite. Sir, if you please— [Goes to whisper PLUME.

Plume. No, no, there's your captain. Captain Plume, your serjeant has got so drunk he mistakes me for you. 176

Braz. He's an incorrigible sot.—Here, my Hector of Holbourn, forty shillings for you.

Plume. I forbid the banes.—Look'e, friend, you shall list with Captain Brazen. 180

Sil. I will see Captain Brazen hang'd first; I will list with Captain Plume. I am a free-born English man, and will be a slave my own way—Look'e, sir, will you stand by me?

[To BRAZEN.

Braz. I warrant you, my lad.

Sil. Then I will tell you, Captain Brazen, [to PLUME] that you are an ignorant, pretending, impudent coxcomb. 186

Braz. Ay, ay, a sad dog.

Sil. A very sad dog; give me the money, noble Captain Plume.

Plume. Then you won't list with Captain Brazen?

Sil. I wont. 190

Braz. Never mind him, child, I'll end the dispute presently.—
Heark'e, my dear.

[Takes PLUME to one side of the stage, and entertains him in dumb show.]

Kite. Sir, he in the plain coat is Captain Plume; I am his serjeant, and will take my oath on't.

Sil. What! you are Serjeant Kite? 195

Kite. At your service.

Sil. Then I wou'd not take your oath for a farthing.

Kite. A very understanding youth of his age! Pray, sir, let me look you full in the face.

Sil. Well, sir, what have you to say to my face? 200

Kite. The very image of my brother; two bullets of the same caliver were never so like. Sure it must be Charles, Charles—

Sil. What d'ye mean by Charles?

Kite. The voice too, only a little variation in *Effa-ut flatt*.¹—
My dear brother, for I must call you so, if you shou'd have the fortune to enter into the most noble society of the sword, I bespeak you for a comrade. 207

Sil. No, sir, I'll be the captain's comrade, if any body's.

Kite. Ambition there again! 'tis a noble passion for a soldier; by that I gain'd this glorious halbert. Ambition! I see a commission in his face already. Pray, noble Captain, give me leave to salute you. [Offers to kiss her.]

Sil. What, men kiss one another! 213

Kite. We officers do; 'tis our way. We live together like man

¹ "The fuller name (*F fa ut*) of the note F, which was sung to the syllable *fa* or *ut* according as it occurred in one or other of the Hexachords (imperfect scales) to which it could belong." (*N.E.D.*)

and wife, always either kissing or fighting.—But I see a storm a coming. 216

Sil. Now, Serjeant I shall see who is your captain, by your knocking down the other.

Kite. My captain scorns assistance, sir.

Braz. How dare you contend for any thing, and not dare to draw your sword? But you are a young fellow, and have not been much abroad. I excuse that, but prithee resign the man, prithee do; you are a very honest fellow.

Plume. You lye; and you are a son of a whore.

[Draws and makes up to BRAZEN.]

Braz. Hold, hold, did not you refuse to fight for the lady? 225

[Retiring.]

Plume. I always do.—But for a man I'll fight knee deep, so you lye again.

[PLUME and BRAZEN fight a traverse or two about the stage; SILVIA draws, who is held by KITE, who sounds to arms with his mouth; takes SILVIA in his arms and carries her off the stage.]

Braz. Hold, where's the man?

Plume. Gone.

Braz. Then what do we fight for? *[Puts up.]* Now let's embrace, my dear. 231

Plume. With all my heart, my dear. *[Putting up.]*—I suppose Kite has listed him by this time. *[Embrace.]*

Braz. You are a brave fellow; I always fight with a man before I make him my friend; and if once I find he will fight, I never quarrel with him afterwards.—And now I'll tell you a secret, my dear friend; that lady we frighted out of the walk just now I found in bed this morning—so beautiful, so inviteing—I presently lock'd the door.—But I am a man of honour—but I believe I shall marry her nevertheless.—Her twenty thousand pound, you know, will be a pretty conveniency—I had an assignation with her here, but your coming spoil'd my sport. Curse you, my dear, but don't do so agen— 243

Plume. No, no, my dear, men are my business at present.

[Exeunt.]

Act IV. Scene [I], *The Walk continues.*

Enter ROSE and BULLOCK meeting.

Rose. Where have you been, you great booby? you are always out of the way in the time of preferment.

Bull. Preferment! who shou'd prefer me?

Rose. I wou'd prefer you; who shou'd prefer a man but a woman? Come, throw away that great club, hold up your head, cock your hat, and look big. 6

Bull. Ah Ruose, Ruose, I fear some body will look big sooner than folk think of. This genteel breeding never comes into the country without a train of followers.—Here has been Cartwheel, your sweetheart; what will become of him? 10

Rose. Look'e, I'm a great woman, and will provide for my relations.—I told the captain how finely he play'd upon the taber and pipe, so he has set him down for drum-major.

Bull. Nay, sister, why did not you keep that place for me? You know I always lov'd to be a drumming, if it were but on a table, or on a quart pot. 16

Enter SILVIA.

Sil. Had I but a commission in my pocket I fancy my breeches wou'd become me as well as any ranting fellow of 'em all; for I take a bold step, a rakish toss, a smart cock, and an impudent air to be the principle ingredients in the composition of a captain.—What's here? *Rose!* my nurses daughter!—I'll go and practice.—Come, child, kiss me at once. [*Kisses ROSE.*] And her brother too!—Well, honest Dungfork, do you know the difference between a horse cart and a cart horse, eh? 24

Bull. I presume that your worship is a captain, by your cloaths and your courage. 26

Sil. Suppose I were, wou'd you be contented to list, friend?

Rose. No, no, tho' your worship be a handsome man, there be others as fine as you; my brother is engag'd to Captain Plume.

Sil. Plume! do you know Captain Plume? 30

Rose. Yes, I do, and he knows me.—He took the ribbands out of

his shirt sleeves and put 'em into my shoes.—See there.—I can assure you that I can do any thing with the captain.

Bull. That is, in a modest way, sir.—Have a care what you say, Ruose, don't shame your parentage. 35

Rose. Nay, for that matter, I am not so simple as to say that I can do any thing with the captain, but what I may do with any body else.

Sil. So!—And pray what do you expect from this captain, child? 40

Rose. I expect, sir—I expect—But he order'd me to tell no body.—But suppose that he should promise to marry me?

Sil. You shou'd have a care, my dear; men will promise any thing beforehand.

Rose. I know that, but he promis'd to marry me afterwards.

Bull. Wuns, Rose, what have you said? 46

Sil. Afterwards! after what?

Rose. After I had sold my chickens.—I hope there's no harm in that.

Enter PLUME.

Plume. What, Mr. Wilful so close with my market woman!

Sil. I'll try if he loves her. [*Aside.*]—Close, sir, ay, and closer yet, sir.—Come, my pretty maid, you and I will withdraw a little.

Plume. No, no, friend, I han't done with her yet. 53

Sil. Nor I have begun with her, so I have as good a right as you have. 55

Plume. Thou art a bloody impudent fellow.¹

Sil. Sir, I wou'd qualifie my self for the service.

Plume. Hast thou really a mind to the service?

Sil. Yes, sir. So let her go.

Rose. Pray, gentlemen, don't be so violent. 60

Plume. Come, leave it to the girl's own choice.—Will you belong to me or to that gentleman?

Rose. Let me consider; you're both very handsom.

Plume. Now the natural unconstancy of her sex begins to work.

¹ Lines 56-79 appear as rewritten in the text of Q2. For the inferior version of this passage in Q1 see Introduction, pages 677-78.

Rose. Pray, sir, what will you give me? 65

Bull. Don't be angry, sir, that my sister shou'd be mercenary, for she's but young.

Sil. Give thee, child!—I'll set thee above scandal; you shall have a coach with six before and six behind,¹ an equipage to make vice fashionable and put vertue out of countenance. 70

Plume. Pho, that's easily done! I'll do more for thee, child; I'll buy you a furbuloe scarf, and give you a ticket to see a play.

Bull. A play! Wauns, Ruose, take the ticket, and let's see the show.

Sil. Look'e Captain, if you won't resign, I'll go list with Captain Brazen this minute. 76

Plume. Will you list with me if I give up my title?

Sil. I will.

Plume. Take her: I'll change a woman for a man at any time.

Rose. I have heard before, indeed, that you captains us'd to sell your men. 81

Bull. Pray, Captain, don't send Ruose to the West Indies.

Plume. Ha, ha, ha, West Indies! No, no, my honest lad, give me thy hand; nor you nor she shall move a step farther than I do.—This gentleman is one of us, and will be kind to you, Mrs. Rose.

Rose. But will you be so kind to me, sir, as the captain wou'd?

Sil. I can't be altogether so kind to you; my circumstances are not so good as the captains; but I'll take care of you, upon my word. 89

Plume. Ay, ay, we'll all take care of her; she shall live like a princess, and her brother here shall be—What wou'd you be? 91

Bull. O, sir! if you had not promis'd the place of drum-major—

Plume. Ay, that is promis'd.—But what think you of barrack-master? You are a person of understanding, and barrack-master you shall be.—But what's become of this same Cartwheel you told me of, my dear? 96

Rose. We'll go fetch him.—Come, brother barrack-master.—We shall find you at home, noble Captain?

[*Ex[eunt] ROSE and BULL[OCK].*]

Plume. Yes, yes; and now, sir, here are your forty shillings.

¹ Six horses and six footmen.

Sil. Captain Plume, I despise your listing money; if I do serve, 'tis purely for love—of that wench, I mean.—For you must know that, among my other sallies, I have spent the best part of my fortune in search of a maid, and cou'd never find one hitherto; so you may be assur'd I'd [not] sell my freedom under a less purchase than I did my estate.—So before I list, I must be certify'd that this girl is a virgin. 106

Plume. Mr. Wilfull, I can't tell you how you can be certify'd in that point till you try; but upon my honour she may be a vestal for ought that I know to the contrary.—I gain'd her heart indeed by some trifling presents and promises, and knowing that the best security for a woman's soul is her body, I wou'd have made my self master of that too, had not the jealousy of my impertinent landlady interpos'd. 113

Sil. So you only want an opportunity for accomplishing your designs upon her? 115

Plume. Not at all; I have already gain'd my ends, which were only the drawing in one or two of her followers. The women, you know, are the loadstones every where; gain the wives, and you are caress'd by the husbands; please the mistress, and you are valu'd by the gallants; secure an interest with the finest women at court, and you procure the favour of the greatest men.—So kiss the prettiest country wenches, and you are sure of listing the lustiest fellows. Some people may call this artifice, but I term it stratagem, since it is so main a part of the service.—Besides, the fatigue of recruiting is so intolerable, that unless we cou'd make our selves some pleasure amidst the pain, no mortal man wou'd be able to bear it. 127

Sil. Well, sir, I am satisfy'd as to the point in debate; but now let me beg you to lay aside your recruiting airs, put on the man of honour, and tell me plainly what usage I must expect when I am under your command? 131

Plume. You must know in the first place, then, that I hate to have gentlemen in my company; for they are always troublesome and expensive, sometimes dangerous; and 'tis a constant maxim amongst us, that those who know the least, obey the best. Notwithstanding all this, I find something so agreeable about you,

that engages me to court your company; and I can't tell how it is, but I shou'd be uneasy to see you under the command of any body else.—Your usage will chiefly depend upon your behaviour; only this you must expect, that if you commit a small fault, I will excuse it, if a great one, I'll discharge you; for something tells me I shall not be able to punish you. 142

Sil. And something tells me that if you do discharge me 'twill be the greatest punishment you can inflict; for were we this moment to go upon the greatest dangers in your profession, they wou'd be less terrible to me than to stay behind you.—And now your hand; this lists me—and now you are my captain. 147

Plume. Your friend. [*Kisses her.*]—'Sdeath! There's something in this fellow that charms me.

Sil. One favour I must beg.—This affair will make some noise, and I have some friends that wou'd censure my conduct, if I threw my self into the circumstance of a private centinel of my own head.—I must therefore take care to be imprest by the act of Parliament; you shall leave that to me. 154

Plume. What you please as to that.—Will you lodge at my quarters in the mean time? You shall have part of my bed. 156

Sil. O fye! Lye with a common soldier! Wou'd not you rather lye with a common woman?

Plume. No, faith, I'm not that rake that the world imagines; I have got an air of freedom, which people mistake for lewdness in me, as they mistake formality in others for religion.—The world is all a cheat; only I take mine, which is undesign'd, to be more excusable than theirs which is hypocritical. I hurt no body but my self, and they abuse all mankind.—Will you lye with me? 164

Sil. No, no, Captain, you forget Rose; she's to be my bed-fellow, you know. 166

Plume. I had forgot; pray be kind to her. [*Exeunt severally.*]

Enter MELINDA and LUCY.

Mel. 'Tis the greatest misfortune in nature for a woman to want a confident. We are so weak that we can do nothing without assistance, and then a secret racks us worse than the collick.—I am

at this minute so sick of a secret, that I'm ready to faint away.—
Help me, Lucy. 172

Luc. Bless me, madam! What's the matter?

Mel. Vapours only; I begin to recover.—If Sylvia were in town I cou'd heartily forgive her faults for the ease of discovering my own. 176

Luc. You're thoughtful, madam; am not I worthy to know the cause?

Mel. You are a servant, and a secret wou'd make you saucy.

Luc. Not unless you shou'd find fault without a cause, madam.

Mel. Cause or not cause, I must not lose the pleasure of chiding when I please; women must discharge their vapours somewhere, and before we get husbands our servants must expect to bear with 'em. 184

Luc. Then, madam, you had better raise me to a degree above a servant. You know my family, and that 500 *l.* would set me upon the foot of a gentlewoman, and make me worthy the confidence of any lady in the land; besides, madam, 'twill extreamly encourage me in the great design I now have in hand. 189

Mel. I don't find that your design can be of any great advantage to you. 'Twill please me indeed in the humour I have of being reveng'd on the fool for his vanity of making love to me; so I don't much care if I do promise you five hundred pound upon my day of marriage. 194

Luc. That is the way, madam, to make me diligent in the vocation of a confidant, which I think is generally to bring people together. 197

Mel. O Lucy! I can hold my secret no longer: You must know that, hearing of the famous fortune-teller in town, I went disguis'd to satisfy a curiosity which has cost me dear. That fellow is certainly the devil, or one of his bosom favourites; he has told me the most surprising things of my past life— 202

Luc. Things past, madam, can hardly be reckon'd surprizing, because we know them already. Did he tell you any thing surprizing that was to come? 205

Mel. One thing very surprizing; he said I shou'd die a maid!

Luc. Die a maid! come into the world for nothing!—Dear

madam, if you shou'd believe him, it might come to pass; for the bare thought on't might kill one in four and twenty hours.—And did you ask him any questions about me? 210

Mel. You! why, I pass'd for you.

Luc. So 'tis I that am to die a maid.—But the devil was a liar from the beginning, he can't make me die a maid.—I have put it out of his power already.

Mel. I do but jest; I wou'd have pass'd for you, and call'd my self Lucy; but he presently told me my name, my quality, my fortune, and gave me the whole history of my life.—He told me of a lover I had in this country, and describ'd Worthy exactly, but in nothing so well as in his present indifference.—I fled to him for refuge here to day; he never so much as encourag'd me in my fright, but coldly told me that he was sorry for the accident, because it might give the town cause to censure my conduct; excus'd his not waiting on me home, made me a careless bow, and walk'd off: 'sdeath! I cou'd have stab'd him, or my self; 'twas the same thing.—Yonder he comes—I will so use him! 225

Luc. Don't exasperate him, consider what the fortune-teller told you. Men are scarce, and as times go, it is not impossible for a woman to die a maid.

Enter WORTHY.

Mel. No matter.

Worthy. I find she's warm'd; I must strike while the iron is hot.—You have a great deal of courage, madam, to venture into the walks, where you were so lately frighted. 232

Mel. And you have a quantity of impudence to appear before me that you have so lately affronted.

Wor. I had no design to affront you, nor appear before you either, madam: I left you here, because I had business in another place, and came hither thinking to meet another person. 237

Mel. Since you find your self disappointed, I hope you'll withdraw to another part of the walk.

Wor. The walk is broad enough for us both. [*They walk by one another, he with his hat cockt, she fretting and tearing her fan.*] Will you please to take snuff, madam? 242

[*He offers her his box, she strikes it out of his hand; while he is gathering it up, BRAZEN takes her round the waste, she cuffs him.*

Enter BRAZEN.

Braz. What, here before me, my dear!

Mel. What means this insolence?

Luc. Are you mad? Don't you see Mr. Worthy? [*To BRAZEN.*

Braz. No, no, I'm struck blind—Worthy! Odsol! well turn'd.—My mistress has wit at her fingers ends.—Madam, I ask your pardon, 'tis our way abroad.—Mr. Worthy, you are the happy man. 249

Wor. I don't envy your happiness very much, if the lady can afford no other sort of favours but what she has bestowed upon you. 252

Mel. I am sorry the favour miscarry'd, for it was design'd for you, Mr. Worthy; and be assur'd, 'tis the last and only favour you must expect at my hands.—Captain, I ask your pardon— 255

[*Exit with LUCY.*

Braz. I grant it.—You see, Mr. Worthy, 'twas only a random shot; it might have taken off your head as well as mine. Courage, my dear, 'tis the fortune of war; but the enemy has thought fit to withdraw, I think.

Wor. Withdraw! Oons, sir! what d'ye mean by withdraw?

Braz. I'll shew you. [*Exit.*

Wor. She's lost, irrecoverably lost, and Plume's advice has ruin'd me: 'sdeath! why shou'd I that knew her haughty spirit be rul'd by a man that's a stranger to her pride? 264

Enter PLUME.

Plume. Ha, ha, ha! a battel royal. Don't frown so, man; she's your own, I tell you. I saw the fury of her love in the extremity of her passion. The wildness of her anger is a certain sign that she loves you to madness. That rogue Kite began the battel with abundance of conduct, and will bring you off victorious, my life on't. He plays his part admirably; she's to be with him again presently. 271

Wor. But what cou'd be the meaning of Brazen's familiarity with her?

Plume. You are no logician, if you pretend to draw consequences from the actions of fools: There's no arguing by the rule of reason upon a science without principles, and such is their conduct.—Whim, unaccountable whim, hurrys 'em on like a man drunk with brandy before ten a clock in the morning.—But we lose our sport—Kite has open'd above an hour ago; let's away.
[*Exeunt.*]

Scene [II], *A Chamber; a Table with Books and Globes.*

KITE *disguis'd in a strange habit, sitting at a table.*

Kite [*rising*]. By the position of the heavens, gain'd from my observation upon these celestial globes, I find that Luna was a tyde-waiter,¹ Sol a surveyor, Mercury a thief, Venus a whore, Saturn an alderman, Jupiter a rake, and Mars a serjeant of grana-deers; and this is the system of Kite the conjurer. 5

Enter PLUME and WORTHY.

Plume. Well, what success?

Kite. I have sent away a shoemaker and a taylor already; one's to be a captain of marines, and the other a major of dragoons—I am to manage them at night.—Have you seen the lady, Mr. Worthy? 10

Worthy. Ay, but it won't do.—Have you shew'd her her name, that I tore off from the bottom of the letter?

Kite. No, sir, I reserve that for the last stroke.

Plume. What letter?

Wor. One that I wou'd not let you see, for fear that you shou'd break windows in good earnest. [*Knocking at the door.*]

Kite. Officers to your posts! [*Exeunt PLUME and WORTHY.*]
Mind the door. [*Servant opens the door.*]

¹ A customs officer who awaited the arrival of ships as they came in on the tide. The earliest instance of the word in the *N.E.D* is from Farquhar's *Constant Couple*.

Enter a Smith.

Smith. Well, master, are you the cunning man?

Kite. I am the learned Copernicus. 20

Smith. Well, master, I'm but a poor man, and I can't afford above a shilling for my fortune.

Kite. Perhaps that is more than 'tis worth.

Smith. Look ye, doctor, let me have something that's good for my shilling, or I'll have my money again. 25

Kite. If there be faith in the stars, you shall have your shilling forty-fold.—Your hand, countryman; you're by trade a smith.

Smith. How the devil shou'd you know that?

Kite. Because the devil and you are brother tradesmen—You were born under Forceps. 30

Smith. Forceps! what's that?

Kite. One of the signs: There's Leo, Sagittarius, Forceps, Furns, Dixmude, Namur, Brussels, Charleroy,¹ and so forth—twelve of 'em.—Let me see—Did you ever make any bombs or cannon bullets? 35

Smith. Not I.

Kite. You either have, or will.—The stars have decreed that you shall be—I must have more money, sir.—Your fortune's great.

Smith. Faith, doctor, I have no more.

Kite. O, sir, I'll trust you, and take it out of your arrears. 40

Smith. Arrears! what arrears!

Kite. The five hundred pound that's owing to you from the government.

Smith. Owing me!

Kite. Owing you, sir—Let me see your t'other hand—I beg your pardon, it will be owing to you. And the rogue of an agent will demand fifty *per cent.* for a fortnights advance. 47

Smith. I'm in the clouds, doctor, all this while.

Kite. Sir, I am above 'em, among the stars.—In two years, three months, and two hours, you will be made captain of the

¹ To the two signs of the zodiac that he can remember Kite adds "Forceps" (suggested by the Smith's vocation) and the names of five towns which had figured in the recent wars in Flanders. Furns (Furnes) is the westernmost village in Belgium.

forges to the grand train of artillery, and will have ten shilling a day, and two servants.—'Tis the decree of the stars, and of the fixt stars, that are as immoveable as your anvil.—Strike, sir, while the iron is hot.—Fly, sir, begone. 54

Smith. What! what wou'd you have me do, doctor? I wish the stars wou'd put me in a way for this fine place. 56

Kite. The stars do.—Let me see.—Ay, about an hour hence walk carelesly into the market-place, and you'll see a tall slender gentleman cheapning ¹ a pennyworth of apples, with a cane hanging upon his button.—This gentleman will ask you what's a clock.—He's your man, and the maker of your fortune.—Follow him, follow him.—And now go home, and take leave of your wife and children; an hour hence exactly is your time. 63

Smith. A tall slender gentleman, you say, with a cane! Pray what sort of head has the cane? 65

Kite. An amber head with a black ribband.

Smith. And pray of what employment is the gentleman?

Kite. Let me see; he's either a collector of the excise, or a plenipotentiary, or a captain of granadeers—I can't tell exactly which—but he'll call you honest—your name is— 70

Smith. Thomas.

Kite. He'll call you honest Tom.

Smith. But how the devil shou'd he know my name?

Kite. O there are several sorts of Toms—Tom o' Lincoln, Tom-tit, Tom Tell-troth, Tom a Bedlam, and Tom Fool.—Be gone.—An hour hence precisely. [*Knocking at the door.*]

Smith. You say, he'll ask me what's a clock? 77

Kite. Most certainly—And you'll answer you don't know.—And be sure you look at St. Mary's dial; for the sun won't shine, and if it shou'd, you won't be able to tell the figures. 80

Smith. I will, I will. [*Exit.*]

Plume. Well done, conjurer! go on and prosper. [*Behind.*]

Kite. As you were!

Enter a Butcher.

Kite. What, my old friend Pluck the butcher!—I offer'd the surly bull-dog five guineas this morning, and he refus'd it. [*Aside.*]

¹ bargaining for.

But. So, Mr. Conjuror, here's half a crown.—And now you must understand— 87

Kite. Hold, friend, I know your business beforehand.—

But. You're devilish cunning then, for I don't well know it my self. 90

Kite. I know more than you, friend.—You have a foolish saying, that such a one knows no more than the man in the moon. I tell you, the man in the moon knows more than all the men under the sun. Don't the moon see all the world?

But. All the world see the moon, I must confess. 95

Kite. Then she must see all the world, that's certain.—Give me your hand—You're by trade either a butcher or a surgeon.

But. True, I am a butcher.

Kite. And a surgeon you will be; the employments differ only in the name.—He that can cut up an ox may dissect a man, and the same dexterity that cracks a marrow-bone will cut off a leg or an arm. 102

But. What d'ye mean, doctor, what d'ye mean?

Kite. Patience, patience, Mr. Surgeon General; the stars are great bodies, and move slowly. 105

But. But what d'ye mean by surgeon general, doctor?

Kite. Nay, sir, if your worship won't have patience, I must beg the favour of your worship's absence.

But. My worship! my worship! but why my worship?

Kite. Nay then, I have done.

[*Sits.*

But. Pray, doctor— 111

Kite. Fire and fury, sir! [*Rises in a passion.*] Do you think the stars will be hurry'd? Do the stars owe you any money, sir, that you dare to dun their lordships at this rate?—Sir, I am porter to the stars, and I am order'd to let no dun come near their doors. 115

But. Dear doctor, I never had any dealing with the stars; they don't owe me a penny.—But since you are their porter, please to accept of this half-crown to drink their healths, and don't be angry.

Kite. Let me see your hand then once more.—Here has been gold—five guineas, my friend, in this very hand this morning. 121

But. Nay, then he is the devil.—Pray, doctor, were you born

of a woman, or did you come into the world of your own head?

Kite. That's a secret.—This gold was offer'd you by a proper handsome man, call'd Hawk, or Buzzard, or— 125

But. Kite, you mean.

Kite. Ay, ay, Kite.

But. As arrant a rogue as ever carry'd a halbard.—The impudent rascal wou'd have decoy'd me for a soldier.

Kite. A soldier! a man of your substance for a soldier! Your mother has an hundred pound in hard money lying at this minute in the hands of a mercer, not forty yards from this place. 132

But. Oons! and so she has, but very few know so much.

Kite. I know it, and that rogue, what's his name, Kite, knew it, and offer'd you five guineas to list, because he knew your poor mother wou'd give the hundred for your discharge. 136

But. There's a dog now.—'Sflesh, doctor, I'll give you t'other half crown, and tell me that this same Kite will be hang'd.

Kite. He's in as much danger as any man in the county of Salop.

But. There's your fee—but you have forgot the surgeon general all this while. 141

Kite. You put the stars in a passion. [*Looks on his books.*] But now they are pacify'd agen.—Let me see, did you never cut off a man's leg?

But. No. 145

Kite. Recollect, pray.

But. I say, no.

Kite. That's strange, wonderful strange; but nothing is strange to me, such wonderful changes have I seen.—The second, or third, ay, the third campaign that you make in Flanders, the leg of a great officer will be shatter'd by a great shot; you will be there accidentally, and with your clever ¹ chop off the limb at a blow: In short, the operation will be perform'd with so much dexterity, that with general applause you will be made surgeon general of the whole army. 155

But. Nay, for the matter of cutting off a limb, I'll do't, I'll do't, with any surgeon in Europe; but I have no thoughts of making a campaign.

¹ butcher's cleaver.

Kite. You have no thoughts! what's matter¹ for your thoughts?
The stars have decreed it, and you must go. 160

But. The stars decree it! Oons, sir, the justices can't press me.

Kite. Nay, friend, 'tis none of my business, I have done; only mind this, you'll know more an hour and half hence, that's all.
Farewel. [Going.]

But. Hold, hold, doctor. Surgeon general! What is the place worth, pray? 166

Kite. Five hundred pounds a year, besides guineas for claps.

But. Five hundred pounds a year!—An hour and a half hence, you say?

Kite. Prithee, friend, be quiet; don't be troublesome. Here's such a work to make a booby butcher accept of five hundred pound a year—But if you must hear it—I tell [you²] in short, you'll be standing in your stall an hour and half hence, and a gentleman will come by with a snuff-box in his hand, and the tip of his handkerchief hanging out of his right pocket; he'll ask you the price of a line³ of veal, and at the same time stroak your great dog upon the head, and call him Chopper. 177

But. Mercy upon us! Chopper is the dog's name.

Kite. Look'e there—What I say is true—things that are to come must come to pass.—Get you home, sell off your stock, don't mind the whining and the sniveling of your mother and your sister—Women always hinder preferment.—Make what money you can, and follow that gentleman—his name begins with a *P*.—Mind that.—There will be the barber's daughter too, that you promis'd marriage to—she will be pulling and halling you to pieces.

But. What! know Sally too? He's the devil, and he needs must go that the devil drives. [Going.] The tip of his handkerchief out of his left pocket. 188

Kite. No, no, his right pocket; if it be the left, 'tis none of the man. 190

But. Well, well, I'll mind him. [Exit.]

Plume. The right pocket, you say? [Behind, with his pocket-book.]

Kite. I hear the rustling of silks. [Knocking.] Fly, sir, 'tis Madam Melinda.

¹What matter, Q1.

²tell, Q2; tell you, Q1.

³loin.

Enter MELINDA and LUCY.

Kite. Tycho!¹ Chairs for the ladies. 195

Mel. Don't trouble your self, we shan't stay, doctor.

Kite. Your ladyship is to stay much longer than you imagine.

Mel. For what?

Kite. For a husband.—For your part, madam, you won't stay for a husband. [To LUCY.]

Luc. Pray, doctor, do you converse with the stars, or the devil?

Kite. With both; when I have the destinies of men in search, I consult the stars; when the affairs of women come under my hands, I advise with my t'other friend. 204

Mel. And have you rais'd the devil upon my account?

Kite. Yes, madam, and he's now under the table.

Luc. Oh heavens protect us! Dear madam, let's be gone.

Kite. If you be afraid of him, why do you come to consult him?

Mel. Don't fear, fool. Do you think, sir, that because I am a woman, I'm to be fool'd out of my reason, or frighted out of my senses? Come, shew me this devil. 211

Kite. He's a little busie at present, but when he has done he shall wait on you.

Mel. What is he doing?

Kite. Writing your name in his pocket-book. 215

Mel. Ha, ha! my name! Pray what have you or he to do with my name?

Kite. Look'e, fair lady—The devil is a very modest person, he seeks no body unless they seek him first; he's chain'd up like a mastiff, and can't stir unless he be let loose.—You come to me to have your fortune told.—Do you think, madam, that I can answer you of my own head? No, madam, the affairs of women are so irregular, that nothing less than the devil can give any account of them. Now to convince you of your incredulity, I'll shew you a trial of my skill.—Here you *Cacodemo del Plumo*—Exert your power; draw me this lady's name, the word Melinda in proper letters and characters of her own hand writing—do it at three

¹The name is a compliment to Tycho Brahe, the Danish astronomer. Compare *Kite's* own pseudonym of Copernicus.

motions—one—two—three—'tis done.—Now, Madam, will you please to send your maid to fetch it? 229

Luc. I fetch it! the devil fetch me if I do.

Mel. My name in my own hand writing! that wou'd be convincing indeed.

Kite. Seeing's believing. [*Goes to the table, lifts up the carpet.* Here, *Tre, Tre*, poor *Tre*, give me the bone, sirrah.¹ There's your name upon that square piece of paper, behold— 235

Mel. 'Tis wonderful! my very letters to a tittle.

Luc. 'Tis like your hand, madam, but not so like your hand neither; and now I look nearer, 'tis not like your hand at all.

Kite. Here's a chamber-maid now will out-lye the devil!

Luc. Look'e, madam, they shan't impose upon us; people can't remember their hands no more than they can their faces.—Come, madam, let us be certain; write your name upon this paper, then we'll compare the two names. [*Takes out a paper and folds it.*

Kite. Any thing for your satisfaction, madam—here's pen and ink. [*MELINDA writes, LUCY holds the paper.*

Luc. Let me see it, madam: 'tis the same—the very same.—But I'll secure one copy for my own affairs. [*Aside.*

Mel. This is demonstration. 248

Kite. 'Tis so, madam.—The word demonstration comes from *Dæmon*, the father of lyes. 250

Mel. Well; doctor, I am convinc'd; and now pray, what account can you give me of my future fortune?

Kite. Before the sun has made one course round this earthly globe, your fortune will be fix'd for happiness or misery.

Mel. What! So near the crisis of my fate! 255

Kite. Let me see.—About the hour of ten to morrow morning, you will be saluted by a gentleman, who will come to take his leave of you, being design'd for travel; his intention of going abroad is sudden, and the occasion a woman. Your fortune and his are like the bullet and the barrel; one runs plump into the other.—In short, if the gentleman travels, he will die abroad, and if he does you will die before he comes home. 262

¹ Q1 here introduces a piece of horseplay in which Plume acts the part of the invisible devil, to the terror of the ladies.

Mel. What sort of man is he?

Kite. Madam, he's a fine gentleman, and a lover; that is, a man of very good sense, and a very great fool. 265

Mel. How is that possible, doctor?

Kite. Because, madam—because it is so.—A woman's reason is the best for a man's being a fool.

Mel. Ten a clock, you say.

Kite. Ten—about the hour of tea-drinking throughout the kingdom. 271

Mel. Here doctor. [*Gives money.*] Lucy, have you any questions to ask?

Luc. Oh, madam! a thousand.

Kite. I must beg your patience till another time, for I expect more company this minute; besides I must discharge the gentleman under the table. 277

Luc. O pray, sir, discharge us first!

Kite. Tycho, wait on the ladies down stairs.

[*Exeunt*] MEL[INDA] and LUC[Y].

Enter WORTHY and PLUME.¹

Kite. Mr. Worthy, you were pleas'd to wish me joy to day; I hope to be able to return the complement to morrow. 281

Wor. I'll make it the best complement to you that ever I made in my life, if you do. But I must be a traveller, you say?

Kite. No farther than the chops² of the channel, I presume, sir.

Plume. That we have concerted already. [*Knocking hard.*] Hey day! you don't profess midwifry, doctor? 286

Kite. Away to your ambuscade. [*Exeunt* PLUME and WORTHY.]

Enter BRAZEN.

Brazen. Your servant, servant, my dear.

Kite. Stand off, I have my familiar already.

Braz. Are you bewitch'd, my dear? 290

Kite. Yes, my dear, but mine is a peaceable spirit, and hates

¹Q1 has here another brief farcical passage which Farquhar properly excised in Q2. See note on page 743.

²jaws, entrance.

gunpowder. Thus I fortifie my self. [*Draws a circle round him.*]
And now, Captain, have a care how you force my lines.

Braz. Lines! What dost talk of lines! You have something like a fishing rod there, indeed; but I come to be acquainted with you, man—what's your name, my dear? 296

Kite. Conundrum.

Braz. Conundrum! Rat me, I knew a famous doctor in London of your name.—Where were you born?

Kite. I was born in Algebra. 300

Braz. Algebra! 'tis no country in Christendom, I'm sure, unless it be some place in the highlands in Scotland.

Kite. Right.—I told you I was bewitch'd.

Braz. So am I, my dear; I am going to be marry'd—I have had two letters from a lady of fortune that loves me to madness, fits, collick, spleen, and vapours.—Shall I marry her in four and twenty hours, ay, or no? 307

Kite. I must have the year and day of the month when these letters were dated.

Braz. Why, you old bitch, did you ever hear of love letters dated with the year and day of the month? Do you think billet deuz are like bank bills? 312

Kite. They are not so good—but if they bear no date, I must examine the contents.

Braz. Contents! That you shall, old boy; here they be both.

Kite. Only the last you receiv'd, if you please. [*Takes the letter.*]
Now, sir, if you please to let me consult my books for a minute, I'll send this letter inclos'd to you with the determination of the stars upon it to your lodgings. 319

Braz. With all my heart—I must give him—[*Puts his hand in his pocket.*] Algebra! I fancy, doctor, 'tis hard to calculate the place of your nativity.—Here.—[*Gives him money.*] And if I succeed, I'll build a watch-tower upon the top of the highest mountain in Wales for the study of astrology, and the benefit of Conundrums.

[*Exit.*]

Enter PLUME and WORTHY.

Wor. O doctor! that letter's worth a million. Let me see it; and now I have it, I am afraid to open it. 326

Plume. Pho! let me see it! [*Opening the letter.*] If she be a jilt!—Damn her, she is one.—There's her name at the bottom on't.

Wor. How! Then I'll travel in good earnest.—By all my hopes, 'tis Lucy's hand. 330

Plume. Lucy's!

Wor. Certainly—'tis no more like Melinda's character then black is to white.

Plume. Then 'tis certainly Lucy's contrivance to draw in Brazen for a husband—but are you sure 'tis not Melinda's hand?

Wor. You shall see; where's the bit of paper I gave you just now that the devil writ Melinda upon. 337

Kite. Here, sir.

Plume. 'Tis plain they're not the same. And is this the malicious name that was subscribed to the letter, which made Mr. Ballance send his daughter into the country? 341

Wor. The very same; the other fragments I shew'd you just now.

Plume. But 'twas barbarous to conceal this so long, and to continue me so many hours in the pernicious heresie of believing that angelick creature cou'd change: Poor Silvia! 346

Wor. Rich Silvia, you mean, and poor Captain, ha, ha, ha!—Come, come, friend, Melinda is true, and shall be mine; Silvia is constant, and may be yours.

Plume. No, she's above my hopes—but for her sake I'll recant my opinion of her sex. 351

<p><i>By some the sex is blam'd without design, Light harmless censure, such as yours and mine, Sallys of wit, and vapours of our wine. Others the justice of the sex condemn, And wanting merit to create esteem, Wou'd hide their own defects by cens'ring them. But they, secure in their all-conqu'ring charms, Laugh at the vain efforts of false alarms; He magnifies their conquests who complains, For none wou'd struggle were they not in chains.</i></p>	}	<p>355</p> <p>360</p>
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[*Exeunt.*]

Act V.¹ Scene [I], *Justice Ballance's House.*

Enter BALLANCE and SCALE.

Scale. I say 'tis not to be born, Mr. Ballance.

Ball. Look'e, Mr. Scale, for my own part I shall be very tender in what regards the officers of the army; they expose their lives to so many dangers for us abroad that we may give them some grain of allowance at home. 5

Scale. Allowance! This poor girl's father is my tenant, and, if I mistake not, her mother nurst a child for you.—Shall they debauch our daughters to our faces?

Ball. Consider, Mr. Scale, that were it not for the bravery of these officers, we shou'd have French dragoons among us, that wou'd leave us neither liberty, property, wives, nor daughters.—Come, Mr. Scale, the gentlemen are vigorous and warm, and may they continue so; the same heat that stirs them up to love, spurs them on to battel: you never knew a great general in your life, that did not love a whore. This I only speak in reference to Captain Plume—for the other spark I know nothing of. 16

Scale. Nor can I hear of any body that do's.—Oh, here they come!

Enter SILVIA, BULLOCK, ROSE, prisoners; Constable and Mob.

Cons. May it please your worships, we took them in the very act, *re infecta*, sir.—The gentleman indeed behav'd himself like a gentleman; for he drew his sword and swore, and afterwards laid it down and said nothing. 22

Ball. Give the gentleman his sword again.—Wait you without. [*Ex[eunt] Constable and Watch.*] I'm sorry, sir, [*to SILVIA*] to know a gentleman upon such terms that the occasion of our meeting shou'd prevent the satisfaction of an acquaintance. 26

Sil. Sir, you need make no apology for your warrant, no more than I shall do for my behaviour.—My innocence is upon an equal foot with your authority.

Scale. Innocence! have not you seduc'd that young maid? 30

¹ For the brief scene which opens Act V in Q1 and was later dropped see Introduction, page 678.

Sil. No, Mr. Goosecap, she seduc'd me.

Bull. So she did, I'll swear—for she propos'd marriage first.

Ball. [To ROSE.] What, then you are marry'd, child?

Rose. Yes, sir, to my sorrow.

Ball. Who was witness? 35

Bull. That was I—I danc'd, threw the stocking, and spoke jokes by their bed-side, I'm sure.

Ball. Who was the minister?

Bull. Minister! we are soldiers, and want no minister.—They were marry'd by the articles of war. 40

Ball. Hold thy prating, fool.—Your appearance, sir, promises some understanding; pray what does this fellow mean?

Sil. He means marriage, I think—but that, you know, is so odd a thing, that hardly any two people under the sun agree in the ceremony; some make it a sacrament, others a convenience, and others make it a jest; but among soldiers 'tis most sacred.—Our sword, you know, is our honour; that we lay down.—The hero jumps over it first, and the amazon after—leap rogue, follow whore.—The drum beats a ruff, and so to bed; that's all, the ceremony is concise. 50

Bull. And the prettiest ceremony, so full of pastime and prodigality—

Ball. What! are you a soldier?

Bull. Ay, that I am.—Will your worship lend me your cane, and I'll shew you how I can exercise. 55

Ball. Take it. [Strikes him over the head.] Pray, sir, what commission may you bear? [To SILVIA.]

Sil. I'm call'd captain, sir, by all the coffee-men, drawers, whores, and groom-porters in London; for I wear a red coat, a sword, a hat *bien troussée*, a martial twist in my cravat, a fierce knot in my perriwig, a cane upon my button, piquet in my head, and dice in my pocket. 62

Scale. Your name, pray sir?

Sil. Capt. Pinch: I cock my hat with a pinch, I take snuff with a pinch, pay my whores with a pinch. In short, I can do any thing at a pinch but fight and fill my belly. 66

Ball. And pray, sir, what brought you into Shropshire?

Sil. A pinch, sir: I knew you country gentlemen want wit, and you know that we town gentlemen want money; and so—

Ball. I understand you, sir.—Here, constable— 70

Enter Constable.

Take this gentleman into custody till farther orders.

Rose. Pray, your worship, don't be uncivil to him, for he did me no hurt; he's the most harmless man in the world, for all he talks so.

Scale. Come, come, child, I'll take care of you. 75

Sil. What, gentlemen! rob me of my freedom and my wife at once! 'Tis the first time they ever went together.

Ball. Hearn'ye, constable. [*Whispers him.*]

Const. It shall be done, sir—Come along, sir.

[*Exeunt CONST[ABLE], BULLOCK, and SILVIA.*]

Ball. Come, Mr. Scale, we'll manage the spark presently. 80

[*Ex[eunt].*]

Scene [II], *Melinda's Apartment.*

Enter MELINDA and WORTHY.

Mel. So far the prediction is right, 'tis ten exactly. [*Aside.*]
And pray, sir, how long have you been in this travelling humour?

Wor. 'Tis natural, madam, for us to avoid what disturbs our quiet.

Mel. Rather the love of change, which is more natural, may be the occasion of it. 6

Wor. To be sure, madam, there must be charms in variety, else neither you nor I shou'd be so fond of it.

Mel. You mistake, Mr. Worthy, I am not so fond of variety as to travel for 't, nor do I think it prudence in you to run your self into a certain expence and danger, in hopes of precarious pleasures, which at best never answer expectation, as 'tis evident from the example of most travellers, that long more to return to their own country than they did to go abroad. 14

Wor. What pleasures I may receive abroad are indeed uncertain; but this I am sure of, I shall meet with less cruelty among the most barbarous of nations than I have found at home.

Mel. Come, sir, you and I have been jangling a great while; I fancy if we made up our accounts, we shou'd the sooner come to an agreement. 20

Wor. Sure, madam, you wont dispute your being in my debt.—My fears, sighs, vows, promises, assiduities, anxieties, jealousies, have run on for a whole year without any payment.

Mel. A year! Oh Mr. Worthy! what you owe to me is not to be paid under a seven years servitude. How did you use me the year before, when, taking the advantage of my innocence and necessity, you wou'd have made me your mistress, that is, your slave?—Remember the wicked insinuations, artful baits, deceitful arguments, cunning pretences; then your impudent behaviour, loose expressions, familiar letters, rude visits; remember those, those, Mr. Worthy. 31

Wor. I do remember, and am sorry I made no better use of 'em. [*Aside.*]—But you may remember, madam, that—

Mel. Sir, I'll remember nothing—'tis your interest that I shou'd forget. You have been barbarous to me, I have been cruel to you; put that and that together, and let one ballance the other.—Now if you will begin upon a new score, lay aside your adventuring airs, and behave your self handsomely till Lent be over, here's my hand, I'll use you as a gentleman shou'd be. 39

Wor. And if I don't use you as a gentlewoman shou'd be, may this be my poison. [*Kissing her hand.*]

Enter a Servant.

Serv. Madam, the coach is at the door.

Mel. I am going to Mr. Ballance's country house to see my cousin Silvia; I have done her an injury, and can't be easy till I have ask'd her pardon. 45

Wor. I dare not hope for the honour of waiting on you.

Mel. My coach is full; but if you will be so gallant as to mount your own horses and follow us, we shall be glad to be overtaken, and if you bring Captain Plume with you, we shan't have the worse reception. 50

Wor. I'll endeavour it.

[*Exit leading MELINDA.*]

Scene [III], *The Market-Place.**Enter* PLUME and KITE.

Plume. A baker, a taylor, a smith, and a butcher—I believe the first colony planted in Virginia had not more trades in their company than I have in mine.

Kite. The butcher, sir, will have his hands full; for we have two sheep-stealers among us.—I hear of a fellow, too, committed just now for stealing of horses. 6

Plume. We'll dispose of him among the dragoons.—Have we ne'er a poulterer among us?

Kite. Yes, sir, the king of the gipsies is a very good one, he has an excellent hand at a goose or a turkey.—Here's Captain Brazen, sir; I must go look after the men. [*Exit.*]

Enter BRAZEN *reading a Letter.*

Braz. Um, um, um, the canonical hour—Um, um, very well.—My dear Plume! Give me a buss. 13

Plume. Half a score, if you will, my dear. What hast got in thy hand, child? 15

Braz. 'Tis a project for laying out a thousand pound.

Plume. Were it not requisite to project first how to get it in?

Braz. You can't imagine, my dear, that I want twenty thousand ¹ pound; I have spent twenty times as much in the service.—Now, my dear, pray advise me: my head runs much upon architecture; shall I build a privateer or a playhouse? 21

Plume. An odd question—a privateer or a playhouse! 'Twill require some consideration.—Faith, I'm for a privateer.

Braz. I'm not of your opinion, my dear—for in the first place a privateer may be ill built. 25

Plume. And so may a play-house.

Braz. But a privateer may be ill mann'd.

Plume. And so may a play-house.

Braz. But a privateer may run upon the shallows.

¹ Strauss conjectures plausibly that "twenty thousand" is a printer's error for "a thousand." Even Brazen would hardly boast of spending twenty times twenty thousand pounds in the service.

Plume. Not so often as a play-house. 30

Braz. But you know a privateer may spring a leak.

Plume. And I know that a playhouse may spring a great many.

Braz. But suppose the privateer come home with a rich booty, we shou'd never agree about our shares.

Plume. 'Tis just so in a play-house.—So, by my advice, you shall fix upon a privateer. 36

Braz. Agreed—But if this twenty thousand shou'd not be in specie—

Plume. What twenty thousand?

Braz. Hearn'e—

[*Whispers.*

Plume. Marry'd!

41

Braz. Presently. We're to meet about half a mile out of town at the water-side—And so forth—[*Reads.*] *For fear I shou'd be known by any of Worthy's friends, you must give me leave to wear my mask till after the ceremony, which will make me for ever yours—* Look'e there, my dear dog. 46

[*Shews the bottom of the letter to PLUME.*

Plume. Melinda! and by this light, her own hand!—Once more, if you please, my dear—Her hand exactly!—Just now, you say?

Braz. This minute I must be gone. 50

Plume. Have a little patience, and I'll go with you.

Braz. No, no, I see a gentleman coming this way, that may be inquisitive; 'tis Worthy, do you know him?

Plume. By sight only.

Braz. Have a care; the very eyes discover secrets. [*Exit.*

Enter WORTHY.

Worthy. To boot and saddle, Captain, you must mount. 56

Plume. Whip and spur, Worthy, or you won't mount.

Wor. But I shall: Melinda and I are agreed. She's gone to visit Silvia; we are to mount and follow, and cou'd we carry a parson with us, who knows what might be done for us both? 60

Plume. Don't trouble your head; Melinda has secur'd a parson already.

Wor. Already! Do you know more than I?

Plume. Yes, I saw it under her hand.—Brazen and she are to meet half a mile hence at the water-side, there to take boat, I suppose, to be ferry'd over to Elysian¹ fields, if there be any such thing in matrimony. 67

Wor. I parted with Melinda just now; she assur'd me she hated Brazen, and that she resolv'd to discard Lucy for daring to write letters to him in her name. 70

Plume. Nay, nay, there's nothing of Lucy in this.—I tell ye, I saw Melinda's hand, as surely as this is mine.

Wor. But I tell you, she's gone this minute to Justice Ballance's country-house.

Plume. But I tell you, she's gone this minute to the water-side.

Enter Servant.

Serv. Madam Melinda has sent word that you need not trouble your self to follow her, because her journey to Justice Ballance's is put off, and she's gone to take the air another way. [To *Wor.*

Wor. How! her journey put off!

Plume. That is, her journey was a put-off to you. 80

Wor. 'Tis plain, plain.—But how, where, when is she to meet Brazen?

Plume. Just now, I tell you, half a mile hence at the water-side.

Wor. Up or down the water?

Plume. That I don't know. 85

Wor. I'm glad my horses are ready.—Jack, get 'em out.

Plume. Shall I go with you?

Wor. Not an inch—I shall return presently. [Exit.

Plume. You'll find me at the Hall; the justices are sitting by this time, and I must attend them. [Exit.

Scene [IV], *A Court of Justice: Ballance, Scale, and Scruple upon the Bench; Constable, Kite, Mob.*

KITE and Constable advance forward.

Kite. Pray who are those honourable gentlemen upon the bench?

¹ Elysian, Q2; the Elisian, Q1.

Constable. He in the middle is Justice Ballance, he on the right is Justice Scale, and he on the left is Justice Scruple; and I am Mr. Constable: four very honest gentlemen. 5

Kite. O dear sir! I am your most obedient servant. [*Saluting the Constable.*] I fancy, sir, that your employment and mine are much the same; for my business is to keep people in order, and if they disobey, to knock 'em down; and then we are both staff officers. 10

Const. Nay, I'm a serjeant my self—of the militia.—Come, brother, you shall see me exercise.—Suppose this a musket now. Now I am shoulder'd. [*Puts his staff on's right shoulder.*]

Kite. Ay, you are shoulder'd pretty well for a constable's staff, but for a musket you must put it on the other shoulder, my dear.

Const. Adso! that's true.—Come, now give the word of command. 17

Kite. Silence.

Const. Ay, ay, so we will—we will be silent.

Kite. Silence, you dog, silence! 20
[*Strikes him over the head with his halberd.*]

Const. That's the way to silence a man with a witness!—What d'ye mean, friend?

Kite. Only to exercise you, sir.

Const. Your exercise differs so from ours, that we shall ne'er agree about it; if my own captain had given me such a rap, I had taken the law of him. 26

Enter PLUME.

Ball. Captain, you're welcome.

Plume. Gentlemen, I thank you.

Scr. Come, honest Captain, sit by me. [*Plume ascends, and sits upon the bench.*] Now produce your prisoners.—Here, that fellow there—Set him up.—Mr. Constable, what have you to say against this man? 32

Const. I have nothing to say against him, an please you.

Ball. No! what made you bring him hither?

Const. I don't know, an please your worship.

Scale. Did not the contents of your warrant direct you what sort of men to take up? 37

Const. I can't tell, an please ye; I can't read.

Scr. A very pretty constable truly!—I find we have no business here. 40

Kite. May it please the worshipful bench, I desire to be heard in this case, as being counsel for the queen.

Ball. Come, Serjeant, you shall be heard, since no body else will speak; we won't come here for nothing.

Kite. This man is but one man; the country may spare him, and the army wants him; besides, he's cut out by nature for a granadeer; he's five foot ten inches high; he shall box, wrestle, or dance the Cheshire round with any man in the county; he gets drunk every sabbath-day, and he beats his wife. 49

Wife. You lye, sirrah, you lye!—An please your worship, he's the best natur'dst, pains-taking'st man in the parish, witness my five poor children. 52

Scr. A wife! and five children! You constable, you rogue, how durst you impress a man that has a wife and five children?

Scale. Discharge him, discharge him. 55

Ball. Hold, gentlemen.—Heark'e, friend, how do you maintain your wife and five children?

Plume. They live upon wild fowl and venison, sir; the husband keeps a gun, and kills all the hares and partridge within five mile round.¹ 60

Ball. A gun! nay, if he be so good at gunning, he shall have enough on't.—He may be of use against the French, for he shoots flying to be sure.

Scr. But his wife and children, Mr. Ballance!

Wife. Ay, ay, that's the reason you wou'd send him away; you know I have a child every year, and you are afraid they shou'd come upon the parish at last. 67

Plume. Look'e there, gentlemen, the honest woman has spoke it at once; the parish had better maintain five children this year than six or seven the next: that fellow upon his high feeding may get you two or three beggars at a birth. 71

¹ Archer suggests that this speech should be assigned to Kite.

Wife. Look'e, Mr. Captain, the parish shall get nothing by sending him away, for I won't lose my teaming time, if there be a man left in the parish.

Ball. Send that woman to the house of correction—and the man— 76

Kite. I'll take care o' him, if you please. [*Takes him down.*]

Scale. Here, you constable, the next.—Set up that black fac'd fellow, he has a gunpowder look; what can you say against this man, constable? 80

Const. Nothing but that he's a very honest man.

Plume. Pray, gentlemen, let me have one honest man in my company for the novelty's sake.

Ball. What are you, friend?

Mob. A collier, I work in the cole-pits. 85

Scr. Look'e, gentlemen, this fellow has a trade, and the act of parliament here expresses that we are to impress no man that has any visible means of a livelihood. 88

Kite. May it please your worships, this man has no visible means of livelihood, for he works under ground. 90

Plume. Well said, Kite; besides the army wants miners.

Ball. Right, and had we an order of government for't, we cou'd raise you in this and the neighbouring county of Stafford five hundred colliers that wou'd run you under ground like moles, and do more service in a siege than all the miners in the army. 95

Scr. Well, friend, what have you to say for your self?

Mob. I'm marry'd.

Kite. Lack-a-day, so am I.

Mob. Here's my wife, poor woman.

Ball. Are you marry'd, good woman? 100

Wom. I'm marry'd, in conscience.

Kite. May it please your worship, she's with child in conscience.

Scale. Who marry'd you, mistress?

Wom. My husband—we agreed that I shou'd call him husband to avoid passing for a whore, and that he shou'd call me wife to shun going for a souldier. 106

Scr. A very pretty couple! pray, Captain, will you take 'em both?

Plume. What say you, Mr. Kite, will you take care of the woman? 110

Kite. Yes, sir, she shall go with us to the seaside, and there, if she has a mind to drown her self, we'll take care that no body shall hinder her.

Ball. Here, constable, bring in my man. [*Exit* Constable. Now, Captain, I'll fit you with a man such as you ne'er listed in your life. 116

Enter Constable and SILVIA.

Oh! my friend Pinch, I am very glad to see you.

Sil. Well, sir, and what then?

Scale. What then! Is that your respect to the bench?

Sil. Sir, I don't care a farthing for you nor your bench neither.

Scr. Look'e, gentlemen, that's enough; he's a very impudent fellow, and fit for a soldier. 122

Scale. A notorious rogue, I say, and very fit for a soldier.

Const. A whore-master, I say, and therefore fit to go.

Ball. What think you, Captain? 125

Plume. I think he's a very pretty fellow, and therefore fit to serve.

Sil. Me for a soldier! Send your own lazy lubberly sons at home, fellows that hazzard their necks every day in the pursuit of a fox, yet dare not peep abroad to look an enemy in the face.

Const. May it please your worships, I have a woman at the door to swear a rape against this rogue. 132

Sil. Is it your wife or daughter, booby? I ravish'd 'em both yesterday.

Ball. Pray, Captain, read the articles of war; we'll see him listed immediately. 136

Plume [*Reads*]. *Articles of War against Mutiny and Desertion—*

Sil. Hold, sir.—Once more, gentlemen, have a care what you do, for you shall severely smart for any violence you offer to me; and you, Mr. Ballance, I speak to you particularly, you shall heartily repent it. 141

Plume. Look'e, young spark, say but one word more, and I'll

build a horse ¹ for you as high as the ceiling, and make you ride the most tiresome journey that ever you made in your life.

Sil. You have made a fine speech, good Captain Huffcap, but you had better be quiet; I shall find a way to cool your courage. 146

Plume. Pray, gentlemen, don't mind him; he's distracted.

Sil. 'Tis false.—I'm descended of as good a family as any in your county; my father is as good a man as any upon your bench, and I am heir to twelve hundred pound a year. 150

Ball. He's certainly mad.—Pray, Captain, read the Articles of War.

Sil. Hold once more.—Pray, Mr. Ballance, to you I speak; suppose I were your child, wou'd you use me at this rate?

Ball. No, faith, were you mine, I wou'd send you to Bedlam first, and into the army afterwards. 156

Sil. But consider my father, sir; he's as good, as generous, as brave, as just a man as ever serv'd his country; I'm his only child; perhaps the loss of me may break his heart.

Ball. He's a very great fool if it² does. Captain, if you don't list him this minute, I'll leave the court. 161

Plume. Kite, do you distribute the levy money to the men while I read.

Kite. Ay, sir.—Silence, gentlemen.

[PLUME reads the Articles of War.]

Ball. Very well; now, Captain, let me beg the favour of you not to discharge this fellow upon any account whatsoever. Bring in the rest. 167

Const. There are no more, an't please your worship.

Ball. No more! there were five two hours ago.

Sil. 'Tis true, sir, but this rogue of a constable let the rest escape for a bribe of eleven shillings a man, because he said the act allow'd him but ten, so the odd shilling was clear gains. 172

All Justices. How!

Sil. Gentlemen, he offer'd to let me go away for two guineas, but I had not so much about me; this is truth, and I'm ready to swear it. 176

¹ A wooden instrument used for military punishments.

² it, Q1; he, Q2.

Kite. And I'll swear it; give me the book, 'tis for the good of the service.

Mob. May it please your worship, I gave him half a crown to say that I was an honest man, but now since that your worships have made me a rogue, I hope I shall have my money again. 181

Ball. 'Tis my opinion that this constable be put into the captain's hands, and if his friends don't bring four good men for his ransom by to-morrow night,—Captain, you shall carry him to Flanders. 185

Scale. Scruple. Agreed, agreed!

Plume. Mr. Kite, take the constable into custody.

Kite. Ay, ay.—Sir, [*to the Constable*] will you please to have your office taken from you? Or will you handsomely lay down your staff, as your betters have done before you? 190

[*Constable drops his staff.*]

Ball. Come, gentlemen, there needs no great ceremony in adjourning this court.—Captain, you shall dine with me.

Kite. Come, Mr. Militia Serjeant, I shall silence you now, I believe, without your taking the law of me. [*Exeunt omnes.*]

Scene [V], *The Fields.*

Enter BRAZEN leading in LUCY mask'd.

Braz. The boat is just below here.

Enter WORTHY with a case of pistols under his arm.

Wor. Here, sir, take your choice.

[*Going between 'em, and offering them.*]

Braz. What! pistols! Are they charg'd, my dear?

Wor. With a brace of bullets each.

Braz. But I'm a foot officer, my dear, and never use pistols; the sword is my way—and I won't be put out of my road to please any man. 7

Wor. Nor I neither, so have at you. [*Cocks one pistol.*]

Braz. Look'e, my dear, I don't care for pistols.—Pray oblige me, and let us have a bout at sharps; dam it, there's no parrying these bullets. 11

Wor. Sir, if you han't your belly full of these, the swords shall come in for second course.

Braz. Why then, fire and fury! I have eaten smoak from the mouth of a cannon, sir; don't think I fear powder, for I live upon't. Let me see. [*Takes one.*] And now, sir, how many paces distant shall we fire? 17

Wor. Fire you when you please; I'll reserve my shot till I am sure of you.

Braz. Come, where's your cloak? 20

Wor. Cloak! what d'ye mean?

Braz. To fight upon; I always fight upon a cloak; 'tis our way abroad.

Luc. Come, gentlemen, I'll end the strife. [*Unmasks.*

Wor. Lucy! Take her. 25

Braz. The devil take me if I do.—Huzza! [*Fires his pistol.*] D'ye hear, d'ye hear, you plaguy harrydan, how those bullets whistle? suppose they had been lodg'd in my gizzard now!

Luc. Pray, sir, pardon me.

Braz. I can't tell, child, 'till I know whether my money be safe. [*Searching his pockets.*] Yes, yes, I do pardon you; but if I had you in the Rose tavern, Covent Garden, with three or four hearty rakes, and three or four smart napkins, I wou'd tell you another story, my dear. [*Exit.*

Wor. And was Melinda privy to this? 35

Luc. No, sir, she wrote her name upon a piece of paper at the fortune-tellers last night, which I put in my pocket, and so writ above it to the captain.

Wor. And how came Melinda's journey put off?

Luc. At the towns end she met Mr. Ballance's steward, who told her that Mrs. Silvia was gone from her father's, and no body cou'd tell whither. 42

Wor. Silvia gone from her father's! This will be news to Plume. Go home, and tell your lady how near I was being shot for her.

[*Exeunt.*

[Scene VI. *A Room in Justice Ballance's House.*]

Enter BALLANCE with a napkin in his hand, as risen from dinner, and Steward.

Stew. We did not miss her till the evening, sir; and then searching for her in the chamber that was my young master's, we found her cloaths there; but the suit that your son left in the press when he went to London was gone.

Ball. The white trim'd with silver! 5

Stew. The same.

Ball. You han't told that circumstance to any body.

Stew. To none but your worship.

Ball. And be sure you don't; go into the dining-room, and tell Captain Plume that I beg to speak with him. 10

Stew. I shall.— [Exit. 10

Ball. Was ever man so impos'd upon? I had her promise indeed, that she shou'd never dispose of her self without my consent. I have consented with a witness, given her away as my act and deed.—And this, I warrant, the captain thinks will pass; no, I shall never pardon him the villany, first of robbing me of my daughter, and then the mean opinion he must have of me to think that I cou'd be so wretchedly impos'd upon; her extravagant passion might encourage her in the attempt, but the contrivance must be his.—I'll know the truth presently— 20

Enter PLUME.

Pray, Captain, what have you done with your young gentleman soldier?

Plume. He's at my quarters, I suppose, with the rest of my men.

Ball. Does he keep company with the common soldiers?

Plume. No, he's generally with me. 25

Ball. He lies with you, I presume?

Plume. No, faith, I offer'd him part of my bed,—but the young rogue fell in love with Rose, and has lain with her, I think, since he came to town.

Ball. So that, between you both, Rose has been finely manag'd.

Plume. Upon my honour, sir, she had no harm from me. 31

Ball. All's safe, I find.—Now, Captain, you must know that the young fellow's impudence in court was well grounded; he said I shou'd heartily repent his being listed, and so I do from my soul.

Plume. Ay! For what reason? 35

Ball. Because he is no less than what he said he was, born of as good a family as any in this county, and is heir to twelve hundred pound a year.

Plume. I'm very glad to hear it—for I wanted but a man of that quality to make my company a perfect representative of the whole commons of England. 41

Ball. Won't you discharge him?

Plume. Not under an hundred pound sterling.

Ball. You shall have it, for his father is my intimate friend.

Plume. Then you shall have him for nothing. 45

Ball. Nay, sir, you shall have your price.

Plume. Not a penny, sir; I value an obligation to you much above an hundred pound.

Ball. Perhaps, sir, you shan't repent your generosity.—Will you please to write his discharge in my pocket-book? [*Gives his book.* In the mean time, we'll send for the gentleman. Who waits there?

Enter Servant.

Go to the captain's lodging, and enquire for Mr. Willful; tell him his captain wants him here immediately. 53

Serv. Sir, the gentleman's below at the door, enquiring for the captain. 55

Plume. Bid him come up.—Here's the discharge, sir.

Ball. Sir, I thank you.—'Tis plain he had no hand in't. [*Aside.*

Enter SILVIA.

Silv. I think, Captain, you might have us'd me better than to leave me yonder among your swearing, drunken crew; and you, Mr. Justice, might have been so civil as to have invited me to dinner, for I have eaten with as good a man as your worship. 61

Plume. Sir, you must charge our want of respect upon our ignorance of your quality—but now you are at liberty—I have discharg'd you.

Silv. Discharg'd me! 65

Ball. Yes, sir, and you must once more go home to your father.

Silv. My father! then I am discover'd.—Oh, sir [*kneeling*], I expect no pardon.

Ball. Pardon! No, no, child, your crime shall be your punishment. Here, Captain, I deliver her over to the conjugal power for her chastisement; since she will be a wife be you a husband, a very husband.—When she tells you of her love, upbraid her with her folly; be modishly ungrateful, because she has been unfashionably kind, and use her worse than you wou'd any body else, because you can't use her so well as she deserves. 75

Plume. And are you Silvia, in good earnest?

Silv. Earnest! I have gone too far to make it a jest, sir.

Plume. And do you give her to me in good earnest?

Ball. If you please to take her, sir.

Plume. Why then I have sav'd my legs and arms, and lost my liberty; secure from wounds, I am prepar'd for the gout; farewell subsistence, and welcome taxes.—Sir, my liberty and hopes of being a general are much dearer to me than your twelve hundred pound a year.—But to your love, madam, I resign my freedom, and to your beauty my ambition—greater in obeying at your feet than commanding at the head of an army. 86

Enter WORTHY.

Wor. I am sorry to hear, Mr. Ballance, that your daughter is lost.

Ball. So am not I, sir, since an honest gentleman has found her.

Enter MELINDA.

Mel. Pray, Mr. Ballance, what's become of my cousin Silvia?

Ball. Your cousin Silvia is talking yonder with your cousin

Plume.

92

Mel. and *Wor.* How!

Silv. Do you think it strange, cousin, that a woman should change? But, I hope, you'll excuse a change that has proceeded from constancy; I alter'd my outside, because I was the same

within, and only laid by the woman to make sure of my man: that's my history. 98

Mel. Your history is a little romantick, cousin, but since success has crown'd your adventures, you will have the world o' your side, and I shall be willing to go with the tide, provided you'll pardon an injury I offer'd you in the letter to your father. 102

Plume. That injury, madam, was done to me, and the reparation I expect shall be made to my friend; make Mr. Worthy happy, and I shall be satisfy'd. 105

Mel. A good example, sir, will go a great way—when my cousin is pleas'd to surrender, 'tis probable I shan't hold out much longer.

Enter BRAZEN.

Braz. Gentlemen, I am yours.—Madam, I am not yours.

Mel. I'm glad on't, sir.

Braz. So am I.—You have got a pretty house here, Mr. Laconick. 111

Ball. 'Tis time to right all mistakes.—My name, sir, is Ballance.

Braz. Ballance! Sir, I am your most obedient—I know your whole generation—had not you an unkle that was governour of the Leeward Islands some years ago? 115

Ball. Did you know him?

Braz. Intimately, sir.—He play'd at billiards to a miracle.—You had a brother too that was captain of a fireship—poor Dick—he had the most engaging way with him—of making punch—and then his cabbin was so neat—but his boy Jack was the most comical bastard.—Ha, ha, ha, ha, a pickl'd dog; I shall never forget him. 122

Plume. Well, Captain, are you fix'd in your project yet? Are you still for the privateer?

Braz. No, no, I had enough of a privateer just now; I had like to have been pick'd up by a cruiser under false colours, and a French pickaroon for ought I know. 127

Plume. But have you got your recruits, my dear?

Braz. Not a stick, my dear.

Plume. Probably I shall furnish you. 130

Enter ROSE and BULLOCK.

Rose. Captain, Captain, I have got loose once more, and have persuaded my sweetheart Cartwheel to go with us, but you must promise not to part with me again. 133

Silv. I find Mrs. Rose has not been pleas'd with her bedfellow.

Rose. Bedfellow! I don't know whether I had a bedfellow or not.

Silv. Don't be in a passion, child; I was as little pleas'd with your company as you cou'd be with mine. 137

Bull. Pray, sir, dunna be offended at my sister, she's something under-bred, but if you please, I'll lye with you in her stead.

Plume. I have promis'd, madam, to provide for this girl; now will you be pleas'd to let her wait upon you? or shall I take care of her? 142

Silv. She shall be my charge, sir; you may find it business enough to take care of me.

Bull. Ay, and of me, Captain; for wauns! if ever you lift your hand against me, I'll desart.— 146

Plume. Captain Brazen shall take care o' that.—My dear, instead of the twenty thousand pound you talk'd of, you shall have the twenty brave recruits that I have rais'd at the rate they cost me.—My commission I lay down to be taken up by some braver fellow, that has more merit, and less good fortune—whilst I endeavour by the example of this worthy gentleman to serve my queen and country at home. 153

*With some regret I quit the active field,
Where glory full reward for life does yield; 155
But the recruiting trade, with all its train
Of endless plague, fatigue, and endless pain,
I gladly quit, with my fair spouse to stay,
And raise recruits the matrimonial way.*

[*Exeunt.*

FINIS.

Epilogue¹

All ladies and gentlemen that are willing to see the comedy call'd the *Recruiting Officer*, let them repair to morrow night, by six a clock, to the sign of the *Theatre Royal* in *Drury-Lane*, and they shall be kindly entertain'd.—

We scorn the vulgar ways to bid you come, 5
Whole Europe now obeys the call of drum.
The soldier, not the poet, here appears,
And beats up for a corps of volunteers:
He finds that musick chiefly does delight ye,
And therefore chuses musick to invite ye. 10

Beat the Granadeer March—Row, row, tow.—Gentlemen, this piece of musick, call'd an *Overture to a Battel*, was compos'd by a famous Italian master, and was perform'd with wonderful success at the great *Opera's* of *Vigo*,² *Schellenbergh*,³ and *Bleinheim*;⁴ it came off with the applause of all *Europe*, excepting *France*; the *French* found it a little too rough for their *Delicatesse*.

Some that have acted on those glorious stages, } 17
Are here to witness to succeeding ages, }
That no musick like the Granadeer's engages. }

Ladies, we must own that this musick of ours is not altogether so soft as *Bonancini's*;⁵ yet we dare affirm that it has laid more people asleep than all the *Camilla's* in the world; and you'll con-

¹ In the early editions the Epilogue is printed immediately after the Prologue.

² The naval victory at Vigo Bay in 1702, in which Farquhar's patron, the Duke of Ormond, had a part.

³ Victory of Marlborough over the Elector of Bavaria, July 2, 1704, six weeks previous to the Battle of Blenheim.

⁴ See note on page 699.

⁵ Marc-Antonio Bononcini's opera *Camilla* had just been produced (March 30, 1706) at the Drury Lane Theatre. The entire Epilogue is a satire upon the popularity of French and Italian opera in England.

descend to own that it keeps one awake better than any *Opera* that ever was acted.

24

The *Granadeer March* seems to be a composure excellently adapted to the genius of the *English*; for no musick was ever follow'd so far by us, nor with so much alacrity; and with all deference to the present subscription, we must say that the *Granadeer March* has been subscrib'd for by the whole *Grand Alliance*; and we presume to inform the ladies that it always has the pre-eminence abroad, and is constantly heard by the tallest, handsomest men in the whole army. In short, to gratifie the present taste, our author is now adapting some words to the *Granadeer March*, which he intends to have perform'd to morrow, if the lady who is to sing it should not happen to be sick.

35

*This he concludes to be the surest way
To draw you hither; for you'll all obey
Soft musick's call, tho' you shou'd damn his play.* }

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