

AN *Wm. Ligon*  
A P O L O G Y

For the LIFE of  
COLLEY CIBBER,  
COMEDIAN,  
AND LATE PATENTEE OF THE  
THEATRE-ROYAL.

With an Historical View of the STAGE  
during his OWN TIME.

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WRITTEN BY HIMSELF.

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—————Hoc est  
Vivere bis, vitâ posse priore frui. MART. lib 2.  
When Years no more of active Life retain,  
'Tis Youth renew'd, to laugh them o'er again. Anonym.

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The FOURTH EDITION.

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In TWO VOLUMES.

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V O L. I.

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With an Account of the Rise and Progress  
of the ENGLISH STAGE:  
A Dialogue on OLD PLAYS, and OLD PLAYERS:  
AND  
A List of Dramatic AUTHORS and their WORKS.

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L O N D O N:

Printed for R. and J. DODSLEY, in *Pall-Mall*.

MDCCLVI.

AN  
APOLOGY  
FOR THE LIFE OF  
COLLEGE GIBBER,  
COMEDIAN,  
AND LAST PATRIOT OF THE  
THEATRE ROYAL,  
IN AN ORIGINAL VIEW OF THE STAGE  
DURING HIS OWN TIME.  
WRITTEN BY THOMAS  
THE FOURTH EDITION.  
IN TWO VOLUMES.  
LONDON:  
Printed and Sold by J. DODD, in Pall-mall.  
MDCCLXXII.



T O A

*Certain Gentleman.*

S I R,

**B**ECAUSE I know it would give you less Concern, to find your Name in an impertinent Satyr, than before the daintiest Dedication of a modern Author, I conceal it.

Let me talk never so idly to you, this way; you are, at least, under no necessity of taking it to yourself: Nor when I boast of your Favours, need you blush to have bestow'd them. Or I may now give you all the Attributes, that raise a wise, and good-natur'd Man, to Esteem, and Happiness, and not to be censured as a

VOL. I.

A

Flatterer

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## DEDICATION.

Flatterer by my own, or your Enemies.—I place my own first; because as they are the greater Number, I am afraid of not paying the greater Respect to them. Yours, if such there are, I imagine are too well-bred to declare themselves: But as there is no Hazard, or visible Terror, in an Attack, upon my defenceless Station, my Censurers have generally been Persons of an intrepid Sincerity. Having therefore shut the Door against them, while I am thus privately addressing you, I have little to apprehend, from either of them.

Under this Shelter, then, I may safely tell you, That the greatest Encouragement, I have had to publish this Work, has risen from the several Hours of Patience you have lent me, at the Reading it. It is true, I took the Advantage of your Leisure, in the Country, where moderate Matters serve for Amusement; and there indeed, how far your Good-nature, for an old Acquaintance, or your Reluctance to put the Vanity of an Author out

## DEDICATION.

out of countenance, may have carried you, I cannot be sure; and yet Appearances give me stronger Hopes: For was not the Complaisance of a whole Evening's Attention, as much as an Author of more Importance ought to have expected? Why then was I desired the next Day, to give you a second Lecture? Or why was I kept a third Day, with you, to tell you more of the same Story? If these Circumstances have made me vain, shall I say, Sir, you are accountable for them? No, Sir, I will rather so far flatter myself, as to suppose it possible, That your having been a Lover of the Stage (and one of those few good Judges, who know the Use and Value of it, under a right Regulation) might incline you to think so copious an Account of it a less tedious Amusement, than it may naturally be, to others of different good Sense, who may have less Concern, or Taste for it. But be all this as it may; the Brat is now born, and rather, than see it starve, upon the Bare Parish Provision,

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## DEDICATION.

vision, I chuse thus clandestinely, to drop it at your Door, that it may exercise One of your many Virtues, your Charity, in supporting it.

If the World were to know, into whose Hands I have thrown it, their Regard to its Patron might incline them to treat it as one of his Family : But in the Consciousness of what I *am*, I chuse not, Sir, to say who you *are*. If your Equal, in Rank, were to do publick Justice to your Character, then, indeed, the Concealment of your Name, might be an unnecessary Diffidence : But am I, Sir, of Consequence enough, in any Guise, to do Honour to Mr. — ? were I to set him, in the most laudable Lights that Truth, and good Sense could give him, or his own Likeness would require ; my officious Mite would be lost in that general Esteem, and Regard, which People of the first Consequence, even of different Parties, have a Pleasure in paying him. Encomiums to Superiors from Authors of lower Life, as they are naturally liable to Suspicion, can  
add

## DEDICATION.

add very little Lustre, to what before was visible to the publick Eye : Such Offerings (to use the Stile they are generally dressed in) like *Pagan* Incense, evaporate, on the Altar, and rather gratify the Priest, than the Deity.

But you, Sir, are to be approached in Terms within the Reach of common Sense : The honest Oblation of a chearful Heart, is as much as you desire, or I am able to bring you : A Heart, that has just Sense enough, to mix Respect, with Intimacy, and is never more delighted, than when your rural Hours of Leisure admit me, with all my laughing Spirits, to be my idle self, and in the whole Day's Possession of you ! Then, indeed, I have Reason to be vain ; I am, then, distinguished, by a Pleasure too great, to be conceal'd, and could almost pity the Man of graver Merit, that dares not receive it, with the same unguarded Transport ! This Nakedness of Temper the World may place, in what Rank of Folly, or Weakness they

## DEDICATION.

they please ; but till Wisdom, can give me something, that will make me more heartily happy, I am content, to be gaz'd at, as I am, without lessening my Respect, for those, whose Passions may be more soberly covered.

Yet, Sir, will I not deceive you ; 'tis not the Lustre of your publick Merit, the Affluence of your Fortune, your high Figure in Life, nor those honourable Distinctions, which you had rather deserve than be told of, that have so many Years made my plain Heart hang after you : These are but incidental Ornaments, that, 'tis true, may be of Service to you, in the World's Opinion ; and though, as one among the Croud, I may rejoice, that Providence has so deservedly bestowed them ; yet my particular Attachment has risen from a mere natural, and more engaging Charm, the Agreeable Companion ! Nor is my Vanity half so much gratified, in the *Honour*, as my Sense is in the *Delight* of your Society ! When  
I see



## DEDICATION.

I see you lay aside the Advantages of Superiority, and by your own Cheerfulness of Spirits, call out all that Nature has given me to meet them; then 'tis I taste you! then Life runs high! I desire! I possess you!

Yet, Sir, in this distinguish'd Happiness, I give not up my farther Share of that Pleasure, or of that Right I have to look upon you, with the publick Eye, and to join in the general Regard, so unanimously pay'd to that uncommon Virtue, your *Integrity*! This, Sir, the World allows so conspicuous a Part of your Character, that, however invidious the Merit, neither the rude Licence of Detraction, nor the Prejudice of Party, has ever, once, thrown on it the least Impeachment, or Reproach. This is that commanding Power, that, in publick Speaking, makes you heard with such Attention! This it is, that discourages, and keeps silent the Insinuations of Prejudice, and Suspicion; and almost renders your Eloquence an unnecessary Aid, to your Assertions: Even  
your

## DEDICATION.

your Opponents, conscious of your *Integrity*, hear you rather as a Witness, than an Orator. — But this, Sir, is drawing you too near the Light, *Integrity* is too particular a Virtue to be cover'd with a general Application. Let me therefore only talk to you, as at *Tusculum* (for so I will call that sweet Retreat, which your own Hands have rais'd) where, like the fam'd Orator of old, when publick Cares permit, you pass so many rational, unbending Hours: There! and at such Times, to have been admitted, still plays in my Memory, more like a fictitious, than a real Enjoyment! How many golden Evenings, in that Theatrical Paradise of water'd Lawns, and hanging Groves, have I walk'd, and prated down the Sun, in social Happiness! Whether the Retreat of *Cicero*, in Cost, Magnificence, or curious Luxury of Antiquities, might not out-blaze the *simplex Munditiis*, the modest Ornaments of your *Villa*, is not within my reading to determine: But that the united Power of Nature, Art, or  
Elegance

## DEDICATION.

Elegance of Taste, could have thrown so many varied Objects, into a more delightful Harmony, is beyond my Conception.

When I consider you, in this View, and as the Gentleman of Eminence, surrounded with the general Benevolence of Mankind; I rejoice, Sir, for you, and for myself; to see *You*, in this particular Light of Merit, and myself, sometimes, admitted to my more than equal Share of you.

If this *Apology* for my past Life discourages you not, from holding me, in your usual Favour, let me quit this greater Stage, the World, whenever I may, I shall think This the best-acted Part of any I have undertaken, since you first condescended to laugh with,

S I R,

*Your most obedient,*

*most obliged, and*

*most humble Servant,*

Novemb. 6,  
1739.

COLLEY CIBBER.

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A P O L O G Y,  
FOR THE LIFE OF  
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*The Introduction. The Author's Birth. Various Fortune at School. Not lik'd by those he lov'd there. Why. A Digression upon Raillery. The Use and Abuse of it. The Comforts of Folly. Vanity of Greatness. Laughing, no bad Philosophy.*

**Y**OU know, Sir, I have often told you, that one time or other I should give the Publick Some Memoirs of my own Life; at which you have never fail'd to laugh, like a Friend, without saying a word to dissuade me from it; concluding, I suppose, that such a wild Thought could not possibly require a serious

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B

Answer.

Answer. But you see I was in earnest. And now you will say, the World will find me, under my own Hand, a weaker Man than perhaps I may have pass'd for, even among my Enemies. — With all my Heart! my Enemies will then read me with Pleasure, and you, perhaps, with Envy, when you find that Follies, without the Reproach of Guilt upon them, are not inconsistent with Happiness. — But why make my Follies publick? Why not? I have pass'd my Time very pleasantly with them, and I don't recollect that they have ever been hurtful to any other Man living. Even admitting they were injudiciously chosen, would it not be Vanity in me to take Shame to myself for not being found a Wise Man? Really, Sir, my Appetites were in too much haste to be happy, to throw away my Time in pursuit of a Name I was sure I could never arrive at.

Now the Follies I frankly confess, I look upon as, in some measure, discharged; while those I conceal are still keeping the Account open between me and my Conscience. To me the Fatigue of being upon a continual Guard to hide them, is more than the Reputation of being without them can repay. If this be Weakness, *defendit numerus*, I have such comfortable Numbers on my side, that were all Men to blush, that are not Wise, I am afraid, in Ten, Nine Parts of the World ought to be out of Countenance: But since that sort of Modesty is what they don't care to come into, why should I be afraid of being star'd at, for not being particular? Or if the Particularity lies in owning my Weakness, will my wisest Reader be so inhuman as not to pardon it? But



But if there should be such a one, let me, at least, beg him to shew me that strange Man, who is perfect! Is any one more unhappy, more ridiculous, than he who is always labouring to be thought so, or that is impatient when he is not thought so? Having brought myself to be easy, under whatever the World may say of my Undertaking, you may still ask me, why I give myself all this Trouble? Is it for Fame, or Profit to myself, or Use or Delight to others? For all these Considerations I have neither Fondness nor Indifference: If I obtain none of them, the Amusement, at worst, will be a Reward that must constantly go along with the Labour. But behind all this, there is something inwardly inciting, which I cannot express in few Words; I must therefore a little make bold with your Patience.

A Man who has pass'd above Forty Years of his Life upon a Theatre, where he has never appear'd to be himself, may have naturally excited the Curiosity of his Spectators to know what he really was, when in no body's Shape but his own; and whether he, who by his Profession had so long been ridiculing his Benefactors, might not, when the Coat of his Profession was off, deserve to be laugh'd at himself; or from his being often seen in the most flagrant, and immoral Characters; whether he might not see as great a Rogue, when he look'd into the Glass himself, as when he held it to others.

It was doubtless, from a Supposition that this sort of Curiosity wou'd compensate their Labours, that so many hasty Writers have been encourag'd to publish the Lives of the late Mrs. *Oldfield*, Mr. *Wilks*, and Mr. *Booth*, in less Time after

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their

their Deaths than one could suppose it cost to transcribe them.

Now, Sir, when my Time comes, lest they should think it worth while to handle my Memory with the same Freedom, I am willing to prevent its being so oddly besmear'd (or at best but flatly white-wash'd) by taking upon me to give the Publick This, as true a Picture of myself as natural Vanity will permit me to draw: For, to promise you that I shall never be vain, were a Promise that, like a Looking-Glass too large, might break itself in the making: Nor am I sure I ought wholly to avoid that Imputation, because if Vanity be one of my natural Features, the Portrait would not be like me without it. In a word, I may palliate, and soften, as much as I please; but upon an honest Examination of my Heart, I am afraid the same Vanity which makes even homely People employ Painters to preserve a flattering Record of their Persons, has seduced me to print off this *Chiaro Oscuro* of my Mind.

And when I have done it, you may reasonably ask me, of what Importance can the History of my private Life be to the Publick? To this, indeed, I can only make you a ludicrous Answer, which is, That the Publick very well knows, my Life has not been a private one; that I have been employed in their Service, ever since many of their Grandfathers were young Men; And though I have voluntarily laid down my Post, they have a sort of Right to enquire into my Conduct, (for which they have so well paid me) and to call for the Account of it, during my Share of Administration in the State  
of

of the Theatre. This Work, therefore, which, I hope, they will not expect a Man of hasty Head shou'd confine to any regular Method: (For I shall make no scruple of leaving my History, when I think a Digression may make it lighter, for my Reader's Digestion :) This Work, I say, shall not only contain the various Impressions of my Mind, (as in *Louis the Fourteenth* his Cabinet you have seen the growing Medals of his Person from Infancy to Old Age,) but shall likewise include with them the *Theatrical History of my Own Time*, from my first Appearance on the Stage to my last *Exit*.

If then what I shall advance on that Head, may any ways contribute to the Prosperity or Improvement of the Stage in Being, the Publick must of consequence have a Share in its Utility.

This, Sir, is the best Apology I can make for being my own Biographer. Give me leave therefore to open the first Scene of my Life, from the very Day I came into it; and though (considering my Profession) I have no reason to be ashamed of my Original; yet I am afraid a plain dry Account of it, will scarce admit of a better Excuse than what my Brother *Bayes* makes for Prince *Prettyman* in the *Rehearsal*, viz. *I only do it, for fear I should be thought to be no body's Son at all*; for if I have led a worthless Life, the Weight of my Pedigree will not add an Ounce to my intrinsic Value. But be the Inference what it will, the simple Truth is this.

I was born in *London*, on the 6th of *November* 1671, in *Southampton-Street*, facing *Southampton-House*. My Father, *Caius Gabriel Cibber*, was

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a Native of *Holstein*, who came into *England* some time before the Restoration of King *Charles II.* to follow his Profession, which was that of a Statuary, &c. The *Basso Relievo* on the Pedestal of the Great Column in the City, and the two Figures of the *Lunaticks*, the *Raving* and the *Melancholy*, over the Gates of *Bethlehem-Hospital*, are no ill Monuments of his Fame as an Artist. My Mother was the Daughter of *William Colley*, Esq; of a very ancient Family of *Glaiston* in *Rutlandshire*, where she was born. My Mother's Brother, *Edward Colley*, Esq; (who gave me my Christian Name) being the last Heir Male of it, the Family is now extinct. I shall only add, that in *Wright's History of Rutlandshire*, publish'd in 1684, the *Colleys* are recorded as Sheriffs and Members of Parliament from the Reign of *Henry VII.* to the latter End of *Charles I.* in whose Cause chiefly Sir *Antony Colley*, my Mother's Grandfather, sunk his Estate from Three Thousand to about Three Hundred *per Annum*.

In the Year 1682, at little more than Ten Years of Age, I was sent to the Free-School of *Grantham* in *Lincolnshire*, where I staid till I got through it, from the lowest Form to the uppermost. And such Learning as that School could give me, is the most I pretend to (which though I have not utterly forgot, I cannot say I have much improv'd by Study) but even there I remember I was the same inconsistent Creature I have been ever since! always in full Spirits, in some small Capacity to do right, but in a more frequent Alacrity to do wrong; and consequently often under a worse Character than I wholly deserv'd: A giddy Negligence always possess'd me,  
and

and so much, that I remember I was once whipp'd for my *Theme*, tho' my Master told me, at the same time, what was good of it was better than any Boy's in the Form. And (whatever Shame it may be to own it) I have observed the same odd Fate has frequently attended the Course of my later Conduct in Life. The unskilful Openness, or in plain Terms, the Indiscretion I have always acted with from my Youth, has drawn more Ill-will towards me, than Men of worse Morals and more Wit might have met with. My Ignorance, and want of Jealousy of Mankind has been so strong, that it is with Reluctance I even yet believe any Person, I am acquainted with, can be capable of Envy, Malice, or Ingratitude: And to shew you what a Mortification it was to me, in my very boyish Days, to find myself mistaken, give me leave to tell you a School Story.

A great Boy, near the Head taller than myself, in some Wrangle at Play had insulted me; upon which I was fool-hardy enough to give him a Box on the Ear; the Blow was soon return'd with another, that brought me under him, and at his Mercy. Another Lad, whom I really lov'd, and thought a good-natur'd one, cry'd out with some Warmth, to my Antagonist, (while I was down) Beat him, beat him soundly! This so amaz'd me, that I lost all my Spirits to resist, and burst into Tears! When the Fray was over, I took my Friend aside, and ask'd him, how he came to be so earnestly against me? To which, with some glouting Confusion, he reply'd, Because you are always jeering, and making a Jest of me to every Boy in the School. Many a Mis-

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chief

chief have I brought upon myself by the same Folly in riper Life. Whatever Reason I had to reproach my Companion's declaring against me, I had none to wonder at it, while I was so often hurting him: Thus I deserv'd his Enmity, by my not having Sense enough to know I *had* hurt him; and he hated me, because he had not Sense enough to know, that I never *intended* to hurt him.

As this is the first remarkable Error of my Life I can recollect, I cannot pass it by without throwing out some further Reflections upon it; whether flat or spirited, new or common, false or true, right or wrong, they will be still my own, and consequently like me; I will therefore boldly go on; for I am only obliged to give you my *own*, and not a *good* Picture, to shew as well the Weakness, as the Strength of my Understanding. It is not on what I write, but on my Reader's Curiosity I rely to be read through: At worst, tho' the Impartial may be tired, the Ill-natured (no small Number) I know will see the bottom of me.

What I observed then, upon my having undesignedly provok'd my School-Friend into an Enemy, is a common Case in Society; Errors of this kind often sour the Blood of Acquaintance into an inconceivable Aversion, where it is little suspected. It is not enough to say of your Railery, that you intended no Offence; if the Person you offer it to has either a wrong Head, or wants a Capacity to make that Distinction, it may have the same Effect as the Intention of the grossest Injury: And in reality, if you know his Parts are too slow to return it in kind, it is a vain and idle Inhumanity, and sometimes draws the Aggressor into Difficulties not easily got out of: Or, to give  
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the Case more Scope, suppose your Friend may have a passive Indulgence for your Mirth, if you find him silent at it; tho' you were as intrepid as *Cæsar*, there can be no Excuse for your not leaving it off. When you are conscious that your Antagonist can give as well as take, then indeed the smarter the Hit, the more agreeable the Party: A Man of chearful Sense, among Friends, will never be grave upon an Attack of this kind, but rather thank you that you have given him a Right to be even with you: There are few Men (tho' they may be Masters of both) that on such occasions had not rather shew their Parts than their Courage, and the Preference is just: A Bull-Dog may have one, and only a Man can have the other. Thus it happens, that in the coarse Merriment of common People, when the Jest begins to swell into earnest; for want of this Election you may observe, he that has least Wit generally gives the first Blow. Now, as among the better sort, a Readiness of Wit is not always a Sign of intrinsic Merit; so the want of that Readiness is no Reproach to a Man of plain Sense and Civility, who therefore (methinks) should never have these Lengths of Liberty taken with him. Wit there becomes absurd, if not insolent; ill-natur'd I am sure it is, which Imputation a generous Spirit will always avoid, for the same Reason that a Man of real Honour will never send a Challenge to a Cripple. The inward Wounds that are given by the inconsiderate Insults of Wit, to those that want it, are as dangerous as those given by Oppression to Inferiors; as long in healing, and perhaps never forgiven. There is besides (and little worse than this) a mutual Grossness in Rail-  
 B 5 lery,

lery, that sometimes is more painful to the Hearers that are not concerned in it, than to the Persons engaged. I have seen a Couple of these clumsy Combatants drub one another with as little Manners or Mercy as if they had two Flails in their Hands; Children at Play with Case-knives could not give you more Apprehension of their doing one another a Mischief. And yet, when the Contest has been over, the Boobys have looked round them for Approbation, and upon being told they were admirably well match'd, have sat down (bedaub'd as they were) contented at making it a drawn Battle. After all that I have said, there is no clearer way of giving Rules for Raillery, than by Example.

There are two Persons now living, who, tho' very different in their Manner, are, as far as my Judgment reaches, complete Masters of it; one of a more polite and extensive Imagination, the other of a Knowledge more closely useful to the Business of Life: The one gives you perpetual Pleasure, and seems always to be taking it; the other seems to take none, till his Business is over, and then gives you as much as if Pleasure were his only Business. The one enjoys his Fortune, the other thinks it first necessary to make it; though that he will enjoy it then, I cannot be positive; because when a Man has once picked up more than he wants, he is apt to think it a Weakness to suppose he has enough. But as I don't remember ever to have seen these Gentlemen in the same Company, you must give me leave to take them separately.

The first of them, then, has a Title, and—  
no matter what; I am not to speak of the great,  
but



but the happy Part of his Character, and in this one *single* Light; not of his being an illustrious, but a delightful Companion.

In Conversation he is seldom silent but when he is attentive, nor ever speaks without exciting the Attention of others; and tho' no Man might with less Displeasure to his Hearers engross the Talk of the Company, he has a Patience in his Vivacity that chuses to divide it, and rather gives more Freedom than he takes; his sharpest Replies having a Mixture of Politeness that few have the Command of; his Expression is easy, short, and clear; a stiff or studied Word never comes from him; it is in a Simplicity of Style that he gives the highest Surprise, and his Ideas are always adapted to the Capacity and Taste of the Person he speaks to: Perhaps you will understand me better, if I give you a particular Instance of it. A Person at the University, who from being a Man of Wit, easily became his Acquaintance there, from that Acquaintance found no Difficulty in being made one of his Chaplains: This Person afterwards leading a Life that did no great Honour to his Cloth, obliged his Patron to take some gentle Notice of it; but as his Patron knew the Patient was squeamish, he was induced to sweeten the Medicine to his Taste, and therefore with a Smile of Good-humour told him, that if to the many Vices he had already, he would give himself the trouble to add one more, he did not doubt but his Reputation might still be set up again. Sir *Crape*, who could have no Aversion to so pleasant a Dose, desiring to know what it might be, was answered, *Hypocrisy, Doctor, only a little Hypocrisy!* This plain Reply can need no  
Comment;

Comment; but *ex pede Herculem*, he is every where proportionable. I think I have heard him since say, the Doctor thought Hypocrisy so detestable a Sin, that he dy'd without committing it. In a word, this Gentleman gives Spirit to Society the Moment he comes into it, and whenever he leaves it, they who have Business have then leisure to go about it.

Having often had the Honour to be myself the But of his Raillery, I must own I have received more Pleasure from his lively Manner of raising the Laugh against me, than I could have felt from the smoothest Flattery of a serious Civility. Tho' Wit flows from him with as much Ease as common Sense from another, he is so little elated with the Advantage he may have over you, that whenever your good Fortune gives it against him, he seems more pleased with it on your side than his own. The only Advantage he makes of his Superiority of Rank is, that by always waving it himself, his Inferior finds he is under the greater Obligation not to forget it.

When the Conduct of social Wit is under such Regulations, how delightful must those *Convivia*, those Meals of Conversation be, where such a Member presides; who can with so much Ease (as *Shakespear* phrases it) *set the Table in a roar*. I am in no pain that these imperfect Outlines will be applied to the Person I mean, because every one who has the Happiness to know him, must know how much more in this particular Attitude is wanting to be like him.

The other Gentleman, whose bare Interjections of Laughter have Humour in them, is so far from having a Title that he has lost his real  
Name,

Name, which some Years ago he suffer'd his Friends to rally him out of; in lieu of which they have equipped him with one they thought had a better Sound in good Company. He is the first Man of so sociable a Spirit, that I ever knew capable of quitting the Allurements of Wit and Pleasure, for a strong Application to Business; in his Youth (for there was a Time when he was young) he set out in all the hey-day Expences of a modish Man of Fortune; but finding himself over-weighted with Appetites, he grew restiff, kick'd up in the middle of the Course, and turned his Back upon his Frolicks abroad, to think of improving his Estate at home: In order to which, he clapt Collars upon his Coach-Horses, and that their Mettle might not run over other People, he ty'd a Plough to their Tails, which tho' it might give them a more slovenly Air, would enable him to keep them fatter in a foot-pace with a whistling Peasant beside them, than in a full trot, with a hot-headed Coachman behind them. In these unpolite Amusements he has laugh'd like a Rake, and look'd about him like a Farmer, for many Years. As his Rank and Station often find him in the best Company, his easy Humour, whenever he is called to it, can still make himself the Fiddle of it.

And tho' some say, he looks upon the Follies of the World like too severe a Philosopher, yet he rather chuses to laugh than to grieve at them; to pass his time therefore more easily in it, he often endeavours to conceal himself, by assuming the Air and Taste of a Man in Fashion; so that his only Uneasiness seems to be, that he cannot

not quite prevail with his Friends to think him a worse Manager, than he really is ; for they carry their Raillery to such a Height, that it sometimes rises to a Charge of downright Avarice against him. Upon which Head, it is no easy matter to be more merry upon him, than he will be upon himself. Thus while he sets that Infirmity in a pleasant Light, he so disarms your Prejudice, that if he has it not, you can't find in your Heart to wish he were without it. Whenever he is attacked where he seems to lie so open, if his Wit happens not to be ready for you, he receives you with an assenting Laugh, till he has gained time enough to whet it sharp enough for a Reply, which seldom turns out to his Disadvantage. If you are too strong for him (which may possibly happen from his being obliged to defend the weak side of the Question) his last Resource is to join in the Laugh, till he has got himself off by an ironical Applause of your Superiority.

If I were capable of Envy, what I have observed of this Gentleman would certainly incline me to it ; for sure to get through the necessary Cares of Life, with a Train of Pleasures at our Heels, in vain calling after us, to give a constant Preference to the Business of the Day, and yet be able to laugh while we are about it, to make even Society the subservient Reward of it, is a State of Happiness which the gravest Precepts of moral Wisdom will not easily teach us to exceed. When I speak of Happiness, I go no higher than that which is contained in the World we now tread upon ; and when I speak of Laughter, I don't simply mean that which every Oaf is capable of,  
but



Skin; I have often try'd, but they stick too close to me; nor am I sure my Friends are displeas'd with them; for, besides that in this Light I afford them frequent matter of Mirth, they may possibly be less uneasy at their *own* Foibles, when they have so old a Precedent to keep them in Countenance: Nay, there are some frank enough to confess, they envy what they laugh at; and when I have seen others, whose Rank and Fortune have laid a sort of Restraint upon their Liberty of pleasing their Company, by pleasing themselves, I have said softly to myself, — Well, there is some Advantage in having neither Rank nor Fortune! Not but there are among them a third Sort, who have the particular Happiness of unbending into the very Wantonness of Good-humour, without depreciating their Dignity: He that is not Master of that Freedom, let his Condition be never so exalted, must still want something to come up to the Happiness of his Inferiors who enjoy it. If *Socrates* cou'd take pleasure in playing at *Even or Odd* with his Children, or *Agessilaus* divert himself in riding the Hobby-horse with them, am I oblig'd to be as eminent as either of them before I am as frolicksome? If the Emperor *Adrian*, near his Death, cou'd play with his very Soul, his *Animula*, &c. and regret that it cou'd be no longer companionable; if Greatness, at the same time was not the Delight he was so loth to part with, sure then these chearful Amusements I am contending for, must have no inconsiderable share in our Happiness; he that does not chuse to live his own way, suffers others to chuse for him. Give me the Joy I always took in the End of an old Song,

*My*

*My Mind, my Mind is a Kingdom to me!*

If I can please myself with my own Follies, have not I a plentiful Provision for Life? If the World thinks me a Trifler, I don't desire to break in upon their Wisdom; let them call me any Fool, but an uncheerful one; I live as I write; while my Way amuses me, it's as well as I wish it; when another writes better, I can like him too, tho' he shou'd not like me. Not our great Imitator of *Horace* himself can have more Pleasure in writing his Verses, than I have in reading them, tho' I sometimes find myself there (as *Shakespear* terms it) *dispraisingly* spoken of: If he is a little free with me, I am generally in good Company, he is as blunt with my Betters; so that even here I might laugh in my turn. My Superiors, perhaps, may be mended by him; but, for my part, I own myself incorrigible: I look upon my Follies as the best part of my Fortune, and am more concern'd to be a good Husband of Them, than of That; nor do I believe, I shall ever be rhim'd out of them. And, if I don't mistake, I am supported in my way of thinking by *Horace* himself, who, in excuse of a loose Writer, says,

*Prætulerim scriptor delirus, inersque videri,  
Dum mea delectent, mala me, aut denique fallant,  
Quam sapere, et ringi — — —*

which, to speak of myself as a loose Philosopher, I have thus ventur'd to imitate:

*Me, while my laughing Follies can deceive,  
Blest in the dear Delirium let me live,  
Rather than wisely know my Wants and grieve.* }

We

We had once a merry Monarch of our own, who thought Chearfulness so valuable a Blessing, that he would have quitted one of his Kingdoms where he cou'd not enjoy it; where, among many other Conditions they had ty'd him to, his sober Subjects wou'd not suffer him to laugh on a *Sunday*; and tho' this might not be the avow'd Cause of his Elopement, I am not sure, had he had no other, that this alone might not have serv'd his turn; at least, he has my hearty Approbation either way; for had I been under the same Restriction, tho' my staying were to have made me his Successor, I shou'd rather have chosen to follow him.

How far his Subjects might be in the right, is not my Affair to determine; perhaps they were wiser than the Frogs in the Fable, and rather chose to have a Log, than a Stork for their King; yet I hope it will be no Offence to say, that King *Log* himself must have made but a very simple Figure in History.

The Man who chuses never to laugh, or whose becalm'd Passions know no Motion, seems to me only in the quiet State of a green Tree; he vegetates, 'tis true, but shall we say he lives? Now, Sir, for Amusement.—Reader, take heed! for I find a strong impulse to talk impertinently; if therefore you are not as fond of seeing, as I am of shewing myself in all my Lights, you may turn over two Leaves together, and leave what follows to those who have more Curiosity, and less to do with their Time, than you have.—As I was saying then, let us, for Amusement, advance this, or any other Prince, to the most glorious Throne, mark out his Empire in what  
Clime



Clime you please, fix him on the highest Pinnacle of unbounded Power; and in that State let us enquire into his degree of Happiness; make him at once the Terror and the Envy of his Neighbours, send his Ambition out to War, and gratify it with extended Fame and Victories; bring him in triumph home, with great unhappy Captives behind him, through the Acclamations of his People, to repossess his Realms in Peace. Well, when the Dust has been brush'd from his Purple, what will he do next? Why, this envy'd Monarch (who, we will allow to have a more exalted Mind than to be delighted with the trifling Flatteries of a congratulating Circle) will chuse to retire, I presume, to enjoy in private the Contemplation of his Glory; an Amusement, you will say, that well becomes his Station! But there, in that pleasing Ruminatation, when he has made up his new Account of Happiness, how much, pray, will be added to the Balance more than as it stood before his last Expedition? From what one Article will the Improvement of it appear? Will it arise from the conscious Pride of having done his weaker Enemy an Injury? Are his Eyes so dazzled with false Glory, that he thinks it a less Crime in him to break into the Palace of his Princely Neighbour, because he gave him time to defend it, than for a Subject feloniously to plunder the House of a private Man? Or is the Outrage of Hunger and Necessity more enormous than the Ravage of Ambition? Let us even suppose the wicked Usage of the World, as to that Point, may keep his Conscience quiet; still, what is he to do with the infinite Spoil that his imperial Rapine has brought home? Is he to sit  
down,

down, and vainly deck himself with the Jewels which he has plunder'd from the Crown of another, whom Self-defence had compell'd to oppose him? No, let us not debase his Glory into so low a Weakness. What Appetite, then, are these shining Treasures food for? Is their vast Value in seeing his vulgar Subjects stare at them, wise Men smile at them, or his Children play with them? Or can the new Extent of his Dominions add a Cubit to his Happiness? Was not his Empire wide enough before to do good in? And can it add to his Delight that now no Monarch has such room to do Mischief in? But farther; if even the great *Augustus*, to whose Reign such Praises are given, cou'd not enjoy his Days of Peace, free from the Terrors of repeated Conspiracies, which lost him more Quiet to suppress, than his Ambition cost him to provoke them. What human Eminence is secure? In what private Cabinet then must this wondrous Monarch lock up his Happiness, that common Eyes are never to behold it? Is it, like his Person, a Prisoner to its own Superiority? Or does he at last poorly place it in the Triumph of his injurious Devastations! One Moment's Search into himself will plainly shew him, that real and reasonable Happiness can have no Existence without Innocence and Liberty. What a Mockery is Greatness without them? How lonesome must be the Life of that Monarch, who, while he governs only by being fear'd, is restrain'd from letting down his Grandeur sometimes to forget himself, and to humanize him into the Benevolence and Joy of Society? To throw off his cumbersome Robe of Majesty to be a Man without Disguise, to have a sensible Taste of Life in  
its

its Simplicity, till he confess, from the sweet Experience, that *dulce est desipere in loco*, was no Fool's Philosophy. Or if the gawdy Charms of Pre-eminence are so strong that they leave him no Sense of a less pompous, tho' a more rational Enjoyment, none sure can envy him, but those who are the Dupes of an equally fantastick Ambition.

My Imagination is quite heated and fatigued, in dressing up this Phantom of Felicity; but I hope it has not made me so far misunderstood, as not to have allow'd, that in all the Dispensations of Providence, the Exercise of a great and virtuous Mind is the most elevated State of Happiness: No, Sir, I am not for setting up Gaiety against Wisdom; nor for preferring the Man of Pleasure to the Philosopher; but for shewing, that the Wisest, or greatest Man, is very near an unhappy Man, if the unbending Amusements I am contending for, are not sometimes admitted to relieve him.

How far I may have over-rated these Amusements, let graver Casuists decide; whether they affirm, or reject, what I have asserted, hurts not my Purpose; which is not to give Laws to others; but to shew by what Laws I govern myself: If I am misguided, 'tis Nature's Fault, and I follow her, from this Persuasion; That as Nature has distinguish'd our Species from the mute Creation, by our Risibility, her Design must have been, by that Faculty, as evidently to raise our Happiness, as by our *Os Sublime* (our erected Faces) to lift the Dignity of our Form above them.

Notwithstanding all I have said, I am afraid there is an absolute Power, in what is simply call'd

call'd our Constitution, that will never admit of other Rules for Happiness, than her own; from which (be we never so wise or weak) without Divine Assistance, we only can receive it; So that all this my Parade, and Grimace of Philosophy, has been only making a mighty Merit of following my own Inclination. A very natural Vanity! Though it is some sort of Satisfaction to know it does not impose upon me. Vanity again! However, think it what you will that has drawn me into this copious Digression, 'tis now high time to drop it: I shall therefore in my next Chapter return to my School, from whence, I fear, I have too long been Truant.



## C H A P. II.

*He that writes of himself, not easily tir'd. Boys may give Men Lessons. The Author's Preference at School attended with Misfortunes. The Danger of Merit among Equals. Of Satyrists and Backbiters. What effect they have had upon the Author. Stanzas published by himself against himself.*

**I**T often makes me smile, to think how contentedly I have set myself down, to write my own Life; nay, and with less Concern for what may be said of it, than I should feel, were I to do the same for a deceased Acquaintance. This you will easily account for, when you consider, that nothing gives a Coxcomb more delight, than when

when you suffer him to talk of himself; which sweet Liberty I here enjoy for a whole Volume together! A Privilege which neither could be allowed me, nor would become me to take, in the Company I am generally admitted to; but here, when I have all the Talk to myself, and have no body to interrupt and contradict me, sure, to say whatever I have a mind other People should know of me, is a Pleasure which none but Authors, as vain as myself, can conceive. ———  
But to my History.

However little worth notice the Life of a School-boy may be supposed to contain, yet, as the Passions of Men and Children have much the same Motives, and differ very little in their Effects, unless where the elder Experience may be able to conceal them: As therefore what arises from the Boy, may possibly be a Lesson to the Man, I shall venture to relate a Fact, or two, that happened while I was still at School.

In *February*, 1684-5, died King *Charles II.* who being the only King I had ever seen, I remember (young as I was) his Death made a strong Impression upon me, as it drew Tears from the Eyes of Multitudes, who looked no further into him than I did: But it was, then, a sort of School-Doctrine to regard our Monarch as a Deity; as in the former Reign it was to insist he was accountable to this World, as well as to that above him. But what, perhaps, gave King *Charles II.* this peculiar Possession of so many Hearts, was his affable and easy Manner in conversing; which is a Quality that goes farther with the greater Part of Mankind than many higher Virtues, which, in a Prince, might more immediately

mediately regard the publick Prosperity. Even his indolent Amusement of playing with his Dogs, and feeding his Ducks, in St. *James's Park*, (which I have seen him do) made the common People adore him, and consequently overlook in him, what, in a Prince of a different Temper, they might have been out of humour at.

I cannot help remembering one more Particular in those Times, tho' it be quite foreign to what will follow. I was carried by my Father to the Chapel in *Whitehall*; where I saw the King, and his Royal Brother the then Duke of *York*, with him in the Closet, and present during the whole Divine Service. Such Dispensation, it seems, for his Interest, had that unhappy Prince, from his real Religion, to assist at another, to which his Heart was so utterly averse. — I now proceed to the Facts I promised to speak of.

King *Charles* his Death was judg'd, by our School-Master, a proper Subject to lead the Form I was in, into a higher kind of Exercise; he therefore enjoyn'd us, severally, to make his Funeral Oration: This sort of Task, so entirely new to us all, the Boys received with Astonishment, as a Work above their Capacity; and tho' the Master persisted in his Command, they one and all, except myself, resolved to decline it. But I, Sir, who was ever giddily forward, and thoughtless of Consequences, set myself roundly to work, and got through it as well as I could. I remember to this Hour, that single Topick of his Affability (which made me mention it before) was the chief Motive that warmed me into the Undertaking; and to shew how very childish a Notion I had of his Character at that time, I

raised his Humanity, and Love of those who serv'd him, to such Height, that I imputed his Death to the Shock he received from the Lord *Arlington's* being at the point of Death, about a Week before him. This Oration, such as it was, I produc'd the next Morning: All the other Boys pleaded their Inability, which the Master taking rather as a Mark of their Modesty than their Idleness, only seem'd to punish, by setting me at the Head of the Form: A Preferment dearly bought! Much happier had I been to have sunk my Performance in the general Modesty of declining it. A most uncomfortable Life I led among them, for many a Day after! I was so jeer'd, laugh'd at, and hated as a pragmatistical Bastard (School-boys Language) who had betray'd the whole Form, that scarce any of them would keep me company; and tho' it so far advanced me into the Master's Favour that he would often take me from the School, to give me an Airing with him on Horseback, while they were left to their Lessons; you may be sure such envy'd Happiness did not increase their Good-will to me: Notwithstanding which, my Stupidity could take no warning from their Treatment. An Accident of the same Nature happen'd soon after, that might have frighten'd a Boy of a meek Spirit from attempting any thing above the lowest Capacity. On the 23d of *April* following, being the Coronation-Day of the new King, the School petition'd the Master for leave to play; to which he agreed, provided any of the Boys would produce an *English* Ode upon that Occasion. ----- The very Word, *Ode*, I know, makes you smile already; and so it does me; not only because it

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still

still makes so many poor Devils turn Wits upon it, but from a more agreeable Motive; from a Reflection of how little I then thought that, half a Century afterwards, I should be called upon twice a Year, by my Post, to make the same kind of Oblations to an *unexceptionable* Prince, the serene Happiness of whose Reign my halting Rhimes are still so unequal to. — This, I own, is Vanity without Disguise; but, *Hæc olim meminisse juvat*: The Remembrance of the miserable Prospect we had then before us, and have since escaped by a Revolution, is now a Pleasure, which, without that Remembrance, I could not so heartily have enjoyed. The Ode I was speaking of fell to my Lot, which, in about half an Hour I produced. I cannot say it was much above the merry Stile of *Sing! Sing the Day, and sing the Song*, in the Farce: Yet bad as it was, it served to get the School a Play-day, and to make me not a little vain upon it; which last Effect so disgusted my Play-fellows, that they left me out of the Party I had most a mind to be of in that Day's Recreation. But their Ingratitude serv'd only to increase my Vanity; for I considered them as so many beaten Tits, that had just had the Mortification of seeing my Hack of a *Pegasus* come in before them. This low Passion is so rooted in our Nature, that sometimes riper Heads cannot govern it. I have met with much the same silly sort of Coldness, even from my Contemporaries of the Theatre, from having the superfluous Capacity of writing myself the Characters I have acted.

Here, perhaps, I may again seem to be vain; but if all these Facts are true (as true they are)  
how



how can I help it? Why am I obliged to conceal them? The Merit of the best of them is not so extraordinary as to have warn'd me to be nice upon it; and the Praise due to them is so small a Fish, it was scarce worth while to throw my Line into the Water for it. If I confess my Vanity while a Boy, can it be Vanity, when a Man, to remember it? And if I have a tolerable Feature, will not that as much belong to my Picture as an Imperfection? In a word, from what I have mentioned, I would observe only this; That when we are conscious of the least comparative Merit in ourselves, we should take as much Care to conceal the Value we set upon it, as if it were a real Defect: To be elated, or vain upon it, is shewing your Money before People in want; ten to one, but some who may think you have too much, may borrow, or pick your Pocket before you get home. He who assumes Praise to himself, the World will think, overpays himself. Even the Suspicion of being vain, ought as much to be dreaded as the Guilt itself. *Cæsar* was of the same Opinion in regard to his Wife's Chastity. Praise, tho' it may be our Due, is not like a *Bank-Bill*, to be paid upon Demand; to be valuable, it must be voluntary. When we are dun'd for it, we have a Right and Privilege to refuse it. If Compulsion insists upon it, it can only be paid as Persecution in Points of Faith is, in a counterfeit Coin. And who, ever, believ'd occasional Conformity to be sincere? *Nero*, the most vain Coxcomb of a Tyrant that ever breath'd, cou'd not raise an unfeigned Applause of his Harp by military Execution; even where Praise is deserv'd, Ill-nature and Self-conceit (Passions that poll a

C 2

Majority

Majority of Mankind) will with less Reluctance part with their Money than their Approbation. Men of the greatest Merit are forced to stay 'till they die, before the World will fairly make up their Account: Then, indeed, you have a Chance for your full Due, because it is less grudg'd when you are incapable of enjoying it: Then, perhaps, even Malice shall heap Praises upon your Memory; tho' not for your Sake, but that your surviving Competitors may suffer by a Comparison. 'Tis from the same Principle that *Satyr* shall have a thousand Readers, where *Panegyric* has one. When I therefore find my Name at length, in the Satyrical Works of our most celebrated living Author, I never look upon those Lines as Malice meant to me, (for he knows I never provok'd it) but Profit to himself: One of his Points must be, to have many Readers: He considers that my Face and Name are more known than those of many thousands of more Consequence in the Kingdom: That therefore, right or wrong, a Lick at the *Laureat* will always be a sure Bait, *ad captandum vulgus*, to catch him little Readers: And that to gratify the Unlearned, by now and then interspersing those merry Sacrifices of an old Acquaintance to their Taste, is a Piece of quite right Poetical Craft.

But as a little bad Poetry, is the greatest Crime, he lays to my Charge, I am willing to subscribe to his Opinion of *it*. That this sort of Wit is one of the easiest ways too, of pleasing the generality of Readers, is evident from the comfortable Subsistence which our weekly Retailers of Politicks have been known to pick up, merely by making bold with a Government that had unfortunately

fortunately neglected to find their Genius a better Employment.

Hence too arises all that flat Poverty of Censure and Invective, that so often has a Run in our publick Papers, upon the Success of a new Author; when, God knows, there is seldom above one Writer among hundreds in Being at the same time, whose Satyr a Man of common Sense ought to be mov'd at. When a Master in the Art is angry, then indeed, we ought to be alarm'd! How terrible a Weapon is Satyr in the Hand of a great Genius? Yet even there, how liable is Prejudice to misuse it? How far, when general, it may reform our Morals, or what Cruelties it may inflict by being angrily particular, is perhaps above my reach to determine. I shall therefore only beg leave to interpose what I feel for others, whom it may personally have fallen upon. When I read those mortifying Lines of our most eminent Author, in his Character of *Atticus* (*Atticus*, whose Genius in Verse, and whose Morality in Prose, has been so justly admir'd) though I am charm'd with the Poetry, my Imagination is hurt at the Severity of it; and tho' I allow the Satyrist to have had personal Provocation, yet, methinks, for that very Reason, he ought not to have troubled the Public with it: For, as it is observed in the 242d *Tatler*, "In all Terms of Reproof, where  
" the Sentence appears to arise from personal  
" Hatred, or Passion, it is not then made the  
" Cause of Mankind, but a Misunderstanding  
" between two Persons." But if such kind of Satyr has its incontestible Greatness; if its exemplary Brightness may not mislead inferior Wits into a barbarous Imitation of its Severity, then I

C 3 have

have only admired the Verses, and exposed myself, by bringing them under so scrupulous a Reflection: But the Pain which the Acrimony of those Verses gave me, is, in some measure, allayed, in finding that this inimitable Writer, as he advances in Years, has since had Candor enough to celebrate the same Person for his visible Merit. Happy Genius! whose Verse, like the Eye of Beauty, can heal the deepest Wounds with the least Glance of Favour.

Since I am got so far into this Subject, you must give me leave to go thro' all I have a mind to say upon it; because I am not sure, that in a more proper Place, my Memory may be so full of it. I cannot find, therefore, from what Reason Satyr is allowed more Licence than Comedy, or why either of them (to be admired) ought not to be limited by Decency and Justice. Let *Juvenal* and *Aristophanes* have taken what Liberties they please, if the Learned have nothing more than their Antiquity to justify their laying about them at that enormous Rate, I shall wish they had a better Excuse for them! The personal Ridicule and Scurrility thrown upon *Socrates*, which *Plutarch* too condemns; and the Boldness of *Juvenal*, in writing real Names over guilty Characters, I cannot think are to be pleaded in right of our modern Liberties of the same kind. *Facit indignatio versum*, may be a very spirited Expression, and seems to give a Reader Hopes of a lively Entertainment: But I am afraid Reproof is in unequal Hands, when Anger is its Executioner; and tho' an outrageous Invective may carry some Truth in it, yet it will never have that natural, easy Credit with us, which we give

to

to the laughing Ironies of a cool Head. The Satyr that can smile *circum præcordia ludit*, and seldom fails to bring the Reader quite over to his Side, whenever Ridicule and Folly are at variance. But when a Person satyriz'd is used with the extreme Rigour, he may sometimes meet with Compassion, instead of Contempt, and throw back the Odium that was designed for him, upon the Author. When I would therefore disarm the Satyrist of this Indignation, I mean little more, than that I would take from him all private or personal Prejudice, and would still leave him as much general Vice to scourge as he pleases, and that with as much Fire and Spirit as Art and Nature demand to enliven his Work, and keep his Reader awake.

Against all this it may be objected, That these are Laws which none but phlegmatic Writers will observe, and only Men of Eminence should give. I grant it, and therefore only submit them to Writers of better Judgment. I pretend not to restrain others from chusing what I don't like; they are welcome (if they please too) to think I offer these Rules, more from an Incapacity to break them, than from a moral Humanity. Let it be so! still, That will not weaken the Strength of what I have asserted, if my Assertion be true. And though I allow, that Provocation is not apt to weigh out its Resentments by Drachms and Scruples, I shall still think that no public Revenge can be honourable, where it is not limited by Justice; and if Honour is insatiable in its Revenge, it loses what it contends for, and sinks itself, if not into Cruelty, at least into Vain-glory.

This so singular Concern which I have shewn for others, may naturally lead you to ask me, what I feel for myself, when I am unfavourably treated by the elaborate Authors of our daily Papers. Shall I be sincere, and own my Frailty? its usual Effect is to make me vain! For I consider, if I were quite good for nothing, the Pidlors in Wit would not be concerned to take me to pieces, or (not to be quite so vain) when they moderately charge me with only Ignorance, or Dulness, I see nothing in That, which an honest Man need be ashamed of: There is many a good Soul, who, from those sweet Slumbers of the Brain, are never awaken'd by the least harmful Thought; and I am sometimes tempted to think those Retailers of Wit may be of the same Class; that what they write proceeds not from Malice, but Industry; and that I ought no more to reproach them than I would a Lawyer that pleads against me for his Fee; that their Detraction, like Dung, thrown upon a Meadow, tho' it may seem at first to deform the Prospect, in a little time it will disappear of itself, and leave an involuntary Crop of Praise behind it.

When they confine themselves to a sober Criticism upon what I write; if their Censure is just, what Answer can I make to it? If it is unjust, why should I suppose that a sensible Reader will not see it, as well as myself? Or, admit I were able to expose them, by a laughing Reply, will not that Reply beget a Rejoinder? And though they might be Gainers, by having the worst on't, in a Paper War, that is no Temptation for me to come into it, Or (to make both sides less considerable) would not my bearing Ill-language,

language, from a Chimney-sweeper, do me less Harm, than it would be to box with him, tho' I were sure to beat him? Nor indeed is the little Reputation I have as an Author, worth the Trouble of a Defence. Then, as no Criticism can possibly make me worse than I really am; so nothing I can say of myself can possibly make me better: When therefore a determined Critick comes arm'd with Wit and Outrage, to take from me that small Pittance I have, I wou'd no more dispute with him, than I wou'd resist a Gentleman of the Road, to save a little Pocket-Money. Men that are in want themselves, seldom make a Conscience of taking it from others. Whoever thinks I have too much, is welcome to what Share of it he pleases: Nay, to make him more merciful (as I partly guess the worst he can say of what I now write) I will prevent even the Imputation of his doing me Injustice, and honestly say it myself, *viz.* That of all the Assurances I was ever guilty of, this, of writing my own Life is the most hardy. I beg his Pardon! — Impudent is what I should have said! That through every Page there runs a Vein of Vanity and Impertinence, which no *French Ensigns memoirs* ever came up to; but, as this is a common Error, I presume the Terms of *Doating Trifler*, *Old Fool*, or *Conceited Coxcomb*, will carry Contempt enough for an impartial Censor to bestow on me; that my Style is unequal, pert, and frothy, patch'd and party-colour'd, like the Coat of an *Harlequin*; low and pompous, cramm'd with Epithets, strew'd with Scraps of second-hand *Latin* from common Quotations; frequently aiming at Wit, without ever hitting the Mark; a

mere Ragouft, toss'd up from the Offals of other Authors: My Subject below all Pens but my own, which, whenever I keep to, is flatly daub'd by one eternal Egotism: That I want nothing but Wit, to be as an accomplish'd Coxcomb here, as ever I attempted to expose on the Theatre: Nay, that this very Confession is no more a Sign of my Modesty, than it is a Proof of my Judgment; that, in short, you may roundly tell me, that—*Cinna (or Cibber) vult videri Pauper, et est Pauper.*

*When humble Cinna cries, I'm poor and low,  
You may believe him——he is really so.*

Well, Sir Critick! and what of all this? Now I have laid myself at your Feet, what will you do with me? Expose me? Why, dear Sir, does not every Man that writes expose himself? Can you make me more ridiculous than Nature has made me? You cou'd not sure suppose, that I would lose the Pleasure of Writing, because you might possibly judge me a Blockhead, or perhaps might pleasantly tell other People they ought to think me so too. Will not they judge as well from what *I* say, as what *You* say? If then you attack me merely to divert yourself, your Excuse for writing will be no better than mine. But perhaps you may want Bread; if that be the Case, even go to Dinner, i' God's Name!

If our best Authors, when teiz'd by these Triflers, have not been Masters of this Indifference, I should not wonder if it were disbeliev'd in me; but when it is consider'd that I have allow'd, my never having been disturb'd into a  
Reply,



Reply, has proceeded as much from Vanity as from Philosophy, the Matter then may not seem so incredible: And tho' I confess, the complete Revenge of making them Immortal Dunces in Immortal Verse, might be glorious; yet, if you will call it Insensibility in me, never to have winc'd at them, even that Insensibility has its Happiness, and what could Glory give me more? For my part, I have always had the comfort to think, whenever they design'd me a Disfavour, it generally flew back into their own Faces, as it happens to Children when they squirt at their Play-fellows against the Wind. If a Scribbler cannot be easy, because he fancies I have too good an Opinion of my own Productions, let him write on, and mortify; I owe him not the Charity to be out of Temper myself, merely to keep him quiet, or give him Joy: Nor, in reality, can I see, why any thing misrepresented, tho' believ'd of me by Persons to whom I am unknown, ought to give me any more Concern, than what may be thought of me in *Lapland*: 'Tis with those with whom I am to *live* only, where my Character can affect me; and I will venture to say, he must find out a new way of Writing that will make me pass my Time *there* less agreeably.

You see, Sir, how hard it is for a Man that is talking of himself, to know when to give over; but if you are tired, lay me aside till you have a fresh Appetite; if not, I'll tell you a Story.

In the Year 1730, there were many Authors, whose Merit wanted nothing but Interest to recommend them to the vacant *Laurel*, and who took it ill, to see it at last conferred upon a Comedian ;;

median; infomuch, that they were resolved, at least, to shew Specimens of their superior Pretensions, and accordingly enliven'd the publick Papers with ingenious Epigrams, and satyrical Flirts, at the unworthy Successor: These Papers my Friends, with a wicked Smile, would often put into my Hands, and desire me to read them fairly in Company: This was a Challenge which I never declined, and, to do my doughty Antagonists Justice, I always read them with as much impartial Spirit, as if I had writ them myself. While I was thus beset on all Sides, there happen'd to step forth a poetical Knight-Errant to my Assistance, who was hardy enough to publish some compassionate Stanzas in my Favour. These, you may be sure, the Raillery of my Friends could do no less than say, I had written to myself. To deny it, I knew, would but have confirmed their pretended Suspicion: I therefore told them, since it gave them such Joy to believe them my own, I would do my best to make the whole Town think so too. As the Oddness of this Reply was, I knew, what would not be easily comprehended, I desired them to have a Day's Patience, and I would print an Explanation to it: To conclude, in two Days after, I sent this Letter, with some doggerel Rhimes at the Bottom,

*To the Author of the Whitehall Evening-Post.*

S I R,

*THE Verses to the Laureat, in yours of Saturday last, have occasioned the following Reply, which I hope you'll give a Place in your next, to shew that we can be quick, as well as smart, upon a proper Occasion:*

*Occasion: And, as I think it the lowest Mark of a Scoundrel to make bold with any Man's Character in Print, without subscribing the true Name of the Author; I therefore desire, if the Laureat is concern'd enough to ask the Question, that you will tell him my Name, and where I live; till then, I beg leave to be known by no other than that of,*

Your Servant,

Monday, Jan. 11, 1730.

FRANCIS FAIRPLAY,

These were the Verses.

I.

*Ah, ha! Sir Coll, is that thy Way,  
Thy own dull Praise to write?  
And wou'd'st thou stand so sure a Lay?  
No, that's too stale a Bite.*

II.

*Nature, and Art, in thee combine,  
Thy Talents here excel:  
All shining Brasses thou dost outshine,  
To play the Cheat so well.*

III.

*Who sees thee in Iago's Part,  
But thinks thee such a Rogue?  
And is not glad, with all his Heart,  
To hang so sad a Dog?*

IV.

*When Bays thou play'st, Thyself thou art;  
For that by Nature fit,  
No Blockhead better suits the Part,  
Than such a Coxcomb Wit.*

## V.

*In Wronghead too, thy Brains we see,  
Who might do well at Plough;  
As fit for Parliament was he,  
As for the Laurel, Thou.*

## VI.

*Bring thy protected Verse from Court,  
And try it on the Stage;  
There it will make much better Sport,  
And set the Town in Rage.*

## VII.

*There Beaux, and Wits, and Cits, and Smarts,  
Where Hissing's not uncivil,  
Will shew their Parts to thy Deserts,  
And send it to the Devil.*

## VIII.

*But, ah! in vain, 'gainst Thee we write,  
In vain thy Verse we maul,  
Our sharpest Satyr's thy Delight,  
\* For ——— Blood! thou'lt stand it all.*

## IX.

*Thunder, 'tis said, the Laurel spares;  
Naught but thy Brows could blast it:  
And yet ——— O curst, provoking Stars!  
Thy Comfort is, thou hast it.*

*This,*

*\* A Line in the Epilogue to the Nonjuror.*

This, Sir, I offer as a Proof, that I was seven Years ago the same cold Candidate for Fame, which I would still be thought; you will not easily suppose I could have much Concern about it, while, to gratify the merry Pique of my Friends, I was capable of seeming to head the Poetical Cry then against me, and at the same time of never letting the Publick know, till this Hour, that these Verses were written by myself: Nor do I give them you as an Entertainment, but merely to shew you this particular Cast of my Temper.

When I have said this, I would not have it thought Affectation in me, when I grant, that no Man worthy the Name of an Author, is a more faulty Writer than myself; that I am not Master of my own Language, I too often feel, when I am at a loss for Expression: I know too that I have too bold a Disregard for that Correctness, which others set so just a Value upon: This I ought to be ashamed of, when I find that Persons, perhaps of colder Imaginations, are allowed to write better than myself. Whenever I speak of any thing that highly delights me, I find it very difficult to keep my Words within the Bounds of Common Sense: Even when I write too, the same Failing will sometimes get the better of me; of which I cannot give you a stronger Instance, than in that wild Expression I made use of in the first Edition of my Preface to the *Provok'd Husband*; where, speaking of Mrs. Oldfield's excellent Performance in the Part of Lady Townly, my Words ran thus, *viz. It is not enough to say, that here she outdid her usual Outdoing.*—A most vile Jingle, I grant it! You may well ask me,  
How

How could I possibly commit such a Wantonness to Paper? And I owe myself the Shame of confessing, I have no Excuse for it, but that, like a Lover in the Fulness of his Content, by endeavouring to be floridly grateful, I talk'd Nonsense. Not but it makes me smile to remember how many flat Writers have made themselves brisk upon this single Expression; wherever the Verb, *Outdo*, could come in, the pleasant Accusative, *Outdoing*, was sure to follow it. The provident Wags knew, that *Decies repetita placeret*: so delicious a Morfel could not be serv'd up too often! After it had held them nine times told for a Jest, the publick has been pester'd with a tenth Skull, thick enough to repeat it. Nay, the very learned in the Law, have at last facetiously laid hold of it! Ten Years after it first came from me, it served to enliven the Eloquence of an eloquent Pleader before a House of Parliament! What Author would not envy me so frolicksome a Fault, that had such publick Honours paid to it?

After this Conscioufness of my real Defects, you will easily judge, Sir, how little I presume that my Poetical Labours may outlive those of my mortal *Cotemporaries*.

At the same time that I am so humble in my Pretensions to Fame, I would not be thought to undervalue it; Nature will not suffer us to despise it, but she may sometimes make us too fond of it. I have known more than one good Writer, very near ridiculous, from being in too much Heat about it. Whoever intrinsically deserves it, will always have a proportionable Right to it. It can neither be resign'd, nor taken from you by Violence. Truth, which is unalterable, must (how-  
ever

ever his Fame may be contested) give every Man his Due: What a Poem weighs, it will be worth; nor is it in the Power of Human Eloquence, with Favour or Prejudice, to increase or diminish its Value. Prejudice, 'tis true, may a while discolour it; but it will always have its Appeal to the Equity of good Sense, which will never fail, in the End, to reverse all false Judgment against it. Therefore when I see an eminent Author hurt, and impatient at an impotent Attack upon his Labours, he disturbs my Inclination to admire him; I grow doubtful of the favourable Judgment I have made of him, and am quite uneasy to see him so tender, in a Point he cannot but know he ought not himself to be Judge of; his Concern indeed, at another's Prejudice, or Disapprobation, may be natural; but, to own it, seems to me a natural Weakness. When a Work is apparently great, it will go without Crutches; all your Art and Anxiety to heighten the Fame of it, then becomes low and little. He that will bear no Censure, must be often robb'd of his due Praise. Fools have as good a Right to be Readers, as Men of Sense have, and why not to give their Judgments too? Methinks it would be a sort of Tyranny in Wit, for an Author to be publicly putting every Argument to Death that appear'd against him; so absolute a Demand for Approbation, puts us upon our Right to dispute it; Praise is as much the Reader's Property, as Wit is the Author's; Applause is not a Tax paid to him as a Prince, but rather a Benevolence given to him as a Beggar; and we have naturally more Charity for the dumb Beggar, than the sturdy one. The Merit of a Writer, and a fine Woman's

man's Face, are never mended by their talking of them: How amiable is she that seems not to know she is handsome!

To conclude; all I have said upon this Subject is much better contained in six Lines of a Reverend Author, which will be an Answer to all critical Censure for ever.

*Time is the Judge; Time has nor Friend, nor Foe;  
False Fame will wither, and the True will grow:  
Arm'd with this Truth, all Criticks I defy,  
For, if I fall, by my own Pen I die.  
While Snarlers strive with proud but fruitless Pain,  
To wound Immortals, or to slay the Slain.*



### C H A P. III.

*The Author's several Chances for the Church, the Court, and the Army, Going to the University. Met the Revolution at Nottingham. Took Arms on that Side. What he saw of it. A few Political Thoughts. Fortune willing to do for him. His Neglect of her. The Stage prefer'd to all her Favours. The Profession of an Actor considered. The Misfortunes and Advantages of it.*

**I** AM now come to that Crisis of my Life, when Fortune seem'd to be at a Loss what she should do with me. Had she favour'd my Father's first Designation of me, he might then, perhaps, have had as sanguine Hopes of my being a Bishop, as I afterwards conceived of my being a General, when I first took Arms, at the  
Revo-



Revolution. Nay, after that, I had a third Chance too, equally as good, of becoming an Under-propper of the State. How, at last, I became to be none of all these, the Sequel will inform you.

About the Year 1687, I was taken from School to stand at the Election of Children into *Winchester* College; my being, by my Mother's Side, a Descendant of *William* of *Wickham*, the Founder, my Father (who knew little how the World was to be dealt with) imagined my having that Advantage, would be Security enough for my Success, and so sent me simply down thither, without the least favourable Recommendation or Interest, but that of my naked Merit, and a pompous Pedigree in my Pocket. Had he tack'd a Direction to my Back, and sent me by the Carrier to the Mayor of the Town, to be chosen Member of Parliament there, I might have had just as much Chance to have succeeded in the one, as the other. But I must not omit in this Place, to let you know, that the Experience which my Father then bought, at my Cost, taught him, some Years after, to take a more judicious Care of my younger Brother, *Lewis Cibber*, whom, with the Present of a Statue of the Founder, of his own making, he recommended to the same College. This Statue now stands (I think) over the School-Door there, and was so well executed, that it seem'd to speak—for its Kinsman. It was no sooner set up, than the Door of Preferment was open to him.

Here, one would think, my Brother had the Advantage of me, in the Favour of Fortune, by this his first laudable Step into the World. I

OWN,

own, I was so proud of his Success, that I even valued myself upon it; and yet it is but a melancholy Reflection to observe, how unequally his Profession and mine were provided for; when I, who had been the Outcast of Fortune, could find means, from my Income of the Theatre, before I was my own Master there, to supply, in his highest Preferment, his common Necessities. I cannot part with his Memory without telling you, I had as sincere a Concern for this Brother's Well-being, as my own. He had lively Parts, and more than ordinary Learning, with a good deal of natural Wit and Humour; but from too great a Disregard to his Health, he died a Fellow of *New College* in *Oxford*, soon after he had been ordained by *Dr. Compton*, then Bishop of *London*. I now return to the State of my own Affair at *Winchester*.

After the Election, the Moment I was inform'd that I was one of the unsuccessful Candidates, I blest myself to think what a happy Reprieve I had got, from the confin'd Life of a School-boy! and the same Day took Post back to *London*, that I might arrive time enough to see a Play (then my darling Delight) before my Mother might demand an Account of my travelling Charges. When I look back to that Time, it almost makes me tremble to think what Miseries, in fifty Years farther in Life, such an unthinking Head was liable to! To ask, why Providence afterwards took more Care of me, than I did of myself, might be making too bold an Enquiry into its secret Will and Pleasure: All I can say to that Point, is, that I am thankful, and amaz'd at it.

'Twas

'Twas about this time I first imbib'd an Inclination, which I durst not reveal, for the Stage; for, besides that I knew it would disoblige my Father, I had no Conception of any means, practicable, to make my way to it. I therefore suppress'd the bewitching Ideas of so sublime a Station, and compounded with my Ambition by laying a lower Scheme, of only getting the nearest way into the immediate Life of a Gentleman Collegiate. My Father being at this time employed at *Chattsworth* in *Derbyshire*, by the (then) Earl of *Devonshire*, who was raising that Seat from a *Gothick*, to a *Grecian* Magnificence, I made use of the Leisure I then had, in *London*, to open to him, by Letter, my Disinclination to wait another Year for an uncertain Preferment at *Winchester*, and to entreat him that he would send me, *per saltum*, by a shorter Cut, to the University. My Father, who was naturally indulgent to me, seem'd to comply with my Request, and wrote word, that as soon as his Affairs would permit, he would carry me with him, and settle me in some College, but rather at *Cambridge*, where, (during his late Residence at that Place, in making some Statues that now stand upon *Trinity* College New Library) he had contracted some Acquaintance with the Heads of Houses, who might assist his Intentions for me. This I lik'd better than to go discountenanc'd to *Oxford*, to which it would have been a sort of Reproach to me, not to have come elected. After some Months were elaps'd, my Father, not being willing to let me lie too long idling in *London*, sent for me down to *Chattsworth*, to be under his Eye, till he cou'd be at leisure to carry me to *Cambridge*.

bridge. Before I could set out, on my Journey thither, the Nation fell in labour of the Revolution, the News being then just brought to *London*, That the Prince of *Orange*, at the Head of an Army, was landed in the *West*. When I came to *Nottingham*, I found my Father in Arms there, among those Forces which the Earl of *Devonshire* had raised for the Redress of our violated Laws and Liberties. My Father judg'd this a proper Season, for a young Stripling to turn himself loose into the Bustle of the World; and being himself too advanc'd in Years, to endure the Winter Fatigue, which might possibly follow, entreated that noble Lord, that he would be pleas'd to accept of his Son in his Room, and that he would give him (my Father) leave to return, and finish his Works at *Chattsworth*. This was so well receiv'd by his Lordship, that he not only admitted of my Service, but promis'd my Father, in return, that when Affairs were settled, he would provide for me. Upon this, my Father return'd to *Derbyshire*, while I, not a little transported, jump'd into his Saddle. Thus, in one Day, all my Thoughts of the University were smother'd in Ambition! A slight Commission for a Horse Officer, was the least View I had before me. At this Crisis you cannot but observe, that the Fate of King *James*, and of the Prince of *Orange*, and that of so minute a Being as myself, were all at once upon the Anvil: In what shape they wou'd severally come out, tho' a good Guess might be made, was not then demonstrable to the deepest Foresight; but as my Fortune seem'd to be of small Importance to the Publick, Providence thought fit to postpone it, 'till that of those  
great

great Rulers of Nations, was justly perfected. Yet, had my Father's Business permitted him to have carried me, one Month sooner (as he intended) to the University, who knows but, by this time, that purer Fountain might have wash'd my Imperfections into a Capacity of writing (instead of Plays and Annual Odes) Sermons, and Pastoral Letters. But whatever Care of the Church might, so, have fallen to my Share, as I dare say it may be now, in better Hands, I ought not to repine at my being otherwise dispos'd of.

You must, now, consider me as one among those desperate Thousands, who, after a Patience sorely try'd, took Arms under the Banner of Necessity, the natural Parent of all Human Laws, and Government. I question, if in all the Histories of Empire, there is one Instance of so bloodless a Revolution, as that in *England* in 1688, wherein Whigs, Tories, Princes, Prelates, Nobles, Clergy, common People, and a Standing Army, were unanimous. To have seen all *England* of one Mind, is to have liv'd at a very particular Juncture. Happy Nation! who are never divided among themselves, but when they have least to complain of! Our greatest Grievance since that Time, seems to have been, that we cannot all govern; and 'till the Number of good Places are equal to those, who think themselves qualified for them, there must ever be a Cause of Contention among us. While great Men want great Posts, the Nation will never want real or seeming Patriots; and while great Posts are fill'd with Persons, whose Capacities are but Human, such Persons will never be allow'd to be without Errors; not even the Revolution, with all its Advan-

Advantages, it seems, has been able to furnish us with unexceptionable Statesmen! for, from that time, I don't remember any one Set of Ministers, that have not been heartily rail'd at; a Period long enough, one would think (if all of them have been as bad as they have been call'd) to make a People despair of ever seeing a good one: But as it is possible that Envy, Prejudice, or Party, may sometimes have a share in what is generally thrown upon 'em, it is not easy for a private Man, to know who is absolutely in the right, from what is said against them, or from what their Friends or Dependants may say in their Favour: Tho' I can hardly forbear thinking, that they who have been *longest* rail'd at, must, from that Circumstance, shew, in some sort, a Proof of Capacity.—— But to my History.

It were almost incredible to tell you, at the latter End of King *James's* Time (though the Rod of Arbitrary Power was always shaking over us) with what Freedom and Contempt the common People, in the open Streets, talk'd of his wild Measures to make a whole Protestant Nation Papiſts; and yet, in the Height of our secure and wanton Defiance of him, we, of the Vulgar, had no farther Notion of any Remedy for this Evil, than a satisfy'd Presumption, that our Numbers were too great to be master'd by his mere Will and Pleasure; that though he might be too hard for our Laws, he would never be able to get the better of our Nature; and, that to drive all *England* into Popery and Slavery, he would find, would be teaching an old Lion to dance.

But, happy was it for the Nation, that it had then wiser Heads in it, who knew how to lead a  
 People

People so dispos'd into Measures for the Publick Preservation.

Here, I cannot help reflecting on the very different Deliverances *England* met with, at this Time, and in the very same Year of the Century before: Then (in 1588) under a glorious Princess, who had, at heart, the Good and Happiness of her People, we scatter'd and destroy'd the most formidable Navy of Invaders, that ever cover'd the Seas: And now (in 1688) under a Prince, who had alienated the Hearts of his People, by his absolute Measures, to oppress them, a foreign Power is receiv'd with open Arms, in Defence of our Laws, Liberties, and Religion, which our native Prince had invaded! How widely different were these two Monarchs in their Sentiments of Glory! But, *Tantum religio potuit suadere malorum.*

When we consider, in what height of the Nation's Prosperity, the Successor of Queen *Elizabeth* came to this Throne, it seems amazing, that such a Pile of *English* Fame, and Glory, which her skilful Administration had erected, should, in every following Reign, down to the Revolution, so unhappily moulder away, in one continual Gradation of Political Errors: All which must have been avoided, if the plain Rule, which that wise Princess left behind her, had been observed, *viz. That the Love of her People was the surest Support of her Throne.* This was the Principle by which she so happily govern'd herself, and those she had the Care of. In this she found Strength to combat, and struggle thro' more Difficulties, and dangerous Conspiracies, than ever *English* Monarch had to cope with. At the

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same

same time that she profess'd to *desire* the People's Love, she took care that her Actions shou'd *deserve* it, without the least Abatement of her Prerogative; the Terror of which she so artfully covered, that she sometimes seem'd to flatter those she was determin'd should obey. If the four following Princes had exercis'd their Regal Authority with so visible a Regard to the Publick Welfare, it were hard to know, whether the People of *England* might have ever complain'd of them, or even felt the want of that Liberty they now so happily enjoy. 'Tis true that before her Time, our Ancestors had many successful Contests with their Sovereigns for their *ancient Right* and *Claim* to it; yet what did those Successes amount to? little more than a Declaration, that there was such a Right in being; but who ever saw it enjoy'd? Did not the Actions of almost every succeeding Reign shew, there were still so many Doors of Oppression left open to the Prerogative, that (whatever Value our most eloquent Legislators may have set upon those ancient Liberties) I doubt it will be difficult to fix the Period of their having a real Being, before the Revolution: Or, if there ever was an elder Period of our unmolested enjoying them, I own, my poor Judgment is at a loss where to place it. I will boldly say then, it is, to the Revolution only, we owe the full Possession of what, 'till then, we never had more than a perpetually contested Right to: And, from thence, from the Revolution it is, that the Protestant Successors of King *William* have found their Paternal Care and Maintenance of that Right, has been the surest Basis of their Glory.

These,



These, Sir, are a few of my Political Notions, which I have ventur'd to expose, that you may see what sort of an *English* Subject I am; how wise, or weak they may have shewn me, is not my Concern; let the Weight of these Matters have drawn me never so far out of my Depth, I still flatter myself, that I have kept a simple, honest Head above Water. And it is a solid Comfort to me, to consider that how insignificant soever my Life was at the Revolution, it had still the good Fortune to make one, among the many, who brought it about; and that I, now, with my Coævals, as well as with the Millions, since born, enjoy the happy Effects of it.

But I must now let you see how my particular Fortune went forward, with this Change in the Government; of which I shall not pretend to give you any farther Account than what my simple Eyes saw of it.

We had not been many Days at *Nottingham* before we heard, that the Prince of *Denmark*, with some other great Persons, were gone off, from the King, to the Prince of *Orange*, and that the Princess *Anne*, fearing the King her Father's Resentment might fall upon her, for her Consort's Revolt, had withdrawn herself, in the Night, from *London*, and was then within half a Day's Journey of *Nottingham*; on which very Morning we were suddenly alarmed with the News, that two thousand of the King's Dragoons were in close Pursuit to bring her back Prisoner to *London*: But this Alarm it seems was all Stratagem, and was but a part of that general Terror which was thrown into many other Places about the Kingdom, at the same time, with design to ani-

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mate

mate and unite the People in their common Defence; it being then given out, that the *Irish* were every where at our Heels, to cut off all the Protestants within the Reach of their Fury. In this Alarm our Troops scrambled to Arms in as much Order as their Consternation would admit of, when having advanced some few Miles on the *London Road*, they met the Princess in a Coach, attended only by the *Lady Churchill*, (now Duchess Dowager of *Marlborough*) and the *Lady Fitzharding*, whom they conducted into *Nottingham*, through the Acclamations of the People: The same Night all the Noblemen, and the other Persons of Distinction, then in Arms, had the Honour to sup at her Royal Highness's Table; which was then furnished (as all her necessary Accommodations were) by the Care, and at the Charge of the Lord *Devonshire*. At this Entertainment, of which I was a Spectator, something very particular surpriz'd me: The noble Guests at the Table happening to be more in Number, than Attendants out of Liveries, could be found for, I being well known in the Lord *Devonshire's* Family, was desired by his Lordship's *Maitre d'Hotel* to assist at it: The Post assigned me was to observe what the *Lady Churchill* might call for. Being so near the Table, you may naturally ask me, what I might have heard to have passed in Conversation at it? which I should certainly tell you, had I attended to above two Words that were uttered there, and those were, *Some Wine and Water*. These, I remember, came distinguished, and observ'd to my Ear, because they came from the fair Guest, whom I took such Pleasure to wait on: Except at that  
single

single Sound, all my Senses were collected into my Eyes, which during the whole Entertainment wanted no better Amusement, than of stealing now and then the Delight of gazing on the fair Object so near me: If so clear an Emanation of Beauty, such a commanding Grace of Aspect struck me into a Regard that had something softer than the most profound Respect in it, I cannot see why I may not, without Offence, remember it; since Beauty, like the Sun, must sometimes lose its Power to chuse, and shine into equal Warmth, the Peasant and the Courtier. Now to give you, Sir, a farther Proof of how good a Taste my first hopeful Entrance into Manhood set out with, I remember above twenty Years after, when the same Lady had given the World four of the loveliest Daughters, that ever were gaz'd on, even after they were all nobly married, and were become the reigning Toasts of every Party of Pleasure, their still lovely Mother had at the same time her Votaries, and her Health very often took the Lead, in those involuntary Triumphs of Beauty. However presumptuous, or impertinent these Thoughts might have appear'd at my first entertaining them, why may I not hope that my having kept them decently secret, for full fifty Years, may be now a good round Plea for their Pardon? Were I now qualified to say more of this celebrated Lady, I should conclude it thus: That she has liv'd (to all Appearance) a peculiar Favourite of Providence; that few Examples can parallel the Profusion of Blessings which have attended so long a Life of Felicity. A Person so attractive! a Husband so memorably great! an Offspring so beautiful!

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beautiful!

beautiful! a Fortune so immense! and a Title, which (when Royal Favour had no higher to bestow) she only could receive from the Author of Nature; a great Grandmother without grey Hairs! These are such consummate Indulgencies, that we might think Heaven has center'd them all in one Person, to let us see how far, with a lively Understanding, the full Possession of them could contribute to human Happiness.—I now return to our Military Affairs.

From *Nottingham* our Troops march'd to *Oxford*; through every Town we pass'd, the People came out, in some sort of Order, with such rural, and rusty Weapons as they had, to meet us, in Acclamations of Welcome, and good Wishes. This, I thought, promised a favourable End of our Civil War, when the Nation seem'd so willing to be all of a Side! At *Oxford* the Prince and Princess of *Denmark* met for the first time, after their late Separation, and had all possible Honours paid them by the University. Here we rested in quiet Quarters for several Weeks, till the Flight of King *James* into *France*; when the Nation being left to take care of itself, the only Security that could be found for it, was to advance the Prince and Princess of *Orange* to the vacant Throne. The public Tranquillity being now settled, our Forces were remanded back to *Nottingham*. Here all our Officers, who had commanded them from their first Rising, received Commissions to confirm them in their several Posts; and at the same time, such private Men as chose to return to their proper Business or Habitations, were offer'd their Discharges. Among the small Number of those, who receiv'd them,  
I was

I was one; for not hearing that my Name was in any of these new Commissions, I thought it time for me to take my leave of Ambition, as Ambition had before seduc'd me from the imaginary Honours of the Gown, and therefore resolv'd to hunt my Fortune in some other Field.

From *Nottingham* I again return'd to my Father at *Chattsworth*, where I staid till my Lord came down, with the new Honours of Lord Steward of his Majesty's Household, and Knight of the Garter! a noble Turn of Fortune! and a deep Stake he had play'd for! which calls to my Memory a Story we had then in the Family, which though too light for our graver Historians Notice, may be of weight enough for my humble Memoirs. This noble Lord being in the Presence-Chamber, in King *James's* Time, and known to be no Friend to the Measures of his Administration; a certain Person in favour there, and desirous to be more so, took occasion to tread rudely upon his Lordship's Foot, which was return'd with a sudden Blow upon the Spot: For this Misdemeanour his Lordship was fin'd thirty thousand Pounds; but I think had some Time allowed him for the Payment. In the Summer preceding the Revolution, when his Lordship retired to *Chattsworth*, and had been there deeply engaged with other Noblemen, in the Measures, which soon after brought it to bear, King *James* sent a Person down to him, with Offers to mitigate his Fine, upon Conditions of ready Payment, to which his Lordship reply'd, That if his Majesty pleased to allow him a little longer Time, he would rather chuse to pay *double* or *quit* with him: The Time of the intended rising being then so

near at hand, the Demand, it seems, came too late for a more serious Answer.

However low my Pretensions to Preferment were at this Time, my Father thought that a little Court-Favour added to them, might give him a Chance for saving the Expence of maintaining me, as he had intended at the University: He therefore order'd me to draw up a Petition to the Duke, and to give it some Air of Merit, to put it into *Latin*, the Prayer of which was, That his Grace would be pleas'd to do something (I really forget what) for me. — However, the Duke upon receiving it, was so good as to desire my Father would send me to *London* in the Winter, where he would consider of some Provision for me. It might, indeed, well require Time to consider it; for I believe it was then harder to know what I was really fit for, than to have got me any thing I was not fit for: However, to *London* I came, where I enter'd into my first State of Attendance and Dependance for about five Months, till the *February* following. But, alas! in my Intervals of Leisure, by frequently seeing Plays, my wise Head was turn'd to higher Views, I saw no Joy in any other Life than that of an Actor, so that (as before, when a Candidate at *Winchester*) I was even afraid of succeeding to the Preferment I sought for: 'Twas on the Stage alone I had form'd a Happiness preferable to all that Camps or Courts could offer me! and there was I determin'd, let Father and Mother take it as they pleas'd, to fix my *non ultra*. Here I think myself oblig'd, in respect to the Honour of that noble Lord, to acknowledge, that I believe his real Intentions to do well for me, were prevented by

by my own inconsiderate Folly; so that if my Life did not then take a more laudable Turn, I have no one but myself to reproach for it; for I was credibly informed by the Gentleman of his Household, that his Grace had, in their Hearing, talk'd of recommending me to the Lord *Shrewsbury*, then Secretary of State, for the first proper Vacancy in that Office. But the distant Hope of a Reversion was too cold a Temptation for a Spirit impatient as mine, that wanted immediate Possession of what my Heart was so differently set upon. The Allurements of a Theatre are still so strong in my Memory, that perhaps few, except those who have felt them, can conceive: And I am yet so far willing to excuse my Folly, that I am convinc'd were it possible to take off that Disgrace and Prejudice, which Custom has thrown upon the Profession of an Actor, many a well-born younger Brother, and Beauty of low Fortune, would gladly have adorn'd the Theatre, who, by their not being able to brook such Dishonour to their Birth, have pass'd away their Lives decently unheeded and forgotten.

Many Years ago, when I was first in the Management of the Theatre, I remember a strong Instance, which will shew you what Degree of Ignominy the Profession of an Actor was then held at.—A Lady, with a real Title, whose female Indiscretions had occasion'd her Family to abandon her, being willing, in her Distress to make an honest Penny of what Beauty she had left, desired to be admitted as an Actress; when before she could receive our Answer, a Gentleman (probably by her Relation's Permission) advised us not to entertain her for Reasons easy to be guess'd.

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You:

You may imagine we could not be so blind to our Interest as to make an honourable Family our unnecessary Enemies, by not taking his Advice; which the Lady too being sensible of, saw the Affair had its Difficulties; and therefore pursued it no farther. Now is it not hard that it should be a Doubt, whether this Lady's Condition or ours were the more melancholy? For here, you find her honest Endeavour, to get Bread from the Stage, was looked upon as an Addition of new Scandal to her former Dishonour! so that I am afraid, according to this way of thinking, had the same Lady stoop'd to have sold Patches and Pomatum, in a Band-box, from Door to Door, she might, in that Occupation have starv'd, with less Infamy, than had she relieved her Necessities by being famous on the Theatre. Whether this Prejudice may have arisen from the Abuses that so often have crept in upon the Stage, I am not clear in; tho' when that is grossly the Case, I will allow there ought to be no Limits set to the Contempt of it; yet in its lowest Condition, in my time, methinks there could have been no Pretence of preferring the Band-box to the Buskin. But this severe Opinion, whether merited, or not, is not the greatest Distress that this Profession is liable to.

I shall now give you another Anecdote, quite the reverse of what I have instanced; wherein you will see an Actress, as hardly used for an Act of Modesty (which without being a Prude, a Woman, even upon the Stage, may sometimes think it necessary not to throw off.) This too I am forced to premise, that the Truth of what I am going to tell you, may not be sneer'd at before it be known.



known. About the Year 1717, a young Actress, of a desirable Person, sitting in an upper Box at the Opera, a military Gentleman thought this a proper Opportunity to secure a little Conversation with her; the Particulars of which were, probably, no more worth repeating, than it seems the *Damoiselle* then thought them worth listening to; for, notwithstanding the fine Things he said to her, she rather chose to give the Musick the Preference of her Attention: This difference was so offensive to his high Heart, that he began to change the Tender, into the Terrible, and, in short, proceeded at last, to treat her in a Style too grossly insulting, for the meanest Female Ear to endure unresented: Upon which, being beaten too far out of her Discretion, she turn'd hastily upon him, with an angry Look, and a Reply, which seem'd to set his Merit in so low a Regard, that he thought himself oblig'd, in Honour, to take his time to resent it: This was the full Extent of her Crime, which his Glory delayed no longer to punish, than 'till the next time she was to appear upon the Stage: There, in one of her best Parts, wherein she drew a favourable Regard and Approbation from the Audience, he, dispensing with the Respect which some People think due to a polite Assembly, began to interrupt her Performance, with such loud and various Notes of Mockery, as other young Men of Honour, in the same Place, have sometimes made themselves undauntedly merry with: Thus, deaf to all Murmurs, or Entreaties of those about him, he pursued his Point, even to throwing near her such Thrash, as no Person can be supposed to carry

carry about him, unless to use on so particular an Occasion.

A Gentleman, then behind the Scenes, being shock'd at his unmanly Behaviour, was warm enough to say, That no Man, but a Fool, or a Bully, cou'd be capable of insulting an Audience, or a Woman, in so monstrous a manner. The former valiant Gentleman, to whose Ear the Words were soon brought, by his Spies, whom he had plac'd behind the Scenes, to observe how the Action was taken there, came immediately from the Pit, in a Heat, and demanded to know of the Author of those Words, if he was the Person that spoke them? to which he calmly reply'd, That though he had never seen him before, yet, since he seem'd so earnest to be satisfy'd, he would do him the favour to own, That, indeed, the Words were his, and that they would be the last Words he should chuse to deny, whoever they might fall upon. To conclude, their Dispute was ended the next Morning in *Hyde-Park*, where the determined Combatant, who first ask'd for Satisfaction, was oblig'd afterwards to ask his Life too; whether he mended it or not, I have not yet heard; but his Antagonist, in a few Years after, died in one of the principal Posts of the Government.

Now though I have, sometimes, known these gallant Insulters of Audiences, draw themselves into Scrapes, which they have less honourably got out of; yet, alas! what has that avail'd? This generous publick-spirited Method of silencing a few, was but repelling the Disease in one Part, to make it break out in another: All Endeavours  
at

at Protection are new Provocations, to those who pride themselves in pushing their Courage to a Defiance of Humanity. Even when a Royal Resentment has shewn itself, in the behalf of an injur'd Actor, it has been unable to defend him from farther Insults! an Instance of which happen'd in the late King *James's* time. Mr. *Smith* (whose Character as a Gentleman, could have been no way impeach'd, had he not degraded it, by being a celebrated Actor) had the Misfortune, in a Dispute with a Gentleman behind the Scenes, to receive a Blow from him: The same Night an Account of this Action was carried to the King, to whom the Gentleman was represented so grossly in the wrong, that, the next Day, his Majesty sent to forbid him the Court upon it. This Indignity cast upon a Gentleman, only for having maltreated a Player, was look'd upon as the Concern of every Gentleman; and a Party was soon form'd to assert, and vindicate their Honour, by humbling this favour'd Actor, whose slight Injury had been judg'd equal to so severe a Notice. Accordingly, the next time *Smith* acted, he was receiv'd with a Chorus of Cat-calls, that soon convinc'd him, he should not be suffer'd to proceed in his Part; upon which, without the least Discomposure, he order'd the Curtain to be dropp'd; and having a competent Fortune of his own, thought the Conditions of adding to it, by his remaining upon the Stage, were too dear, and from that Day entirely quitted it. I shall make no Observation upon the King's Resentment, or on that of his good Subjects; how far either was, or was not right, is not the Point I dispute for: Be that as it may, the unhappy Condition of the Actor:

Actor was so far from being reliev'd by his Royal Interposition in his favour, that it was the worse for it.

While these sort of real Distresses, on the Stage, are so unavoidable, it is no wonder that young People of Sense (though of low Fortune) should be so rarely found, to supply a Succession of good Actors. Why then may we not, in some measure, impute the Scarcity of them, to the wanton Inhumanity of those Spectators, who have made it so terribly mean to appear there? Were there no ground for this Question, where could be the Disgrace of entering into a Society, whose Institution, when not abus'd, is a delightful School of Morality; and where to excel, requires as ample Endowments of Nature, as any one Profession (that of holy Institution excepted) whatsoever? But, alas! as *Shakespear* says,

*Where is that Palace, whereunto, sometimes  
Foul things intrude not?*

Look into *St. Peter's* at *Rome*, and see what a profitable Farce is made of Religion there! Why then is an Actor more blemish'd than a Cardinal? While the Excellence of the one arises from his innocently seeming what he is not, and the Eminence of the other from the most impious Fallacies that can be impos'd upon human Understanding? If the best things, therefore, are most liable to Corruption, the Corruption of the Theatre is no Disproof of its innate and primitive Utility.

In this Light, therefore, all the Abuses of the Stage, all the low, loose, or immoral Supplements to Wit, whether, in making Virtue ridiculous,

culous, or Vice agreeable, or in the decorated Nonsense and Absurdities of Pantomimical Trumpery, I give up to the Contempt of every sensible Spectator, as so much rank Theatrical Popery. But cannot still allow these Enormities to impeach the Profession, while they are so palpably owing to the deprav'd Taste of the Multitude. While Vice, and Farcical Folly, are the most profitable Commodities, why should we wonder that, time out of Mind, the poor Comedian, when real Wit would bear no Price, should deal in what would bring him most ready Money? But this, you will say, is making the Stage a Nursery of Vice and Folly, or at least keeping an open Shop for it.— I grant it: But who do you expect should reform it? The Actors? Why so? If People are permitted to buy it, without blushing, the Theatrical Merchant seems to have an equal Right to the Liberty of selling it, without Reproach. That this Evil wants a Remedy, is not to be contested; nor can it be denied, that the Theatre is as capable of being preserv'd, by a Reformation, as Matters of more Importance; which, for the Honour of our National Taste, I could wish were attempted; and then, if it could not subsist, under decent Regulations, by not being permitted to present any thing there, but what were *worthy* to be there, it would be time enough to consider, whether it were necessary to let it totally fall, or effectually support it.

Notwithstanding all my best Endeavours, to recommend the Profession of an Actor, to a more general Favour, I doubt, while it is liable to such Corruptions, and the Actor himself to such unlimited Insults, as I have already mention'd, I  
doubt,

doubt, I say, we must still leave him a-drift, with his intrinsic Merit, to ride out the Storm, as well as he is able.

However, let us now turn to the other side of this Account, and see what Advantages stand there, to balance the Misfortunes I have laid before you. There we shall still find some valuable Articles of Credit, that, sometimes overpay his incidental Disgraces.

First, if he has Sense, he will consider, that as these Indignities are seldom or never offer'd him by People, that are remarkable for any one good Quality, he ought not to lay them too close to his Heart: He will know too, that when Malice, Envy, or a brutal Nature, can securely hide or fence themselves in a Multitude, Virtue, Merit, Innocence, and even sovereign Superiority, have been, and must be equally liable to their Insults; that therefore, when they fall upon him in the same manner, his intrinsic Value cannot be diminished by them: On the contrary, if with a decent and unruffled Temper, he lets them pass, the Disgrace will return upon his Aggressor, and perhaps warm the generous Spectator into a Partiality in his Favour.

That while he is conscious, That, as an Actor, he must be always in the Hands of Injustice, it does him at least this involuntary Good, that it keeps him in a settled Resolution to avoid all Occasions of provoking it, or of even offending the lowest Enemy, who, at the Expence of a Shilling, may publickly revenge it.

That, if he excels on the Stage, and is irreproachable in his personal Morals, and Behaviour, his Profession is so far from being an Impediment, that

that it will be oftener a just Reason for his being receiv'd among People of Condition with Favour; and sometimes with a more social Distinction, than the best, though more profitable Trade he might have follow'd, could have recommended him to.

That this is a Happiness to which several Actors, within my Memory, as *Betterton*, *Smith*, *Montfort*, *Captain Griffin*, and *Mrs. Bracegirdle* (yet living) have arrived at; to which I may add the late celebrated *Mrs. Oldfield*. Now let us suppose these Persons, the Men, for example, to have been all eminent Mercers, and the Women as famous Milliners, can we imagine, that merely as such, though endow'd with the same natural Understanding, they could have been call'd into the same honourable Parties of Conversation? People of Sense and Condition, could not but know, it was impossible they could have had such various Excellencies on the Stage, without having something naturally valuable in them: And I will take upon me to affirm, who knew them all living, that there was not one of the Number, who were not capable of supporting a Variety of Spirited Conversation, tho' the Stage were never to have been the Subject of it.

That, to have trod the Stage, has not always been thought a Disqualification from more honourable Employments; several have had military Commissions; *Carlisle* and *Wiltshire* were both kill'd Captains; one, in King *William's* Reduction of *Ireland*; and the other, in his first War, in *Flanders*; and the famous *Ben. Johnson*, tho' an unsuccessful Actor, was afterwards made Poet-Laureat.

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To these laudable Distinctions, let me add one more; that of Publick Applause, which, when truly merited, is, perhaps, one of the most agreeable Gratifications that venial Vanity can feel. A Happiness, almost peculiar to the Actor, inso-much that the best Tragick Writer, however numerous his separate Admirers may be, yet, to unite them into one general Act of Praise, to receive at once, those thundering Peals of Approbation, which a crowded Theatre throws out, he must still call in the Assistance of the skilful Actor, to raise and partake of them.

In a Word, 'twas in this flattering Light only, though not perhaps so thoroughly consider'd, I look'd upon the Life of an Actor, when but eighteen Years of Age; nor can you wonder, if the Temptations are too strong for so warm a Vanity as mine to resist; but whether excusable, or not, to the Stage, at length, I came, and it is from thence, chiefly, your Curiosity, if you have any left, is to expect a farther Account of me.



#### C H A P. IV.

*A short View of the Stage, from the Year 1660 to the Revolution. The King's and Duke's Company united, composed the best Set of English Actors yet known. Their several Theatrical Characters.*

**T**H O' I have only promis'd you an Account of all the material Occurrences of the Theatre during my own Time; yet there  
was



was one which happen'd not above seven Years before my Admission to it, which may be as well worth notice, as the first great Revolution of it, in which, among Numbers, I was involv'd. And as the one will lead you into a clearer View of the other, it may therefore be previously necessary to let you know that

King *Charles* II. at his Restoration, granted two Patents, one to Sir *William Davenant*, and the other to *Henry Killigrew*, Esq; and their several Heirs and Assigns, for ever, for the forming of two distinct Companies of Comedians: The first were call'd the *King's Servants*, and acted at the Theatre-Royal in *Drury-Lane*; and the other the *Duke's Company*, who acted at the Theatre in *Corset Garden*. About ten of the King's Company were on the Royal Household Establishment, having each ten Yards of Scarlet Cloth, with a proper Quantity of Lace allow'd them for Liveries; and in their Warrants from the Lord Chamberlain, were stiled *Gentlemen of the Great Chamber*: Whether the like Appointments were extended to the Duke's Company, I am not certain; but they were both in high Estimation with the Publick, and so much the Delight and Concern of the Court, that they were not only supported by its being frequently present at their publick *Presentations*, but by its taking Cognizance even of their private Government, insomuch, that their particular Differences, Pretensions, or Complaints, were generally ended by the *King*, or *Duke's* Personal Command or Decision. Besides their being thorough Masters of their Art, these Actors set forward with two critical Advantages, which perhaps may never happen again in many Ages.

Ages. The one was, their immediate opening after the so long Interdiction of Plays, during the Civil War, and the Anarchy that followed it. What eager Appetites from so long a Fast, must the Guests of those Times have had, to that high and fresh Variety of Entertainments, which *Shakespeare* had left prepared for them? Never was a Stage so provided! A hundred Years are wasted, and another silent Century well advanced, and yet what unborn Age shall say, *Shakespeare* has his Equal! How many shining Actors have the warm Scenes of his Genius given to Posterity? without being himself, in his Action, equal to his Writing! A strong Proof that Actors, like Poets, must be born such. Eloquence and Elocution are quite different Talents: *Shakespeare* could write *Hamlet*; but Tradition tells us, That the *Ghost*, in the same Play, was one of his best Performances as an Actor: Nor is it within the reach of Rule or Precept to complete either of them. Instruction, 'tis true, may guard them equally against Faults or Absurdities, but there it stops; Nature must do the rest: To excel in either Art, is a self-born Happiness, which something more than good Sense must be the Mother of.

The other Advantage I was speaking of, is, that before the Restoration, no Actresses had ever been seen upon the *English* Stage. The Characters of Women, on former Theatres, were perform'd by Boys, or young Men of the most effeminate Aspect. And what Grace, or Master-strokes of Action can we conceive such ungainly Hoydens to have been capable of? This Defect was so well considered by *Shakespeare*, that in few of his Plays, he has any greater Dependance upon the Ladies, than

than in the Innocence and Simplicity of a *Desdemona*, an *Ophelia*, or in the short Specimen of a fond and virtuous *Portia*. The additional Objects then of real, beautiful Women, could not but draw a Proportion of new Admirers to the Theatre. We may imagine too, that these Actresses were not ill chosen, when it is well known, that more than one of them had Charms sufficient at their leisure Hours, to calm and mollify the Cares of Empire. Besides these peculiar Advantages, they had a private Rule or Argument, which both Houses were happily ty'd down to, which was, that no Play acted at one House, should ever be attempted at the other. All the capital Plays therefore of *Shakespear*, *Fletcher*, and *Ben. Johnson*, were divided between them, by the Approbation of the Court, and their own alternate Choice: So that when *Hart* was famous for *Othello*, *Betterton* had no less a Reputation for *Hamlet*. By this Order the Stage was supply'd with a greater Variety of Plays, than could possibly have been shewn, had both Companies been employ'd at the same time upon the same Play; which Liberty too, must have occasion'd such frequent Repetitions of 'em, by their opposite Endeavours to forestall and anticipate one another, that the best Actors in the World must have grown tedious and tasteless to the Spectator: For what Pleasure is not languid to Satiety? It was therefore one of our greatest Happinesses (during my time of being in the Management of the Stage) that we had a certain Number of select Plays, which no other Company had the good Fortune to make a tolerable Figure in, and consequently, could find little or no Account, by acting them against us. These Plays therefore,  
for

for many Years, by not being too often seen, never fail'd to bring us crowded Audiences; and it was to this Conduct we ow'd no little Share of our Prosperity. But when four Houses are at once (as very lately they were) all permitted to act the same Pieces, let three of them perform never so ill, when Plays come to be so harras'd and hackney'd out to the common People (half of which too, perhaps, would as lieve see them at one House as another) the best Actors will soon feel that the Town has enough of them.

I know it is the common Opinion, That the more Play-houses, the more Emulation; I grant it; but what has this Emulation ended in? Why, a daily Contention which shall soonest surfeit you with the best Plays; so that when what *ought* to please, can no *longer* please, your Appetite is again to be raised by such monstrous Presentations, as dishonour the Taste of a civiliz'd People. If, indeed, to our several Theatres, we could raise a proportionable Number of good Authors, to give them all different Employment, then, perhaps, the Publick might profit from their Emulation: But while good Writers are so scarce, and undaunted Criticks so plenty, I am afraid a good Play, and a blazing Star, will be equal Rarities. This voluptuous Expedient, therefore, of indulging the Taste with several Theatres, will amount to much the same Variety as that of a certain Oeconomist, who, to enlarge his Hospitality, would have two Puddings and two Legs of Mutton, for the same Dinner.—But, to resume the Thread of my History.

These two excellent Companies were both prosperous for some few Years, 'till their Variety of  
 2 Plays

Plays began to be exhausted: Then of course, the better Actors (which the King's seem to have been allowed) could not fail of drawing the greater Audiences. Sir *William Davenant*, therefore, Master of the Duke's Company, to make Head against their Success, was forced to add Spectacle and Musick to Action; and to introduce a new Species of Plays, since call'd Dramatick Opera's, of which kind were the *Tempest*, *Pysche*, *Circe*, and others, all set off with the most expensive Decorations of Scenes and Habits, with the best Voices and Dancers.

This sensual Supply of Sight and Sound, coming in to the Assistance of the weaker Party, it was no Wonder they should grow too hard for Sense and simple Nature, when it is consider'd how many more People there are, that can see and hear, than think and judge. So wanton a Change of the publick Taste, therefore, began to fall as heavy upon the King's Company, as their greater Excellence in Action, had, before, fallen upon their Competitors: Of which Encroachment upon Wit, several good Prologues in those Days frequently complain'd.

But alas! what can Truth avail, when its Dependence is much more upon the Ignorant, than the sensible Auditor? a poor Satisfaction, that the due Praise given to it, must at last, sink into the cold Comfort of—*Laudatur & Alget*. Unprofitable Praise can hardly give it a *Soup maigre*. Taste and Fashion, with us, have always had Wings, and fly from one publick Spectacle to another so wantonly, that I have been inform'd, by those, who remember it, that a famous Puppet-show, in *Salisbury Change* (then standing where *Cecil Street*

now

now is) so far distressed these two celebrated Companies, that they were reduced to petition the King for Relief against it: Nor ought we perhaps to think this strange, when, if I mistake not, *Terence* himself reproaches the *Roman* Auditors of his Time, with the like Fondness for the *Funambuli*, the Rope-dancers. Not to dwell too long therefore upon that Part of my History, which I have only collected, from oral Tradition, I shall content myself with telling you, that *Mobun*, and *Hart* now growing old (for, above thirty Years before this time, they had severally borne the King's Commission of Major and Captain, in the Civil Wars) and the younger Actors, as *Goodman*, *Clark*, and others, being impatient to get into their Parts, and growing intractable, the Audiences too of both Houses then falling off, the Patentees of each, by the King's Advice, which perhaps amounted to a Command, united their Interests, and both Companies into one, exclusive of all others, in the Year 1684. This Union was, however, so much in favour of the Duke's Company, that *Hart* left the Stage upon it, and *Mobun* survived not long after.

One only Theatre being now in Possession of the whole Town, the united Patentees imposed their own Terms, upon the Actors; for the Profits of acting were then divided into twenty Shares, ten of which went to the Proprietors, and the other Moiety to the principal Actors, in such Sub-divisions as their different Merit might pretend to. These Shares of the Patentees were promiscuously sold out to Money-making Persons, called Adventurers, who, tho' utterly ignorant of Theatrical Affairs, were still admitted to a  
 propor-

proportionate Vote in the Management of them ; all particular Encouragements to Actors were by them, of consequence, look'd upon as so many Sums deducted from their private Dividends. While therefore the Theatrical Hive had so many Drones in it, the labouring Actors, sure, were under the highest Discouragement, if not a direct State of Oppression. Their Hardship will at least appear in a much stronger Light, when compar'd to our later Situation, who with scarce half their Merit, succeeded to be Sharers under a Patent upon five times easier Conditions : For, as they had but half the Profits divided among ten, or more of them ; we had three fourths of the whole Profits, divided only among three of us : And as they might be said to have ten Task-Masters over them, we never had but one Assistant Manager (not an Actor) join'd with us ; who, by the Crown's Indulgence, was sometimes too of our own chusing. Under this heavy Establishment then groan'd this United Company, when I was first admitted into the lowest Rank of it. How they came to be relieved by King *William's* Licence in 1695, how they were again dispersed, early in Queen *Anne's* Reign ; and from what Accidents Fortune took better care of Us, their unequal Successors, will be told in its Place : But to prepare you for the opening so large a Scene of their History, methinks I ought, (in Justice to their Memory too) to give you such particular Characters of their Theatrical Merit, as in my plain Judgment they seem'd to deserve. Presuming then, that this Attempt may not be disagreeable to the Curious, or the true Lovers of the Theatre, take it without farther Preface.

VOL. I.

E

In

In the Year 1690, when I first came into this Company, the principal Actors then at the Head of it were.

## Of Men.

Mr. *Betterton*,  
 Mr. *Monfort*,  
 Mr. *Kynaston*,  
 Mr. *Sandford*,  
 Mr. *Nokes*,  
 Mr. *Underhil*, and  
 Mr. *Leigh*.

## Of Women.

Mrs. *Betterton*,  
 Mrs. *Barry*,  
 Mrs. *Leigh*,  
 Mrs. *Buttler*,  
 Mrs. *Monfort*, and  
 Mrs. *Bracegirdle*.

These Actors, whom I have selected from their Cotemporaries, were all original Masters in their different Stile, not mere auricular Imitators of one another, which commonly is the highest Merit of the middle Rank; but Self-judges of Nature, from whose various Lights they only took their true Instruction. If in the following Account of them, I may be obliged to hint at the Faults of others, I never mean such Observations should extend to those who are now in Possession of the Stage; for as I design not my Memoirs shall come down to their Time, I would not lie under the Imputation of speaking in their Disfavour to the Publick, whose Approbation they must depend upon for Support. But to my Purpose.

*Betterton* was an Actor, as *Shakespear* was an Author, both without Competitors! form'd for the mutual Assistance, and Illustration of each other's Genius! How *Shakespear* wrote, all Men who have a Taste for Nature may read, and know——but with what higher Rapture would he



he still be *read*, could they conceive how *Betterton* play'd him! Then might they know, the one was born alone to speak what the other only knew, to write! Pity it is, that the momentary Beauties flowing from an harmonious Elocution, cannot like those of Poetry, be their own Record! That the animated Graces of the Player can live no longer than the instant Breath and Motion that presents them; or at best can but faintly glimmer through the Memory, or imperfect Attestation of a few surviving Spectators. Could *how Betterton* spoke be as easily known as *what* he spoke; then might you see the Muse of *Shakespear* in her Triumph, with all her Beauties in their best Array, rising into real Life, and charming her Beholders. But alas! since all this is so far out of the reach of Description, how shall I shew you *Betterton*? Should I therefore tell you, that all the *Othellos*, *Hamlets*, *Hotspurs*, *Mackbeths*, and *Brutus's*, whom you may have seen since his Time, have fallen far short of him; this still should give you no Idea of his particular Excellence. Let us see then what a particular Comparison may do! whether that may yet draw him nearer to you?

You have seen a *Hamlet* perhaps, who, on the first Appearance of his Father's Spirit, has thrown himself into all the straining Vociferation requisite to express Rage and Fury, and the House has thunder'd with Applause; tho' the mis-guided Actor was all the while (as *Shakespear* terms it) tearing a Passion into Rags.—I am the more bold to offer you this particular Instance, because the late Mr. *Addison*, while I sat by him, to see this Scene acted, made the same Observation,

E. 2

asking

asking me with some Surprize, if I thought *Hamlet* should be in so violent a Passion with the Ghost, which tho' it might have astonish'd, it had not provok'd him? for you may observe that in this beautiful Speech, the Passion never rises beyond an almost breathless Astonishment, or an Impatience, limited by filial Reverence, to enquire into the suspected Wrongs that may have rais'd him from his peaceful Tomb! and a Desire to know what a Spirit so seemingly distress'd, might wish or enjoin a sorrowful Son to execute towards his future Quiet in the Grave? This was the Light into which *Betterton* threw this Scene; which he open'd with a Pause of mute Amazement! then rising slowly, to a solemn, trembling Voice, he made the Ghost equally terrible to the Spectator, as to himself! and in the descriptive Part of the natural Emotions which the ghastly Vision gave him, the Boldness of his Expostulation was still govern'd by Decency, manly, but not braving; his Voice never rising into that seeming Outrage, or wild Defiance of what he naturally rever'd. But alas! to preserve this medium, between mouthing, and meaning too little, to keep the Attention more pleasingly awake, by a temper'd Spirit, than by mere Vehemence of Voice, is of all the Master-strokes of an Actor the most difficult to reach. In this none yet have equall'd *Betterton*. But I am unwilling to shew his Superiority only by recounting the Errors of those, who now cannot answer to them; let their farther Failings therefore be forgotten! or rather, shall I in some measure excuse them? For I am not yet sure, that they might not be as much owing to the false Judgment of the Spectator, as the

the Actor. While the Million are so apt to be transported, when the Drum of their Ear is so roundly rattled; while they take the Life of Elocution to lie in the Strength of the Lungs, it is no wonder the Actor, whose End is Applause, should be also tempted, at this easy rate, to excite it. Shall I go a little farther? and allow that this Extreme is more pardonable than its opposite Error? I mean that dangerous Affectation of the Monotone, or solemn Sameness of Pronunciation, which to my Ear is insupportable; for of all Faults that so frequently pass upon the Vulgar, that of Flatness will have the fewest Admirers. That this is an Error of ancient standing seems evident by what *Hamlet* says, in his Instructions to the Players, *viz.*

*Be not too tame, neither, &c.*

The Actor, doubtless, is as strongly ty'd down to the Rules of *Horace* as the Writer.

*Si vis me flere, dolendum est  
Primum ipsi tibi* —————

He that feels not himself the Passion he would raise, will talk to a sleeping Audience: But this never was the Fault of *Betterton*; and it has often amaz'd me to see those who soon came after him, throw out in some Parts of a Character, a just and graceful Spirit, which *Betterton* himself could not but have applauded. And yet in the equally shining Passages of the same Character, have heavily dragg'd the Sentiment along like a dead Weight; with a long-ton'd Voice, and absent  
E 3 Eyes,

Eyes, as if they had fairly forgot what they were about: If you have never made this Observation, I am contented you should not know where to apply it.

A farther Excellence in *Betterton*, was, that he could vary his Spirit to the different Characters he acted. Those wild impatient Starts, that fierce and flashing Fire, which he threw into *Hotspur*, never came from the unruffled Temper of his *Brutus* (for I have, more than once, seen a *Brutus* as warm as *Hotspur*) when the *Betterton Brutus* was provok'd, in his Dispute with *Cassius*, his Spirit flew only to his Eye; his steady Look alone supply'd that Terror, which he disdain'd an Intemperance in his Voice should rise to. Thus, with a settled Dignity of Contempt, like an unheeding Rock, he repelled upon himself the Foam of *Cassius*. Perhaps the very Words of *Shakespear* will better let you into my Meaning:

*Must I give way, and room, to your rash Choler?  
Shall I be frighted when a Madman stares?*

And a little after.

*There is no Terror, Cassius, in your Looks! &c.*

Not but in some Part of this Scene, where he reproaches *Cassius*, his Temper is not under this Suppression, but opens into that Warmth which becomes a Man of Virtue; yet this is the *Hasty Spark* of Anger, which *Brutus* himself endeavours to excuse.

But with whatever Strength of Nature we see the Poet shew, at once, the Philosopher and the Heroe,

Heroe,

Heroe, yet the Image of the Actor's Excellence will be still imperfect to you, unless Language could put Colours in our Words to paint the Voice with.

*Et, si vis similem pingere, pingere sonum*, is enjoying an Impossibility. The most that a *Vandyke* can arrive at, is to make his Portraits of great Persons seem to *think*; a *Shakespear* goes farther yet, and tells you *what* his Pictures thought; a *Betterton* steps beyond 'em both, and calls them from the Grave, to breathe, and be themselves again, in Feature, Speech, and Motion. When the skilful Actor shews you all these Powers at once united, and gratifies at once your Eye, your Ear, your Understanding. To conceive the Pleasure rising from such Harmony, you must have been present at it! 'tis not to be told you!

There cannot be a stronger Proof of the Charms of harmonious Elocution, than the many even unnatural Scenes and Flights of the false Sublime it has lifted into Applause. In what Raptures have I seen an Audience, at the furious Fustian and turgid Rants in *Nat. Lee's Alexander the Great!* For though I can allow this Play a few great Beauties, yet it is not without its extravagant Blemishes. Every Play of the same Author has more or less of them. Let me give you a Sample from this. *Alexander*, in a full crowd of Courtiers, without being occasionally call'd or provok'd to it, falls into this Rhapsody of Vain-glory.

*Can none remember? Yes, I know all must!*

E 4

And

And therefore they shall know it agen.

*When Glory, like the dazzling Eagle, stood  
Perch'd on my Beaver, in the Granic Flood,  
When Fortune's Self, my Standard trembling bore,  
And the pale Fates stood frighted on the Shore,  
When the Immortals on the Billows rode,  
And I myself appear'd the leading God.*

When these flowing Numbers came from the Mouth of a *Betterton*, the Multitude no more desired Sense to them, than our musical *Connoisseurs* think it essential in the celebrated *Airs* of an *Italian Opera*. Does not this prove, that there is very near as much Enchantment in the well-governed Voice of an Actor, as in the sweet Pipe of a Eunuch? If I tell you, there was no one Tragedy, for many Years, more in favour with the Town than *Alexander*, to what must we impute this its Command of publick Admiration? Not to its intrinsic Merit, surely, if it swarms with Passages like this I have shewn you! If this Passage has Merit, let us see what Figure it would make upon Canvas, what sort of Picture would rise from it. If *Le Brun*, who was famous for painting the Battles of this Heroe, had seen this lofty Description, what one Image could he have possibly taken from it? In what Colours would he have shewn us *Glory perch'd upon a Beaver*? How would he have drawn *Fortune trembling*? Or, indeed, what use could he have made of *pale Fates*, or *Immortals* riding upon *Billows*, with this blustering *God* of his own making at the head of them? Where, then, must have lain the Charm,

Charm, that once made the Publick so partial to this Tragedy? Why plainly, in the Grace and Harmony of the Actor's Utterance. For the Actor himself is not accountable for the false Poetry of his Author; That, the Hearer is to judge of; if it passes upon him, the Actor can have no Quarrel to it; who, if the Periods given him are round, smooth, spirited, and high-sounding, even in a false Passion, must throw out the same Fire and Grace, as may be required in one justly rising from Nature; where those his Excellencies will then be only more pleasing in proportion to the Taste of his-Hearer. And I am of opinion, that to the extraordinary Success of this very Play, we may impute the Corruption of so many Actors, and Tragick Writers, as were immediately misled by it. The unskilful Actor, who imagin'd all the Merit of delivering those blazing Rants, lay only in the Strength, and strain'd Exertion of the Voice, began to tear his Lungs, upon every false, or slight Occasion, to arrive at the same Applause. And it is from hence I date our having seen the same Reason prevalent for above fifty Years. Thus equally misguided too, many a barren-brain'd Author has stream'd into a frothy flowing Style, pompously rolling into sounding Periods, signifying ——— roundly nothing; of which Number, in some of my former Labours, I am something more than suspicious, that I may myself have made one. But to keep a little closer to *Betterton*.

When this favourite Play I am speaking of, from its being too frequently acted, was worn out; and came to be deserted by the Town, upon the sudden Death of *Monfort*, who had play'd

E. 5:

*Alexander*

*Alexander* with Success, for several Years, the Part was given to *Betterton*, which, under this great Disadvantage of the Satiety it had given, he immediately reviv'd with so new a Lustre, that for three Days together it fill'd the House; and had his then declining Strength been equal to the Fatigue the Action gave him, it probably might have doubled its Success; an uncommon Instance of the Power and intrinsick Merit of an Actor. This I mention not only to prove what irresistible Pleasure may arise from a judicious Elocution, with scarce Sense to assist it; but to shew you too, that tho' *Betterton* never wanted Fire, and Force, when his Character demanded it; yet, where it was not demanded, he never prostituted his Power to the low Ambition of a false Applause. And further, that when, from a too advanced Age, he resigned that toilsome Part of *Alexander*, the Play, for many Years after, never was able to impose upon the Publick; and I look upon his so particularly supporting the false Fire and Extravagancies of that Character, to be a more surprizing Proof of his Skill, than his being eminent in those of *Shakespear*; because there, Truth and Nature coming to his Assistance he had not the same Difficulties to combat, and consequently, we must be less amaz'd at his Success, where we are more able to account for it.

Notwithstanding the extraordinary Power he shew'd in blowing *Alexander* once more into a blaze of Admiration, *Betterton* had so just a sense of what was true, or false Applause, that I have heard him say, he never thought any kind of it equal to an attentive Silence; that there were many ways of deceiving an Audience into a loud  
one;



one; but to keep them hush'd and quiet, was an Applause which only Truth and Merit could arrive at: Of which Art, there never was an equal Master to himself. From these various Excellencies, he had so full a Possession of the Esteem and Regard of his Auditors, that upon his Entrance into every Scene, he seem'd to seize upon the Eyes and Ears of the Giddy and Inadvertent! To have talk'd or look'd another way, would then have been thought Insensibility or Ignorance. In all his Soliloquies of moment, the strong Intelligence of his Attitude and Aspect, drew you into such an impatient Gaze, and eager Expectation, that you almost imbib'd the Sentiment with your Eye, before the Ear could reach it.

As *Betterton* is the Center to which all my Observations upon Action tend, you will give me leave, under his Character, to enlarge upon that Head. In the just Delivery of Poetical Numbers, particularly where the Sentiments are pathetick, it is scarce credible, upon how minute an Article of Sound depends their greatest Beauty or Inaffection. The Voice of a Singer is not more strictly ty'd to Time and Tune, than that of an Actor in Theatrical Elocution: The least Syllable too long, or too slightly dwelt upon in a Period, depreciates it to nothing; which very Syllable, if rightly touch'd, shall, like the heightening Stroke of Light from a Master's Pencil, give Life and Spirit to the whole. I never heard a Line in Tragedy come from *Betterton*, wherein my Judgment, my Ear, and my Imagination, were not fully satisfy'd; which, since his Time, I cannot equally say of any one Actor whatsoever: Not but it is possible to be much his Inferior,

with

with great Excellencies; which I shall observe in another Place. Had it been practicable to have ty'd down the clattering Hands of all the ill judges who were commonly the Majority of an Audience, to what amazing Perfection might the *English* Theatre have arrived, with so just an Actor as *Betterton* at the Head of it! If what was Truth only, could have been applauded, how many noisy Actors had shook their Plumes with shame, who, from the injudicious Approbation of the Multitude, have bawl'd and strutted in the place of Merit? If therefore the bare speaking Voice has such Allurements in it, how much less ought we to wonder, however we may lament, that the sweeter Notes of Vocal Musick should so have captivated even the politer World, into an Apostacy from Sense, to an Idolatry of Sound. Let us enquire from whence this Enchantment rises. I am afraid it may be too naturally accounted for: For when we complain, that the finest Musick, purchas'd at such vast Expence, is so often thrown away upon the most miserable Poetry, we seem not to consider, that when the Movement of the Air, and Tone of the Voice, are exquisitely harmonious, tho' we regard not one *Word* of what we hear, yet the Power of the Melody is so busy in the Heart, that we naturally annex Ideas to it of our own Creation, and, in some sort, become ourselves the Poet to the Composer; and what Poet is so dull as not to be charm'd with the Child of his own Fancy? So that there is even a kind of Language in agreeable Sounds, which, like the Aspect of Beauty, without Words, speaks and plays with the Imagination. While this Taste therefore is so naturally prevalent,

valent, I doubt, to propose Remedies for it, were but giving Laws to the Winds, or Advice to Inamorato's : And however gravely we may assert, that Profit ought always to be inseparable from the Delight of the Theatre ; nay, admitting that the Pleasure would be heighten'd by the uniting them ; yet, while Instruction is so little the Concern of the Auditor, how can we hope that so choice a Commodity will come to a Market where there is so seldom a Demand for it ?

It is not to the Actor therefore, but to the vitiated and low Taste of the Spectator, that the Corruptions of the Stage (of what kind soever) have been owing. If the Publick, by whom they must live, had Spirit enough to discountenance, and declare against all the Trash and Fopperies they have been so frequently fond of, both the Actors, and the Authors, to the best of their Power, must naturally have serv'd their daily Table, with sound and wholesome Diet.— But I have not yet done with my Article of Elocution.

As we have sometimes great Composers of Musick, who cannot sing, we have as frequently great Writers that cannot read ; and though, without the nicest Ear, no Man can be Master of Poetical Numbers, yet the best Ear in the World will not always enable him to pronounce them. Of this Truth, *Dryden*, our first great Master of Verse and Harmony, was a strong Instance : When he brought his Play of *Amphytrion* to the Stage, I heard him give it his first Reading to the Actors, in which, though it is true, he deliver'd the plain Sense of every Period, yet the whole was in so cold, so flat, and unaffecting a manner,

manner, that I am afraid of not being believ'd, when I affirm it.

On the contrary, *Lee*, far his Inferior in Poetry, was so pathetick a Reader of his own Scenes, that I have been inform'd by an Actor, who was present, that while *Lee* was reading to Major *Mobun* at a Rehearsal, *Mobun*, in the Warmth of his Admiration, threw down his Part, and said, Unless I were able to *play* it, as well as you *read* it, to what purpose should I undertake it? And yet this very Author, whose Elocution raised such Admiration in so capital an Actor, when he attempted to be an Actor himself, soon quitted the Stage, in an honest Despair of ever making any profitable Figure there. From all this I would infer, That let our Conception of what we are to speak be ever so just, and the Ear ever so true, yet, when we are to deliver it to an Audience (I will leave Fear out of the question) there must go along with the whole, a natural Freedom, and becoming Grace, which is easier to conceive than describe: For without this inexpressible Somewhat, the Performance will come out oddly disguis'd, or somewhere defectively, unsurprising to the Hearer. Of this Defect too, I will give you yet a stranger Instance, which you will allow Fear could not be the Occasion of: If you remember *Eastcourt*, you must have known that he was long enough upon the Stage, not to be under the least Restraint from Fear, in his Performance: This Man was so amazing and extraordinary a Mimick, that no Man or Woman, from the Coquette to the Privy-Counsellor, ever mov'd or spoke before him, but he could carry their Voice, Look, Mien, and Motion, instantly  
into

into another Company: I have heard him make long Harangues, and form various Arguments, even in the manner of thinking, of an eminent Pleader at the Bar, with every the least Article and Singularity of his Utterance so perfectly imitated, that he was the very *alter ipse*, scarce to be distinguished from his Original. Yet more; I have seen, upon the Margin of the written Part of *Falstaff*, which he acted, his own Notes and Observations upon almost every Speech of it, describing the true Spirit of the Humour, and what Tone of Voice, Look, and Gesture, each of them ought to be delivered. Yet in his Execution upon the Stage, he seem'd to have lost all those just Ideas he had form'd of it, and almost thro' the Character, labour'd under a heavy Load of Flatness: In a word, with all his Skill in Mimickry, and Knowledge of what ought to be done, he never, upon the Stage, could bring it truly into Practice, but was upon the whole, a languid, unaffecting Actor. After I have shewn you so many necessary Qualifications, not one of which can be spar'd in true Theatrical Elocution, and have at the same time prov'd, that with the Assistance of them all united, the whole may still come forth defective; what Talents shall we say will infallibly form an Actor? This, I confess, is one of Nature's Secrets, too deep for me to dive into; let us content ourselves therefore with affirming, That *Genius*, which Nature only gives, only can complete him. This *Genius* then was so strong in *Betterton*, that it shone out in every Speech and Motion of him. Yet Voice, and Person, are such necessary Supports to it, that, by the Multitude, they have been prefer'd to *Genius* itself, or at least often mistaken for it.

*Betterton*

*Betterton* had a Voice of that kind, which gave more Spirit to Terror, than to the softer Passions; of more Strength than Melody. The Rage and Jealousy of *Othello*, became him better than the Sighs and Tenderness of *Castalio*: For though in *Castalio* he only excell'd others, in *Othello* he excell'd himself; which you will easily believe, when you consider, that in spite of his Complexion *Othello* has more natural Beauties than the best Actor can find in all the Magazine of Poetry, to animate his Power, and delight his Judgment with.

The Person of this excellent Actor was suitable to his Voice, more manly than sweet, not exceeding the middle Stature, inclining to the corpulent; of a serious and penetrating Aspect; his Limbs nearer the athletick than the delicate Proportion; yet however form'd, there arose from the Harmony of the whole a commanding Mien of Majesty, which the Fairer-fac'd, or (as *Shakespear* calls 'em) the *curled* Darlings of his Time, ever wanted something to be equal Masters of. There was some Years ago, to be had, almost in every Printshop, a *Metzotinto*, from *Kneller*, extremely like him.

In all I have said of *Betterton*, I confine myself to the Time of his Strength, and highest Power in Action, that you may make Allowances from what he was able to execute at Fifty, to what you might have seen of him at past Seventy; for tho' to the last he was without his Equal, he might not then be equal to his former Self; yet so far was he from being ever overtaken, that for many Years after his Decease, I seldom saw any of his Parts, in *Shakespear*, supply'd by others, but

but it drew from me the Lamentation of *Ophelia* upon *Hamlet's* being unlike, what she had seen him.

——— *Ah! woe is me!*

*T' have seen, what I have seen, see what I see!*

The last Part this great Master of his Profession acted, was *Melantius* in the *Maid's Tragedy*, for his own Benefit; when being suddenly seiz'd by the Gout, he submitted, by extraordinary Applications, to have his Foot so far reliev'd, that he might be able to walk on the Stage, in a Slipper, rather than wholly disappoint his Auditors. He was observ'd that Day to have exerted a more than ordinary Spirit, and met with suitable Applause; but the unhappy Consequence of tampering with his Distemper was, that it flew into his Head, and kill'd him in three Days, (I think) in the seventy-fourth Year of his Age.

I once thought to have fill'd up my Work with a select Dissertation upon Theatrical Action, but I find, by the Digressions I have been tempted to make in this Account of *Betterton*, that all I can say upon that Head, will naturally fall in, and possibly be less tedious, if dispers'd among the various Characters of the particular Actors, I have promis'd to treat of; I shall therefore make use of those several Vehicles, which you will find waiting in the next Chapter, to carry you thro' the rest of the Journey, at your Leisure.

C H A P.

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——— *Ah! woe is me!*  
*I' have seen, what I have seen, see what I see!*

The last Part this great Master of his Profession acted, was *Melantius* in the *Maid's Tragedy*, for his own Benefit; when being suddenly seiz'd by the Gout, he submitted, by extraordinary Applications, to have his Foot so far reliev'd, that he might be able to walk on the Stage, in a Slipper, rather than wholly disappoint his Auditors. He was observ'd that Day to have exerted a more than ordinary Spirit, and met with suitable Applause; but the unhappy Consequence of tampering with his Distemper was, that it flew into his Head, and kill'd him in three Days, (I think) in the seventy-fourth Year of his Age.

I once thought to have fill'd up my Work with a select Dissertation upon Theatrical Action, but I find, by the Digressions I have been tempted to make in this Account of *Betterton*, that all I can say upon that Head, will naturally fall in, and possibly be less tedious, if dispers'd among the various Characters of the particular Actors, I have promis'd to treat of; I shall therefore make use of those several Vehicles, which you will find waiting in the next Chapter, to carry you thro' the rest of the Journey, at your Leisure.

C H A P.



## C H A P. V.

*The Theatrical Characters of the Principal Actors,  
in the Year 1690, continu'd.*

*A few Words to Critical Auditors.*

**T**HO', as I have before observ'd, Women were not admitted to the Stage, till the Return of King *Charles*, yet it could not be so suddenly supply'd with them, but that there was still a Necessity, for some time, to put the handsomest young Men into Petticoats; which *Kynaston* was then said to have worn, with Success; particularly in the Part of *Evadne*, in the *Maid's Tragedy*, which I have heard him speak of; and which calls to my Mind a ridiculous Distress that arose from these sort of Shifts which the Stage was then put to.—The King coming a little before his usual time to a Tragedy, found the Actors not ready to begin, when his Majesty not chusing to have as much Patience as his good Subjects, sent to them, to know the Meaning of it; upon which the Master of the Company came to the Box, and rightly judging, that the best Excuse for their Default, would be the true one, fairly told his Majesty, that the Queen was not *shav'd* yet: The King, whose good Humour lov'd to laugh at a Jest, as well as to make one, accepted the Excuse, which serv'd to divert him, till the male Queen cou'd be effeminated. In a word, *Kynaston*, at that time was so beautiful a Youth, that  
the

the Ladies of Quality prided themselves in taking him with them in their Coaches, to *Hyde-Park*, in his Theatrical Habit, after the Play; which in those Days they might have sufficient time to do, because Plays then, were us'd to begin at four a-Clock: The Hour that People of the same Rank, are now going to Dinner.—— Of this Truth, I had the Curiosity to enquire, and had it confirm'd from his own Mouth, in his advanc'd Age: And indeed, to the last of him, his Handsomeness was very little abated; even at past Sixty, his Teeth were all sound, white, and even, as one would wish to see, in a reigning Toast of Twenty. He had something of a formal Gravity in his Mien, which was attributed to the stately Step he had been so early confin'd to, in a female Decency. But even that, in Characters of Superiority had its proper Graces; it misbecame him not in the Part of *Leon*, in *Fletcher's Rule a Wife*, &c. which he executed with a determin'd Manliness, and honest Authority, well worth the best Actor's Imitation. He had a piercing Eye, and in Characters of heroick Life, a quick imperious Vivacity, in his Tone of Voice, that painted the Tyrant truly terrible. There were two Plays of *Dryden* in which he shone, with uncommon Lustre; in *Aurenge-Zebe* he play'd *Morat*, and in *Don Sebastian*, *Muley Moloch*; in both these Parts, he had a fierce, Lion-like Majesty in his Port and Utterance, that gave the Spectator a kind of trembling Admiration!

Here I cannot help observing upon a modest Mistake, which I thought the late Mr. *Booth* committed in his acting the Part of *Morat*: There are in this fierce Character so many Sentiments

timents of avow'd Barbarity, Insolence, and Vain-glory, that they blaze even to a ludicrous Lustre, and doubtless the Poet intended those to make his Spectators laugh, while they admir'd them; but *Booth* thought it depreciated the Dignity of Tragedy to raise a Smile, in any Part of it, and therefore cover'd these kind of Sentiments with a scrupulous Coldness, and unmov'd Delivery, as if he had fear'd the Audience might take too familiar a notice of them. In Mr. *Addison's Cato*, *Syphax* has some Sentiments of near the same nature, which I ventur'd to speak, as I imagin'd *Kynaston* would have done, had he been then living to have stood in the same Character. Mr. *Addison*, who had something of Mr. *Booth's* Diffidence, at the Rehearsal of his Play, after it was acted, came into my Opinion, and own'd, that even Tragedy, on such particular Occasions, might admit of a Laugh of *Approbation*. In *Shakespear* Instances of them are frequent, as in *Mackbeth*, *Hotspur*, *Richard the Third*, and *Harry the Eighth*, all which Characters, tho' of a tragical Cast, have sometimes familiar Strokes in them, so highly natural to each particular Disposition, that it is impossible not to be transported into an honest Laughter at them: And these are those happy Liberties, which tho' few Authors are qualify'd to take, yet when justly taken, may challenge a Place among their greatest Beauties. Now whether *Dryden* in his *Morat*, *feliciter Audet*,—or may be allow'd the Happiness of having hit his Mark, seems not necessary to be determin'd by the Actor; whose Business, sure, is to make the best of his Author's Intention, as in this Part *Kynaston* did, doubtless not without *Dryden's* Approbation. For these

Reasons

Reasons then, I thought my good Friend, Mr. Booth (who certainly had many Excellencies) carried his Reverence for the Buskin too far, in not following the bold Flights of the Author with that Wantonness of Spirit which the Nature of those Sentiments demanded: For Example; *Morat* having a criminal Passion for *Indamora*, promises, at her Request, for one Day, to spare the Life of her Lover *Aurence-Zebe*: But not chusing to make known the real Motive of his Mercy, when *Nourmahal* says to him,

*'Twill not be safe to let him live an Hour!*

*Morat* silences her with this heroical *Rhodomontade*,

*I'll do't, to shew my Arbitrary Power.*

*Risum teneatis?* It was impossible not to laugh, and reasonably too, when this Line came out of the Mouth of *Kynaston*, with the stern, and haughty Look that attended it. But above this tyrannical, tumid Superiority of Character, there is a grave, and rational Majesty in *Shakespear's Harry the Fourth*, which tho' not so glaring to the vulgar Eye, requires thrice the Skill, and Grace to become, and support. Of this real Majesty *Kynaston* was entirely Master; here every Sentiment came from him, as if it had been his own, as if he had himself, that instant, conceiv'd it, as if he had lost the Player, and were the real King he personated! A Perfection so rarely found, that very often in Actors of good Repute, a certain Vacancy of Look, Inanity of Voice, or superfluous

not by elbowing, and crossing it before others, or disconcerting their Action, but by surpassing them, in true and masterly Touches of Nature. He never laugh'd at his own Jest, unless the Point of his Raillery upon another requir'd it.—He had a particular Talent, in giving Life to *bons Mots* and *Repartees*: The Wit of the Poet seem'd always to come from him *extempore*, and sharpen'd into more Wit, from his brilliant manner of delivering it; he had himself a good Share of it, or what is equal to it, so lively a Pleasantness of Humour, that when either of these fell into his Hands upon the Stage, he wantoned with them, to the highest Delight of his Auditors. The agreeable was so natural to him, that even in that dissolute Character of the *Rover* he seem'd to wash off the Guilt from Vice, and gave it Charms and Merit. For tho' it may be a Reproach to the Poet, to draw such Characters, not only unpunish'd, but rewarded; the Actor may still be allow'd his due Praise in his excellent Performance. And this is a Distinction which, when this Comedy was acted at *Whitehall*, King *William's* Queen *Mary* was pleas'd to make in favour of *Monfort*, notwithstanding her Disapprobation of the Play.

He had besides all this, a Variety in his Genius, which few capital Actors have shewn, or perhaps have thought it any Addition to their Merit to arrive at; he could entirely change himself; could at once throw off the Man of Sense, for the brisk, vain, rude, and lively Coxcomb, the false, flashy Pretender to Wit, and the Dupe of his own Sufficiency: Of this he gave a delightful Instance in the Character of *Sparkish* in *Wycheley's Country Wife*. In that of *Sir Courthy Nice* his Excellence

was still greater: There his whole Man, Voice, Mien, and Gesture, was no longer *Monfort*, but another Person. There, the insipid, soft Civility, the elegant, and formal Mien; the drawling Delicacy of Voice, the stately Flatness of his Address, and the empty Eminence of his Attitudes were so nicely observ'd and guarded by him, that had he not been an intire Master of Nature, had he not kept his Judgment, as it were, a Centinel upon himself, not to admit the least Likeness of what he us'd to be, to enter into any Part of his Performance, he could not possibly have so completely finish'd it. If, some Years after the Death of *Monfort*, I myself had any Success, in either of these Characters, I must pay the Debt, I owe to his Memory, in confessing the Advantages I receiv'd from the just Idea, and strong Impression he had given me, from his acting them. Had he been remember'd, when I first attempted them, my Defects would have been more easily discover'd, and consequently my favourable Reception in them, must have been very much, and justly abated. If it could be remembered how much he had the Advantage of me, in Voice and Person, I could not, here, be suspected of an affected Modesty, or of over-valuing his Excellence: For he sung a clear Counter-tenour, and had a melodious, warbling Throat, which could not but set off the last Scene of *Sir Courtly* with an uncommon Happiness; which I, alas! could only struggle thro', with the faint Excuses, and real Confidence of a fine Singer, under the Imperfection of a feign'd and screaming Treble, which at best could only shew you what

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F

I would

I would have done, had Nature been more favourable to me.

This excellent Actor was cut off by a Tragical Death, in the 33d Year of his Age, generally lamented by his Friends, and all Lovers of the Theatre. The particular Accidents that attended his Fall, are to be found at large in the Trial of the Lord *Mehun*, printed among those of the State, in *Folio*.

*Sandford* might properly be term'd the *Spagnolet* of the Theatre, an excellent Actor in disagreeable Characters. For as the chief Pieces of that famous Painter were of human Nature in Pain and Agony; so *Sandford*, upon the Stage, was generally as flagitious as a *Crenon*, a *Maligni*, an *Iago*, or a *Machiavil*, could make him. The Painter, 'tis true, from the Fire of his Genius might think the quiet Objects of Nature too tame for his Pencil, and therefore chose to indulge it in its full Power, upon those of Violence and Horror: But poor *Sandford* was not the Stage-Villain by Choice, but from Necessity; for having a low and crooked Person, such bodily Defects were too strong to be admitted into great, or amiable Characters; so that whenever, in any new or revived Play, there was a hateful or mischievous Person, *Sandford* was sure to have no Competitor for it: Nor indeed (as we are not to suppose a Villain, or Traitor can be shewn for our Imitation, or not for our Abhorrence) can it be doubted, but the less comely the Actor's Person, the fitter he may be to perform them. The Spectator too, by not being misled by a tempting Form, may be less inclin'd to excuse the wicked or immoral



moral Views or Sentiments of them. And though the hard Fate of an *Oedipus*, might naturally give the Humanity of an Audience thrice the Pleasure that could arise from the wilful Wickedness of the best acted *Crenon*; yet who could say that *Sandford*, in such a Part, was not Master of as true and just Action, as the best Tragedian could be, whose happier Person had recommended him to the virtuous Heroe, or any other more pleasing Favourite of the Imagination? In this disadvantageous Light, then, stood *Sandford*, as an Actor; admir'd by the Judicious, while the Crowd only prais'd him by their Prejudice. And so unusual had it been to see *Sandford* an innocent Man in a Play, that whenever he was so, the Spectators would hardly give him credit in so gross an Improbability. Let me give you an odd Instance of it, which I heard *Monfort* say was a real Fact. A new Play (the Name of it I have forgot) was brought upon the Stage, wherein *Sandford* happen'd to perform the Part of an honest Statesman: The Pit, after they had sate three or four Acts, in a quiet Expectation, that the well-dissembled Honesty of *Sandford* (for such of course they concluded it) would soon be discover'd, or at least, from its Security, involve the Actors in the Play, in some surprizing Distress or Confusion, which might raise, and animate the Scenes to come; when, at last, finding no such matter, but that the Catastrophe had taken quite another Turn, and that *Sandford* was really an honest Man to the end of the Play, they fairly damn'd it, as if the Author had impos'd upon them the most frontless or incredible Absurdity.

F 2

It

It is not improbable, but that from *Sandford's* so masterly personating Characters of Guilt, the inferior Actors might think his Success chiefly owing to the Defects of his Person; and from thence might take occasion, whenever they appear'd as Bravo's, or Murtherers, to make themselves as frightful and as inhuman Figures, as possible. In King *Charles's* time, this low Skill was carry'd to such an Extravagance, that the King himself, who was black-brow'd, and of a swarthy Complexion, pass'd a pleasant Remark, upon his observing the grim Looks of the Murtherers in *Macbeth*; when, turning to his People, in the Box about him, *Pray, what is the Meaning, said he, that we never see a Rogue in a Play, but, Godsfish, they always clap him on a black Perriwig? when, it is well known, one of the greatest Rogues in England always wears a fair one?* Now, whether or no Dr. *Oates*, at that time, wore his own Hair, I cannot be positive: Or, if his Majesty pointed at some greater Man, then out of Power, I leave those to guess at him, who, may yet, remember the changing Complexion of his Ministers. This Story I had from *Betterton*, who was a Man of Veracity: And, I confess, I should have thought the King's Observation a very just one, though he himself had been fair as *Adonis*. Nor can I, in this Question, help voting with the Court; for were it not too gross a Weakness to employ, in wicked Purposes, Men, whose very suspected Looks might be enough to betray them? Or are we to suppose it unnatural, that a Murther should be thoroughly committed out of an old red Coat, and a black Perriwig?

For

For my own part, I profess myself to have been an Admirer of *Sandford*, and have often lamented, that his masterly Performance could not be rewarded with that Applause, which I saw much inferior Actors met with, merely because they stood in more laudable Characters. For, tho' it may be a Merit in an Audience, to applaud Sentiments of Virtue and Honour; yet there seems to be an equal Justice, that no Distinction should be made, as to the Excellence of an Actor, whether in a good or evil Character; since neither the Vice, nor the Virtue of it, is his own, but given him by the Poet: Therefore, why is not the Actor who shines in either, equally commendable? ——— No, Sir; this may be Reason, but that is not always a Rule with us; the Spectator will tell you, that when Virtue is applauded, he gives part of it to himself; because his Applause at the same time, lets others about him see, that he himself admires it. But when a wicked Action is going forward; when an *Iago* is meditating Revenge, and Mischief; tho' Art and Nature may be equally strong in the Actor, the Spectator is shy of his Applause, lest he should, in some sort, be look'd upon as an Aider or an Abettor of the Wickedness in view; and therefore rather chuses to rob the Actor of the Praise he may merit, than give it him in a Character, which he would have you see his Silence modestly discourages. From the same fond Principle, many Actors have made it a Point to be seen in Parts sometimes, even flatly written, only because they stood in the favourable Light of Honour and Virtue.

I have formerly known an Actress carry this Theatrical Prudery to such a height, that she

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was,

was, very near, keeping herself chaste by it: Her Fondness for Virtue on the Stage, she began to think, might persuade the World, that it had made an Impression on her private Life; and the Appearances of it actually went so far, that, in an Epilogue to an obscure Play, the Profits of which were given to her, and wherein she acted a Part of impregnable Chastity, she bespoke the Favour of the Ladies by a Protestation, that in Honour of their Goodness and Virtue, she would dedicate her unblemish'd Life to their Example. Part of this Vestal Vow, I remember, was contain'd in the following Verse:

*Study to live the Character I play.*

But alas! how weak are the strongest Works of Art, when Nature besieges it? for though this good Creature so far held out her Distaste to Mankind, that they could never reduce her to marry any one of 'em; yet we must own she grew, like *Cæsar*, greater by her Fall! Her first heroick Motive, to a Surrender, was to save the Life of a Lover, who, in his Despair, had vow'd to destroy himself, with which Act of Mercy (in a jealous Dispute once, in my Hearing) she was provoked to reproach him in these very Words; *Villain! did not I save your Life?* The generous Lover, in return to that first tender Obligation, gave Life to her First-born, and that pious Offspring has, since, raised to her Memory, several innocent Grand-children.

So that, as we see, it is not the Hood, that makes the Monk, nor the Veil the Vestal; I am apt to think, that if the personal Morals of an Actor,

Actor, were to be weighed by his Appearance on the Stage, the Advantage and Favour (if any were due to either side) might rather incline to the Traitor, than the Heroe, to the *Sempronius*, than the *Cato*; or to the *Syphax*, than the *Juba*: Because no Man can naturally desire to cover his Honesty with a wicked Appearance; but an ill Man might possibly incline to cover his Guilt with the Appearance of Virtue, which was the Case of the frail Fair One, now mentioned. But be this Question decided as it may, *Sandford* always appear'd to me the honestest Man, in proportion to the Spirit wherewith he expos'd the wicked, and immoral Characters he acted: For had his Heart been unsound, or tainted with the least Guilt of them, his Conscience must, in spite of him, in any too near a Resemblance of himself, have been a Check upon the Vivacity of his Action. *Sandford*, therefore, might be said to have contributed his equal Share, with the foremost Actors, to the true and laudable Use of the Stage: And in this Light too, of being so frequently the Object of common Distaste, we may honestly stile him a Theatrical Martyr, to Poetical Justice: For in making Vice odious, or Virtue amiable, where does the Merit differ? To hate the one, or love the other, are but leading Steps to the same Temple of Fame, tho' at different Portals.

This Actor, in his manner of Speaking, varied very much from those I have already mentioned. His Voice had an acute and piercing Tone, which struck every Syllable of his Words distinctly upon the Ear. He had likewise a peculiar Skill in his Look of marking out to an Audience whatever

F 4

he

he judg'd worth their more than ordinary Notice. When he deliver'd a Command, he would sometimes give it more Force, by seeming to slight the Ornament of Harmony. In *Dryden's* Plays of Rhime, he as little as possible glutted the Ear with the Jingle of it, rather chusing, when the Sense would permit him, to lose it, than to value it.

Had *Sandford* liv'd in *Shakespear's* Time, I am confident his Judgment must have chose him, above all other Actors, to have play'd his *Richard the Third*: I leave his Person out of the Question, which, tho' naturally made for it, yet that would have been the least Part of his Recommendation; *Sandford* had stronger Claims to it; he had sometimes an uncouth Stateliness in his Motion, a harsh and sullen Pride of Speech, a meditating Brow, a stern Aspect, occasionally changing into an almost ludicrous Triumph over all Goodness and Virtue: From thence falling into the most asswasive Gentleness, and soothing Candour of a designing Heart. These, I say, must have prefer'd him to it; these would have been Colours so essentially shining in that Character, that it will be no Dispraise to that great Author, to say, *Sandford* must have shewn as many masterly Strokes in it (had he ever acted it) as are visible in the Writing it.

When I first brought *Richard the Third* (with such Alterations as I thought not improper) to the Stage, *Sandford* was engaged in the Company then acting under King *William's* Licence in *Lincoln's-Inn-Fields*; otherwise you cannot but suppose my Interest must have offer'd him that Part. What encouraged me, therefore, to attempt

tempt it myself at the *Theatre-Royal*, was, that I imagined I knew how *Sandford* would have spoken every Line of it: If therefore, in any Part of it, I succeeded, let the Merit be given to him: And how far I succeeded in that Light, those only can be Judges who remember him. In order, therefore, to give you a nearer Idea of *Sandford*, you must give me leave (compell'd as I am to be vain) to tell you, that the late Sir *John Vanbrugh*, who was an Admirer of *Sandford*, after he had seen me act it, assur'd me, That he never knew any one Actor so particularly profit by another, as I had done by *Sandford* in *Richard the Third*: You have, said he, *his very Look, Gesture, Gait, Speech, and every Motion of him, and have borrow'd them all, only to serve you in that Character.* If therefore Sir *John Vanbrugh's* Observation was just, they who remember me in *Richard the Third*, may have a nearer Conception of *Sandford*, than from all the critical Account I can give of him.

I come now to those other Men Actors, who, at this time, were equally famous in the lower Life of Comedy. But I find myself more at a loss to give you them, in their true and proper Light, than those I have already set before you. Why the Tragedian warms us into Joy, or Admiration, or sets our Eyes on flow with Pity, we can easily explain to another's Apprehension: But it may sometimes puzzle the gravest Spectator to account for that familiar Violence of Laughter, that shall seize him, at some particular Strokes of a true Comedian. How then shall I describe what a better Judge might not be able to express? The Rules to please the Fancy cannot so easily be laid down, as those that ought to govern the

Judgment. The Decency too, that must be observed in Tragedy, reduces, by the manner of speaking it, one Actor to be much more like another, than they can or need be supposed to be in Comedy: There the Laws of Action give them such free, and almost unlimited Liberties, to play and wanton with Nature, that the Voice, Look, and Gesture of a Comedian may be as various, as the Manners and Faces of the whole Mankind are different from one another. These are the Difficulties I lie under. Where I want Words, therefore, to describe what I may commend, I can only hope you will give credit to my Opinion: And this Credit I shall most stand in need of, when I tell you, that

*Nokes* was an Actor of a quite different Genius from any I have ever read, heard of, or seen, since or before his Time; and yet his general Excellence may be comprehended in one Article, *viz.* a plain and palpable Simplicity of Nature, which was so utterly his own, that he was often as unaccountably diverting in his common Speech, as on the Stage. I saw him once, giving an Account of some Table-talk, to another Actor behind the Scenes, which, a Man of Quality accidentally listening to, was so deceived by his Manner, that he ask'd him, if that was a new Play, he was rehearsing? It seems almost amazing, that this Simplicity, so easy to *Nokes*, should never be caught by any one of his Successors. *Leigh* and *Underhil* have been well copied, tho' not equall'd by others. But not all the mimical Skill of *Eastcourt* (fam'd as he was for it) tho' he had often seen *Nokes*, could scarce give us an Idea of him. After this perhaps it will be saying less of  
him,



him, when I own, that though I have still the Sound of every Line he spoke, in my Ear, (which us'd not to be thought a bad one) yet I have often try'd, by myself, but in vain, to reach the least distant Likeness of the *Vis Comica* of *Nokes*. Though this may seem little to his Praise, it may be negatively saying a good deal to it, because I have never seen any one Actor, except himself, whom I could not, at least so far imitate, as to give you a more than tolerable Notion of his manner. But *Nokes* was so singular a Species, and was so form'd by Nature for the Stage, that I question if (beyond the trouble of getting Words by Heart) it ever cost him an Hour's Labour to arrive at that high Reputation he had, and deserved.

The Characters he particularly shone in, were *Sir Martin Marr-al*, *Gomez* in the *Spanish Friar*, *Sir Nicholas Cully* in *Love in a Tub*, *Barnaby Brittle* in the *Wanton Wife*, *Sir Davy Dunce* in the *Soldier's Fortune*, *Sofia* in *Amphytrion*, &c. &c. &c. To tell you how he acted them is beyond the reach of Criticism: But, to tell you what Effect his Action had upon the Spectator, is not impossible: This then is all you will expect from me, and from hence I must leave you to guess at him.

He scarce ever made his first Entrance in a Play, but he was received with an involuntary Applause, not of Hands only, for those may be, and have often been partially prostituted, and bespoken; but by a General Laughter, which the very Sight of him provoked, and Nature could not resist; yet the louder the Laugh the graver was his Look upon it; and sure, the ridiculous Solemnity

Solemnity of his Features were enough to have set a whole Bench of Bishops into a Titter, cou'd he have been honour'd (may it be no Offence to suppose it) with such grave and right reverend Auditors. In the ludicrous Distresses, which by the Laws of Comedy, Folly is often involv'd in; he sunk into such a Mixture of piteous Pusillanimity, and a Consternation so rufully ridiculous and inconsolable, that when he had shook you, to a Fatigue of Laughter, it became a moot Point, whether you ought not to have pity'd him. When he debated any matter by himself, he would shut up his Mouth with a dumb studious Powt, and roll his full Eye into such a vacant Amazement, such a palpable Ignorance of what to think of it, that his silent Perplexity (which would sometimes hold him several Minutes) gave your Imagination as full Content, as the most absurd thing he could say upon it. In the Character of Sir *Martin Marr-all*, who is always committing Blunders to the Prejudice of his own Interest, when he had brought himself to a Dilemma in his Affairs, by vainly proceeding upon his own Head, and was afterwards afraid to look his governing Servant, and Counsellor in the Face; what a copious, and distressful Harangue have I seen him make with his Looks (while the House has been in one continued Roar, for several Minutes) before he could prevail with his Courage to speak a Word to him! Then might you have, at once, read in his Face *Vexation*—that his own Measures, which he had piqued himself upon, had fail'd. *Envy*—of his Servant's superior Wit. *Distress*—to retrieve, the Occasion he had lost. *Shame*—to confess his Folly: and yet a sullen  
Desire,

Desire, to be reconciled and better advised, for the future! What Tragedy ever shew'd us such a Tumult of Passions, rising, at once, in one Bosom! or what buskin'd Heroe standing under the Load of them, could have more effectually, mov'd his Spectators, by the most pathetick Speech, than poor miserable *Nokes* did, by this silent Eloquence, and piteous Plight of his Features?

His Person was of the middle size, his Voice clear, and audible; his natural Countenance grave, and sober; but the Moment he spoke, the settled Seriousness of his Features was utterly discharg'd, and a dry, drolling, or laughing Levity took such full Possession of him, that I can only refer the Idea of him to your Imagination. In some of his low Characters, that became it, he had a shuffling Shamle in his Gait, with so contented an Ignorance in his Aspect, and an aukward Absurdity in his Gesture, that had you not known him, you could not have believ'd, that naturally he could have had a Grain of common Sense. In a Word, I am tempted to sum up the Character of *Nokes*, as a Comedian, in a Parodie of what *Shakespear's Mark Antony* says of *Brutus* as a Heroe.

*His Life was Laughter, and the Ludicrous  
So mixt, in him, that Nature might stand up,  
And say to all the World — This was an Actor.*

*Leigh* was of the mercurial kind, and though not so strict an Observer of Nature, yet never so wanton in his Performance, as to be wholly out of her Sight. In Humour, he lov'd to take a full  
Career,

Career, but was careful enough to stop short, when just upon the Precipice: He had great Variety, in his manner, and was famous in very different Characters: In the canting, grave, Hypocrisy of the *Spanish* Friar, he stretcht the Veil of Piety so thinly over him, that in every Look, Word, and Motion, you saw a palpable, wicked Slyness shine through it.—Here he kept his Vivacity demurely confin'd, till the pretended Duty of his Function demanded it; and then he exerted it, with a cholerick sacerdotal Insolence. But the Friar is a Character of such glaring Vice, and so strongly drawn, that a very indifferent Actor cannot but hit upon the broad Jest, that are remarkable, in every Scene of it. Though I have never yet seen any one, that has fill'd them with half the Truth, and Spirit of *Leigh*.—*Leigh* rais'd the Character as much above the Poet's Imagination, as the Character has sometimes rais'd other Actors above themselves! and I do not doubt, but the Poet's Knowledge of *Leigh's* Genius help'd him to many a pleasant Stroke of Nature, which without that Knowledge never might have enter'd into his Conception. *Leigh* was so eminent in his Character, that the late Earl of *Dorset* (who was equally an Admirer, and a Judge of Theatrical Merit) had a whole Length of him, in the Friar's Habit, drawn by *Kneller*: The whole Portrait is highly painted, and extremely like him. But no wonder *Leigh* arriv'd to such Fame in what was so compleatly written for him; when Characters that would have made the Reader yawn, in the Closet, have by the Strength of his Action, been lifted into the loudest Laughter, on the Stage. Of this kind  
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was the Scrivener's great boobily Son in the *Villain*; *Ralph*, a stupid, staring, Under-servant, in *Sir Solomon Single*. Quite opposite to those were *Sir Jolly Jumble*, in the *Soldier's Fortune*, and his old *Belfond* in the *Squire of Alsatia*. In *Sir Jolly* he was all Life, and laughing Humour; and when *Nokes* acted with him in the same Play, they returned the Ball so dextrously upon one another, that every Scene between them, seem'd but one continued Rest of Excellence. — But alas! when those Actors were gone, that Comedy, and many others, for the same Reason, were rarely known to stand upon their own Legs; by seeing no more of *Leigh* or *Nokes* in them, the Characters were quite sunk, and alter'd. In his *Sir William Belfond*, *Leigh* shew'd a more spirited Variety, than ever I saw, any Actor, in any one Character come up to: The Poet, 'tis true, had here, exactly chalked for him, the Out-lines of Nature; but the high Colouring, the strong Lights and Shades of Humour that enliven'd the whole, and struck our Admiration, with Surprize and Delight, were wholly owing to the Actor. The easy Reader might, perhaps, have been pleas'd with the Author without discomposing a Feature; but the Spectator must have heartily held his Sides, or the Actor would have heartily made them ach for it.

Now, though I observ'd before, that *Nokes* never was tolerably touch'd by any of his Successors; yet, in this Character, I must own, I have seen *Leigh* extremely well imitated, by my late facetious Friend *Penkethman*, who tho' far short of what was inimitable, in the Original, yet as to the general Resemblance, was a very valuable Copy of him: And, as I know *Penketh-*  
*man*

*man* cannot yet be out of your Memory, I have chosen to mention him here, to give you the nearest Idea I can, of the Excellence of *Leigh* in that particular Light: For *Leigh* had many masterly Variations, which the other cou'd not, nor ever pretended to reach; particularly in the Dotage, and Follies of extreme old Age, in the Characters of *Fumble* in the *Fond Husband*, and the Toothless Lawyer, in the *City Politicks*; both which Plays liv'd only by the extraordinary Performance of *Nokes* and *Leigh*.

There were two other Characters, of the farcical kind, *Geta* in the *Prophetess*, and *Crack* in *Sir Courtly Nice*, which, as they are less confin'd to Nature, the Imitation of them was less difficult to *Penkethman*; who, to say the Truth, delighted more in the whimsical, than the natural; therefore, when I say he sometimes resembled *Leigh*, I reserve this Distinction, on his Master's side; that the pleasant Extravagancies of *Leigh*, were all the Flowers of his own Fancy, while the less fertile Brain of my Friend was contented to make use of the Stock his Predecessor had left him. What I have said, therefore, is not to detract from honest *Pinkey's* Merit, but to do Justice to his Predecessor. ——— And though, 'tis true, as we seldom see a good Actor, as a great Poet arise from the bare *Imitation* of another's Genius; yet if this be a general Rule, *Penkethman* was the nearest to an Exception from it; for with those, who never knew *Leigh*, he might very well have pass'd for a more than common Original. Yet again, as my Partiality for *Penkethman* ought not to lead me from Truth, I must beg leave (though out of its Place) to tell you fairly what was the  
best

best of him, that the Superiority of *Leigh* may stand in its due Light. — *Penkethman* had certainly, from Nature, a great deal of comic Power about him; but his Judgment was by no Means equal to it; for he would make frequent Deviations into the Whimfies of an *Harlequin*. By the way, (let me digress a little farther) whatever Allowances are made for the Licence of that Character, I mean of an *Harlequin*, whatever Pretences may be urged, from the Practice of the ancient Comedy, for its being play'd in a Mask, resembling no part of the human Species; I am apt to think, the best Excuse a modern Actor can plead for his continuing it, is that the low, senseless, and monstrous things he says, and does in it, no theatrical Assurance could get through, with a bare Face: Let me give you an Instance of even *Penkethman's* being out of Countenance for want of it: When he first play'd *Harlequin* in the *Emperor* of the *Moon*, several Gentlemen (who inadvertently judg'd by the Rules of Nature) fancied that a great deal of the Drollery, and Spirit of his Grimace was lost, by his wearing that useles, unmeaning Masque of a black Cat, and therefore insisted, that the next time of his acting that Part, he should play without it: Their Desire was accordingly comply'd with — but, alas! in vain — *Penkethman* could not take to himself the Shame of the Character without being concealed — he was no more *Harlequin* — his Humour was quite disconcerted! his Conscience could not, with the same *Effronterie* declare against Nature, without the cover of that unchanging Face, which he was sure would never blush for it! no! it was quite another

another Case! without that Armour his Courage could not come up to the bold Strokes, that were necessary to get the better of common Sense. Now if this Circumstance will justify the Modesty of *Penkethman*, it cannot but throw a wholesome Contempt on the low Merit of an *Harlequin*. But how farther necessary the Masque is to that Fool's Coat, we have lately had a stronger Proof, in the Favour, that the *Harlequin Sauvage* met with, at *Paris*, and the ill Fate that followed the same *Sauvage*, when he pull'd off his Masque in *London*. So that it seems, what was Wit from a *Harlequin*, was something too extravagant from a human Creature. If therefore *Penkethman*, in Characters drawn from Nature, might sometimes launch out into a few gamesome Liberties, which would not have been excused from a more correct Comedian; yet, in this manner of taking them, he always seem'd to me, in a kind of Consciousness of the Hazard he was running, as if he fairly confess'd, that what he did was only, as well as he *could* do. — That he was willing to take his Chance for Success, but if he did not meet with it, a Rebuke should break no Squares; he would mend it another time, and would take whatever pleas'd his Judges to think of him, in good part; and I have often thought, that a good deal of the Favour he met with, was owing to this seeming humble way of waving all Pretences to Merit, but what the Town would please to allow him. What confirms me in this Opinion is, that when it has been his ill Fortune to meet with a *Disgraccia*, I have known him say apart to himself, yet loud enough to be heard — *Odso!* I believe  
I am



*I am a little wrong here!* which once was so well receiv'd, by the Audience, that they turn'd their Reproof into Applause.

Now, the Judgment of *Leigh* always guarded the happier Sallies of his Fancy, from the least Hazard of Disapprobation: he seem'd not to court, but to attack your Applause, and always came off victorious; nor did his highest Assurance amount to any more, than that just Confidence, without which the commendable Spirit of every good Actor must be abated; and of this Spirit *Leigh* was a most perfect Master. He was much admir'd by King *Charles*, who us'd to distinguish him, when spoke of, by the Title of *his Actor*: Which however makes me imagine, that in his Exile that Prince might have receiv'd his first Impression of good Actors from the *French Stage*; for *Leigh* had more of that farcical Vivacity than *Nokes*; but *Nokes* was never languid by his more strict Adherence to Nature, and as far as my Judgment is worth taking, if their intrinsic Merit could be justly weigh'd, *Nokes* must have had the better in the Balance. Upon the unfortunate Death of *Monfort*, *Leigh* fell ill of a Fever, and dy'd in a Week after him, in *December 1692*.

*Underhil* was a correct, and natural Comedian, his particular Excellence was in Characters, that may be call'd Still-life, I mean the Stiff, the Heavy, and the Stupid; to these he gave the exactest, and most expressive Colours, and in some of them, look'd, as if it were not in the Power of human Passions to alter a Feature of him. In the solemn Formality of *Obadiab* in the *Committee*, and in the boobily Heaviness of *Lolpoop* in the *Squire of Alfatia*, he seem'd the immoveable Log  
he

he stood for! a Countenance of Wood could not be more fixt than his, when the Blockhead of a Character required it: His Face was full and long; from his Crown to the end of his Nose, was the shorter half of it, so that the Disproportion of his lower Features, when soberly compos'd, with an unwandering Eye hanging over them, threw him into the most lumpish, moping Mortal, that ever made Beholders merry! not but, at other times, he could be wakened into Spirit equally ridiculous.—In the coarse, rustick Humour of Justice *Clodpate*, in *Epsome Wells*, he was a delightful Brute! and in the blunt Vivacity of Sir *Sampson*, in *Love for Love*, he shew'd all that true perverse Spirit, that is commonly seen in much Wit, and Ill-nature. This Character is one of those few so well written, with so much Wit and Humour, that an Actor must be the grossest Dunce, that does not appear with an unusual Life in it: But it will still shew as great a Proportion of Skill, to come near *Underhil* in the acting it, which (not to undervalue those who soon came after him) I have not yet seen. He was particularly admir'd too, for the Grave-digger in *Hamlet*. The Author of the *Tatler* recommends him to the Favour of the Town, upon that Play's being acted for his Benefit, wherein, after his Age had some Years oblig'd him to leave the Stage, he came on again, for that Day, to perform his old Part; but, alas! so worn, and disabled, as if himself was to have lain in the Grave he was digging; when he could no more excite Laughter, his Infirmities were dismiss'd with Pity: He dy'd soon after, a superannuated Pensioner, in the List of those who were supported by the joint

joint Sharers, under the first Patent granted to Sir *Richard Steele*.

The deep Impressions of these excellent Actors, which I receiv'd in my Youth, I am afraid, may have drawn me into the common Foible of us old Fellows; which is, a Fondness, and perhaps, a tedious Partiality for the Pleasures we have formerly tasted, and think are now fallen off, because we can no longer enjoy them. If therefore I lie under that Suspicion, tho' I have related nothing incredible, or out of the reach of a good Judge's Conception, I must appeal to those Few, who are about my own Age, for the Truth and Likeness of these Theatrical Portraits.

There were, at this time, several others in some degree of Favour with the Publick, *Powel, Verbruggen, Williams, &c.* But as I cannot think their best Improvements made them, in any wise equal to those I have spoke of, I ought not to range them in the same Class. Neither were *Wilks*, or *Dogget*, yet come to the Stage; nor was *Booth* initiated till about six Years after them; or *Mrs. Oldfield* known, till the Year 1700. I must therefore reserve the four last for their proper Period, and proceed to the Actresses, that were famous with *Betterton*, at the latter end of the last Century.

*Mrs. Barry* was then in Possession of almost all the chief Parts in Tragedy: With what Skill she gave Life to them, you will judge from the Words of *Dryden*, in his Preface to *Cleomenes*, where he says,

*Mrs. Barry, always excellent, has in this Tragedy excell'd herself, and gain'd a Reputation beyond any Woman I have ever seen on the Theatre.*

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I very perfectly remember her acting that Part; and however unnecessary it may seem, to give my Judgment after *Dryden's*, I cannot help saying, I do not only close with his Opinion, but will venture to add, that (tho' *Dryden* has been dead these Thirty-Eight Years) the same Compliment, to this Hour, may be due to her Excellence. And tho' she was then, not a little, past her Youth, she was not, till that time, fully arriv'd to her Maturity of Power and Judgment: From whence I would observe, That the short Life of Beauty, is not long enough to form a complete Actress. In Men, the Delicacy of Person is not so absolutely necessary, nor the Decline of it so soon taken notice of. The Fame Mrs. *Barry* arriv'd to, is a particular Proof of the Difficulty there is, in judging with Certainty, from their first Trials, whether young People will ever make any great Figure on a Theatre. There was, it seems, so little Hopes of Mrs. *Barry*, at her first setting out, that she was, at the end of the first Year, discharg'd the Company, among others, that were thought to be a useless Expence to it. I take it for granted that the Objection to Mrs. *Barry*, at that time, must have been a defective Ear, or some unskilful Dissonance, in her manner of pronouncing: But where there is a proper Voice, and Person, with the Addition of a good Understanding, Experience tells us, that such Defect is not always invincible; of which, not only Mrs. *Barry*, but the late Mrs. *Oldfield*, are eminent Instances. Mrs. *Oldfield* had been a Year, in the Theatre-Royal, before she was observ'd to give any tolerable Hope of her being an Actress; so unlike, to all manner of Propriety, was her Speaking!

Speaking! How unaccountably, then, does a Genius for the Stage make its way towards Perfection? For, notwithstanding these equal Disadvantages, both these Actresses, tho' of different Excellence, made themselves complete Mistresses of their Art, by the Prevalence of their Understanding. If this Observation may be of any use, to the Masters of future Theatres, I shall not then have made it to no purpose.

Mrs. *Barry*, in Characters of Greatness, had a Presence of elevated Dignity, her Mien and Motion superb, and gracefully majestick; her Voice full, clear, and strong, so that no Violence of Passion could be too much for her: And when Distress, or Tenderness possessed her, she subsided into the most affecting Melody, and Softness. In the Art of exciting Pity, she had a Power beyond all the Actresses I have yet seen, or what your Imagination can conceive. Of the former of these two great Excellencies, she gave the most delightful Proofs in almost all the Heroic Plays of *Dryden* and *Lee*; and of the latter, in the softer Passions of *Otway's Monimia* and *Belvidera*. In Scenes of Anger, Defiance, or Resentment, while she was impetuous, and terrible, she pour'd out the Sentiment with an enchanting Harmony; and it was this particular Excellence, for which *Dryden* made her the above-recited Compliment, upon her acting *Cassandra* in his *Cleomenes*. But here, I am apt to think his Partiality for that Character, may have tempted his Judgment to let it pass for her Master-piece; when he could not but know, there were several other Characters in which her Action might have given her a fairer Pretence to the Praise he has bestow'd on her, for *Cassandra*;  
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for, in no Part of that, is there the least ground for Compassion, as in *Monimia*; nor equal cause for Admiration, as in the nobler Love of *Cleopatra*, or the tempestuous Jealousy of *Roxana*. 'Twas in these Lights, I thought Mrs. *Barry* shone with a much brighter Excellence than in *Cassandra*. She was the first Person whose Merit was distinguished, by the Indulgence of having an annual Benefit-Play, which was granted to her alone, if I mistake not, first in King *James's* time, and which became not common to others, till the Division of this Company, after the Death of King *William's* Queen *Mary*. This great Actress dy'd of a Fever, towards the latter end of Queen *Anne*; the Year I have forgot; but perhaps you will recollect it, by an Expression that fell from her in blank Verse, in her last Hours, when she was delirious, *viz.*

*Ha, ha! and so they make us Lords, by Dozens!*

Mrs. *Betterton*, tho' far avanc'd in Years, was so great a Mistress of Nature, that even Mrs. *Barry*, who acted the *Lady Macbeth* after her, could not in that Part, with all her superior Strength, and Melody of Voice, throw out those quick and careless Strokes of Terror, from the Disorder of a guilty Mind, which the other gave us, with a Facility in her Manner, that render'd them at once tremendous, and delightful. Time could not impair her Skill, tho' he had brought her Person to decay. She was, to the last, the Admiration of all true Judges of Nature, and Lovers of *Shakespear*, in whose Plays she chiefly excell'd, and without a Rival. When she quitted  
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the Stage, several good Actresses were the better for her Instruction. She was a Woman of an unblemish'd, and sober Life; and had the Honour to teach Queen *Anne*, when Princess, the Part of *Semandra* in *Mitbridates*, which she acted at Court in King *Charles's* time. After the Death of Mr. *Betterton*, her Husband, that Princess, when Queen, order'd her a Pension for Life, but she lived not to receive more than the first half Year of it.

Mrs. *Leigh*, the Wife of *Leigh* already mention'd, had a very droll way of dressing the pretty Foibles of superannuated Beauties. She had, in herself, a good deal of Humour, and knew how to infuse it into the affected Mothers, Aunts, and modest stale Maids, that had miss'd their Market; of this sort were the Modish Mother in the *Chances*, affecting to be politely commode, for her own Daughter; the Coquette Prude of an Aunt, in *Sir Courty Nice*, who prides herself in being chaste, and cruel, at Fifty; and the languishing Lady *Wishfort*, in *The Way of the World*: In all these, with many others, she was extremely entertaining, and painted, in a lively manner, the blind Side of Nature.

Mrs. *Butler*, who had her Christian Name of *Charlotte* given her by King *Charles*, was the Daughter of a decayed Knight, and had the Honour of that Prince's Recommendation to the Theatre; a provident Restitution, giving to the Stage in kind, what he had sometimes taken from it: The Publick, at least, was obliged by it; for she prov'd not only a good Actress, but was allow'd in those Days, to sing and dance to great Perfection. In the Dramatick Operas of *Dioclesian*, and that of *King Arthur*, she was a capital,

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and admired Performer. In speaking too, she had a sweet-ton'd Voice, which, with her naturally genteel Air, and sensible Pronunciation, render'd her wholly Mistress of the Amiable, in many serious Characters. In Parts of Humour too she had a manner of blending her assuasive Softness, even with the Gay, the Lively, and the Alluring. Of this she gave an agreeable Instance, in her Action of the (*Villars*) Duke of *Buckingham's* second *Constantia* in the *Chances*. In which, if I should say, I have never seen her exceeded, I might still do no wrong to the late Mrs. *Oldfield's* lively Performance of the same Character. Mrs. *Oldfield's* Fame may spare Mrs. *Butler's* Action this Compliment, without the least Diminution, or Dispute of her Superiority, in Characters of more Moment.

Here I cannot help observing, when there was but one Theatre in *London*, at what unequal Salaries, compar'd to those of later Days, the hired Actors were then held, by the absolute Authority of their frugal Masters, the Patentees; for Mrs. *Butler* had then but Forty Shillings a Week, and could she have obtain'd an Addition of Ten Shillings more (which was refused her) would never have left their Service; but being offer'd her own Conditions, to go with Mr. *Ashbury* to *Dublin* (who was then raising a Company of Actors for that Theatre, where there had been none since the Revolution) her Discontent, here, prevail'd with her to accept of his Offer, and he found his Account in her Value. Were not those Patentees most sagacious Oeconomists, that could lay hold on so notable an Expedient, to lessen their Charge? How gladly, in my time of being a Sharer, would

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we have given four times her Income, to an Actress of equal Merit?

Mrs. *Monfort*, whose second Marriage gave her the Name of *Verbruggen*, was Mistress of more variety of Humour, than I ever knew in any one Woman Actress. This variety too, was attended with an equal Vivacity, which made her excellent in Characters extremely different. As she was naturally a pleasant Mimick, she had the Skill to make that Talent useful on the Stage, a Talent which may be surprizing in a Conversation, and yet be lost when brought to the Theatre, which was the Case of *Estcourt* already mention'd: But where the Elocution is round, distinct, voluble, and various, as Mrs. *Monfort's* was, the Mimick, there, is a great Assistant to the Actor. Nothing, tho' ever so barren, if within the Bounds of Nature, could be flat in her Hands. She gave many heightening Touches to Characters but coldly written, and often made an Author vain of his Work, that in itself had but little Merit. She was so fond of Humour, in what low Part soever to be found, that she would make no scruple of defacing her fair Form, to come heartily into it; for when she was eminent in several desirable Characters of Wit, and Humour, in higher Life, she would be, in as much Fancy, when descending into the antiquated *Abigail*, of *Fletcher*, as when triumphing in all the Airs, and vain Graces of a fine Lady; a Merit, that few Actresses care for. In a Play of *D'urfey's*, now forgotten, call'd, *The Western Lass*, which Part she acted, she transform'd her whole Being, Body, Shape, Voice, Language, Look, and Features, into almost another Animal; with a strong *Devonshire* Dialect,

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a broad laughing Voice, a poking Head, round Shoulders, an unconceiving Eye, and the most be-diz'ning, dowdy Dress, that ever cover'd the untrain'd Limbs of a *Joan Trot*. To have seen her here, you would have thought it impossible the same Creature could ever have been recover'd, to what was as easy to her, the Gay, the Lively, and the Desirable. Nor was her Humour limited, to her Sex; for, while her Shape permitted, she was a more adroit pretty Fellow, than is usually seen upon the Stage: Her easy Air, Action, Mien, and Gesture, quite chang'd from the Quoif, to the cock'd Hat, and Cavalier in fashion. People were so fond of seeing her a Man, that when the Part of *Bays* in the *Rehearsal*, had, for some time, lain dormant, she was desired to take it up, which I have seen her act with all the true, coxcomby Spirit, and Humour, that the Sufficiency of the Character required.

But what found most Employment for her whole various Excellence at once, was the Part of *Melantha*, in *Marriage-Alamode*. *Melantha* is as finish'd an Impertinent, as ever flutter'd in a Drawing-room, and seems to contain the most complete System of Female Foppery, that could possibly be crowded into the tortured Form of a Fine Lady. Her Language, Dress, Motion, Manners, Soul, and Body, are in a continual Hurry to be something more, than is necessary, or commendable. And though I doubt it will be a vain Labour, to offer you a just Likeness of Mrs. *Monfort's* Action, yet the fantastick Impression is still so strong in my Memory, that I cannot help saying something, tho' fantastically, about it. The first ridiculous Airs that break from her, are, up-  
on

on a Gallant, never seen before, who delivers her a Letter from her Father, recommending him to her good Graces, as an honourable Lover. Here now, one would think she might naturally shew a little of the Sex's decent Reserve, tho' never so slightly cover'd! No, Sir; not a Tittle of it; Modesty is the Virtue of a poor-soul'd Country Gentlewoman; she is too much a Court Lady, to be under so vulgar a Confusion; she reads the Letter, therefore, with a careless, dropping Lip, and an erected Brow, humming it hastily over, as if she were impatient to outgo her Father's Commands, by making a compleat Conquest of him at once; and that the Letter might not embarrass her Attack, crack! she crumbles it at once, into her Palm, and pours upon him her whole Artillery of Airs, Eyes and Motion; down goes her dainty, diving Body, to the Ground, as if she were sinking under the conscious Load of her own Attractions; then launches into a Flood of fine Language, and Compliment, still playing her Chest forward in fifty Falls and Risings, like a Swan upon waving Water; and, to complete her Impatience, she is so rapidly fond of her own Wit, that she will not give her Lover Leave to praise it: Silent assenting Bows, and vain Endeavours to speak, are all the share of the Conversation he is admitted to, which, at last, he is relieved from, by her Engagement to half a Score Visits, which she *swims* from him to make, with a Promise to return in a Twinkling.

If this Sketch has Colour enough to give you any near Conception of her, I then need only tell you, that throughout the whole Character, her variety of Humour was every way proportionable;

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as,

as, indeed, in most Parts, that she thought worth her care, or that had the least Matter for her Fancy to work upon, I may justly say, That no Actress, from her own Conception, could have heighten'd them with more lively Strokes of Nature.

I come now to the last, and only living Person, of all those whose Theatrical Characters I have promised you, Mrs. *Bracegirdle*; who, I know, would rather pass her remaining Days forgotten, as an Actress, than to have her Youth recollected in the most favourable Light I am able to place it; yet, as she is essentially necessary to my Theatrical History, and as I only bring her back to the Company of those, with whom she pass'd the Spring and Summer of her Life, I hope it will excuse the Liberty I take, in commemorating the Delight which the Publick received from her Appearance, while she was an Ornament to the Theatre.

Mrs. *Bracegirdle* was now, but just blooming to her Maturity; her Reputation, as an Actress, gradually rising with that of her Person; never any Woman was in such general Favour of her Spectators, which, to the last Scene of her Dramatick Life, she maintain'd, by not being unguarded in her private Character. This Discretion contributed, not a little, to make her the *Cara*, the Darling of the Theatre: For it will be no extravagant thing to say, Scarce an Audience saw her, that were less than half of them Lovers, without a suspected Favourite among them: And tho' she might be said to have been the Universal Passion, and under the highest Temptations; her Constancy in resisting them, served but to increase the Number of her Admirers:  
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And this perhaps you will more easily believe, when I extend not my Encomiums on her Person, beyond a Sincerity that can be suspected; for she had no greater Claim to Beauty, than what the most desirable *Brunette* might pretend to. But her Youth, and lively Aspect, threw out such a Glow of Health, and Chearfulness, that, on the Stage, few Spectators that were not past it, could behold her without Desire. It was even a Fashion among the Gay, and Young, to have a Taste or *Tendre* for Mrs. *Bracegirdle*. She inspired the best Authors to write for her, and two of them, when they gave her a Lover, in a Play, seem'd palpably to plead their own Passions, and make their private Court to her, in fictitious Characters. In all the chief Parts she acted, the Desirable was so predominant, that no Judge could be cold enough to consider, from what other particular Excellence, she became delightful. To speak critically of an Actress, that was extremely good, were as hazardous, as to be positive in one's Opinion of the best Opera Singer. People often judge by Comparison, where there is no Similitude, in the Performance. So that, in this case, we have only Taste to appeal to, and of Taste there can be no disputing. I shall therefore only say of Mrs. *Bracegirdle*, That the most eminent Authors always chose her for their favourite Character, and shall leave that uncontestable Proof of her Merit to its own Value. Yet let me say, there were two very different Characters, in which she acquitted herself with uncommon Applause: If any thing could excuse that desperate Extravagance of Love, that almost frantick Passion of *Lee's Alexander the Great*, it must have been, when Mrs. *Bracegirdle*

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was

was his *Statira*: As when she acted *Millamant*, all the Faults, Follies, and Affectation of that agreeable Tyrant, were venially melted down into so many Charms, and Attractions of a conscious Beauty. In other Characters, where Singing was a necessary Part of them, her Voice and Action gave a Pleasure, which good Sense, in those Days, was not asham'd to give Praise to.

She retir'd from the Stage in the Height of her Favour from the Publick, when most of her Contemporaries, whom she had been bred up with, were declining, in the Year 1710, nor could she be persuaded to return to it, under new Masters, upon the most advantageous Terms, that were offered her; excepting one Day, about a Year after, to assist her good Friend, Mr. *Betterton*, when she play'd *Angelica*, in *Love for Love*, for his Benefit. She has still the Happiness to retain her usual Chearfulness, and to be, without the transitory Charm of Youth, agreeable.

If, in my Account of these memorable Actors, I have not deviated from Truth, which, in the least Article, I am not conscious of, may we not venture to say, They had not their Equals, at any one Time, upon any Theatre in *Europe*? Or, if we confine the Comparison, to that of *France alone*, I believe no other Stage can be much disparag'd, by being left out of the question; which cannot properly be decided, by the single Merit of any one Actor; whether their *Baron* or our *Betterton*, might be the Superior, (take which Side you please) that Point reaches, either way, but to a thirteenth part of what I contend for, viz. That no Stage, at any one Period, could shew thirteen Actors, standing all in equal Lights  
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of Excellence, in their Profession: And I am the bolder, in this Challenge, to any other Nation, because no Theatre having so extended a Variety of natural Characters, as the *English*, can have a Demand for Actors of such various Capacities; why then, where they could not be equally wanted, should we suppose them, at any one time, to have existed?

How imperfect soever this copious Account of them may be, I am not without Hope, at least, it may in some degree shew, what Talents are requisite to make Actors valuable: And if that may any ways inform, or assist the Judgment of future Spectators, it may, as often, be of service to their publick Entertainments; for as their Hearers are, so will Actors be; worse, or better, as the false, or true Taste applauds, or discommends them. Hence only can our Theatres improve, or must degenerate.

There is another Point, relating to the hard Condition of those who write for the Stage, which I would recommend to the Consideration of their Hearers; which is, that the extreme Severity with which they damn a bad Play, seems too terrible a Warning to those whose untried Genius might hereafter give them a good one: Whereas it might be a Temptation, to a latent Author, to make the Experiment, could he be sure that, tho' not approved, his Muse might, at least, be dismiss'd with Decency: But the Vivacity of our modern Criticks, is of late grown so riotous, that an unsuccessful Author has no more Mercy shewn him, than a notorious Cheat, in a Pillory; every Fool, the lowest Member of the Mob, becomes a Wit, and will have a fling at him. They come

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now to a new Play, like Hounds to a Carcase, and are all in a full Cry, sometimes for an Hour together, before the Curtain rises to throw it amongst them. Sure, those Gentlemen cannot but allow, that a Play condemned after a fair Hearing, falls with thrice the Ignominy, as when it is refused that common Justice.

But when their critical Interruptions grow so loud, and of so long a Continuance, that the Attention of quiet People (though not so complete Criticks) is terrify'd, and the Skill of the Actors quite disconcerted by the Tumult, the Play then seems rather to fall by Assassins, than by a lawful Sentence. Is it possible that such Auditors can receive Delight, or think it any Praise to them, to prosecute so injurious, so unmanly a Treatment? And tho' perhaps the Compassionate, on the other side (who know they have as good a Right to clap, and support, as others have to catcall, damn, and destroy,) may oppose this Oppression; their Goodnature, alas! contributes little to the Redress; for in this sort of Civil War, the unhappy Author, like a good Prince, while his Subjects are at mortal Variance, is sure to be a Loser by a Victory on either Side; for still the Commonwealth, his Play, is, during the Conflict, torn to pieces. While this is the Case, while the Theatre is so turbulent a Sea, and so infested with Pirates, what Poetical Merchant, of any Substance, will venture to trade in it? If these valiant Gentlemen pretend to be Lovers of Plays, why will they deter Gentlemen, from giving them such as are fit for Gentlemen to see? In a word, this new Race of Criticks seem to me, like the Lion-Whelps in the *Tower*, who are so boisterously gamesome at their Meals, that they



they dash down the Bowls of Milk, brought for their own Breakfast.

As a good Play is certainly the most rational, and the highest Entertainment, that Human Invention can produce, let that be my Apology (if I need any) for having thus freely deliver'd my Mind, in behalf of those Gentlemen, who, under such calamitous Hazards, may hereafter be reduced to write for the Stage, whose Case I shall compassionate, from the same Motive, that prevail'd on *Dido*, to assist the *Trojans* in Distress.

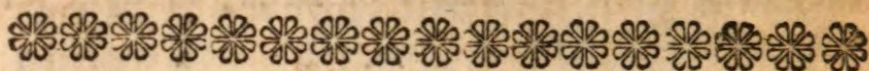
*Non ignara mali miseris succurrere disco.* Virg.

Or, as *Dryden* has it,

*I learn to pity Woes so like my own.*

If those particular Gentlemen have sometimes made me the humbled Object of their Wit, and Humour, their Triumph at least has done me this involuntary Service, that it has driven me a Year or two sooner into a quiet Life, than otherwise, my own want of Judgment might have led me to: I left the Stage, before my Strength left me; and tho' I came to it again, for some few Days, a Year or two after; my Reception there not only turn'd to my Account, but seem'd a fair Invitation, that I would make my Visits more frequent: But, to give over a Winner, can be no very imprudent Resolution.

C H A P.



## C H A P. VI.

*The Author's first Step upon the Stage. His Discouragements. The best Actors in Europe, illus'd. A Revolution, in their Favour. King William grants them a Licence to act in Lincoln's-Inn Fields. The Author's Distress, in being thought a worse Actor than a Poet. Reduc'd to write a Part for himself. His Success. More Remarks, upon Theatrical Action. Some, upon himself.*

**H**AVING given you the State of the Theatre, at my first Admission to it; I am now drawing towards the several Revolutions it suffer'd, in my own Time. But (as you find by the setting out of my History) that I always intended myself the Heroe of it, it may be necessary to let you know me, in my Obscurity, as well as in my higher Light, when I became one of the Theatrical Triumvirat.

The Patentees, who were now Masters of this united, and only Company of Comedians, seem'd to make it a Rule, that no young Persons, desirous to be Actors, should be admitted into Pay under, at least, half a Year's Probation; wisely knowing, that how early soever they might be approv'd of, there could be no great fear of losing them, while they had, then, no other Market to go to. But, alas! Pay was the least of my Concern; the Joy, and Privilege of every Day seeing Plays, for nothing, I thought was a sufficient Con-

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Consideration, for the best of my Services. So that it was no Pain to my Patience, that I waited full three Quarters of a Year, before I was taken into a Sallary of Ten Shillings *per* Week; which, with the Assistance of Food, and Raiment, at my Father's House, I then thought a most plentiful Accession, and myself the happiest of Mortals.

The first Thing that enters into the Head of a young Actor, is that of being a Heroe: In this Ambition I was soon snubb'd, by the Insufficiency of my Voice; to which might be added, an uninform'd meagre Person (tho' then not ill made) with a dismal pale Complexion. Under these Disadvantages, I had but a melancholy Prospect of ever playing a Lover, with Mrs. *Bracegirdle*, which I had flatter'd my Hopes, that my Youth might one Day, have recommended me to. What was most promising in me, then, was the Aptness of my Ear; for I was soon allow'd to speak justly, tho' what was grave and serious, did not equally become me. The first Part, therefore, in which I appear'd, with any glimpse of Success, was the Chaplain in the *Orphan of Otway*. There is in this Character (of one Scene only) a decent Pleasantry, and Sense enough to shew an Audience, whether the Actor has any himself. Here was the first Applause I ever receiv'd, which you may be sure, made my Heart leap with a higher Joy, than may be necessary to describe; and yet my Transport was not then half so high, as at what *Goodman* (who had now left the Stage) said of me, the next Day, in my hearing. *Goodman* often came to a Rehearsal for Amusement, and having fate out the *Orphan*, the Day before; in a Conversation with some of the principal Actors, enquir'd

quir'd what new young Fellow that was, whom he had seen in the Chaplain? Upon which, *Monfort* reply'd, *That's he, behind you.* *Goodman* then turning about, look'd earnestly at me, and, after some Pause, clapping me on the Shoulder, rejoin'd, *If he does not make a good Actor, I'll be d——n'd!* The Surprize of being commended, by one who had been himself so eminent, on the Stage, and in so positive a manner, was more than I could support; in a Word, it almost took away my Breath, and (laugh, if you please) fairly drew Tears from my Eyes! And tho' it may be as ridiculous, as incredible, to tell you what a full Vanity, and Content, at that time possess'd me, I will still make it a Question, whether *Alexander* himself, or *Charles the Twelfth* of Sweden, when at the Head of their first victorious Armies, could feel a greater Transport, in their Bosoms, than I did then in mine, when but in the Rear of this Troop of Comedians. You see, to what low Particulars I am forced to descend, to give you a true Resemblance of the early and lively Follies of my Mind. Let me give you another Instance, of my Discretion, more desperate, than that, of preferring the Stage, to any other Views of Life. One might think, that the Madness of breaking, from the Advice, and Care of Parents, to turn Player, could not easily be exceeded: But what think you, Sir, of —— Matrimony? which, before I was Two-and-twenty, I actually committed, when I had but Twenty Pounds a Year, which my Father had assur'd to me, and Twenty Shillings a Week from my Theatrical Labours, to maintain, as I then thought, the happiest young Couple, that ever took a Leap in the Dark! If  
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after this, to complete my Fortune, I turn'd Poet too, this last Folly, indeed, had something a better Excuse — Necessity : Had it never been my Lot to have come on the Stage, 'tis probable, I might never have been inclin'd, or reduc'd to have wrote for it : But having once expos'd my Person there, I thought it could be no additional Dishonour to let my Parts, whatever they were, take their Fortune along with it. — But, to return to the Progress I made as an Actor.

Queen *Mary* having commanded the *Double Dealer* to be acted, *Kynaston* happen'd to be so ill, that he could not hope to be able next Day to perform his Part of the *Lord Touchwood*. In this Exigence, the Author, Mr. *Congreve*, advis'd that it might be given to me, if at so short a Warning I would undertake it. The Flattery of being thus distinguish'd by so celebrated an Author, and the Honour to act before a Queen, you may be sure, made me blind to whatever Difficulties might attend it. I accepted the Part, and was ready in it before I slept ; next Day the Queen was present at the Play, and was receiv'd with a new Prologue from the Author, spoken by Mrs. *Barry*, humbly acknowledging the great Honour done to the Stage, and to his Play in particular : Two Lines of it, which tho' I have not since read, I still remember.

*But never were in Rome, nor Athens seen,  
So fair a Circle, or so bright a Queen.*

After the Play, Mr. *Congreve* made me the Compliment of saying, That I had not only answer'd, but had exceeded his Expectations, and that he  
would

would shew me he was sincere, by his saying more of me to the Masters. — He was as good as his Word, and the next Pay Day, I found my Sallary, of fifteen, was then advanc'd to twenty Shillings a Week. But alas! this favourable Opinion of Mr. *Congreve*, made no further Impression upon the Judgment of my good Masters; it only serv'd to heighten my own Vanity; but could not recommend me to any new Trials of my Capacity; not a Step farther could I get, till the Company was again divided; when the Desertion of the best Actors left a clear Stage, for younger Champions to mount, and shew their best Pretensions to Favour. But it is now time to enter upon those Facts, that immediately preceded this remarkable Revolution of the Theatre.

You have seen how complete a Set of Actors were under the Government of the united Patents in 1690; if their Gains were not extraordinary, what shall we impute it to, but some extraordinary ill Management? I was then too young to be in their Secrets, and therefore can only observe upon what I saw, and have since thought visibly wrong.

Though the Success of the *Prophetess*, and *King Arthur* (two dramattick Operas, in which the Patentees had embark'd all their Hopes) was, in Appearance, very great, yet their whole Receipts did not so far balance their Expence, as to keep them out of a large Debt, which it was publickly known was, about this time, contracted, and which found Work for the Court of Chancery for about twenty Years following, till one side of the Cause grew weary. But this was not all that was wrong; every Branch of the Theatrical Trade

Trade had been sacrific'd, to the necessary fitting out those tall Ships of Burthen, that were to bring home the *Indies*. Plays of course were neglected, Actors held cheap, and slightly dress'd, while Singers, and Dancers were better paid, and embroider'd. These Measures, of course, created Murmurings, on one side, and Ill-humour and Contempt on the other. When it became necessary therefore to lessen the Charge, a Resolution was taken to begin with the Sallaries of the Actors; and what seem'd to make this Resolution more necessary at that time, was the Loss of *Nokes*, *Monfort*, and *Leigh*, who all dy'd about the same Year: No wonder then, if when these great Pillars were at once remov'd, the Building grew weaker, and the Audiences very much abated. Now in this Distress, what more natural Remedy could be found, than to incite and encourage (tho' with some Hazard) the Industry of the surviving Actors? But the Patentees, it seems, thought the surer way was to bring down their Pay, in proportion to the Fall of their Audiences. To make this Project more feasible, they propos'd to begin at the Head of them, rightly judging, that if the Principals acquiesc'd, their Inferiors would murmur in vain. To bring this about with a better Grace, they under Pretence of bringing younger Actors forwards, order'd several of *Berterton's*, and Mrs. *Barry's* chief Parts to be given to young *Powel*, and Mrs. *Bracegirdle*. In this they committed two palpable Errors; for while the best Actors are in Health, and still on the Stage, the Publick is always apt to be out of humour, when those of a lower Class pretend to stand in their Places; or admitting, at this time, they

they might have been accepted, this Project might very probably have lessen'd, but could not possibly mend an Audience; and was a sure Loss of that Time, in studying, which might have been better employ'd in giving the Auditor Variety, the only Temptation to a pall'd Appetite; and Variety is only to be given by Industry: But Industry will always be lame, when the Actor has Reason to be discontented. This the Patentees did not consider, or pretended not to value, while they thought their Power secure, and uncontrollable: But farther, their first Project did not succeed; for tho' the giddy Head of *Powel*, accepted the Parts of *Betterton*; Mrs. *Bracegirdle* had a different way of thinking, and desir'd to be excus'd, from those of Mrs. *Barry*; her good Sense was not to be misled by the insidious Favour of the Patentees; she knew the Stage was wide enough for her Success, without entering into any such rash, and invidious Competition, with Mrs. *Barry*, and therefore wholly refus'd acting any Part that properly belong'd to her. But this Proceeding, however, was Warning enough to make *Betterton* be upon his Guard, and to alarm others, with Apprehensions of their own Safety, from the Design that was laid against him: *Betterton*, upon this, drew into his Party most of the valuable Actors, who, to secure their Unity, enter'd with him into a sort of Association, to stand, or fall together. All this the Patentees for some time slighted, but when Matters drew towards a Crisis, they found it adviseable to take the same Measures, and accordingly open'd an Association on their part; both which were severally sign'd, as the Interest or Inclination of either Side led them.

During



During these Contentions, which the impolitick Patentees had rais'd against themselves (not only by this I have mentioned, but by many other Grievances, which my Memory retains not) the Actors offer'd a Treaty of Peace; but their Masters imagining no Consequence could shake the Right of their Authority, refus'd all Terms of Accommodation. In the mean time this Dissention was so prejudicial to their daily Affairs, that I remember it was allow'd by both Parties, that before *Christmas*, the Patent had lost the getting of at least a thousand Pounds by it.

My having been a Witness of this unnecessary Rupture, was of great use to me, when many Years after, I came to be a Manager myself. I laid it down as a settled Maxim, that no Company could flourish while the chief Actors, and Undertakers were at variance. I therefore made it a Point, while it was possible, upon tolerable Terms to keep the valuable Actors in humour with their Station; and tho' I was as jealous of their Encroachments, as any of my Co-partners could be, I always guarded against the least Warmth, in my Expostulations with them; not but at the same time they might see, I was perhaps more determin'd in the Question, than those that gave a loose to their Resentment, and when they were cool, were as apt to recede. I do not remember that ever I made a Promise to any, that I did not keep, and therefore was cautious how I made them. This Coolness, tho' it might not please, at least left them nothing to reproach me with; and if Temper, and fair Words could prevent a Disobligation, I was sure never to give Offence or receive it. But as I was but one of  
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three, I could not oblige others to observe the same Conduct. However, by this means, I kept many an unreasonable Discontent, from breaking out, and both Sides found their Account in it.

How a contemptuous and overbearing manner of treating Actors had like to have ruin'd us, in our early Prosperity, shall be shewn in its Place: If future Managers should chance to think my way right, I suppose they will follow it; if not, when they find what happen'd to the Patentees (who chose to disagree with their People) perhaps they may think better of it.

The Patentees then, who by their united Powers, had made a Monopoly of the Stage, and consequently presum'd they might impose what Conditions they pleas'd upon their People, did not consider, that they were all this while endeavouring to enslave a Set of Actors, whom the Publick (more arbitrary than themselves) were inclined to support; nor did they reflect, that the Spectator naturally wish'd, that the Actor, who gave him Delight, might enjoy the Profits arising from his Labour, without regard of what pretended Damage, or Injustice might fall upon his Owners, whose personal Merit the Publick was not so well acquainted with. From this Consideration, then, several Persons of the highest Distinction espous'd their Cause, and sometimes, in the Circle, entertain'd the King with the State of the Theatre. At length their Grievances were laid before the Earl of *Dorset*, then Lord Chamberlain, who took the most effectual Method for their Relief. The Learned of the Law were advis'd with, and they gave their Opinion, that no Patent for acting Plays, &c. could tie up the  
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Hands of a succeeding Prince, from granting the like Authority, where it might be thought proper to trust it. But while this Affair was in Agitation, Queen *Mary* dy'd, which of course occasion'd a Cessation of all publick Diversions. In this melancholy Interim, *Betterton*, and his Adherents, had more Leisure to sollicit their Redress; and the Patentees now finding, that the Party against them was gathering Strength, were reduced to make sure of as good a Company, as the Leavings of *Betterton's* Interest could form; and these, you may be sure, would not lose this Occasion of setting a Price upon their Merit, equal to their own Opinion of it, which was but just double to what they had before. *Powel*, and *Verbruggen*, who had then but forty Shillings a Week, were now raised each of them to four Pounds, and others in Proportion: As for my self, I was then too insignificant to be taken into their Councils, and consequently stood among those of little Importance, like Cattle in a Market, to be sold to the first Bidder. But the Patentees seeming in the greater Distress for Actors, condescended to purchase me. Thus, without any farther Merit, than that of being a scarce Commodity, I was advanc'd to thirty Shillings a Week: Yet our Company was so far from being full, that our Commanders were forced to beat up for Volunteers, in several distant Counties; it was this Occasion that first brought *Johnson* and *Bullock* to the Service of the Theatre-Royal.

Forces being thus raised, and the War declared on both Sides, *Betterton* and his Chiefs had the Honour of an Audience of the *King*, who consider'd them as the only Subjects, whom he had  
not

not yet deliver'd from arbitrary Power; and graciously dismiss'd them, with an Assurance of Relief, and Support. ——— Accordingly a select Number of them were impower'd by his Royal Licence, to act in a separate Theatre, for themselves. This great Point being obtain'd, many People of Quality came into a voluntary Subscription of twenty, and some of forty Guineas a-piece, for erecting a Theatre within the Walls of the Tennis-Court, in *Lincoln's-Inn-Fields*. But as it required Time to fit it up, it gave the Patentees more Leisure to muster their Forces, who notwithstanding were not able to take the Field till the *Easter-Monday* in *April* following. Their first Attempt was a reviv'd Play, call'd *Abdelazar*, or the *Moor's Revenge*, poorly written, by Mrs. *Behn*. The House was very full, but whether it was the Play, or the Actors, that were not approved, the next Day's Audience sunk to nothing. However, we were assured, that let the Audiences be never so low, our Masters would make good all Deficiencies, and so indeed they did, till towards the End of the Season, when Dues to Ballance came too thick upon 'em. But that I may go gradually on with my own Fortune, I must take this Occasion to let you know, by the following Circumstance, how very low my Capacity, as an Actor, was then rated: It was thought necessary, at our Opening, that the Town should be address'd in a new Prologue; but to our great Distress, among several, that were offer'd, not one was judg'd fit to be spoken. This I thought a favourable Occasion, to do myself some remarkable Service, if I should have the good Fortune, to produce one that might be  
accepted.

accepted. The next (memorable) Day my Muse brought forth her first Fruit that was ever made publick; how good, or bad, imports not; my Prologue was accepted, and resolv'd on to be spoken. This Point being gain'd, I began to stand upon Terms, you will say, not unreasonable; which were, that if I might speak it myself, I would expect no farther Reward for my Labour: This was judg'd as bad as having no Prologue at all! You may imagine how hard I thought it, that they durst not trust my poor poetical Brat, to my own Care. But since I found it was to be given into other Hands, I insisted that two Guineas should be the Price of my parting with it; which with a Sigh I received, and *Powel* spoke the Prologue: But every Line, that was applauded, went forely to my Heart, when I reflected, that the same Praise might have been given to my own speaking; nor could the Success of the Author compensate the Distress of the Actor. However, in the End, it serv'd, in some sort, to mend our People's Opinion of me; and whatever the Criticks might think of it, one of the Patentees (who, it is true, knew no Difference between *Dryden* and *D'urfey*) said, upon the Success of it, that insooth! I was an ingenious young Man. This sober Compliment (tho' I could have no Reason to be vain upon it) I thought was a fair Promise to my being in favour. But to Matters of more Moment: Now let us reconnoitre the Enemy.

After we had stolen some few Days March upon them, the Forces of *Betterton* came up with us in terrible Order: In about three Weeks following, the new Theatre was open'd against us, with a veteran Company, and a new Train of Artillery;

Artillery; or in plainer *English*, the old Actors, in *Lincoln's-Inn-Fields* began, with a new Comedy of Mr. *Congreve's*, call'd *Love for Love*; which ran on with such extraordinary Success, that they had seldom occasion to act any other Play, till the End of the Season. This valuable Play had a narrow Escape, from falling into the Hands of the Patentees; for before the Division of the Company, it had been read, and accepted of at the Theatre-Royal: But while the Articles of Agreement for it were preparing, the Rupture, in the Theatrical State, was so far advanced, that the Author took time to pause, before he sign'd them; when finding that all Hopes of Accommodation were impracticable, he thought it adviseable to let it take its Fortune, with those Actors for whom he had first intended the Parts.

Mr. *Congreve* was then in such high Reputation, as an Author, that besides his Profits, from this Play, they offer'd him a whole Share with them, which he accepted; in Consideration of which he oblig'd himself, if his Health permitted, to give them one new Play every Year. *Dryden*, in King *Charles's* Time, had the same Share with the King's Company; but he bound himself to give them two Plays every Season. This you may imagine he could not hold long, and I am apt to think, he might have serv'd them better, with one in a Year, not so hastily written. Mr. *Congreve*, whatever Impediment he met with, was three Years before, in pursuance to his Agreement, he produced the *Mourning Bride*; and if I mistake not, the Interval had been much the same, when he gave them the *Way of the World*. But it came out the stronger, for the Time it cost

him, and to their better support, when they sorely wanted it: For though they went on with Success for a Year or two, and even, when their Affairs were declining, stood in much higher Estimation of the Publick, than their Opponents; yet, in the End, both Sides were great Sufferers by their Separation; the natural Consequence of two Houses, which I have already mention'd in a former Chapter.

The first Error this new Colony of Actors fell into, was their inconsiderately parting with *Williams*, and Mrs. *Monfort*, upon a too nice (not to say severe) Punctilio; in not allowing them to be equal Sharers with the rest; which, before they had acted one Play, occasioned their Return to the Service of the Patentees. As I have called this an Error, I ought to give my Reasons for it. Though the Industry of *Williams* was not equal to his Capacity; for he lov'd his Bottle better than his Business; and though Mrs. *Monfort* was only excellent in Comedy, yet their Merit was too great almost on any Scruples, to be added to the Enemy; and at worst, they were certainly much more above those they would have ranked them with, than they could possibly be under those, they were not admitted to be equal to. Of this Fact there is a poetical Record, in the Prologue to *Love for Love*, where the Author speaking of the, then, happy State of the Stage, observes, that if, in Paradise, when two only were there, they both fell; the Surprize was less, if from so numerous a Body as theirs, there had been any Deserters.

*Abate the Wonder, and the Fault forgive,  
If, in our larger Family, we grieve  
One falling Adam, and one tempted Eve.* }

These Lines alluded to the Revolt of the Persons above mention'd.

Notwithstanding the Acquisition of these two Actors, who were of more Importance, than any of those, to whose Assistance they came, the Affairs of the Patentees were still, in a very creeping Condition; they were now, too late, convinced of their Error, in having provok'd their People to this Civil War of the Theatre: Quite changed, and dismal, now, was the Prospect before them! their Houses thin, and the Town crowding into a new one! Actors at double Sallaries, and not half the usual Audiences, to pay them! And all this brought upon them, by those, whom their full Security had contemn'd, and who were now in a fair way of making their Fortunes, upon the ruined Interest of their Oppressors.

Here, tho' at this time, my Fortune depended on the Success of the Patentees, I cannot help, in regard to Truth, remembering the rude, and riotous Havock we made of all the late dramatic Honours of the Theatre! all became at once the Spoil of Ignorance, and Self-conceit! *Shakespear* was defac'd, and tortured in every signal Character. ——— *Hamlet*, and *Othello*, lost in one Hour all their good Sense, their Dignity, and Fame. *Brutus* and *Cassius* became noisy Blusterers, with bold unmeaning Eyes, mistaken Sentiments, and turgid Elocution! Nothing, sure, could more painfully regret a judicious Spectator, than to see,



at our first setting out, with what rude Confidence, those Habits, which Actors of real Merit had left behind them, were worn by giddy Pretenders that so vulgarly disgraced them! Not young Lawyers in hir'd Robes, and Plumes, at a Masquerade, could be less, what they would seem, or more awkwardly personate the Characters they belong'd to. If, in all these Acts of wanton Waste, these Insults upon injur'd Nature, you observe, I have not yet charged one of them upon myself; it is not from an imaginary Vanity, that I could have avoided them; but that I was rather safe, by being too low, at that time, to be admitted even to my Chance of falling into the same eminent Errors: So that as none of those great Parts ever fell to my Share, I could not be accountable for the Execution of them: Nor indeed could I get one good Part of any kind, till many Months after; unless it were of that sort, which no body else car'd for, or would venture to expose themselves in. The first unintended Favour, therefore, of a Part of any Value, Necessity threw upon me, on the following Occasion.

As it has been always judg'd their natural Interest, where there are two Theatres, to do one another as much Mischief as they can; you may imagine, it could not be long, before this hostile Policy shew'd itself in Action. It happen'd, upon our having Information on a *Saturday* Morning, that the *Tuesday* after, *Hamlet* was intended to be acted at the other House, where it had not yet been seen; our merry managing Actors, (for they were now in a manner left to govern themselves) resolv'd, at any rate to steal a March upon the Enemy, and take Possession of the same Play the

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Day

Day before them: Accordingly, *Hamlet* was given out that Night, to be acted with us on *Monday*. The Notice of this sudden Enterprize, soon reach'd the other House, who, in my Opinion too much regarded it; for they shorten'd their first Orders, and resolv'd that *Hamlet* should to *Hamlet* be opposed, on the same Day; whereas, had they given notice in their Bills, that the same Play would have been acted by them the Day after, the Town would have been in no Doubt, which House they should have reserved themselves for; ours must certainly have been empty, and theirs, with more Honour, have been crowded: Experience, many Years after, in like Cases, has convinced me, that this would have been the more laudable Conduct. But be that as it may; when, in their *Monday's* Bills, it was seen that *Hamlet* was up against us, our Consternation was terrible, to find that so hopeful a Project was frustrated. In this Distress, *Powel*, who was our commanding Officer, and whose enterprising Head wanted nothing but Skill to carry him through the most desperate Attempts; for, like others of his Cast, he had murder'd many a Heroe, only to get into his Cloaths. This *Powel*, I say, immediately called a Council of War; where the Question was, Whether he should fairly face the Enemy, or make a Retreat, to some other Play of more probable Safety? It was soon resolved that to act *Hamlet* against *Hamlet*, would be certainly throwing away the Play, and disgracing themselves to little or no Audience; to conclude, *Powel*, who was vain enough to envy *Betterton*, as his Rival, propos'd to change Plays with them, and that as they had given out the *Old Batchelor*, and had chang'd it for *Hamlet*,

*Hamlet*, against us; we should give up our *Hamlet*, and turn the *Old Batchelor* upon them. This Motion was agreed to, *Nemine contradicente*; but, upon Enquiry, it was found, that there were not two Persons among them, who had ever acted, in that Play: But that Objection, it seems, (though all the Parts were to be study'd in six Hours) was soon got over; *Powel* had an Equivalent, *in petto*, that would ballance any Deficiency on that Score; which was, that he would play the *Old Batchelor* himself, and mimick *Betterton* throughout the whole Part. This happy Thought was approv'd with Delight and Applause, as whatever can be supposed to ridicule Merit, generally gives joy to those that want it: Accordingly, the Bills were chang'd, and at the Bottom inserted,

*The Part of the Old Batchelor, to be perform'd in Imitation of the Original.*

Printed Books of the Play were sent for in haste, and every Actor had one, to pick out of it the Part he had chosen: Thus, while they were each of them chewing the Morsel, they had most mind to, some one happening to cast his Eye over the *Dramatis Personæ*, found that the main Matter was still forgot, that no body had yet been thought of for the Part of Alderman *Fondlewife*. Here we were all aground agen! nor was it to be conceiv'd who could make the least tolerable Shift with it. This Character had been so admirably acted by *Dogget*, that though it is only seen in the Fourth Act, it may be no Dispraise to the Play, to say, it probably ow'd the greatest Part of its Success to his Performance. But, as the Case

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was

was now desperate, any Resource was better than none. Somebody must swallow the bitter Pill, or the Play must die. At last it was recollected, that I had been heard to say in my wild way of talking, what a vast mind I had to play *Nykin*, by which Name the Character was more frequently call'd. Notwithstanding they were thus distress'd about the Disposal of this Part, most of them shook their Heads, at my being mention'd for it; yet *Powel*, who was resolv'd, at all Hazards, to fall upon *Betterton*, and having no concern for what might become of any one that serv'd his Ends or Purpose, order'd me to be sent for; and, as he naturally lov'd to set other People wrong, honestly said, before I came, *If the Fool has a mind to blow himself up, at once, let us ev'n give him a clear Stage for it.* Accordingly, the Part was put into my Hands, between Eleven and Twelve that Morning, which I durst not refuse, because others were as much straitened in time, for Study, as myself. But I had this casual Advantage of most of them; that having so constantly observ'd *Dogget's* Performance, I wanted but little Trouble, to make me perfect in the Words; so that when it came to my turn to rehearse, while others read their Parts, from their Books, I had put mine in my Pocket, and went thro' the first Scene without it; and tho' I was more abash'd to rehearse so remarkable a Part before the Actors (which is natural to most young People) than to act before an Audience, yet some of the better-natur'd encourag'd me so far, as to say, they did not think I should make an ill Figure in it: To conclude, the Curiosity to see *Betterton* mimick'd, drew us a pretty good Audience,

ence, and *Powel*, (as far as Applause is a Proof of it) was allow'd to have burlesqu'd him very well. As I have question'd the certain Value of Applause, I hope I may venture, with less Vanity, to say how particular a Share I had of it, in the same Play. At my first Appearance, one might have imagin'd, by the various Murmurs of the Audience, that they were in doubt whether *Dogget* himself were not return'd, or that they could not conceive what strange Face it could be, that so nearly resembled him; for I had laid the Tint of forty Years, more than my real Age, upon my Features, and, to the most minute placing of an Hair, <sup>one</sup> was dressed exactly like him: When I spoke, the Surprize was still greater, as if I had not only borrow'd his Cloaths, but his Voice too. But tho' that was the least difficult Part of him, to be imitated, they seem'd to allow, I had so much of him, in every other Requisite, that my Applause was, perhaps, more than proportionable: For, whether I had done so much, where so little was expected, or that the Generosity of my Hearers were more than usually zealous, upon so unexpected an Occasion, or from what other Motive such Favour might be pour'd upon me, I cannot say; but, in plain and honest Truth, upon my going off from the first Scene, a much better Actor might have been proud of the Applause, that followed me; after one loud *Plaudit* was ended, and sunk into a general Whisper, that seem'd still to continue their private Approbation, it reviv'd to a second, and again to a third, still louder than the former. If, to all this, I add, that *Dogget* himself was, in the Pit, at the same, it would be too rank Affecta-

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tion, if I should not confess, that, to see him there a Witness of my Reception, was, to me, as consummate a Triumph, as the Heart of Vanity could be indulg'd with. But whatever Vanity I might set upon myself, from this unexpected Success, I found that was no Rule to other People's Judgment of me. There were few or no Parts, of the same kind, to be had; nor could they conceive, from what I had done in this, what other sort of Characters I could be fit for. If I solicited for any thing of a different Nature, I was answered, *That was not in my Way.* And what *was* in my Way, it seems, was not, as yet, resolv'd upon. And though I reply'd, *That I thought any thing, naturally written, ought to be in every one's way that pretended to be an Actor;* this was looked upon as a vain, impracticable Conceit of my own. Yet it is a Conceit, that, in forty Years farther Experience, I have not yet given up; I still think, that a Painter, who can draw but one sort of Object, or an Actor that shines, but in one Light, can neither of them boast of that ample Genius, which is necessary to form a thorough Master of his Art: For tho' Genius may have a particular Inclination, yet a good History-Painter, or a good Actor, will, without being at a loss, give you, upon Demand, a proper Likeness of whatever Nature produces. If he cannot do this, he is only an Actor, as the Shoemaker was allow'd a limited Judge of *Apelles's* Painting, but *not beyond his Last.* Now, tho' to do any one thing well, may have more Merit, than we often meet with; and may be enough, to procure a Man the Name of a good Actor, from the Publick; yet, in my Opinion, it is but still  
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the Name, without the Substance. If his Talent is in such narrow Bounds, that he dares not step out of them, to look upon the Singularities of Mankind, and cannot catch them, in whatever Form they present themselves; if he is not Master of the *Quicquid agunt homines, &c.* in any Shape, Human Nature is fit to be seen in; if he cannot change himself into several distinct Persons, so as to vary his whole Tone of Voice, his Motion, his Look, and Gesture, whether in high, or lower Life, and, at the same time, keep close to those Variations, without leaving the Character they singly belong to; if his best Skill falls short of this Capacity, what Pretence have we to call him a complete Master of his Art? And tho' I do not insist, that he ought always to shew himself, in these various Lights, yet, before we compliment him with that Title, he ought, at least, by some few Proofs, to let us see, that he has them all, in his Power. If I am ask'd, who, ever, arriv'd at this imaginary Excellence, I confess, the Instances are very few; but I will venture to name *Monfort*, as one of them, whose Theatrical Character I have given, in my last Chapter: For, in his Youth, he had acted Low Humour, with great Success, even down to *Tally-boy* in the *Jovial Crew*; and when he was in great Esteem, as a Tragedian, he was, in Comedy, the most complete Gentleman that I ever saw upon the Stage. Let me add too, that *Betterton*, in his declining Age, was as eminent in Sir *John Falstaff*, as in the Vigour of it, in his *Othello*.

While I thus measure the Value of an Actor, by the Variety of Shapes he is able to throw himself into, you may naturally suspect, that I am all

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this

this while, leading my own Theatrical Character into your Favour: Why, really, to speak as an honest Man, I cannot wholly deny it: But in this, I shall endeavour to be no farther partial to myself, than known Facts will make me; from the good, or bad Evidence of which, your better Judgment will condemn, or acquit me. And to shew you, that I will conceal no Truth, that is against me, I frankly own, that had I been always left, to my own Choice of Characters, I am doubtful whether I might ever have deserv'd an equal Share of that Estimation, which the Publick seem'd to have held me in: Nor am I sure, that it was not Vanity in me, often to have suspected, that I was kept out of the Parts, I had most mind to, by the Jealousy, or Prejudice of my Cotemporaries; some Instances of which, I could give you, were they not too slight, to be remember'd: In the mean time, be pleas'd to observe, how slowly, in my younger Days, my Good-fortune came forward.

My early Success in the *Old Bachelor*, of which I have given so full an Account, having open'd no farther way to my Advancement, was enough, perhaps, to have made a young Fellow of more Modesty despair; but being of a Temper not easily dishearten'd, I resolv'd to leave nothing unattempted, that might shew me, in some new Rank of Distinction. Having then no other Resource, I was at last reduc'd to write a Character for myself; but as that was not finish'd till about a Year after, I could not, in the Interim, procure any one Part, that gave me the least Inclination to act it; and consequently such as I got, I perform'd with a proportionable Negligence.



gence. But this Misfortune, if it were one, you are not to wonder at; for the same Fate attended me, more, or less, to the last Days of my remaining on the Stage. What Defect in me, this may have been owing to, I have not yet had Sense enough to find out, but I soon found out as good a thing, which was, never to be mortify'd at it: Though I am afraid this seeming Philosophy was rather owing to my Inclination to Pleasure, than Business. But to my Point. The next Year I produc'd the Comedy of *Love's Last Shift*; yet the Difficulty of getting it to the Stage, was not easily surmounted; for, at that time, as little was expected from me, as an Author, as had been from my Pretensions to be an Actor. However, Mr. *Southern*, the Author of *Oroonoko*, having had the Patience to hear me read it, to him, happened to like it so well, that he immediately recommended it to the Patentees, and it was accordingly acted in *January 1695*. In this Play, I gave myself the Part of *Sir Novelty*, which was thought a good Portrait of the Foppery then in Fashion. Here too, Mr. *Southern*, though he had approv'd my Play, came into the common Diffidence of me, as an Actor: For, when on the first Day of it, I was standing, myself, to prompt the *Prologue*, he took me by the Hand, and said, *Young Man! I pronounce thy Play a good one; I will answer for its Success, if thou dost not spoil it by thy own Action.* Though this might be a fair *Salvo*, for his favourable Judgment of the Play; yet, if it were his real Opinion of me, as an Actor, I had the good Fortune to deceive him: I succeeded so well, in both, that People seem'd at a loss, which they should give the Preference

ference to. But (now let me shew a little more Vanity, and my Apology for it, shall come after) the Compliment which my Lord *Dorset* (then Lord-Chamberlain) made me upon it, is, I own, what I had rather not suppress, *viz. That it was the best, First Play, that any Author in his Memory, had produc'd; and that for a young Fellow, to shew himself such an Actor, and such a Writer, in one Day, was something extraordinary.* But as this noble Lord has been celebrated for his Good-nature, I am contented, that as much of this Compliment should be suppos'd to exceed my Deserts, as may be imagin'd to have been heighten'd, by his generous Inclination to encourage a young Beginner. If this Excuse cannot soften the Vanity of telling a Truth so much, in my own Favour, I must lie, at the Mercy of my Reader. But there was a still higher Compliment pass'd upon me, which I may publish without Vanity, because it was not a design'd one, and apparently came from my Enemies, *viz. That, to their certain Knowledge, it was not my own:* This Report is taken notice of in my Dedication to the Play. If they spoke Truth, if they knew what other Person it really belong'd to, I will, at least allow them true to their Trust; for above forty Years have since past, and they have not yet reveal'd the Secret.

The new Light, in which the Character of Sir *Novelty* had shewn me, one might have thought, were enough, to have dissipated the Doubts, of what I might now, be possibly good for. But to whatever Chance, my Ill-fortune was due; whether I had still, but little Merit, or that the Managers, if I had any, were not competent Judges  
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of it; or whether I was not generally elbow'd, by other Actors (which I am most inclin'd to think the true Cause) when any fresh Parts were to be dispos'd of, not one Part of any consequence was I preferr'd to, till the Year following: Then, indeed, from Sir *John Vanbrugh's* favourable Opinion of me, I began, with others, to have a better of myself: For he not only did me Honour, as an Author, by writing his *Relapse*, as a Sequel, or Second Part, to *Love's Last Shift*; but as an Actor too, by preferring me, to the chief Character in his own Play; (which from Sir *Novelty*) he had ennobled by the Style of Baron of *Foppington*. This Play (the *Relapse*) from its new, and easy Turn of Wit, had great Success, and gave me, as a Comedian, a second Flight of Reputation along with it.

As the Matter I write must be very flat, or impertinent, to those, who have no Taste, or Concern for the Stage; and may to those, who delight in it too, be equally tedious, when I talk of no body but myself; I shall endeavour to relieve your Patience, by a Word or two more of this Gentleman, so far as he lent his Pen to the Support of the Theatre.

Though the *Relapse* was the first Play this agreeable Author produc'd, yet it was not, it seems, the first he had written; for he had at that time, by him, (more than) all the Scenes, that were acted of the *Provok'd Wife*; but being then doubtful, whether he should ever trust them to the Stage, he thought no more of it: But after the Success of the *Relapse*, he was more strongly importun'd, than able, to refuse it to the Publick. Why the last-written Play was first acted, and for what

what Reason they were given to different Stages, what follows, will explain.

In his first Step into publick Life, when he was but an Ensign, and had a Heart above his Income, he happen'd somewhere, at his Winter-Quarters, upon a very slender Acquaintance with Sir *Thomas Skipwith*, to receive a particular Obligation from him, which he had not forgot at the Time I am speaking of: When Sir *Thomas's* Interest, in the Theatrical Patent (for he had a large Share in it, though he little concern'd himself in the Conduct of it) was rising but very slowly, he thought, that to give it a Lift, by a new Comedy, if it succeeded, might be the handsomest Return he could make to those his former Favours; and having observ'd, that in *Love's Last Shift*, most of the Actors had acquitted themselves, beyond what was expected of them; he took a sudden Hint from what he lik'd, in that Play, and in less than three Months, in the beginning of *April* following, brought us the *Relapse* finish'd; but the Season being then too far advanc'd, it was not acted till the succeeding Winter. Upon the Success of the *Relapse*, the late Lord *Hallifax*, who was a great Favourer of *Betterton's* Company, having formerly, by way of Family-Amusement, heard the *Provok'd Wife* read to him, in its looser Sheets, engag'd Sir *John Vanbrugh* to revise it, and give it to the Theatre in *Lincoln's-Inn-Fields*. This was a Request not to be refus'd to so eminent a Patron of the Muses, as the Lord *Hallifax*, who was equally a Friend and Admirer of Sir *John* himself. Nor was Sir *Thomas Skipwith*, in the least disobliged, by so reasonable a Compliance: After which, Sir  
*John*

*John* was agen at liberty, to repeat his Civilities to his Friend, Sir *Thomas*; and about the same time, or not long after, gave us the Comedy of *Æsop*; for his Inclination always led him to serve Sir *Thomas*. Besides, our Company, about this time, began to be look'd upon, in another Light; the late Contempt we had lain under, was now wearing off, and from the Success of two or three new Plays, our Actors, by being Originals in a few good Parts, where they had not the Disadvantage of Comparison against them, sometimes found new Favour, in those old Plays, where others had exceeded them.

Of this Good-fortune, perhaps, I had more than my Share, from the two very different, chief Characters, I had succeeded in; for I was equally approv'd in *Æsop*, as the *Lord Foppington*, allowing the Difference, to be no less, than as Wisdom, in a Person deform'd, may be less entertaining to the general Taste, than Folly and Foppery, finely dress'd: For the Character that delivers Precepts of Wisdom, is, in some sort, severe upon the Auditor, by shewing him one wiser than himself. But when Folly is his Object, he applauds himself, for being wiser than the Coxcomb he laughs at: And who is not more pleas'd with an Occasion to commend, than accuse himself?

Though, to write much, in a little time, is no Excuse for writing ill; yet Sir *John Vanbrugh's* Pen, is not to be a little admir'd, for its Spirit, Ease, and Readiness, in producing Plays so fast, upon the Neck of one another; for, notwithstanding this quick Dispatch, there is a clear and lively Simplicity in his Wit, that neither wants  
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the Ornament of Learning, nor has the least Smell of the Lamp in it. As the Face of a fine Woman, with only her Locks loose, about her, may be then in its greatest Beauty; such were his Productions, only adorn'd by Nature. There is something so catching to the Ear, so easy to the Memory, in all he writ, that it has been observ'd, by all the Actors of my Time, that the Style of no Author whatsoever, gave their Memory less trouble, than that of Sir *John Vanbrugh*; which I myself, who have been charg'd with several of his strongest Characters, can confirm by a pleasing Experience. And indeed his Wit and Humour, was so little labour'd, that his most entertaining Scenes seem'd to be no more, than his common Conversation committed to Paper. Here, I confess my Judgment at a Loss, whether, in this, I give him more, or less, than his due Praise? For may it not be, more laudable, to raise an Estate (whether in Wealth, or Fame) by Pains, and honest Industry, than to be born to it? Yet, if his Scenes really were, as to me they always seem'd, delightful, are they not, thus, expeditiously written, the more surprisng? Let the Wit, and Merit of them, then, be weigh'd by wiser Criticks, than I pretend to be. But no wonder, while his Conceptions were so full of Life, and Humour, his Muse should be sometimes too warm, to wait the slow Pace of Judgment, or to endure the Drudgery, of forming a regular Fable to them: Yet we see the *Relapse*, however imperfect, in the Conduct, by the mere Force of its agreeable Wit, ran away with the Hearts of its Hearers; while *Love's Last Shift*, which (as Mr. *Congreve* justly said of it) had only in it, a  
great

great many things, that were *like* Wit, that in reality were *not* Wit; and what is still less pardonable (as I say of it myself) has a great deal of Puerility, and frothy Stage-Language in it, yet by the mere moral Delight receiv'd from its Fable, it has been, with the other, in a continued, and equal Possession of the Stage, for more than forty Years.

As I have already promis'd you, to refer your Judgment of me, as an Actor, rather to known Facts, than my own Opinion (which, I could not be sure, would keep clear of Self-Partiality) I must a little farther risque my being tedious, to be as good as my Word. I have elsewhere allow'd, that my want of a strong and full Voice, soon cut short my Hopes of making any valuable Figure, in Tragedy; and I have been many Years since, convinced, that whatever Opinion I might have of my own Judgment, or Capacity to amend the palpable Errors, that I saw our Tragedians, most in favour, commit; yet the Auditors, who would have been sensible of any such Amendments (could I have made them) were so very few, that my best Endeavour would have been but an unavailing Labour, or, what is yet worse, might have appeared both to our Actors, and to many Auditors, the vain Mistake of my own Self-Conceit: For so strong, so very near indispensable, is that one Article of Voice, in the forming a good Tragedian, that an Actor may want any other Qualification whatsoever, and yet have a better chance for Applause, than he will ever have, with all the Skill in the World, if his Voice is not equal to it. Mistake me not; I say, for *Applause* only——but Applause does not

not always stay for, nor always follow intrinsic Merit; Applause will frequently open, like a young Hound, upon a wrong Scent; and the Majority of Auditors, you how, are generally compos'd of Babblers, that are profuse of their Voices, before there is any thing on foot, that calls for them: Not but, I grant, to lead, or mislead the Many, will always stand in some Rank of a necessary Merit; yet when I say a good Tragedian, I mean one, in Opinion of whose *real* Merit, the best Judges would agree.

Having so far given up my Pretensions to the Buskin, I ought now to account for my having been, notwithstanding, so often seen, in some particular Characters in Tragedy, as *Iago*, *Wolfey*, *Syphax*, *Richard the Third*, &c. If in any of this kind I have succeeded, perhaps it has been a Merit dearly purchas'd; for, from the Delight I seem'd to take in my performing them, half my Auditors have been persuaded, that a great Share of the Wickedness of them, must have been in my own Nature: If this is true, as true I fear (I had almost said hope) it is, I look upon it rather as a Praise, than Censure of my Performance. Aversion there is an involuntary Commendation, where we are only hated, for being like the thing, we *ought* to be like; a sort of Praise however, which few Actors besides my self could endure: Had it been equal to the usual Praise given to Virtue, my Cotemporaries would have thought themselves injur'd, if I had pretended to any Share of it: So that you see, it has been, as much the Dislike others had to them, as Choice, that has thrown me sometimes into these Characters. But it may be farther observ'd, that in the Characters

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I have nam'd, where there is so much close meditated Mischief, Deceit, Pride, Insolence, or Cruelty, they cannot have the least Cast, or Profer of the Amiable in them; consequently, there can be no great Demand for that harmonious Sound, or pleasing, round Melody of Voice, which in the softer Sentiments of Love, the Wailings of distressful Virtue, or in the Throws and Swellings of Honour, and Ambition, may be needful to recommend them to our Pity, or Admiration: So that again; my want of that requisite Voice might less disqualify me for the vicious, than the virtuous Character. This too may have been a more favourable Reason for my having been chosen for them—A yet farther Consideration, that inclin'd me to them, was, that they are generally better written, thicker sown, with sensible Reflections, and come by so much nearer to common Life, and Nature, than Characters of Admiration, as Vice is more the Practice of Mankind than Virtue: Nor could I sometimes help smiling, at those dainty Actors, that were too squeamish to swallow them! as if they were one Jot the better Men, for acting a good Man well, or another Man the worse, for doing equal Justice to a bad one! 'Tis not, sure, *what* we act, but *how* we act what is allotted us, that speaks our intrinsic Value! as in real Life, the wise Man, or the Fool, be he Prince, or Peasant, will, in either State, be equally the Fool, or the wise Man—But alas! in personated Life, this is no Rule to the Vulgar! they are apt to think all before them real, and rate the Actor according to his borrow'd Vice, or Virtue.

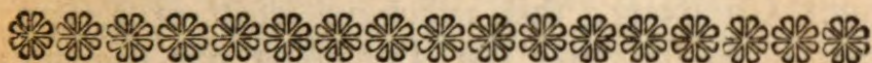
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If then I had always too careless a Concern for false or vulgar Applause, I ought not to complain, if I have had less of it, than others of my time, or not less of it, than I desired: Yet I will venture to say, that from the common, weak Appetite of false Applause, many Actors have run into more Errors, and Absurdities, than their greatest Ignorance could otherwise have committed: If this Charge is true, it will lie chiefly upon the better Judgment of the Spectator to reform it.

But not to make too great a Merit of my avoiding this common Road to Applause, perhaps I was vain enough to think, I had more ways, than one, to come at it. That, in the Variety of Characters I acted, the Chances to win in, were the stronger on my Side—That, if the Multitude were not in a Roar, to see me, in *Cardinal Wolfey*, I could be sure of them in *Alderman Fondlewife*. If they hated me in *Iago*, in *Sir Fopling* they took me for a fine Gentleman; if they were silent at *Syphax*, no *Italian Eunuch* was more applauded than when I sung in *Sir Courtly*. If the Morals of *Æsop* were too grave for them, *Justice Shallow* was as simple, and as merry an old Rake, as the wisest of our young ones could wish me. And though the Terror and Detestation raised by *King Richard*, might be too severe a Delight for them, yet the more gentle and modern Vanities of a Poet *Bays*, or the well-bred Vices of a Lord *Foppington*, were not at all, more than their merry Hearts, or nicer Morals could bear.

These few Instances out of fifty more I could give you, may serve to explain, what sort of Merit,

Merit, I at most pretended to; which was, that I supplied, with Variety, whatever I might want of that particular Skill, wherein others went before me. How this Variety was executed (for by that only is its Value to be rated) you who have so often been my Spectator, are the proper Judge; If you pronounce my Performance to have been defective, I am condemn'd by my own Evidence; if you acquit me, these Out-lines may serve for a Sketch of my Theatrical Character.



## C H A P. VII.

*The State of the Stage continued. The Occasion of Wilks's commencing Actor. His Success. Facts relating to his Theatrical Talent. Actors more or less esteem'd from their private Characters.*

THE *Lincoln's-Inn-Fields* Company were, now in 1693, a Commonwealth, like that of *Holland*, divided from the Tyranny of *Spain*: But the Similitude goes very little farther; short was the Duration of the Theatrical Power! for tho' Success pour'd in so fast upon them, at their first Opening, that every thing seem'd to support it self; yet Experience, in a Year or two shew'd them, that they had never been worse govern'd, than when they govern'd themselves! Many of them began to make their particular Interest more their Point, than that of the general: and tho' some Deference might be had to the Measures,  
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and Advice of *Betterton*, several of them wanted to govern, in their Turn; and were often out of humour, that their Opinion was not equally regarded. — But have we not seen the same Infirmity in Senates? The Tragedians seem'd to think their Rank as much above the Comedians, as in the Characters they severally acted; when the first were in their Finery, the latter were impatient, at the Expence; and look'd upon it, as rather laid out, upon the real, than the fictitious Person of the Actor; nay, I have known, in our own Company, this ridiculous sort of Regret carried so far, that the Tragedian has thought himself injured, when the *Comedian* pretended to wear a fine Coat! I remember *Powel*, upon surveying my first Dress, in the *Relapse*, was out of all temper, and reproach'd our Master in very rude Terms, that he had not so good a Suit to play *Cæsar Borgia* in! tho' he knew, at the same time, my Lord *Foppington* fill'd the House, when his bouncing *Borgia* would do little more than pay Fiddles, and Candles to it: And though a Character of Vanity, might be supposed more expensive in Dress, than possibly one of Ambition; yet the high Heart of this heroical Actor could not bear, that a *Comedian* should ever pretend to be as well dress'd as himself. Thus again on the contrary, when *Betterton* propos'd to set off a Tragedy, the *Comedians* were sure to murmur at the Charge of it: And the late Reputation which *Dogget* had acquired, from acting his *Ben*, in *Love for Love*, made him a more declared Male-content on such Occasions; he over-valued Comedy for its being nearer to Nature, than Tragedy; which is allow'd to say many fine things,

things, that Nature never spoke, in the same Words; and supposing his Opinion were just, yet he should have consider'd, that the Publick had a Taste, as well as himself; which, in Policy, he ought to have complied with. *Dogget* however, could not, with Patience, look upon the costly Trains and Plumes of Tragedy, in which knowing himself to be useless, he thought were all a vain Extravagance: And when he found his Singularity could no longer oppose that Expence, he so obstinately adhered to his own Opinion, that he left the Society of his old Friends, and came over to us at the *Theatre-Royal*: And yet this Actor always set up for a Theatrical Patriot. This happened in the Winter following the first Division of the (only) Company. He came time enough to the *Theatre-Royal*, to act the Part of *Lory*, in the *Relapse*, an arch Valet, quite after the *French* cast, pert and familiar. But it suited so ill with *Dogget's* dry, and closely-natural Manner of acting, that upon the second Day he desired it might be disposed of to another; which the Author complying with, gave it to *Penkethman*; who tho', in other Lights, much his Inferior, yet this Part he seem'd better to become. *Dogget* was so immovable in his Opinion of whatever he thought was right, or wrong, that he could never be easy, under any kind of Theatrical Government; and was generally so warm, in pursuit of his Interest, that he often out-ran it; I remember him three times, for some Years, unemploy'd in any Theatre, from his not being able to bear, in common with others, the disagreeable Accidents, that in such Societies are unavoidable. But whatever Pretences he had form'd for this  
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first deserting, from *Lincoln's-Inn-Fields*, I always thought his best Reason for it, was, that he look'd upon it as a sinking Ship; not only from the melancholy Abatement of their Profits, but likewise from the Neglect, and Disorder in their Government: He plainly saw, that their extraordinary Success at first had made them too confident of its Duration, and from thence had slacken'd their Industry — by which he observ'd, at the same time, the old House, where there was scarce any other Merit than Industry, began to flourish. And indeed they seem'd not enough to consider, that the Appetite of the Publick, like that of a fine Gentleman, could only be kept warm, by Variety; that let their Merit be never so high, yet the Taste of a Town was not always constant, nor infallible: That it was dangerous to hold their Rivals in too much Contempt; for they found, that a young industrious Company were soon a Match, for the best Actors, when too securely negligent: And negligent they certainly were, and fondly fancied, that had each of their different Schemes been follow'd, their Audiences would not so suddenly have fallen off.

But alas! the Vanity of applauded Actors, when they are not crowded to, as they may have been, makes them naturally impute the Change to any Cause, rather than the true one, Satiety: They are mighty loth, to think a Town, once so fond of them, could ever be tired; and yet, at one time, or other, more or less, thin Houses have been the certain Fate of the most prosperous Actors, ever since I remember the Stage! But against this Evil, the provident Patentees had found

found out a Relief, which the new House were not yet Masters of, *viz.* Never to pay their People, when the Money did not come in; nor then neither, but in such Proportions, as suited their Conveniency. I my self was one of the many, who for six acting Weeks together, never received one Day's Pay; and for some Years after, seldom had above half our nominal Sallaries: But to the best of my Memory, the Finances of the other House, held it not above one Season more, before they were reduced to the same Expedient of making the like scanty Payments.

Such was the Distress, and Fortune of both these Companies, since their Division from the *Theatre-Royal*; either working at half Wages, or by alternate Successes, intercepting the Bread from one another's Mouths; irreconcilable Enemies, yet without Hope of Relief, from a Victory on either Side; sometimes both Parties reduced, and yet each supporting their Spirits, by seeing the other under the same Calamity.

During this State of the Stage, it was, that the lowest Expedient was made use of, to ingratiate our Company, in the Publick Favour: Our Master, who had some time practised the Law, and therefore loved a Storm, better than fair Weather (for it was his own Conduct chiefly, that had brought the Patent into these Dangers) took nothing so much to Heart, as that Partiality, wherewith he imagined the People of Quality had preferr'd the Actors of the other House, to those of his own: To ballance this Misfortune, he was resolv'd, at last, to be well with their Domesticks, and therefore cunningly open'd the upper Gallery to them *gratis*: For before this

time no Footman was ever admitted, or had presum'd to come into it, till after the fourth Act was ended: This additional Privilege (the greatest Plague that ever Play-house had to complain of) he conceived would not only incline them, to give us a good Word, in the respective Families they belong'd to, but would naturally incite them, to come all Hands aloft, in the Crack of our Applauses: And indeed it so far succeeded, that it often thunder'd from the full Gallery above, while our thin Pit, and Boxes below, were in the utmost Serenity. This riotous Privilege, so craftily given, and which from Custom, was at last ripen'd into Right, became the most disgraceful Nufance, that ever depreciated the Theatre. How often have the most polite Audiences, in the most affecting Scenes of the best Plays, been disturb'd and insulted, by the Noise and Clamour of these savage Spectators? From the same narrow way of thinking too, were so many ordinary People, and unlick'd Cubs of Condition, admitted behind our Scenes, for Money, and sometimes without it: The Plagues and Inconveniencies of which Custom, we found so intolerable, when we afterwards had the Stage in our Hands, that at the Hazard of our Lives, we were forced to get rid of them; and our only Expedient was, by refusing Money from all Persons, without Distinction, at the Stage-Door; by this means we preserv'd to ourselves the Right and Liberty of chusing our own Company there: And by a strict Observance of this Order, we brought what had been before debas'd into all the Licences of a Lobby, into the Decencies of a Drawing-Room.

About



About the distressful Time I was speaking of, in the Year 1696, *Wilks*, who now had been five Years in great Esteem on the *Dublin* Theatre, return'd to that of *Drury-Lane*; in which last he had first set out, and had continued to act some small Parts, for one Winter only. The considerable Figure which he so lately made upon the Stage in *London*, makes me imagine that a particular Account of his first commencing Actor may not be unacceptable, to the Curious; I shall, therefore, give it them, as I had it, from his own Mouth.

In King *James's* Reign he had been some time employ'd in the Secretary's Office in *Ireland* (his native Country) and remain'd in it, till after the Battle of the *Boyn*, which completed the Revolution. Upon that happy, and unexpected Deliverance, the People of *Dublin*, among the various Expressions of their Joy, had a mind to have a Play; but the Actors being dispersed, during the War, some private Persons agreed, in the best Manner they were able, to give one, to the Publick, *gratis*, at the Theatre. The Play, was *Othello*, in which *Wilks* acted the *Moor*; and the Applause he receiv'd in it, warm'd him to so strong an Inclination for the Stage, that he immediately prefer'd it to all his other Views in Life: for he quitted his Post, and with the first fair Occasion came over, to try his Fortune, in the (then only) Company of Actors in *London*. The Person, who supply'd his Post, in *Dublin*, he told me, rais'd to himself, from thence, a Fortune of fifty thousand Pounds. Here you have a much stronger Instance of an extravagant Passion for the Stage, than that, which I have

elsewhere shewn in myself; I only quitted my *Hopes* of being preferr'd to the like Post, for it; but *Wilks* quitted his actual *Possession*, for the imaginary Happiness, which the Life of an Actor presented to him. And, though possibly, we might both have better'd our Fortunes, in a more honourable Station, yet whether better Fortunes might have equally gratify'd our Vanity (the universal Passion of Mankind) may admit of a Question.

Upon his being formerly received into the *Theatre-Royal* (which was in the Winter after I had been initiated) his Station there was much upon the same Class, with my own; our Parts were generally of an equal Insignificancy, not of consequence enough to give either a Preference: But *Wilks* being more impatient of his low Condition, than I was, (and, indeed, the Company was then so well stock'd with good Actors, that there was very little hope of getting forward) laid hold of a more expeditious way for his advancement, and returned agen to *Dublin*, with Mr. *Ashbury*, the Patentee of that Theatre, to act in his new Company there: There went with him, at the same time, Mrs. *Butler*, whose Character I have already given, and *Estcourt*, who had not appeared on any Stage, and was yet only known as an excellent Mimick: *Wilks* having no Competitor in *Dublin*, was immediately preferr'd to whatever Parts his Inclination led him, and his early Reputation on that Stage, as soon raised, in him, an Ambition to shew himself on a better. And I have heard him say (in Raillery of the Vanity, which young Actors are liable to) that when the News of *Monfort's* Death came  
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to *Ireland*, he from that time thought his Fortune was made, and took a Resolution to return a second time to *England*, with the first Opportunity; but as his Engagements to the Stage, where he was, were too strong to be suddenly broke from, he return'd not to the *Theatre-Royal*, till the Year 1696.

Upon his first Arrival, *Powel*, who was now in Possession of all the chief Parts of *Monfort*, and the only Actor that stood in *Wilks's* way; in seeming Civility, offer'd him his choice of whatever he thought fit to make his first Appearance in; though, in reality, the Favour was intended to hurt him. But *Wilks* rightly judg'd it more modest, to accept only of a Part of *Powel's*, and which *Monfort* had never acted, that of *Palamede* in *Dryden's Marriage A-la-mode*. Here too, he had the Advantage of having the Ball play'd into his Hand, by the inimitable Mrs. *Monfort*, who was then his *Melantha* in the same Play: Whatever Fame *Wilks* had brought with him, from *Ireland*, he as yet appear'd but a very raw Actor, to what he was afterwards allow'd to be: His Faults however, I shall rather leave to the Judgments of those, who then may remember him, than to take upon me the disagreeable Office of being particular upon them, farther than by saying, that in this Part of *Palamede*, he was short of *Powel*, and miss'd a good deal of the loose Humour of the Character, which the other more happily hit. But however, he was young, erect, of a pleasing Aspect, and, in the whole, gave the Town, and the Stage, sufficient Hopes of him. I ought to make some Allowances too, for the Restraint he must naturally have been under,

from his first Appearance upon a new Stage. But from that he soon recovered, and grew daily more in Favour not only of the Town, but likewise of the Patentee whom *Powel*, before *Wilks's* Arrival, had treated, in almost what manner he pleas'd.

Upon this visible Success of *Wilks*, the pretended Contempt, which *Powel* had held him in, began to sour into an open Jealousy; he, now, plainly saw, he was a formidable Rival, and (which more hurt him) saw too, that other People saw it; and therefore found it high time, to oppose, and be troublesome to him. But *Wilks* happening to be as jealous of his Fame, as the other, you may imagine such clashing Candidates could not be long without a Rupture: In short, a Challenge, I very well remember, came from *Powel*, when he was hot-headed; but the next Morning he was cool enough, to let it end in favour of *Wilks*. Yet however the Magnanimity, on either Part, might subside, the Animosity was as deep in the Heart, as ever, tho' it was not afterwards so openly avow'd: For when *Powel* found that intimidating would not carry his Point; but that *Wilks*, when provok'd, would really give Battle, he (*Powel*) grew so out of humour, that he cock'd his Hat, and in his Passion walk'd off, to the Service of the Company, in *Lincoln's-Inn-Fields*. But there, finding more Competitors, and that he made a worse Figure among them, than in the Company he came from, he stay'd but one Winter with them, before he returned to his old Quarters, in *Drury-Lane*; where, after these unsuccessful Pushes of his Ambition, he at last became a Martyr to Negligence,  
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and quietly submitted to the Advantages and Superiority, which (during his late Desertion) *Wilks* had more easily got over him.

However trifling these Theatrical Anecdotes may seem, to a sensible Reader, yet as the different Conduct of these rival Actors may be of use, to others of the same Profession, and from thence may contribute to the Pleasure of the Publick; let that be my Excuse, for pursuing them. I must therefore let it be known, that though in Voice, and Ear, Nature had been more kind to *Powel*, yet he so often lost the Value of them, by an unheedful Confidence; that the constant wakeful Care, and Decency, of *Wilks*, left the other far behind, in the publick Esteem, and Approbation. Nor was his Memory less tenacious than that of *Wilks*; but *Powel* put too much Trust in it, and idly deferr'd the Studying of his Parts, as School-boys do their Excercise, to the last Day; which commonly brings them out proportionably defective. But *Wilks* never lost an Hour of precious Time, and was, in all his Parts, perfect, to such an Exactitude, that I question, if in forty Years, he ever five times chang'd or misplac'd an Article, in any one of them. To be Master of this uncommon Diligence, is adding, to the Gift of Nature, all that is in an Actor's Power; and this Duty of Studying perfect, whatever Actor is remis in, he will proportionably find, that Nature may have been kind to him, in vain: for though *Powel* had an Assurance, that cover'd this Neglect much better, than a Man of more Modesty might have done; yet with all his Intrepidity, very often the Diffidence, and Concern for what he was to *say*, made him lose the Look of what he

was to be: While, therefore, *Powel* presided, his idle Example made this Fault so common to others, that I cannot but confess, in the general Infection, I had my Share of it; nor was my too critical Excuse for it, a good one, *viz.* That scarce one Part, in five, that fell to my Lot, was worth the Labour. But to shew Respect to an Audience, is worth the best Actor's Labour, and, his Business consider'd, he must be a very impudent one that comes before them, with a conscious Negligence of what he is about. But *Wilks* was never known to make any of these venial Distinctions, nor however barren his Part might be, could bear even the Self-Reprouch of favouring his Memory: And I have been astonished, to see him swallow a Volume of Froth, and Insipidity, in a new Play, that we were sure could not live above three Days, tho' favour'd, and recommended to the Stage, by some good Person of Quality. Upon such Occasions, in Compassion to his fruitless Toil, and Labour, I have sometimes cry'd out with *Cato* — *Painful Pre-eminence!* So insupportable, in my Sense, was the Task, when the bare Praise, of not having been negligent, was sure to be the only Reward of it. But so indefatigable was the Diligence of *Wilks*, that he seem'd to love it, as a good Man does Virtue, for its own sake; of which the following Instance will give you an extraordinary Proof.

In some new Comedy, he happen'd to complain of a crabbed Speech in his Part, which, he said, gave him more trouble to study, than all the rest of it had done; upon which, he apply'd to the Author, either to soften, or shorten it.

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The Author, that he might make the Matter quite easy to him, fairly cut it all out. But, when he got home, from the Rehearsal, *Wilks* thought it such an Indignity to his Memory that any thing should be thought too hard for it, that he actually made himself perfect in that Speech, though he knew it was never to be made use of. From this singular Act of Supererogation, you may judge, how indefatigable the Labour of his Memory must have been, when his Profit, and Honour, were more concern'd to make use of it.

But besides this indispensable Quality of Diligence, *Wilks* had the Advantage of a sober Character, in private Life, which *Powel* not having the least Regard to, labour'd under the unhappy Disfavour, not to say, Contempt, of the Publick, to whom his licentious Courses were no Secret: Even when he did well, that natural Prejudice pursu'd him; neither the Heroe, nor the Gentleman; the young *Ammon*, nor the *Dorimant*, could conceal, from the conscious Spectator, the True *George Powel*. And this sort of Disesteem, or Favour, every Actor, will feel, and more, or less, have his Share of, as he *has*, or has *not*, a due Regard to his private Life, and Reputation. Nay, even false Reports shall affect him, and become the Cause, or Pretence at least, of undervaluing, or treating him injuriously. Let me give a known Instance of it, and, at the same time, a Justification of myself, from an Imputation, that was laid upon me, many Years, before I quitted the Theatre, of which you will see the Consequence.

After the vast Success of that new Species of Dramatick Poetry, the *Beggar's Opera*; the  
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Year following, I was so stupid, as to attempt something of the same Kind, upon a quite different Foundation, that of recommending Virtue and Innocence; which I ignorantly thought, might not have a less Pretence to Favour, than setting Greatness, and Authority, in a contemptible, and the most vulgar Vice, and Wickedness, in an amiable Light. But behold how fondly I was mistaken! *Love in a Riddle* (for so my new-fangled Performance was called) was as vilely damn'd, and hooted at, as so vain a Presumption, in the idle Cause of Virtue, could deserve. Yet this is not what I complain of; I will allow my Poetry, to be as much below the other, as Taste, or Criticism, can sink it: I will grant likewise, that the applauded Author of the *Beggar's Opera* (whom I knew to be an honest good-natur'd Man, and who, when he had descended to write more like one, in the Cause of Virtue, had been as unfortunate, as others of that Class;) I will grant, I say, that in his *Beggar's Opera*, he had more skilfully gratify'd the Publick Taste, than all the brightest Authors that ever writ before him; and I have sometimes thought, from the Modesty of his Motto, *Nos hæc novimus esse nihil*, that he gave them that Performance as a Satyr upon the Depravity of their Judgment (as *Ben. Johnson*, of old, was said to give his *Bartholomew-Fair*, in Ridicule of the vulgar Taste, which had disliked his *Sejanus*) and that, by artfully seducing them, to be the Champions, of the Immoralities he himself detested, he should be amply reveng'd on their former Severity, and Ignorance. This were indeed a Triumph! which, even the Author of *Cato*, might have envy'd.

*Cato!*



*Cato!* 'tis true, succeeded, but reach'd not, by full forty Days, the Progress, and Applauses of the *Beggar's Opera*. Will it, however, admit of a Question, which of the two Compositions, a good Writer, would rather wish to have been the Author of? Yet, on the other side, must we not allow, that to have taken a whole Nation, High, and Low, into a general Applause, has shown a Power in Poetry, which though often attempted in the same kind, none but this one Author, could ever yet arrive at? By what Rule, then, are we to judge of our true National Taste? But, to keep a little closer to my Point.

The same Author, the next Year, had, according to the Laws of the Land transported his Heroe to the *West-Indies*, in a Second Part to the *Beggar's Opera*; but so it happen'd, to the Surprize of the Publick, this Second Part was forbid to come upon the Stage! Various were the Speculations, upon this Act of Power: Some thought that the Author, others that the Town, was hardly dealt with; a third sort, who perhaps had envy'd him the Success of his first Part, affirm'd, when it was printed, that, whatever the Intention might be, the Fact was in his Favour, that he had been a greater Gainer, by Subscriptions to his Copy, than he could have been by a bare Theatrical Presentation. Whether any Part of these Opinions were true, I am not concerned to determine, or consider. But how they affected me, I am going to tell you. Soon after this Prohibition, my Performance was to come upon the Stage, at a time, when many People were out of Humour at the late Disappointment, and seem'd willing to lay hold of any Pretence of making

making a Reprizal. Great Umbrage was taken, that I was permitted, to have the whole Town to myself, by this absolute Forbiddance of what, they had more mind to have been entertain'd with. And, some few Days before my Bawble was acted, I was inform'd, that a strong Party would be made against it: This Report I slighted, as not conceiving why it should be true; and when I was afterwards told, what was the pretended Provocation of this Party, I slighted it, still more, as having less Reason to suppose, any Persons could believe me capable (had I had the Power) of giving such a Provocation. The Report, it seems, that had run against me, was this: That, to make way for the Success of my own Play, I had privately found means, or made Interest, that the Second Part of the *Beggar's Opera*, might be suppressed. What an involuntary Compliment did the Reporters of this Falshood make me? to suppose me of Consideration enough to influence a great Officer of State to gratify the Spleen, or Envy of a Comedian, so far as to rob the Publick of an innocent Diversion (if it were such) that none, but that cunning Comedian, might be suffered to give it them: This is so very gross a Supposition, that it needs only its own senseless Face, to confound it; let that alone, then, be my Defence against it. But against blind Malice, and staring Inhumanity, whatever is upon the Stage, has no Defence! There, they knew, I stood helpless, and expos'd, to whatever they might please to load, or asperse me with. I had not consider'd, poor Devil! that, from the Security of a full Pit, Dunces might be Criticks, Cowards valiant, and 'Prentices Gentlemen!

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Whether any such were concern'd in the Murder of my Play, I am not certain; for I never endeavour'd, to discover any one of its Assassins; I cannot afford them a milder Name, from their unmanly manner of destroying it. Had it been heard, they might have left me nothing to say to them: 'Tis true, it faintly held up its wounded Head, a second Day, and would have spoke for Mercy, but was not suffer'd. Not even the Presence of a Royal Heir apparent, could protect it. But then I was reduc'd to be serious with them; their Clamour, then, became an Insolence, which I thought it my Duty, by the Sacrifice of any Interest of my own, to put an end to. I therefore quitted the Actor, for the Author, and, stepping forward to the Pit, told them, *That since I found they were not inclin'd, that this Play should go forward, I gave them my Word, that after this Night, it should never be acted again: But that, in the mean time, I hop'd, they would consider, in whose Presence they were, and for that Reason, at least, would suspend what farther Marks of their Displeasure, they might imagine I had deserved.* At this there was a dead Silence; and, after some little Pause, a few civiliz'd Hands, signify'd their Approbation. When the Play went on, I observ'd about a Dozen Persons, of no extraordinary Appearance, sullenly walk'd out of the Pit. After which, every Scene of it, while uninterrupted, met with more Applause, than my best Hopes had expected. But it came too late: Peace to its *Manes!* I had given my Word it should fall, and I kept it, by giving out another Play, for the next Day, though I knew the Boxes were all lett for the same again. Such, then, was the Treatment

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ment I met with: How much of it, the Errors of the Play might deserve, I refer to the Judgment of those who may have Curiosity, and idle time enough to read it. But if I had no occasion to complain of the Reception it met with, from its *quieted* Audience, sure it can be no great Vanity, to impute its Disgraces chiefly, to that severe Repentment, which a groundless Report of me had inflamed: Yet those Disgraces have left me something to boast of, an Honour preferable, even to the Applause of my Enemies: A noble Lord came behind the Scenes, and told me, from the Box, where he was in waiting, *That what I said, to quiet the Audience, was extremely well taken there; and that I had been commended for it, in a very obliging manner.* Now, though this was the only Tumult, that I have known to have been so effectually appeas'd, these fifty Years, by any thing that could be said to an Audience, in the same Humour, I will not take any great Merit to myself upon it; because when, like me, you will but humbly submit to their doing you all the Mischief they can, they will, at any time, be satisfy'd.

I have mention'd this particular Fact, to inforce what I before observ'd, That the Private Character of an Actor will always, more or less, affect his Publick Performance. And if I suffer'd so much, from the bare *Suspicion* of my having been guilty of a base Action; what should not an Actor expect, that is hardy enough, to think his whole private Character of no consequence? I could offer many more, tho' less severe Instances, of the same Nature. I have seen the most tender Sentiment of Love, in Tragedy, create Laughter, instead of Compassion, when it has been applicable

to the real Engagements of the Person, that utter'd it. I have known good Parts thrown up, from an humble Consciouſness, that something in them, might put an Audience in mind of — what was rather wish'd might be forgotten : Those remarkable Words of *Evadne*, in the *Maid's Tragedy* — *A Maidenhead, Amintor, at my Years?* — have sometimes been a much stronger Jest, for being a true one. But these are Reproaches, which, in all Nations, the Theatre must have been us'd to, unless we could suppose Actors something more, than Human Creatures, void of Faults, or Frailties. 'Tis a Misfortune, at least, not limited to the *English Stage*. I have seen the better-bred Audience, in *Paris*, made merry, even with a modest Expression, when it has come from the Mouth of an Actress, whose private Character it seem'd not to belong to. The Apprehension of these kind of Fleers, from the Witlings of a Pit, has been carry'd so far, in our own Country, that a late valuable Actress (who was conscious her Beauty was not her greatest Merit) desired the Warmth of some Lines might be abated, when they have made her too remarkably handsome : But in this Discretion she was alone, few others were afraid of undeserving the finest things, that could be said, to them. But to consider this Matter seriously, I cannot but think, at a Play, a sensible Author would contribute all he could, to his being well deceiv'd, and not suffer his Imagination, so far to wander, from the well-acted Character before him, as to gratify a frivolous Spleen, by Mocks, or personal Sneers, on the Performer, at the Expence of his  
better

better Entertainment. But I must now take up *Wilks* and *Powel*, again, where I left them.

Though the Contention for Superiority, between them, seem'd about this time, to end in favour of the former, yet the Distress of the Patentee (in having his Servant his Master, as *Powel* had lately been) was not much reliev'd by the Victory; he had only chang'd the Man, but not the Malady: For *Wilks*, by being in Possession of so many good Parts, fell into the common Error of most Actors, that of over-rating their Merit, or never thinking it is so thoroughly consider'd, as it ought to be; which generally makes them proportionably troublesome to the Master; who, they might consider, only pays them, to profit by them. The Patentee therefore, found it as difficult to satisfy the continual Demands of *Wilks*, as it was dangerous to refuse them; very few were made, that were not granted, and as few were granted, as were not grudg'd him: Not but our good Master, was as sly a Tyrant, as ever was at the Head of a Theatre; for he gave the Actors more Liberty, and fewer Days Pay, than any of his Predecessors: He would laugh with them over a Bottle, and bite them, in their Bargains: He kept them poor, that they might not be able to rebel; and sometimes merry, that they might not think of it: All their Articles of Agreement had a Clause in them, that he was sure to creep out at, *viz.* Their respective Sallaries, were to be paid, in such manner, and proportion, as others of the same Company were paid; which in effect, made them all, when he pleas'd, but limited Sharers of Loss, and himself sole Proprietor of Profits; and this Loss, or Profit,

Profit, they only had such verbal Accounts of, as he thought proper to give them. 'Tis true, he would sometimes advance them Money (but not more, than he knew at most could be due to them) upon their Bonds; upon which, whenever they were mutinous, he would threaten to sue them. This was the Net we danc'd in for several Years: But no wonder we were Dupes, while our Master was a Lawyer. This Grievance, however, *Wilks* was resolv'd for himself, at least, to remedy at any rate; and grew daily more intractable, for every Day his Redress was delay'd. Here our Master found himself under a Difficulty, he knew not well how to get out of: For as he was a close subtle Man, he seldom made use of a Confident, in his Schemes of Government: But here the old Expedient of Delay, would stand him in no longer stead; *Wilks* must instantly be comply'd with, or *Powel* come again into Power! In a word, he was push'd so home, that he was reduc'd even to take my Opinion into his Assistance: For he knew I was a Rival to neither of them; perhaps too, he had fancy'd, that from the Success of my first Play, I might know as much of the Stage, and what made an Actor valuable, as either of them: He saw too, that tho' they had each of them five good Parts to my one; yet the Applause which in my few, I had met with, was given me by better Judges, than, as yet, had approv'd of the best they had done. They generally measured the Goodness of a Part, by the Quantity, or Length of it: I thought none bad for being short, that were closely natural; nor any the better, for being long, without that valuable Quality. But, in this, I doubt, as to their Interest, they

they judg'd better, than myself; for I have generally observ'd, that those, who do a great deal not ill, have been preferr'd to those, who do but little, though never so masterly. And therefore I allow, that while there were so few good Parts, and as few good Judges of them, it ought to have been no Wonder to me, that, as an Actor, I was less valued, by the Master, or the common People, than either of them: All the Advantage I had of them, was, that by not being troublesome, I had more of our Master's personal Inclination, than any Actor of the Male Sex; and so much of it, that I was almost the only one, whom at that time, he us'd to take into his Parties of Pleasure; very often *tete à tete*, and sometimes, in a *Partie quarrée*. These then were the Qualifications, however good, or bad, to which may be imputed our Master's having made choice of me, to assist him, in the Difficulty, under which he now labour'd. He was himself sometimes inclin'd to set up *Powel* again as a Check upon the over-bearing Temper of *Wilks*: Tho' to say truth, he lik'd neither of them; but was still under a Necessity, that one of them should preside; tho' he scarce knew which of the two Evils to chuse. This Question, when I happen'd to be alone with him, was often debated in our Evening Conversation; nor indeed, did I find it an easy matter to know which Party I ought to recommend to his Election. I knew they were neither of them Well-wishers to me, as in common they were Enemies to most Actors, in proportion to the Merit, that seem'd to be rising, in them. But as I had the Prosperity of the Stage more at Heart, than any other Consideration, I could not be long undetermined,



mined, in my Opinion, and therefore gave it to  
 our Master, at once, in Favour of *Wilks*. I, with  
 all the Force I could muster, insisted, “ That if  
 “ *Powel* were preferr’d, the ill Example of his  
 “ Negligence, and abandon’d Character (what-  
 “ ever his Merit on the Stage might be) would  
 “ reduce our Company to Contempt, and Beg-  
 “ gary; observing at the same time, in how much  
 “ better Order our Affairs went forward, since  
 “ *Wilks* came among us, of which I recounted  
 “ several Instances, that are not so necessary to  
 “ tire my Reader with. All this, tho’ he allow’d  
 “ to be true; yet *Powel*, he said, was a better  
 “ Actor than *Wilks*, when he minded his Business  
 “ (that is to say, when he was, what he seldom  
 “ was, sober). But *Powel*, it seems, had a still  
 “ greater Merit to him, which was, (as he ob-  
 “ serv’d) that when Affairs were in his Hands,  
 “ he had kept the Actors quiet, without one Day’s  
 “ Pay, for six Weeks together, and it was not  
 “ every body could do that; for you see, said he,  
 “ *Wilks* will never be easy, unless I give him his  
 “ whole Pay, when others have it not, and what  
 “ an Injustice would that be to the rest, if I were  
 “ to comply with him? How do I know, but  
 “ then they may be all, in a Mutiny, and *may-*  
 “ *hap* (that was this Expression) with *Powel* at  
 “ the Head of ’em?” By this Specimen of our  
 Debate, it may be judg’d, under how particular,  
 and merry a Government, the Theatre then la-  
 bour’d. To conclude, this Matter ended in a  
 Resolution, to sign a new Agreement, with *Wilks*,  
 which entitled him, to his full Pay of four Pounds  
 a Week, without any conditional Deductions.  
 How far soever my Advice might have contributed  
 to

to our Master's settling his Affairs upon this Foot, I never durst make the least Merit of it to *Wilks*, well knowing that his great Heart would have taken it as a mortal Affront, had I (tho' never so distantly) hinted, that his Demands had needed any Assistance, but the Justice of them. From this time, then, *Wilks*, became first Minister, or Buffle-master-general of the Company. He, now, seem'd to take new Delight, in keeping the Actors close to their Business; and got every Play reviv'd with Care, in which he had acted the chief Part, in *Dublin*: 'Tis true, this might be done with a particular View of setting off himself to Advantage; but if, at the same time, it served the Company, he ought not to want our Commendation: Now tho' my own Conduct, neither had the Appearance of his Merit, nor the Reward that follow'd his Industry; I cannot help observing, that it shew'd me, to the best of my Power, a more cordial Commonwealth's Man: His first Views, in serving himself, made his Service to the whole but an incidental Merit; whereas, by my prosecuting the Means, to make him easy, in his Pay, unknown to him, or without asking any Favour for myself, at the same time, I gave a more unquestionable Proof of my preferring the Publick, to my Private Interest: From the same Principle I never murmur'd at whatever little Parts fell to my Share, and though I knew it would not recommend me to the Favour of the common People, I often submitted to play wicked Characters, rather than they should be worse done by weaker Actors than myself: But perhaps, in all this Patience under my Situation, I supported my Spirits, by a conscious Vanity: For I fancied I had more Reason to  
value

value myself, upon being sometimes the Confident, and Companion of our Master, than *Wilks* had, in all the more publick Favours he had extorted from him. I imagined too, there was sometimes as much Skill to be shewn, in a short Part, as in the most voluminous, which he generally made choice of; that even the coxcomby Follies of a Sir *John Daw*, might as well distinguish the Capacity of an Actor, as all the dry Enterprizes, and busy Conduct of a *Truewit*. Nor could I have any Reason to repine at the Superiority he enjoy'd, when I consider'd at how dear a Rate it was purchased, at the continual Expence of a restless Jealousy, and fretful Impatience.—These were the Passions, that, in the height of his Successes, kept him lean, to his last Hour, while what I wanted in Rank, or Glory, was amply made up to me, in Ease and Chearfulness. But let not this Observation either lessen his Merit, or lift up my own; since our different Tempers were not, in our Choice, but equally natural, to both of us. To be employ'd on the Stage was the Delight of his Life; to be justly excused from it, was the Joy of mine: I lov'd Ease, and he Pre-eminence: In that, he might be more commendable. Tho' he often disturb'd me, he seldom could do it, without more disordering himself: In our Disputes, his Warmth could less bear Truth, than I could support manifest Injuries: He would hazard our Undoing, to gratify his Passions, tho' otherwise an honest Man; and I rather chose to give up my Reason, or not see my Wrong, than ruin our Community by an equal Rashness. By this opposite Conduct, our Accounts at the End of our Labours, stood thus: While he lived, he was the elder Man, when he died,

died, he was not so old as I am: He never left the Stage, till he left the World; I never so well enjoy'd the World, as when I left the Stage: He died in Possession of his Wishes; and I, by having had a less cholerick Ambition, am still tasting mine, in Health, and Liberty. But, as he in a great measure wore out the Organs of Life, in his incessant Labours, to gratify the Publick, the Many whom he gave Pleasure to, will always owe his Memory a favourable Report.—Some Facts, that will vouch for the Truth of this Account, will be found in the Sequel of these Memoirs. If I have spoke with more Freedom of his quondam Competitor *Powel*, let my good Intentions to future Actors, in shewing what will so much concern them to avoid, be my Excuse for it: For though *Powel* had from Nature, much more than *Wilks*; in Voice, and Ear, in Elocution, in Tragedy, and Humour in Comedy, greatly the Advantage of him; yet, as I have observ'd, from the Neglect, and Abuse of those valuable Gifts, he suffer'd *Wilks* to be of thrice the Service to our Society. Let me give another Instance of the Reward, and Favour which in a Theatre, Diligence, and Sobriety seldom fail of: *Mills* the elder grew into the Friendship of *Wilks*, with not a great deal more, than those useful Qualities to recommend him: He was an honest, quiet, careful Man, of as few Faults, as Excellencies, and *Wilks* rather chose him for his second, in many Plays, than an Actor of perhaps greater Skill, that was not so laboriously diligent. And from this constant Affiduity, *Mills* with making to himself a Friend in *Wilks*, was advanced to a larger Sallary, than any Man-Actor had enjoy'd,  
during

during my time, on the Stage. I have yet to offer a more happy Recommendation of Temperance which a late celebrated Actor was warn'd into by the mis-conduct of *Powel*. About the Year, that *Wilks* returned from *Dublin*, *Booth*, who had commenced Actor, upon that Theatre, came over to the Company, in *Lincoln's-Inn-Fields*: He was then but an Under-graduate of the Buskin, and as he told me himself, had been for some time too frank a Lover of the Bottle; but having had the Happiness to observe into what Contempt, and Distresses *Powel* had plung'd himself by the same Vice, he was so struck with the Terror of his Example, that he fix'd a Resolution (which from that time, to the End of his Days, he strictly observ'd) of utterly reforming it; an uncommon Act of Philosophy in a young Man! of which in his Fame, and Fortune, he afterwards enjoy'd the Reward and Benefit. These Observations I have not merely thrown together as a Moralist, but to prove, that the briskest loose Liver, or intemperate Man (though Morality were out of the Question) can never arrive at the necessary Excellencies of a good, or useful Actor.

C H A P.



## C H A P. VIII.

*The Patentee of Drury-Lane wiser than his Actors. His particular Management. The Author continues to write Plays. Why. The best dramatick Poets censured, by J. Collier, in his Short View of the Stage. It has a good Effect. The Master of the Revels, from that time, cautious, in his licensing new Plays. A Complaint against him. His Authority founded upon Custom only. The late Law for fixing that Authority, in a proper Person, considered.*

**T**HOUGH the Master of our Theatre had no Conception himself of Theatrical Merit, either in Authors, or Actors; yet his Judgment was govern'd by a saving Rule, in both: He look'd into his Receipts for the Value of a Play, and from common Fame he judg'd of his Actors. But by whatever Rule he was govern'd, while he had prudently reserv'd to himself a Power of not paying them more than their Merit could get, he could not be much deceived by their being over, or under-valued. In a word, he had, with great Skill inverted the Constitution of the Stage, and quite changed the Channel of Profits, arising from it; formerly, (when there was but one Company) the Proprietors punctually paid the Actors their appointed Sallaries, and took to themselves only the clear Profits: But our wiser Proprietor, took first out of every Day's Receipts two Shillings in the Pound to himself; and left their

their Sallaries, to be paid, only, as the less, or greater Deficiencies of acting (according to his own Accounts) would permit. What seem'd most extraordinary in these Measures, was, that at the same time, he had persuaded us to be contented with our Condition, upon his assuring us, that as fast as Money would come in, we should all be paid our Arrears: And that we might not have it always in our Power to say he had never intended to keep his Word; I remember in a few Years, after this time, he once paid us nine Days, in one Week: This happen'd, when the *Funeral*, or *Grief à la Mode* was first acted, with more than expected Success. Whether this well-tim'd Bounty was only allow'd us, to save Appearances, I will not say: But if that was his real Motive for it, it was too costly a Frolick to be repeated, and was, at least the only Grimace of its kind he vouchsafed us; we never having received one Day more of those Arrears, in above fifteen Years Service.

While the Actors were in this Condition, I think I may very well be excused, in my presuming to write Plays: which I was forced to do, for the Support of my encreasing Family, my precarious Income, as an Actor, being then too scanty, to supply it, with even the Necessaries of Life.

It may be observable too, that my Muse, and my Spouse were equally prolifick; that the one was seldom the Mother of a Child, but in the same Year the other made me the Father of a Play: I think we had a Dozen of each Sort between us; of both which kinds, some died in their Infancy, and near an equal Number of each were alive, when I quitted the Theatre.—But it is no Wonder, when a Muse is only call'd upon, by

Family Duty, she should not always rejoice, in the Fruit of her Labour: To this Necessity of writing then, I attribute the Defects of my second Play, which coming out too hastily, the Year after my first, turn'd to very little Account. But having got as much, by my first, as I ought to have expected, from the Success of them both, I had no great Reason to complain: Not but, I confess so bad was my second, that I do not chuse to tell you the Name of it; and that it might be peaceably forgotten, I have not given it a Place, in the two Volumes of those I published in Quarto in the Year 1721. And whenever I took upon me, to make some dormant Play of an old Author, to the best of my Judgment, fitter for the Stage, it was honestly, not to be idle, that set me to work; as a good Housewife will mend old Linnen, when she has not better Employment: But when I was more warmly engag'd by a Subject entirely new, I only thought it a good Subject, when it seem'd worthy of an abler Pen, than my own, and might prove as useful to the Hearer, as profitable to myself: Therefore, whatever any of my Productions, might want of Skill, Learning, Wit, or Humour, or however unqualify'd I might be to instruct others, who so ill-govern'd myself: Yet such Plays (entirely my own) were not wanting, at least, in what our most admired Writers seem'd to neglect, and without which, I cannot allow the most taking Play, to be intrinsically good, or to be a Work, upon which a Man of Sense and Probity should value himself: I mean when they do not, as well *prodesse*, as *delectare*, give Profit with Delight! The *Utile Dulci* was, of old, equally the Point; and has



has always been my Aim, however wide of the Mark, I may have shot my Arrow. It has often given me Amazement, that our best Authors of that time, could think the Wit, and Spirit of their Scenes, could be an Excuse for making the Looseness of them publick. The many Instances of their Talents so abused, are too glaring, to need a clofer Comment, and are sometimes too gross to be recited. If then to have avoided this Imputation, or rather to have had the Interest, and Honour of Virtue always in view, can give Merit to a Play; I am contented that my Readers should think such Merit, the All, that mine have to boast of.—Libertines of mere Wit, and Pleasure, may laugh at these grave Laws, that would limit a lively Genius: But every sensible honest Man, conscions of their Truth, and Use, will give these Ralliers Smile for Smile, and shew a due Contempt for their Merriment.

But while our Authors took these extraordinary Liberties with their Wit, I remember the Ladies were then observ'd, to be decently afraid of venturing bare-fac'd to a new Comedy, till they had been assur'd they might do it, without the Risque of an Insult, to their Modesty.—Or, if their Curiosity were too strong, for their Patience, they took Care, at least, to save Appearances, and rarely came upon the first Days of Acting but in Masks, (then daily worn, and admitted in the Pit, the side Boxes, and Gallery) which Custom however, had so many ill Consequences attend ng it, that it has been abolish'd these many Years.

These Immoralities of the Stage, had by an avow'd Indulgence been creeping into it ever since King *Charles* his Time; nothing that was loose

could then be too low for it: *The London Cuckolds*, the most rank Play that ever succeeded, was then in the highest Court-Favour: In this almost general Corruption, *Dryden*, whose Plays were more fam'd for their Wit, than their Chastity, led the way, which he fairly confesses, and endeavours to excuse, in his Epilogue to the *Pilgrim*, reviv'd in 1700 for his Benefit, in his declining Age, and Fortune.—The following Lines of it will make good my Observation.

*Perhaps the Parson stretch'd a Point too far,  
When, with our Theatres, he wag'd a War.  
He tells you, that this very moral Age  
Receiv'd the first Infection from the Stage.  
But sure, a banish'd Court, with Lewdness fraught,  
The Seeds of open Vice returning brought,  
Thus lodg'd (as Vice by great Example thrives)  
It first debauch'd the Daughters, and the Wives.  
London, a fruitful Soil, yet never bore  
So plentiful a Crop of Horns before.  
The Poets, who must live by Courts or starve,  
Were proud, so good a Government to serve.  
And mixing with Buffoons, and Pimps profane,  
Tainted the Stage, for some small snip of Gain.  
For they, like Harlots under Bawds profess,  
Took all th' ungodly Pains, and got the least.  
Thus did the thriving Malady prevail.  
The Court, its Head, the Poets but the Tail.  
The Sin was of our native Growth, 'tis true,  
The Scandal of the Sin was wholly new.  
Messes there were, but modestly conceal'd;  
White-hall the naked Venus first reveal'd.  
Where standing as at Cyprus, in her Shrine,  
The Strumpet was ador'd with Rites divine, &c,  
This*

This Epilogue, and the Prologue, to the same Play, written by *Dryden*, I spoke myself, which not being usually done by the same Person, I have a mind, while I think of it, to let you know on what Occasion they both fell to my Share, and how other Actors were affected by it.

Sir *John Vanbrugh*, who had given some light touches of his Pen to the *Pilgrim*, to assist the Benefit of *Dryden*, had the Disposal of the Parts, and I being then, as an Actor, in some Favour with him, he read the Play first, with me alone, and was pleased to offer me my Choice of what I might like best for myself, in it. But as the chief Characters were not (according to my Taste) the most shining, it was no great Self-denial in me, that I desir'd, he would first take care of those, who were more difficult to be pleas'd; I therefore only chose, for myself, two short incidental Parts, that of *the stuttering Cook*, and *the mad Englishman*. In which homely Characters, I saw more Matter for Delight, than those that might have a better Pretence to the Amiable: And when the Play came to be acted, I was not deceiv'd, in my Choice. Sir *John*, upon my being contented with so little a Share in the Entertainment, gave me the Epilogue to make up my Mess; which being written so much above the Strain of common Authors, I confess, I was not a little pleas'd with. And *Dryden*, upon his hearing me repeat it, to him, made me a farther Compliment of trusting me with the Prologue. This so particular Distinction was looked upon, by the Actors, as something too extraordinary. But no one was so impatiently ruffled at it, as *Wilks*, who seldom chose soft Words, when he spoke of any thing he did

not like. The most gentle thing he said of it was, that he did not understand such Treatment; that for his part he look'd upon it, as an Affront to all the rest of the Company; that there shou'd be but one out of the Whole judg'd fit to speak either a Prologue, or an Epilogue! To quiet him, I offer'd to decline either in his Favour, or both, if it were equally easy to the Author: But he was too much concern'd, to accept of an Offer, that had been made to another in preference to himself; and which he seem'd to think his best way of resenting, was to contemn. But from that time, however, he was resolv'd, to the best of his Power, never to let the first Offer of a Prologue escape him: Which little Ambition sometimes made him pay too dear, for his Success: The Flatness of the many miserable Prologues, that by this means fell to his Lot, seem'd wofully unequal, to the few good ones he might have Reason to triumph in.

I have given you this Fact, only as a Sample of those frequent Rubs, and Impediments I met with, when any Step was made to my being distinguish'd as an Actor; and from this Incident too, you may partly see what occasion'd so many Prologues, after the Death of *Betterton*, to fall into the Hands of one Speaker: But it is not every Successor, to a vacant Post, that brings into it, the Talents, equal to those of a Predecessor. To speak a good Prologue well is, in my Opinion, one of the hardest Parts, and strongest Proofs of sound Elocution, of which, I confess, I never thought, that any of the several who attempted it shew'd themselves, by far, equal Masters to *Betterton*. *Betterton*, in the Delivery of a good Prologue, had a natural Gravity, that gave Strength to good Sense; a tem-

a temper'd Spirit, that gave Life to Wit; and a dry Reserve in his Smile, that threw Ridicule into its brightest Colours. Of these Qualities, in the speaking of a Prologue, *Booth* only had the first, but attain'd not to the other two: *Wilks* had Spirit, but gave too loose a Rein to it, and it was seldom he could speak a grave and weighty Verse harmoniously: His Accents were frequently too sharp, and violent, which sometimes occasion'd his eagerly cutting off half the Sound of Syllables, that ought to have been gently melted into the Melody of Metre: In Verses of Humour too, he would sometimes carry the Mimickry farther than the Hint would bear, even to a trifling Light, as if himself were pleas'd to see it so glittering. In the Truth of this Criticism, I have been confirm'd by those, whose Judgment, I dare more confidently rely on, than my own: *Wilks* had many Excellencies, but if we leave Prologue-Speaking out of the Number, he will still have enough to have made him a valuable Actor. And I only make this Exception, from them, to caution others from imitating, what, in his time, they might have too implicitly admired.—But I have a Word or two more to say concerning the Immoralities of the Stage. Our Theatrical Writers were not only accus'd of Immorality, but Prophaneness; many flagrant Instances of which, were collected and published by a Non-juring Clergyman, *Jeremy Collier*, in his *View of the Stage*, &c. about the Year 1697. However just his Charge against the Authors, that then wrote for it, might be; I cannot but think his Sentence against the Stage itself is unequal; Reformation he thinks too mild a Treatment for it, and is therefore for laying his

Ax to the Root of it: If this were to be a Rule of Judgment, for Offences of the same Nature, what might become of the Pulpit, where many a seditious, and corrupted Teacher has been known, to cover the most pernicious Doctrine, with the Masque of Religion? This puts me in mind of what the noted *Jo. Hains*, the Comedian, a Fellow of a wicked Wit, said upon this Occasion; who being ask'd what could transport Mr. *Collier* into so blind a Zeal for a general Suppression of the Stage, when only some particular Authors had abus'd it? Whereas the Stage, he could not but know, was generally allow'd, when rightly conducted, to be a delightful Method of mending our Morals? "For that Reason, reply'd *Hains*: *Collier* is by Profession a Moral-mender himself, "and two of a Trade, you know, can never "agree."

The Authors of *the Old Batchelor*, and of the *Relapse*, were those, whom *Collier* most labour'd to convict of Immorality; to which they severally publish'd their Reply; the first seem'd too much hurt, to be able to defend himself, and the other felt him so little, that his Wit only laugh'd at his Lashes.

My first Play of the *Fool in Fashion*, too, being then in a Course of Success; perhaps, for that Reason, only, this severe Author thought himself oblig'd to attack it; in which, I hope, he has shewn more Zeal than Justice, his greatest Charge against it is, that it sometimes uses the Word *Faith!* as an Oath, in the Dialogue: But if *Faith* may as well signify our given Word, or Credit, as our religious Belief, why might not his Charity have taken it, in the less criminal Sense? Nevertheless,

theless, Mr. *Collier's* Book, was upon the whole thought so laudable a Work, that King *William*, soon after it was publish'd, granted him a *Nolo Prosequi*, when he stood answerable to the Law, for his having absolved two Criminals, just before they were executed, for High Treason. And it must be farther granted, that his calling our Dramatick Writers to this strict Account, had a very wholesome Effect, upon those, who writ after this time. They were now a great deal more upon their guard; Indecencies were no longer writ; and by degrees the fair Sex came again to fill the Boxes on the first Day of a new Comedy, without Fear or Censure. But the Master of the Revels, who then, licens'd all Plays for the Stage, assisted this Reformation, with a more zealous Severity than ever. He would strike out whole Scenes of a vicious, or immoral Character, tho' it were visibly shewn to be reform'd, or punish'd; a severe Instance of this kind falling upon myself, may be an Excuse for my relating it: When *Richard the Third* (as I alter'd it from *Shakespear*) came from his Hands, to the Stage, he expung'd the whole first Act, without sparing a Line of it. This extraordinary Stroke of a *Sic volo* occasion'd my applying to him, for the small Indulgence of a Speech or two; that the other four Acts might limp on, with a little less Abfurdity! No! he had not leisure to consider what might be separately inoffensive. He had an Objection to the whole Act, and the Reason he gave for it was, that the Distresses of King *Henry the Sixth*, who is kill'd by *Richard* in the first Act, would put weak People too much in mind of King *James* then living in *France*; a notable Proof of his Zeal for the Go-

vernment! Those who have read either the Play, or the History, I dare say, will think he strain'd hard for the Parallel. In a Word, we were forc'd, for some few Years, to let the Play take its Fate; with only four Acts divided into five; by the Loss of so considerable a Limb; may one not modestly suppose, it was robb'd of at least a fifth Part of that Favour, it afterwards met with? For tho' this first Act was at last recovered, and made the Play whole again, yet the Relief came too late to repay me for the Pains I had taken in it. Nor did I ever hear that this zealous Severity of the Master of the Revels was afterwards thought justifiable. But my good Fortune in Proceſs of time, gave me an Opportunity to talk with my Oppressor in my Turn.

The Patent granted by his Majesty King *George* the First, to Sir *Richard Steele*, and his Assigns, of which I was one, made us sole Judges of what Plays might be proper for the Stage, without submitting them to the Approbation, or Licence of any other particular Person. Notwithstanding which, the Master of the Revels demanded his Fee of Forty Shillings, upon our acting a new One, tho' we had spared him the Trouble of perusing it. This occasion'd my being deputed to him, to enquire into the Right of his Demand, and to make an amicable End of our Dispute. I confess, I did not dislike the Office; and told him, according to my Instructions, That I came not to defend, even our own Right, in prejudice to his; that if our Patent, had inadvertently superseded the Grant of any former Power, or Warrant, whereon he might ground his Pretensions, we would not insist upon our Broad Seal, but  
would



would readily answer his Demands upon sight of such his Warrant, any thing in our Patent to the contrary notwithstanding. This I had reason to think he could not do; and, when I found he made no direct Reply to my Question, I repeated it with greater Civilities, and Offers of Compliance, till I was forc'd in the end to conclude, with telling him, That as his Pretensions were not back'd with any visible Instrument of Right, and as his strongest Plea was Custom, we could not so far extend our Complaisance, as to continue his Fees upon so slender a Claim to them: And from that time, neither our Plays, or his Fees, gave either of us any farther trouble. In this Negotiation, I am the bolder to think Justice was on our Side, because the Law lately pass'd, by which the Power of Licensing Plays, &c. is given to a proper Person, is a strong Presumption, that no Law had ever given that Power to any such Person before.

My having mentioned this Law, which so immediately affected the Stage, inclines me to throw out a few Observations upon it: But I must first lead you gradually thro' the Facts, and natural Causes, that made such a Law necessary.

Although it had been taken for granted, from Time immemorial, that no Company of Comedians, could act Plays, &c. without the Royal Licence, or Protection of some legal Authority; a Theatre was, notwithstanding, erected in *Goodman's-Fields*, about seven Years ago, where Plays, without any such Licence, were acted for some time unmolested, and with Impunity. After a Year or two, this Playhouse was thought a Nuisance too near the City: Upon which the Lord-Mayor,

Mayor, and Aldermen, petition'd the Crown to suppress it: What Steps were taken, in favour of that Petition, I know not, but common Fame seem'd to allow from what had, or had not been done in it, that acting Plays in the said Theatre was not evidently unlawful. However, this Question of Acting without a Licence, a little time after, came to a nearer Decision in *Westminster-Hall*; the Occasion of bringing it thither was this: It happened that the Purchasers of the Patent, to whom Mr. *Booth* and Myself had sold our Shares, were at variance with the Comedians, that were then left to their Government, and the Variance ended, in the chief of those Comedians deserting, and setting up for themselves in the little House in the *Hay-Market*, in 1733, by which Desertion the Patentees were very much distressed, and considerable Losers. Their Affairs being in this desperate Condition, they were advis'd, to put the Act of the Twelfth of Queen *Anne*, against Vagabonds, in force, against these Deserters, then acting in the *Hay-Market* without Licence. Accordingly, one of their chief Performers was taken from the Stage, by a Justice of Peace his Warrant, and committed to *Bridewell*, as one within the Penalty of the said Act. When the Legality of this Commitment was disputed in *Westminster-Hall*, by all I could observe, from the learned Pleadings on both Sides (for I had the Curiosity to hear them) it did not appear to me, that the Comedian, so committed, was within the Description of the said Act, he being a Housekeeper, and having a Vote for the *Westminster* Members of Parliament. He was discharged accordingly, and conducted through the Hall, with the Congratulations

gratulations of the Crowds that attended, and wish'd well to his Cause.

The Issue of this Trial threw me, at that time, into a very odd Reflexion, *viz.* That if acting Plays, without Licence, did not make the Performers Vagabonds, unless they wandered from their Habitations so to do, how particular was the Case of Us three late Managing Actors, at the *Theatre-Royal*, who in twenty Years before had paid, upon an Average, at least Twenty Thousand Pounds, to be protected (as Actors) from a Law, that has not since appeared to be against us. Now, whether we might certainly have acted without any Licence at all, I shall not pretend to determine; but this I have, of my own Knowledge, to say, That in Queen *Anne's* Reign, the Stage was in such Confusion, and its Affairs in such Distress, that Sir *John Vanbrugh*, and Mr. *Congreve*, after they had held it about one Year, threw up the Management of it, as an unprofitable Post, after which, a Licence for Acting was not thought worth any Gentleman's asking for, and almost seem'd to go a begging, till some time after, by the Care, Application, and Industry of three Actors, it became so prosperous; and the Profits so considerable, that it created a new Place, and a *Sine-cure* of a Thousand Pounds a Year, which the Labour of those Actors constantly paid, to such Persons as had from time to time, Merit or Interest enough, to get their Names inserted as Fourth Managers in a Licence with them, for acting Plays, &c. a Preferment, that many a Sir *Francis Wronghead* would have jump'd at. But to go on with my Story. This Endeavour of the Patentees, to suppress the Comedians acting in the  
Hay-

*Hay-Market*, proving ineffectual, and no Hopes of a Reunion then appearing, the Remains of the Company left in *Drury-Lane*, were reduced to a very low Condition. At this time a third Purchaser, *Charles Fleetwood*, Esq; stepped in; who judging the best Time to buy was, when the Stock was at the lowest Price, struck up a Bargain at once, for Five Parts in Six of the Patent; and, at the same time, gave the revolted Comedians their own Terms to return, and come under his Government in *Drury-Lane*, where they now continue to act, at very ample Sallaries, as I am informed, in 1738. But (as I have observ'd) the late Cause of the prosecuted Comedian having gone so strongly in his Favour, and the House in *Goodman's-Fields* too, continuing to act with as little Authority, unmolested; these so tolerated Companies gave Encouragement to a broken Wit, to collect a fourth Company, who, for some time acted Plays in the *Hay-Market*, which House the united *Drury-Lane* Comedians had lately quitted: This enterprising Person, I say (whom I do not chuse to name, unless it could be to his Advantage, or that it were of Importance) had Sense enough to know, that the best Plays, with bad Actors, would turn but to a very poor Account; and therefore found it necessary to give the Publick some Pieces of an extraordinary kind, the Poetry of which he conceiv'd ought to be so strong, that the greatest Dunc of an Actor could not spoil it: He knew too, that as he was in haste to get Money, it would take up less time to be intrepidly abusive, than decently entertaining; that, to draw the Mob after him, he must take the Channel, and pelt their Superiors; that, to shew himself somebody, he must

must come up to *Juvenal's* Advice, and stand the  
Consequence :

*Aude aliquid brevibus Gyaris, & carcere dignum  
Si vis esse aliquis* ——— Juv. Sat. I.

Such then, was the mettlesome Modesty he set out with ; upon this Principle he produc'd several frank, and free Farces, that seem'd to knock all Distinctions of Mankind on the Head : Religion, Laws, Government, Priests, Judges, and Ministers, were all laid flat, at the Feet of this *Herculean* Satyrift ! This *Drawcansir* in Wit, that spared neither Friend nor Foe ! who, to make his Poetical Fame immortal, like another *Erostratus*, set Fire to his Stage, by writing up to an Act of Parliament to demolish it. I shall not give the particular Strokes of his Ingenuity a Chance to be remembered, by reciting them ; it may be enough to say, in general Terms, they were so openly flagrant, that the Wisdom of the Legislature thought it high time, to take a proper Notice of them.

Having now shewn, by what means there came to be four Theatres, besides a fifth for Operas, in *London*, all open at the same time, and that while they were so numerous, it was evident some of them must have starv'd, unless they fed upon the Trash and Filth of Buffoonry, and Licentiousness ; I now come, as I promis'd, to speak of that necessary Law, which has reduced their Number, and prevents the Repetition of such Abuses, in those that remain open, for the publick Recreation.

While this Law was in Debate, a lively Spirit, and uncommon Eloquence was employ'd against  
it.

it. It was urg'd, That *one* of the greatest Goods we can enjoy, is *Liberty*. (This we may grant to be an incontestable Truth, without its being the least Objection to this Law.) It was said too, That to bring the Stage under the Restraint of a Licenser, was leading the way to an Attack, upon the Liberty of the Press. This amounts but to a Jealousy at best, which I hope, and believe all honest *Englishmen* have as much Reason to think a groundless, as to fear, it is a just Jealousy: For the Stage, and the Press, I shall endeavour to shew, are very different Weapons to wound with. If a great Man could be no more injured, by being personally ridicul'd, or made contemptible, in a Play, than by the same Matter only printed, and read against him, in a Pamphlet, or the strongest Verse; then indeed the Stage, and the Press might pretend, to be upon an equal Foot of Liberty: But when the wide Difference between these two Liberties comes to be explain'd, and consider'd, I dare say we shall find the Injuries from one, capable of being ten times more severe, and formidable, than from the other: Let us see, at least, if the Case will not be vastly alter'd. Read what Mr. *Collier*, in his *Defence* of his *Short View of the Stage*, &c. Page 25, says to this Point; he sets this Difference, in a clear Light. These are his Words:

“ The Satyr of a Comedian, and another  
 “ Poet have a different effect upon Reputation:  
 “ A Character of Disadvantage, upon the Stage,  
 “ makes a stronger Impression than elsewhere:  
 “ Reading is but Hearing at second-hand; now  
 “ Hearing, at best, is a more languid Convey-  
 “ ance, than Sight. For as *Horace* observes,

*Segnius*

*Segnius irritant animum, demissa per aurem,  
Quam quæ sunt oculis subjecta fidelibus.*

“ The Eye is much more affecting, and strikes  
 “ deeper into the Memory, than the Ear: Be-  
 “ sides, upon the Stage, both the Senses are in  
 “ Conjunction. The Life of the Actor fortifies  
 “ the Object, and awakens the Mind to take  
 “ hold of it. — Thus a dramatic Abuse is ri-  
 “ vetted, in the Audience; a Jest is improv'd into  
 “ Argument, and Rallying grows up into Reason:  
 “ Thus a Character of Scandal becomes almost  
 “ indelible; a Man goes for a Blockhead, upon  
 “ Content, and he that is made a Fool in a Play,  
 “ is often made one for his Life. 'Tis true, he  
 “ passes for such only among the prejudic'd, and  
 “ unthinking; but these are no inconsiderable  
 “ Division of Mankind. For these Reasons, I  
 “ humbly conceive, the Stage stands in need of  
 “ a great deal of Discipline, and Restraint: To  
 “ give them an unlimited Range, is in effect to  
 “ make them Masters of all moral Distinctions,  
 “ and to lay Honour and Religion, at their  
 “ Mercy. To shew Greatness ridiculous, is the  
 “ way to lose the Use, and abate the Value of  
 “ the Quality. Things made little in jest, will  
 “ soon be so in earnest; for Laughing, and  
 “ Esteem, are seldom bestow'd on the same Ob-  
 “ ject.”

If this was Truth, and Reason (as sure it was)  
 forty Years ago; will it not carry the same Con-  
 viction with it to these Days, when there came  
 to be a much stronger Call for a Reformation of  
 the Stage, than when this Author wrote against  
 it,

it, or perhaps than was ever known, since the *English* Stage had a Being? And now let us ask another Question! Does not the general Opinion of Mankind suppose, that the Honour, and Reputation of a Minister is, or ought to be, as dear to him, as his Life? Yet when the Law, in Queen *Anne's* Time, had made even an unsuccessful Attempt upon the Life of a Minister, capital, could any Reason be found, that the Fame, and Honour of his Character should not be under equal Protection? Was the Wound that *Guiscard* gave to the late Lord *Oxford*, when a Minister, a greater Injury, than the Theatrical Insult which was offer'd to a later Minister, in a more valuable Part, his Character? Was it not as high time, then, to take this dangerous Weapon of mimical Insolence, and Defamation out of the Hands of a mad Poet, as to wrest the Knife from the lifted Hand of a Murderer? And is not that Law of a milder Nature, which prevents a Crime, than that which punishes it, after it is committed? May not one think it amazing, that the Liberty of defaming lawful Power and Dignity, should have been so eloquently contended for? or especially that this Liberty ought to triumph in a Theatre, where the most able, the most innocent, and most upright Person, must himself be, while the Wound is given, defenceless? How long must a Man so injur'd, lie bleeding, before the Pain and Anguish of his Fame (if it suffers wrongfully) can be dispell'd? Or say, he had deserv'd Reproof, and publick Accusation, yet the Weight and Greatness of his Office, never can deserve it from a publick Stage, where the lowest Malice by sawcy Parallels, and abusive



abusive Inuendoes, may do every thing but name him: But alas! Liberty is so tender, so chaste a Virgin, that, it seems, not to suffer her to do irreparable Injuries, with Impunity, is a Violation of her! It cannot sure be a Principle of Liberty, that would turn the Stage into a Court of Enquiry, that would let the partial Applauses of a vulgar Audience give Sentence upon the Conduct of Authority, and put Impeachments into the Mouth of a *Harlequin*? Will not every impartial Man think, that Malice, Envy, Faction, and Mis-rule, might have too much Advantage over lawful Power, if the Range of such a Stage-Liberty were unlimited, and insisted on to be enroll'd among the glorious Rights of an *English* Subject?

I remember much such another ancient Liberty, which many of the good People of *England* were once extremely fond of; I mean that of throwing Squibs, and Crackers, at all Spectators without Distinction, upon a Lord-Mayor's Day; but about forty Years ago a certain Nobleman happening to have one of his Eyes burnt out by this mischievous Merriment, it occasion'd a penal Law, to prevent those sorts of Jest, from being laugh'd at for the future: Yet I have never heard, that the most zealous Patriot ever thought such a Law was the least Restraint upon our Liberty.

If I am ask'd, why I am so voluntary a Champion for the Honour of this Law, that has limited the Number of Play-Houses, and which now can no longer concern me, as a Professor of the Stage? I reply, that it being a Law, so nearly relating to the Theatre, it seems not at all foreign to my History, to have taken notice of it; and as I have farther promised, to give the Publick a  
true

true Portrait of my Mind, I ought fairly to let them see how far I am, or am not a Blockhead, when I pretend to talk of serious Matters, that may be judg'd so far above my Capacity: Nor will it in the least discompose me, whether my Observations are contemn'd, or applauded. A Blockhead is not always an unhappy Fellow, and if the World will not flatter us, we can flatter ourselves; perhaps too it will be as difficult to convince us, we are in the wrong, as that you wiser Gentlemen are one Tittle the better for your Knowledge. It is yet a Question, with me, whether we weak Heads have not as much Pleasure too, in giving our shallow Reason a little Exercise, as those clearer Brains have, that are allow'd to dive into the deepest Doubts and Mysteries; to reflect, or form a Judgment upon remarkable things *past*, is as delightful to me, as it is to the gravest Politician to penetrate into what is *present*, or to enter into Speculations upon what is, or is not likely to come. Why are Histories written, if all Men are not to judge of them? Therefore, if my Reader has no more to do, than I have, I have a Chance for his being as willing to have a little more upon the same Subject, as I am to give it him.

When direct Arguments against this Bill were found too weak, Recourse was had to dissuasive ones: It was said, that *this Restraint upon the Stage, would not remedy the Evil complain'd of: That a Play refus'd to be licens'd, would still be printed, with double Advantage, when it should be insinuated, that it was refus'd, for some Strokes of Wit, &c. and would be more likely, then, to have its Effect, among the People.* However natural  
this

this Consequence may seem, I doubt it will be very difficult, to give a *printed* Satyr, or Libel, half the Force, or Credit of an *acted* one. The most artful, or notorious Lye, or strain'd Allusion that ever slander'd a great Man, may be read, by some People, with a Smile of Contempt, or at worst, it can impose but on one Person, at once: but when the Words of the same plausible Stuff, shall be repeated on a Theatre, the Wit of it among a Crowd of Hearers, is liable to be over-valued, and may unite, and warm a whole Body of the Malicious, or Ignorant, into a Plaudit; nay, the partial Claps of only *twenty* ill-minded Persons, among several hundreds of silent Hearers, shall, and often have been, mistaken for a general Approbation, and frequently draw into their Party the Indifferent, or Inapprehensive, who rather, than be thought not to understand the Conceit, will laugh, with the Laughers, and join in the Triumph! But alas! the *quiet* Reader of the same ingenious Matter, can only like for *himself*; and the Poison has a much slower Operation, upon the Body of a People, when it is so retail'd out, than when sold to a full Audience by wholesale. The *single* Reader too may happen to be a sensible, or unprejudiced Person; and then the merry Dose meeting with the Antidote of a sound Judgment, perhaps may have no Operation at all: With such a one, the Wit of the most ingenious Satyr, will only, by its intrinsic Truth, or Value, gain upon his Approbation; or if it be worth an Answer, a printed Falshood, may possibly be confounded by printed Proofs against it. But against Contempt, and Scandal heighten'd, and colour'd by the Skill of an *Actor*, ludicrously infusing it into a Multitude, there is no immediate

Defence

Defence to be made, or equal Reparation to be had for it; for it would be but a poor Satisfaction, at last, after lying long patient, under the Injury, that Time only is to shew (which would probably be the Case) that the Author of it was a desperate Indigent, that did it for Bread. How much less dangerous, or offensive, then, is the *written*, than the *acted* Scandal? The Impression the Comedian gives to it, is a kind of double Stamp upon the Poet's Paper, that raises it to ten times the intrinsic Value. Might we not strengthen this Argument too, even by the Eloquence, that seem'd to have oppos'd this Law? I will say for my self, at least, that when I came to read the printed Arguments against it, I could scarce believe they were the same, that had amaz'd, and rais'd such Admiration, in me, when they had the Advantage of a lively Elocution, and of that Grace and Spirit, which gave Strength and Lustre to them, in the Delivery!

Upon the whole; if the Stage ought ever to have been reform'd; if to place a Power *some-where* of restraining its Immoralities, was not inconsistent, with the Liberties of a civiliz'd People (neither of which, sure any moral Man of Sense can dispute) might it not have shewn a Spirit too poorly prejudiced, to have reject'd so rational a Law, only because, the Honour, and Office of a Minister might happen, in some small Measure, to be protect'd by it.

But however little Weight there may be, in the Observations I have made upon it, I shall for my own part always think them just; unless I should live to see (which I do not expect) some future Set of upright Ministers use their utmost Endeavours to repeal it.

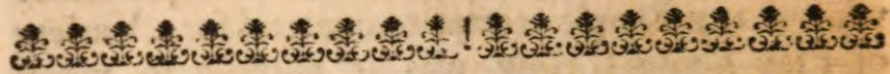
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And now we have seen the Consequence of what many People are apt to contend for, Variety of Play-houses! How was it possible so many could honestly subsist, on what was fit to be seen? Their extraordinary Number, of course, reduc'd them to live upon the Gratification of such Hearers, as they knew would be best pleased with publick Offence; and publick Offence, of what kind soever, will always be a good Reason for making Laws, to restrain it.

To conclude, let us now consider this Law, in a quite different Light; let us leave the political Part of it quite out of the Question; what Advantage could either the Spectators of Plays, or the Masters of Play-houses have gain'd, by its having never been made? How could the same Stock of Plays supply four Theatres, which (without such additional Entertainments, as a Nation of common Sense ought to be ashamed of) could not well support two? Satiety must have been the natural Consequence, of the same Plays being twice as often repeated, as now they need be; and Satiety puts an End to all Tastes, that the Mind of Man can delight in. Had therefore, this Law been made seven Years ago, I should not have parted with my Share in the Patent, under a thousand Pounds more, than I received for it.—So that as far as I am able to judge, both the Publick, as Spectators, and the Patentees, as Undertakers, are, or might be, in a way of being better entertain'd, and more considerable Gainers by it.

I now return to the State of the Stage, where I left it, about the Year 1697, from whence this Pursuit of its Immoralities has led me farther than I first design'd to have follow'd it.

C H A P.



## C H A P. IX.

*A small Apology, for writing on. The different State of the two Companies. Wilks invited over from Dublin. Estcourt, from the same Stage, the Winter following. Mrs. Oldfield's first Admission to the Theatre-Royal. Her Character. The great Theatre in the Hay-Market built, for Betterton's Company. It answers not their Expectation. Some Observations upon it. A Theatrical State Secret.*

I NOW begin to doubt, that the *Gayeté du Cœur*, in which I first undertook this Work, may have drawn me, into a more laborious Amusement, than I shall know how to away with: For though I cannot say, I have yet jaded my Vanity, it is not impossible but, by this time, the most candid of my Readers may want a little Breath; especially, when they consider, that all this Load, I have heap'd upon their Patience, contains but seven Years of the forty-three I pass'd upon the Stage; the History of which Period I have enjoy'd myself to transmit to the Judgment (or Oblivion) of Posterity. However, even my Dulness will find somebody to do it right; if my Reader is an ill-natur'd one, he will be as much pleas'd to find me a Dunce in my old Age, as possibly he may have been, to prove me a brisk Blockhead, in my Youth: But if he has no Gall to gratify, and would (for his simple Amusement) as well know, how the Play houses went on forty Years ago, as  
how

how they do now, I will honestly tell him the rest of my Story, as well as I can. Left therefore the frequent Digressions, that have broke in, upon it, may have entangled his Memory, I must beg leave, just to throw together the Heads of what I have already given him, that he may again recover the Clue of my Discourse.

Let him, then, remember, from the Year 1660 to 1684, the various Fortune of the (then) King's, and Duke's, two famous Companies; their being reduced to one united; the Distinct Characters I have given of thirteen Actors, which in the Year 1690 were the most famous, then, remaining of them; the Cause of their being again divided in 1695, and the Consequences of that Division, till 1697; from whence I shall lead them to our Second Union in —— Hold! let me see —— ay, it was in that memorable Year, when the two Kingdoms of *England* and *Scotland* were made one. And I remember a Particular that confirms me I am right in my Chronology; for the Play of *Hamlet* being acted soon after, *Estcourt*, who then took upon him to say any thing, added a fourth Line to *Shakespear's* Prologue to the Play, in that Play which originally consisted but of three, but *Estcourt* made it run thus:

*For Us, and for our Tragedy,  
Thus stooping to your Clemency,  
[This being a Year of Unity,]  
We beg your Hearing patiently.*

This new Chronological Line coming unexpectedly upon the Audience, was received with Applause, tho' several grave Faces look'd a little out

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of Humour at it. However, by this Fact, it is plain, our Theatrical Union happen'd in 1707. But to speak of it, in its Place, I must go a little back again.

From 1697, to this Union, both Companies went on, without any memorable Change in their Affairs, unless it were that *Betterton's* People (however good in their kind) were most of them too far advanc'd in Years to mend; and tho' we, in *Drury Lane*, were too young to be excellent, we were not too old to be better. But what will not Satiety depreciate? For though I must own, and avow, that in our highest Prosperity, I always thought we were greatly their Inferiors; yet, by our good Fortune of being seen in quite new Lights, which several new-written Plays had shewn us in, we now began to make a considerable Stand against them. One good new Play, to a rising Company is of inconceivable Value. In *Oroonoko* (and why may I not name another, tho' it be my own?) in *Love's Last Shift*, and in the Sequel of it, the *Relapse*; several of our People shew'd themselves in a new Style of Acting, in which Nature had not as yet been seen. I cannot here forget a Misfortune that befel our Society, about this time, by the loss of a young Actor, *Hildebrand Horden*, who was kill'd at the Bar of the *Rose-Tavern*, in a frivolous, rash, accidental Quarrel; for which a late Resident at *Venice*, Colonel *Burges*, and several other Persons of Distinction, took their Tryals, and were acquitted. This young Man had almost every natural Gift, that could promise an excellent Actor; he had besides, a good deal of Table-wit, and Humour, with a handsome Person, and was every Day rising



ing into publick Favour. Before he was bury'd, it was observable, that two or three Days together, several of the Fair Sex, well dress'd, came in Masks (then frequently worn) and some in their own Coaches, to visit this Theatrical Heroe, in his Shrowd. He was the elder Son of Dr. *Horden*, Minister of *Twickenham*, in *Middlesex*. But this Misfortune was soon repair'd, by the Return of *Wilks*, from *Dublin* (who upon this young Man's Death, was sent for over) and liv'd long enough among us to enjoy that Approbation, from which the other was so unhappily cut off. The Winter following, *Estcourt*, the famous Mimick, of whom I have already spoken, had the same Invitation from *Ireland*, where he had commenc'd Actor: His first Part here, at the *Theatre-Royal*, was the *Spanish Friar*, in which, tho' he had remembered every Look and Motion of the late *Tony Leigh*, so far as to put the Spectator very much in mind of him; yet it was visible through the whole, notwithstanding his Exactness in the Out-lines, the true Spirit, that was to fill up the Figure, was not the same, but unskilfully dawb'd on, like a Child's Painting upon the Face of a *Metzo-tinto*: It was too plain to the judicious, that the Conception was not his own, but imprinted in his Memory, by another, of whom he only presented a dead Likeness. But these were Defects, not so obvious to common Spectators; no wonder, therefore, if by his being much sought after, in private Companies, he met with a sort of Indulgence, not to say Partiality, for what he sometimes did upon the Stage.

In the Year 1699, Mrs. *Oldfield* was first taken into the House, where she remain'd about a Twelve-

L 2 month

month almost a Mute, and unheeded, till Sir *John Vanbrugh*, who first recommended her, gave her the Part of *Alinda*, in the *Pilgrim* revis'd. This gentle Character, happily became that want of Confidence which is inseparable from young Beginners, who, without it, seldom arrive to any Excellence: Notwithstanding, I own I was, then, so far deceiv'd in my Opinion of her, that I thought, she had little more than her Person, that appear'd necessary to the forming a good Actress; for she set out with so extraordinary a Diffidence, that it kept her too despondingly down, to a formal, plain (not to say) flat manner of speaking. Nor could the silver Tone of her Voice, till after some time, incline my Ear to any Hope, in her favour. But publick Approbation is the warm Weather of a Theatrical Plant, which will soon bring it forward, to whatever Perfection Nature has design'd it. However Mrs. *Oldfield* (perhaps for want of fresh Parts) seem'd to come but slowly forward, till the Year 1703. Our Company, that Summer, acted at the *Bath*, during the Residence of Queen *Anne* at that Place. At that time it happen'd, that Mrs. *Verbruggen*, by reason of her last Sickness (of which she some few Months after, dy'd) was left in *London*; and tho' most of her Parts were, of course, to be dispos'd of, yet so earnest was the Female Scramble for them, that only one of them fell to the Share of Mrs. *Oldfield*, that of *Leonora*, in *Sir Courtly Nice*; a Character of good plain Sense, but not over elegantly written. It was in this Part Mrs. *Oldfield* surpris'd me into an Opinion of her having all the innate Powers of a good Actress, though they were yet, but in the Bloom of what they promis'd.

Before

Before she had acted this Part, I had so cold an Expectation from her Abilities, that she could scarce prevail with me, to rehearse with her the Scenes, she was chiefly concern'd in, with Sir *Courtly*, which I then acted. However, we ran them over, with a mutual Inadvertency of one another. I seem'd careless, as concluding, that any Assistance I could give her, would be to little, or no purpose; and she mutter'd out her Words in a sort of misty manner, at my low Opinion of her. But when the Play came to be acted, she had a just Occasion to triumph over the Error of my Judgment, by the (almost) Amazement, that her unexpected Performance awak'd me to; so forward, and sudden a Step into Nature, I had never seen; and what made her Performance more valuable, was, that I knew it all proceeded from her own Understanding, untaught, and unassisted by any one more experienc'd Actor. Perhaps it may not be unacceptable, if I enlarge a little more upon the Theatrical Character of so memorable an Actress.

Though this Part of *Leonora* in itself, was of so little value, that when she got more into Esteem, it was one of the several she gave away, to inferior Actresses; yet it was the first (as I have observ'd) that corrected my Judgment of her, and confirm'd me, in a strong Belief, that she could not fail, in a very little time, of being what she was afterwards allow'd to be, the foremost Ornament of our Theatre. Upon this unexpected Sally, then, of the Power, and Disposition, of so unforeseen an Actress, it was, that I again took up the two first Acts of the *Careless Husband*, which I had written the Summer before, and had

L 3

thrown

thrown aside, in despair of having Justice done to the Character of *Lady Betty Modish*, by any one Woman, then among us; Mrs. *Verbruggen* being now in a very declining State of Health, and Mrs. *Bracegirdle* out of my Reach, and engag'd in another Company: But, as I have said, Mrs. *Oldfield* having thrown out such new Proffers of a Genius, I was no longer at a loss for Support; my Doubts were dispell'd, and I had now a new Call to finish it: Accordingly, the *Careless Husband* took its Fate upon the Stage, the Winter following, in 1704. Whatever favourable Reception, this Comedy has met with from the Publick; it would be unjust in me, not to place a large Share of it to the Account of Mrs. *Oldfield*; not only from the uncommon Excellence of her Action; but even from her personal manner of Conversing. There are many Sentiments in the Character of *Lady Betty Modish*, that I may almost say, were originally her own, or only dress'd with a little more care, than when they negligently fell, from her lively Humour: Had her Birth plac'd her in a higher Rank of Life, she had certainly appear'd, in reality, what in this Play she only, excellently, acted, an agreeably gay Woman of Quality, a little too conscious of her natural Attractions. I have often seen her, in private Societies, where Women of the best Rank might have borrow'd some part of her Behaviour, without the least Diminution of their Sense, or Dignity. And this very Morning, where I am now writing at the *Bath*, *November 11, 1738*, the same Words were said of her, by a Lady of Condition, whose better Judgment of her Personal Merit, in that Light, has embolden'd me to repeat them. After her

her Success, in this Character of higher Life; all that Nature had given her of the Actress, seem'd to have risen to its full Perfection: But the Variety of her Power could not be known till she was seen, in variety of Characters; which, as fast as they fell to her, she equally excell'd in. Authors had much more, from her Performance, than they had reason to hope for, from what they had written for her; and none had less than another, but as their Genius in the Parts they allotted her, was more or less elevated.

In the Wearing of her Person, she was particularly fortunate; her Figure was always improving, to her thirty-sixth Year; but her Excellence in acting was never at a Stand: And the last new Character she shone in (*Lady Townly*) was a Proof that she was still able to do more, if more could have been done for *her*. She had one Mark of good Sense, rarely known, in any Actor of either Sex, but herself. I have observ'd several, with promising Dispositions, very desirous of Instruction at their first setting out; but no sooner had they found their least Account, in it, than they were, as desirous of being left to their own Capacity, which they, then, thought would be disgrac'd, by their seeming to want any farther Assistance. But this was not Mrs. *Oldfield's* way of thinking; for to the last Year of her Life, she never undertook any Part she lik'd, without being importunately desirous of having all the Helps in it, that another could possibly give her. By knowing so much herself, she found how much more there was of Nature, yet needful to be known. Yet it was a hard matter to give her any Hint, that she was not able to take, or improve. With all this Me-

L 4

rit,

rit, she was tractable, and less presuming, in her Station, than several, that had not half her Pretensions to be troublesome: But she lost nothing by her easy Conduct; she had every thing she ask'd, which she took care should be always reasonable, because she hated as much to be *grudg'd*, as *deny'd* a Civility. Upon her extraordinary Action in the *Provok'd Husband*, the Managers made her a Present of Fifty Guineas more than her Agreement, which never was more than a verbal one; for they knew she was above deserting them, to engage upon any other Stage, and she was conscious, they would never think it their Interest, to give her cause of Complaint. In the last two Months of her Illness, when she was no longer able to assist them, she declin'd receiving her Sallary, tho' by her Agreement, she was entitled to it. Upon the whole, she was, to the last Scene she acted, the Delight of her Spectators: Why then may we not close her Character, with the same Indulgence with which *Horace* speaks of a commendable Poem:

*Ubi plura nitent — non ego paucis  
Offendor maculis —*

*Where in the whole, such various Beauties shine,  
'Twere idle, upon Errors, to refine.*

What more might be said of her as an Actress may be found in the Preface to the *Provok'd Husband*, to which I refer the Reader.

With the Acquisition, then, of so advanc'd a Comedian as Mrs. *Oldfield*, and the Addition of one so much in Favour as *Wilks*, and by the visible

ble Improvement of our other Actors, as *Penkethman*, *Johnson*, *Bullock*, and I think I may venture to name myself in the Number (but, in what Rank, I leave to the Judgment of those who have been my Spectators) the Reputation of our Company began to get ground; Mrs. *Oldfield*, and Mr *Wilks*, by their frequently playing against one another, in our best Comedies, very happily supported that Humour, and Vivacity, which is so peculiar to our *English* Stage. The *French*, our only modern Competitors, seldom give us their Lovers in such various Lights: In their Comedies (however lively a People they are by nature) their Lovers are generally constant, simple Sighers, both of a Mind, and equally distress'd, about the Difficulties of their coming together; which naturally makes their Conversation so serious, that they are seldom good Company to their Auditors: And tho' I allow them many other Beauties, of which we are too negligent; yet our Variety of Humour has Excellencies that all their valuable Observance of Rules have never yet attain'd to. By these Advantages, then, we began to have an equal Share of the politer sort of Spectators, who, for several Years, could not allow our Company to stand in any comparison, with the other. But Theatrical Favour, like Publick Commerce, will sometimes deceive the best Judgments, by an unaccountable change of its Channel; the best Commodities are not always known to meet with the best Markets. To this Decline of the Old Company, many Accidents might contribute; as the too distant Situation of their Theatre; or their want of a better, for it was not, then in the condition it now is; but small, and poorly fitted up, within the

L 5

Walls

Walls of a Tennis *Quaree* Court, which is of the lesser sort. *Booth*, who was then a young Actor, among them, has often told me of the Difficulties *Betterton*, then, labour'd under, and complain'd of: How impracticable he found it, to keep their Body to that common Order, which was necessary for their Support; of their relying too much upon their intrinsic Merit; and though but few of them were young, even when they first became their own Masters, yet they were all now, ten Years older, and consequently more liable to fall into an inactive Negligence, or were only separately diligent, for themselves, in the sole Regard of their Benefit-Plays; which several of their Principals, knew, at worst, would raise them Contributions, that would more than tolerably subsist them, for the current Year. But as these were too precarious Expedients, to be always depended upon, and brought in nothing to the general Support of the Numbers, who were at Salaries under them; they were reduc'd to have recourse to foreign Novelties; *L' Abbeè*, *Balon*, and *Mademoiselle Subligny*, three of the, then, most famous Dancers of the *French Opera*, were, at several times, brought over at extraordinary Rates, to revive that sickly Appetite, which plain Sense, and Nature had satiated. But alas! there was no recovering to a sound Constitution, by those mere costly Cordials; the Novelty of a Dance was but of a short Duration, and perhaps hurtful, in its Consequence; for it made a Play without a Dance, less endur'd than it had been before, when such Dancing was not to be had. But perhaps, their exhibiting these Novelties, might be owing to the Success we had met with, in our  
more



more barbarous introducing of *French* Mimicks, and Tumblers, the Year before; of which Mr. *Rowe*, thus complains in his Prologue to one of his first Plays:

*Must Shakespear, Fletcher, and laborious Ben,  
Be left for Scaramouch, and Harlequin?*

While the Crowd, therefore, so fluctuated, from one House, to another, as their Eyes were more, or less regaled, than their Ears, it could not be a Question much in Debate, which had the better Actors; the Merit of either, seem'd to be of little moment; and the Complaint in the foregoing Lines, tho' it might be just, for a time, could not be a just one for ever; because the best Play that ever was writ, may tire by being too often repeated, a Misfortune naturally attending the Obligation, to play every Day; not that whenever such Satiety commences, it will be any Proof of the Play's being a bad one, or of its being ill acted. In a word, Satiety is, seldom enough consider'd, by either Criticks, Spectators, or Actors, as the true, not to say just Cause of declining Audiences, to the most rational Entertainments: And tho' I cannot say, I ever saw a good new Play, not attended with due Encouragement, yet to keep a Theatre daily open, without sometimes giving the Publick a bad old one, is more than, I doubt, the Wit of human Writers, or Excellence of Actors, will ever be able to accomplish. And, as both Authors, and Comedians, may have often succeeded, where a sound Judgment would have condemn'd them, it might puzzle the nicest Critick living, to prove in what  
fort

sort of Excellence, the true Value of either consisted: For, if their Merit were to be measur'd by the full Houses, they may have brought; if the Judgment of the Crowd were infallible; I am afraid we shall be reduc'd to allow, that the *Beggars's Opera* was the best-written Play, and Sir *Harry Wildair* (as *Wilks* play'd it) was the best acted Part, that ever our *English* Theatre had to boast of. That Critick indeed, must be rigid, to a Folly, that would deny either of them, their due Praise, when they severally drew such Numbers after them; all their Hearers could not be mistaken; and yet if they were all in the right, what sort of Fame will remain to those celebrated Authors, and Actors, that had so long, and deservedly been admired, before these were in Being. The only Distinction I shall make between them is, That to write, or act, like the Authors, or Actors, of the latter end of the last Century, I am of Opinion, will be found a far better Pretence to Success, than to imitate these who have been so crowded to, in the beginning of this. All I would infer from this Explanation, is, that tho' we had, then, the better Audiences, and might have more of the young World on our Side; yet this was no sure Proof, that the other Company were not, in the Truth of Action, greatly our Superiors. These elder Actors, then, besides the Disadvantages I have mention'd, having only the fewer, true Judges to admire them, naturally wanted the Support of the Crowd, whose Taste was to be pleased at a cheaper Rate, and with coarser Fare. To recover them therefore, to their due Estimation, a new Project was form'd, of building them a stately Theatre, in the *Hay-Market*, by Sir *John Vanbrugh*,  
 for

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for which he raised a Subscription of the best of Quality, at one hundred Pounds each in Consideration whereof every Subscriber, for his Life, was to be admitted, to whatever Entertainments should be publickly perform'd there, without farther Payment for his Entrance. Of this Theatre, I saw the first Stone laid, on which was inscrib'd *The little Whig*, in Honour to a Lady of extraordinary Beauty, then the celebrated Toast, and Pride of that Party.

In the Year 1706, when this House was finish'd, *Betterton*, and his Co-partners dissolved their own Agreement, and threw themselves under the Direction of Sir *John Vanbrugh*, and Mr. *Congreve*; imagining, perhaps, that the Conduct of two such eminent Authors, might give a more prosperous Turn to their Condition; that the Plays, it would, now, be their Interest, to write for them, would soon recover the Town to a true Taste, and be an Advantage, that no other Company could hope for; that in the Interim till such Plays could be written, the Grandeur of their House, as it was a new Spectacle, might allure the Crowd to support them: But if these were their Views, we shall see, that their Dependence upon them, was too sanguine. As to their Prospect of new Plays, I doubt it was not enough consider'd, that good ones were Plants of a slow Growth; and tho' Sir *John Vanbrugh* had a very quick Pen, yet Mr. *Congreve* was too judicious a Writer, to let any thing come hastily out of his Hands: As to their other Dependence, the House they had not yet discover'd, that almost every pro- per Quality, and Convenience of a good Theatre had been sacrificed, or neglected, to shew the Specta-

Spectator a vast, triumphal Piece of Architecture ! And that the best Play, for the Reasons I am going to offer, could not but be under great Disadvantages, and be less capable of delighting the Auditor, here, than it could have been in the plain Theatre they came from. For what could their vast Columns, their gilded Cornices, their immoderate high Roofs avail, when scarce one Word in ten, could be distinctly heard in it? Nor had it, then, the Form, it now stands in, which Necessity, two or three Years after, reduced it to : At the first opening it, the flat Ceiling, that is now over the Orchestre, was then a Semi-oval Arch, that sprung fifteen Feet higher from above the Cornice : The Ceiling over the Pit too, was still more raised, being one level Line from the highest back part of the upper Gallery, to the Front of the Stage : The Front-boxes were a continued Semicircle, to the bare Walls of the House on each Side : This extraordinary, and superfluous Space occasion'd such an Undulation, from the Voice of every Actor, that generally what they said sounded like the Gabbling of so many People, in the lofty Isles in a Cathedral. — The Tone of a Trumpet, or the Swell of an Eunuch's holding Note, 'tis true, might be sweeten'd by it ; but the articulate Sounds of a speaking Voice were drown'd, by the hollow Reverberations of one Word upon another. To this Inconvenience, why may we not add that of its Situation ; for at that time it had not the Advantage of almost a large City, which has since been built, in its Neighbourhood : Those costly Spaces of *Hanover*, *Grosvenor*, and *Cavendish* Squares, with the many, and great adjacent Streets about them, were then  
all

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all but so many green Fields of Pasture  
whence they could draw little, or no Support  
unless it were that of a Milk-Diet. THAT  
the Inns of Court, and the middle Part  
Town, which were the most constant Support of  
a Theatre, and chiefly to be relied on, were now  
too far, out of the Reach of an easy Walk ; and  
Coach-hire is often too hard a Tax, upon the  
Pit, and Gallery. But from the vast Increase of  
the Buildings I have mention'd, the Situation of  
that Theatre has since that Time received con-  
siderable Advantages ; a new World of People of  
Condition are nearer to it, than formerly, and I  
am of Opinion, that if the auditory Part were  
a little more reduced to the Model of that in  
*Drury-Lane*, an excellent Company of Actors  
would, now, find a better Account in it, than in  
any other House in this populous City : Let me  
not be mistaken, I say, an excellent Company,  
and such as might be able to do Justice to the best  
of Plays, and throw out those latent Beauties in  
them, which only excellent Actors can discover,  
and give Life to. If such a Company were now  
there, they would meet with a quite different Set  
of Auditors, than other Theatres have lately been  
used to : Polite Hearers would be content with  
polite Entertainments ; and I remember the time,  
when Plays, without the Aid of Farce, or Pan-  
tomime, were as decently attended as Opera's,  
or private Assemblies, where a noisy Sloven would  
have past his time as uneasily, in a Front-box, as  
in a Drawing-room ; when a Hat upon a Man's  
Head there would have been look'd upon, as a  
sure Mark of a Brute, or a Booby : But of all  
this I have seen too, the Reverse, where in the  
Presence

Presence of Ladies, at a Play, common Civility has been set at Defiance, and the Privilege of being a rude Clown, even to a Nufance, has in a manner been demanded, as one of the Rights of *English* Liberty: Now, though I grant, that Liberty is so precious a Jewel, that we ought not to suffer the least Ray of its Lustre, to be diminish'd; yet methinks the Liberty of seeing a Play, in quiet, has as laudable a Claim to Protection, as the Privilege of not suffering you to do it, has to Impunity. But since we are so happy, as not to have a certain Power among us, which, in another Country, is call'd the *Police*, let us rather bear this Insult, than buy its Remedy at too dear a Rate, and let it be the Punishment of such wrong-headed Savages, that they never will, or can know the true Value of that Liberty, which they so stupidly abuse: Such vulgar Minds possess their Liberty, as profligate Husbands do fine Wives, only to disgrace them. In a Word, when Liberty boils over, such is the Scum of it. But to our new erected Theatre.

Not long before this time, the *Italian* Opera began first to steal into *England*; but in as rude a Disguise, and unlike itself, as possible; in a lame, hobling Translation, into our own Language, with false Quantities, or Metre out of Measure, to its original Notes, sung by our own unskilful Voices, with Graces misapply'd to almost every Sentiment, and with Action, lifeless and unmeaning, through every Character: The first *Italian* Performer, that made any distinguish'd Figure in it, was *Valentini*, a true sensible Singer, at that time, but of a Throat too weak, to sustain those melodious Warblings, for which the fairer Sex have

have since idoliz'd his Successors. However, this Defect was so well supply'd by his Action, that his Hearers bore with the Absurdity of his singing his first Part of *Turnus* in *Camilla*, all in *Italian*, while every other Character was sung and recited to him in *English*. This I have mention'd to shew not only our Tramontane Taste, but that the crowded Audiences, which follow'd it to *Drury-Lane*, might be another Occasion of their growing thinner in *Lincoln's-Inn-Fields*.

To strike in, therefore, with this prevailing Novelty, Sir *John Vanbrugh*, and Mr. *Congreve*, open'd their new *Hay-Market Theatre*, with a translated Opera, to *Italian* Musick, called the *Triumph of Love*, but this not having in it, the Charms of *Camilla*, either from the Inequality of the Musick, or Voices, had but a cold Reception, being perform'd but three Days, and those not crowded. Immediately, upon the Failure of this Opera, Sir *John Vanbrugh* produced his Comedy call'd the *Confederacy*, taken (but greatly improv'd) from the *Bourgeois à la mode* of *Dancour*: Though the Fate of this Play was something better, yet I thought it was not equal to its Merit: For it is written with an uncommon Vein of Wit and Humour; which confirms me, in my former Observation, that the Difficulty of hearing distinctly in that, then wide Theatre, was no small Impediment to the Applause, that might have followed the same Actors in it, upon every other Stage; and indeed every Play acted there, before the House was alter'd, seem'd to suffer from the same Inconvenience: In a Word, the Prospect of Profits, from this Theatre was so very barren, that Mr. *Congreve*, in a few Months, gave up his

his Share and Interest in the Government of it, wholly to Sir *John Vanbrugh*. But Sir *John* being sole Proprietor of the House, was at all Events, oblig'd to do his utmost to support it. As he had a happier Talent of throwing the *English* Spirit into his Translation of *French* Plays, than any former Author, who had borrowed from them, he, in the same Season, gave the Publick three more of that kind, call'd the *Cuckold in Conceit*; from the *Cocu imaginaire* of *Moliere*; *Squire Trelooby*, from his *Monsieur de Pourceaugnac*, and the *Mistake*, from the *D'epit Amoureux* of the same Author. Yet all these, however well executed, came to the Ear in the same undistinguish'd Utterance, by which almost all their Plays had equally suffer'd: For, what few could plainly hear, it was not likely a great many could applaud.

It must farther be consider'd too, that this Company were not now, what they had been, when they first revolted from the Patentees in *Drury-Lane*, and became their own Masters, in *Lincoln's-Inn-Fields*. Several of them, excellent in their different Talents, were now dead; as *Smith*, *Kynaston*, *Sandford*, and *Leigh*: Mrs. *Betterton*, and *Underbil* being, at this time, also superannuated Pensioners, whose Places were generally but ill supply'd: Nor could it be expected that *Betterton* himself, at past seventy, could retain his former Force, and Spirit; though he was yet far distant from any Competitor. Thus then were these Remains of the best Set of Actors, that I believe were ever known, at once in *England*, by Time, Death, and the Satiety of their Hearers, mould'ring to decay.

It was, now, the Town-talk, that nothing  
but



but a Union of the two Companies, could recover the Stage, to its former Reputation, which Opinion was certainly true: One would have thought too, that the Patentee of *Drury-Lane* could not have fail'd to close with it, he being, then, on the Prosperous Side of the Question, having no Relief to ask for himself, and little more to do in the matter, than to consider what he might safely grant: But it seems this was not his way of counting; he had other Persons, who had great Claims to Shares in the Profits of this Stage, which Profits, by a Union, he foresaw would be too visible, to be doubted of, and might raise up a new Spirit, in those Adventurers, to revive their Suits at Law with him; for he had led them a Chace in Chancery several Years, and when they had driven him, into a Contempt of that Court, he conjur'd up a Spirit, in the Shape of Six and eight Pence a-day, that constantly struck the Tipstaff blind, whenever he came near him: He knew the intrinsick Value of Delay, and was resolv'd to stick to it, as the surest way to give the Plaintiffs enough on't. And by this Expedient our good Master had long walk'd about, at his Leisure, cool, and contented, as a Fox, when the Hounds were drawn off, and gone home from him. But whether I am right, or not, in my Conjectures, certain it is, that this close Master of *Drury-Lane*, had no Inclination to a Union, as will appear by the Sequel.

Sir *John Vanbrugh* knew too, that to make a Union worth his while, he must not seem too hasty for it, he therefore found himself under a Necessity, in the mean time, of letting his whole Theatrical Farm to some industrious Tenant,  
that

that might put it into better Condition. This is that Crisis, as I observed, in the Eighth Chapter, when the Royal Licence, for acting Plays, &c. was judg'd of so little Value, as not to have one Suiter for it. At this time then, the Master of *Drury-Lane* happen'd to have a sort of premier Agent, in his Stage-Affairs, that seem'd in Appearance as much to govern the Master, as the Master himself did to govern his Actors: But this Person was under no Stipulation, or Sallary, for the Service he render'd; but had gradually wrought himself into the Master's extraordinary Confidence and Trust, from an habitual Intimacy, a cheerful Humour, and an indefatigable Zeal for his Interest. If I should farther say, that this Person has been well known in almost every Metropolis, in *Europe*; that few private Men have, with so little Reproach, run through more various Turns of Fortune; that, on the wrong side of Three-score, he has yet the open Spirit of a hale young Fellow of five and twenty; that though he still chuses to speak what he thinks, to his best Friends, with an undisguis'd Freedom, he is, notwithstanding acceptable to many Persons of the first Rank, and Condition; that any one of them (provided he likes them) may now send him, for their Service, to *Constantinople*, at half a Day's Warning; that Time has not, yet, been able to make a visible Change in any Part of him, but the Colour of his Hair, from a fierce coal-black, to that of a milder milk-white: When I have taken this Liberty with him, methinks it cannot be taking a much greater, if I at once should tell you, that this Person was Mr. *Owen Swiney*, and that it was to him Sir *John Vanbrugh*, in this Exigence of his  
Thea-

Theatrical Affairs, made an Offer of his Actors, under such Agreements of Sallery, as might be made with them; and of his House, Cloaths, and Scenes, with the Queen's License to employ them, upon Payment of only the casual Rent of five Pounds, upon every acting Day, and not to exceed 700 l. in the Year. Of this Proposal, Mr. *Swiney* desir'd a Day or two, to consider; for however he might like it, he would not meddle in any sort, without the Consent, and Approbation of his Friend, and Patron, the Master of *Drury-Lane*. Having given the Reasons why this Patentee was averse to a Union, it may now seem less a Wonder, why he immediately consented that *Swiney* should take the *Hay-Market* House, &c. and continue that Company to act against him; but the real Truth was, that he had a mind both Companies should be clandestinely under one and the same Interest; and yet in so loose a manner, that he might declare his Verbal Agreement with *Swiney* good, or null, and void, as he might best find his Account in either. What flatter'd him, that he had this wholesome Project, and *Swiney* to execute it, both in his Power, was, that, at this time, *Swiney* happen'd to stand in his Books, Debtor to Cash, upwards of Two Hundred Pounds: But here, we shall find, he over-rated his Security. However, *Swiney* as yet follow'd his Orders; he took the *Hay-Market* Theatre, and had farther, the private Consent of the Patentee, to take such of his Actors from *Drury-Lane*, as either from Inclination, or Discontent, might be willing to come over to him, in the *Hay-Market*. The only one he made an Exception of, was myself: For tho' he chiefly depended upon his Singers,

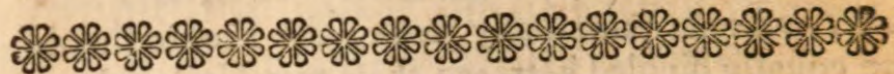
ers, and Dancers, he said, it would be necessary to keep some one tolerable Actor with him, that might enable him to set those Machines a going. Under this Limitation, of not entertaining me, *Swiney* seem'd to acquiesce, till after he had open'd, with the so recruited Company, in the *Hay-Market*: the Actors that came to him from *Drury-Lane*, were *Wilks*, *Estcourt*, *Mills*, *Keen*, *Johnson*, *Bullock*, *Mrs. Oldfield*, *Mrs. Rogers*, and some few others of less note: But I must here let you know, that this Project was form'd, and put in Execution, all in very few Days, in the Summer-Season, when no Theatre was open. To all which I was entirely a Stranger, being at this time at a Gentleman's House in *Gloucestershire*, scribbling, if I mistake not, the *Wife's Resentment*.

The first Word I heard of this Transaction, was by a Letter from *Swiney*, inviting me to make One in the *Hay-Market* Company, whom he hop'd I could not but now think the stronger Party. But, I confess, I was not a little alarm'd, at this Revolution: For I consider'd, that I knew of no visible Fund to support these Actors, but their own Industry; that all his Recruits from *Drury-Lane* would want new Cloathing; and that the warmest Industry would be always labouring up Hill, under so necessary an Expence, so bad a Situation, and so inconvenient a Theatre. I was always of opinion too, that in changing Sides, in most Conditions, there generally were discovered more unforeseen Inconveniencies, than visible Advantages; and that at worst, there would always some sort of Merit remain with Fidelity, tho' unsuccessful. Upon these Considerations, I was only thankful for the Offers made me, from the *Hay-Market*,

*Market*, without accepting them; and soon after came to Town towards the usual time of their beginning to act, to offer my Service to our old Master. But I found our Company so thinn'd, that it was almost impracticable, to bring any one tolerable Play upon the Stage. When I ask'd him, where were his Actors, and in what manner he intended to proceed? he reply'd, *Don't you trouble yourself, come along, and I'll shew you.* He then led me about all the By-places in the House, and shew'd me fifty little Back-doors, dark Closets, and narrow Passages; in Alterations and Contrivances of which kind he had busied his Head, most part of the Vacation; for he was scarce ever, without some notable Joyner, or a Bricklayer extraordinary, in pay, for twenty Years. And there are so many odd obscure Places about a Theatre, that his Genius in Nook-building was never out of Employment; nor could the most vain-headed Author, be more deaf to an Interruption in reciting his Works, than our wise Master was, while entertaining me with the Improvements he had made in his invisible Architecture; all which, without thinking any one Part of it necessary; tho' I seem'd to approve, I could not help, now and then, breaking in, upon his Delight, with the impertinent Question of ---- *But, Master, where are your Actors?* But it seems I had taken a wrong time for this sort of Enquiry; his Head was full of Matters of more moment (and, as you find) I was to come another time for an Answer: A very hopeful Condition I found myself in, under the Conduct of so potent a Virtuoso, and so considerate a Master! But, to speak of him seriously, and to account for this Disregard

gard to his Actors, his Notion was, that Singing, and Dancing, or any sort of Exotick Entertainments, would make an ordinary Company of Actors too hard, for the best Set, who had only plain Plays to subsist on. Now, though I am afraid too much might be said, in favour of this Opinion, yet I thought he laid more Stress upon that sort of Merit, than it would bear; as I therefore found myself of so little Value with him, I could not help setting a little more upon myself, and was resolv'd to come to a short Explanation with him. I told him, I came to serve him, at a time, when many of his best Actors had deserted him; that he might now have the Refusal of me; but I could not afford to carry the Compliment so far, as to lessen my Income by it; that I therefore expected, either my casual Pay to be advanced, or the Payment of my former Sallary made certain, for, as many Days, as we had acted the Year before.—No, he was not willing to alter his former Method; but I might chuse whatever Parts I had a mind to act, of theirs who had left him. When I found him, as I thought, so insensible, or impregnable, I look'd gravely in his Face, and told him—He knew upon what Terms, I was willing to serve him; and took my leave. By this time, the *Hay-Market* Company had begun acting, to Audiences something better than usual, and were all paid their full Sallaries, a Blessing they had not felt, in some Years, in either House before. Upon this Success, *Swiney* press'd the Patentee to execute the Articles they had as yet only verbally agreed on, which were in Substance, That *Swiney* should take the *Hay-Market* House in his own Name, and have what Actors he

he thought necessary from *Drury-Lane*, and after all Payments punctually made, the Profits should be equally divided between these two Undertakers. But soft, and fair! Rashness was a Fault, that had never yet been imputed to the Patentee; certain Payments were Methods he had not of a long, long time been us'd to; that Point still wanted time for Consideration. But *Swiney* was as hasty, as the other was slow, and was resolv'd to know what he had to trust to, before they parted; and to keep him the closer, to his Bargain, he stood upon his Right of having *Me* added to that Company, if I was willing to come into it. But this was a Point as absolutely refus'd on one Side, as insisted on, on the other. In this Contest, high Words were exchange'd on both sides, till, in the End, this their last private Meeting came to an open Rupture: But before it was publickly known, *Swiney*, by fairly letting me into the whole Transaction, took effectual means to secure me in his Interest. When the Mystery of the Patentee's Indifference to me was unfolded, and that his slighting me, was owing to the Security he rely'd on, of *Swiney's* not daring to engage me, I could have no further Debate with myself, which side of the Question I should adhere to. To conclude, I agreed, in two Words, to act with *Swiney*; and from this time, every Change that happen'd in the Theatrical Government, was a nearer Step to that twenty Years of Prosperity, which Actors, under the Management of Actors, not long afterwards, enjoy'd. What was the immediate Consequence of this last Desertion from *Drury-Lane*, shall be the Subject of another Chapter.



## C H A P. X.

*The recruited Actors, in the Hay-Market, encourag'd by a Subscription. Drury-Lane, under a particular Management. The Power of a Lord-Chamberlain, over the Theatres, consider'd. How it had been formerly exercis'd. A Digression to Tragick Authors.*

HAVING shewn the particular Conduct of the Patentee, in refusing so fair an Opportunity of securing to himself both Companies, under his sole Power, and Interest; I shall now lead the Reader, after a short View of what pass'd in this new Establishment of the *Hay-Market* Theatre, to the Accidents, that the Year following, compell'd the same Patentee, to receive both Companies, united, into the *Drury-Lane* Theatre, notwithstanding his Disinclination to it.

It may, now, be imagin'd, that such a Detachment of Actors from *Drury-Lane*, could not but give a new Spirit to those in the *Hay-Market*; not only by enabling them to act each others Plays to better Advantage; but by an emulous Industry, which had lain too long inactive among them, and without which they plainly saw, they could not be sure of Subsistence. Plays, by this means, began to recover a good Share of their former Esteem, and Favour; and the Profits of them, in about a Month, enabled our new Manager to discharge his Debt (of something more than Two hundred Pounds) to his old Friend the Patentee;



Patentee; who had now left him, and his Troop, in trust, to fight their own Battles. The greatest Inconvenience they still laboured under, was the immoderate Wideness of their House; in which, as I have observ'd, the Difficulty of Hearing, may be said to have bury'd half the Auditors Entertainment. This Defect seem'd evident, from the much better Reception several new Plays (first acted there) met with when they afterwards came to be play'd by the same Actors, in *Drury-Lane*: Of this Number were the *Stratagem*, and the *Wife's Resentment*; to which I may add, the *Double Gallant*. This last was a Play made up of what little was tolerable, in two, or three others, that had no Success, and were laid aside, as so much Poetical Lumber; but by collecting and adapting the best Parts of them all, into one Play, the *Double Gallant* has had a Place, every Winter, amongst the Publick Entertainments, these Thirty Years. As I was only the Compiler of this Piece, I did not publish it in my own Name; but as my having but a Hand in it, could not be long a Secret, I have been often treated as a Plagiary on that Account: Not that I think I have any right to complain, of whatever would detract from the Merit of that sort of Labour, yet, a Cobler may be allow'd to be useful, though he is not famous: And I hope a Man is not blameable for doing a little Good, tho' he cannot do as much as another? But so it is—Twopenny Criticks must live, as well as Eighteenpenny Authors.

While the Stage was thus recovering its former Strength, a more honourable Mark of Favour was shewn to it, than it was ever known before, or since, to have receiv'd. The, then, Lord *Hal-*

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*lifax*, was not only the Patron of the Men of Genius of this Time, but had likewise a generous Concern for the Reputation, and Prosperity of the Theatre, from whence the most elegant Dramatick Labours of the Learned, he knew, had often shone in their brightest Lustre: A Proposal therefore was drawn up, and address'd to that Noble Lord, for his Approbation, and Assistance, to raise a publick Subscription for Reviving Three Plays of the best Authors, with the full Strength of the Company; every Subscriber to have Three Tickets, for the first Day of each Play, for his single Payment of Three Guineas. This Subscription his Lordship so zealously encouraged, that from his Recommendation chiefly, in a very little time, it was compleated. The Plays were *Julius Cæsar* of *Shakespear*; the *King and no King* of *Fletcher*; and the Comic Scenes of *Dryden's Marriage à la mode*, and of his *Maiden Queen* put together, for it was judg'd, that as these comic Episodes were utterly independent of the serious Scenes, they were originally written to, they might on this occasion be as well Episodes either to the other, and so make up five livelier Acts between them: At least the Project so well succeeded, that those comic Parts have never since, been replaced, but were continued to be jointly acted, as one Play, several Years after.

By the Aid of this Subscription, which happen'd in 1707, and by the additional Strength, and Industry, of this Company, not only the Actors, (several of which were handsomely advanc'd, in their Salaries) were duly paid, but the Manager himself too, at the Foot of his Account, stood a considerable Gainer.

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At the same time the Patentee of *Drury-Lane* went on in his usual Method of paying extraordinary Prices to Singers, Dancers, and other exotick Performers, which were as constantly deducted out of the sinking Salaries of his Actors: 'Tis true, his Actors, perhaps, might not deserve much more than he gave them; yet, by what I have related, it is plain he chose not to be troubled, with such, as visibly had deserv'd more: For it seems he had not purchas'd his Share of the Patent, to mend the Stage, but to make Money of it: And to say Truth, his Sense of every thing to be shewn there, was much upon a Level, with the Taste of the Multitude, whose Opinion, and whose Money weigh'd with him full as much, as that of the best Judges. His Point was to please the Majority, who, could more easily comprehend any thing they *saw*, than the daintiest things, that could be said to them. But in this Notion he kept no medium; for in my Memory, he carry'd it so far, that he was (some few Years before this time) actually dealing for an extraordinary fine Elephant, at a certain Sum, for every Day he might think fit to shew the tractable Genius of that vast quiet Creature, in any Play or Farce, in the Theatre (then standing) in *Dorset-Garden*. But from the Jealousy, which so formidable a Rival had rais'd in his Dancers, and by his Bricklayer's assuring him, that if the Walls were to be open'd wide enough for its Entrance, it might endanger the fall of the House, he gave up his Project, and with it, so hopeful a Prospect of making the Receipts of the Stage run higher than all the Wit, and Force of the best Writers had ever yet rais'd them to.

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About the same time of his being under this Disappointment, he put in Practice another Project of as new, though not of so bold a Nature; which was his introducing a Set of Rope-dancers, into the same Theatre; for the first Day of whose Performance, he had given out some Play in which I had a material Part: But I was hardy enough to go into the Pit, and acquaint the Spectators near me, that I hop'd, they would not think it a Mark of my Disrespect to them, if I declin'd acting upon any Stage, that was brought to so low a Disgrace, as ours was like to be by that Day's Entertainment. My Excuse was so well taken, that I never after found any ill Consequences, or heard of the least Disapprobation of it: And the whole Body of Actors too, protesting against such an Abuse of their Profession, our cautious Master was too much alarm'd, and intimidated to repeat it.

After what I have said, it will be no wonder, that all due Regards to the original Use, and Institution of the Stage should be utterly lost or neglected: Nor was the Conduct of this Manager easily to be alter'd, while he had found the Secret of making Money out of Disorder and Confusion: For however strange it may seem, I have often observ'd him inclin'd to be cheerful in the Distresses of his Theatrical Affairs, and equally reserv'd and pensive, when they went smoothly forward with a visible Profit. Upon a Run of good Audiences, he was more frighted to be thought a Gainer, which might make him accountable to others, than he was dejected with bad Houses, which at worst, he knew would make others accountable to him: And as, upon a moderate Computation, it cannot be supposed, that

that the contested Accounts of a twenty Year's Wear, and Tear, in a Play-houfe, could be fairly adjusted by a Master in Chancery, under four-score Years more, it will be no Surprize, that by the Neglect, or rather the Discretion of other Proprietors, in not throwing away good Money after bad, this Heroe of a Manager, who alone supported the War, should in time so fortify himself by Delay, and so tire his Enemies, that he became sole Monarch of his Theatrical Empire, and left the quiet Possession of it, to his Successors.

If these Facts seem so trivial for the Attention of a sensible Reader, let it be consider'd, that they are not chosen Fictions, to *entertain*, but Truths necessary to *inform* him, under what low Shifts, and Disgraces, what Disorders and Revolutions the Stage labour'd, before it could recover that Strength, and Reputation, wherewith it began to flourish, towards the latter End of Queen *Anne's* Reign; and which it continued to enjoy, for a Course of twenty Years following. But let us resume our Account of the new Settlement, in the *Hay-Market*.

It may be a natural Question, why the Actors, whom *Swiney* brought over to his Undertaking, in the *Hay-Market*, would tie themselves down to limited Salaries? for though he, as their Manager, was oblig'd to make them certain Payments, it was not certain that the Receipts would enable him to do it; and since their own Industry was the only visible Fund they had to depend upon, why would they not, for that Reason, insist upon their being Sharers as well of possible Profits, as Losses? How far in this Point, they acted right,

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or wrong, will appear from the following State of their Case.

It must first be consider'd, that this Scheme of their Desertion, was all concerted, and put in Execution in a Week's time, which short Warning might make them overlook that Circumstance, and the sudden Prospect of being deliver'd from having seldom more, than half their Pay, was a Contentment that had bounded all their farther Views. Besides, as there could be no room to doubt of their receiving their full Pay, previous to any Profits, that might be reap'd by their Labour, and as they had no great Reason to apprehend those Profits could exceed their respective Salaries, so far as to make them repine at them, they might think it but reasonable, to let the Chance of any extraordinary Gain be on the Side of their Leader, and Director. But farther, as this Scheme had the Approbation of the Court, these Actors, in reality, had it not in their Power to alter any Part of it: And what induced the Court to encourage it, was, that by having the Theatre, and its Manager more immediately dependent on the Power of the Lord-Chamberlain, it was not doubted but the Stage would be recover'd into such a Reputation, as might now do Honour, to that absolute Command, which the Court, or its Officers seem'd always fond of having over it.

Here, to set the Constitution of the Stage in a clearer Light, it may not be amiss, to look back a little on the Power of a Lord-Chamberlain, which, as may have been observ'd, in all Changes of the Theatrical Government, has been the main Spring without which no Scheme, of what kind soever, could be set in Motion. My Intent is not  
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to enquire how far, by Law, this Power has been limited, or extended; but merely as an Historian, to relate Facts, to gratify the Curious, and then leave them to their own Reflections: This, too, I am the more inclin'd to, because there is no one Circumstance, which has affected the Stage, wherein so many Spectators, from those of the highest Rank, to the Vulgar, have seem'd more positively knowing, or less inform'd in.

Though in all the Letters Patent, for acting Plays, &c. since King *Charles the First's* Time, there has been no mention of the Lord Chamberlain, or of any Subordination to his Command, or Authority——yet it was still taken for granted, that no Letters Patent, by the bare Omission of such a great Officer's Name, could have superseded, or taken out of his Hands, that Power, which Time out of Mind, he always had exercised over the Theatre. The common Opinions then abroad were, that if the Profession of Actors was unlawful, it was not in the Power of the Crown to license it; and, if it were not unlawful, it ought to be free, and independent, as other Professions; and that a Patent to exercise it, was only an honorary Favour, from the Crown, to give it a better Grace of Recommendation to the Publick. But as the Truth of this Question seem'd to be wrapt in a great deal of Obscurity, in the old Laws made in former Reigns, relating to Players, &c. it may be no Wonder, that the best Companies of Actors should be desirous of taking Shelter under the visible Power of a Lord Chamberlain, who they knew had, at his Pleasure, favoured, and protected, or born hard upon them: But be all this as it may, a Lord Chamberlain

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(from whencesoever his Power might be derived), had, till of later Years, had always an implicit Obedience paid to it: I shall now give some few Instances, in what manner it was exercis'd.

What appear'd to be most reasonably, under his Cognizance, was the licens'g, or refusing new Plays, or striking out what might be thought offensive, in them: Which Province had been, for many Years, assign'd to his inferior Officer, the Master of the Revels; yet was not this License irrevocable; for several Plays, though acted by that Permission, had been silenced afterwards. The first Instance of this kind, that common Fame has deliver'd down to us, is that of the *Maid's Tragedy* of *Beaumont and Fletcher*, which was forbid in King *Charles the Second's* Time, by an Order from the Lord Chamberlain. For what Reason this Interdiction was laid upon it, the Politicks of those Days, have only left us to guess. Some said, that the killing of the King, in that Play, while the tragical Death of King *Charles the First*, was then so fresh in People's Memory, was an Object too horribly impious, for a publick Entertainment. What makes this Conjecture seem to have some Foundation, is that the celebrated *Waller*, in Compliment to that Court, alter'd the last Act of this Play (which is printed at the End of his Works) and gave it a new Catastrophe, wherein the Life of the King is loyally saved, and the Lady's Matter made up, with a less terrible Reparation. Others have given out, that a repenting Mistrefs, in a romantick Revenge of her Dishonour, killing the King, in the very Bed he expected her to come into, was shewing a too dangerous Example to other *Evadnes*, then shining at Court,



Court, in the same Rank of royal Distinction; who, if ever their Consciences should have run equally mad, might have had frequent Opportunities of putting the Expiation of their Frailty, into the like Execution. But this I doubt is too deep a Speculation, or too ludicrous a Reason, to be relied on; it being well known, that the Ladies then in favour, were not so nice, in their Notions, as to think their Preferment their Dishonour, or their Lover a Tyrant: Besides, that easy Monarch loved his Roses, without Thorns; nor do we hear, that he much chose, to be himself the first Gatherer of them.

The *Lucius Junius Brutus* of *Nat. Lee*, was, in the same Reign, silenced after the third Day of acting it; it being objected, that the Plan, and Sentiments of it had too boldly vindicated, and might inflame republican Principles.

A Prologue (by *Dryden*) to the *Prophetess*, was forbid by the Lord *Dorset*, after the first Day of its being spoken. This happen'd when King *William* was prosecuting the War, in *Ireland*. It must be confess'd, that this Prologue had some familiar, metaphorical Sneers, at the Revolution itself; and as the Poetry of it was good, the Offence of it was less pardonable.

The Tragedy of *Mary Queen of Scotland*, had been offer'd to the Stage twenty Years before it was acted: But from the profound Penetration of the Master of the Revels, who saw political Spectres in it, that never appear'd in the Presentation, it had lain, so long upon the Hands of the Author; who had at last, the good Fortune to prevail with a Nobleman, to favour his Petition to *Queen Anne*, for Permission to have it acted: The  
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Queen had the Goodness to refer the Merit of his Play, to the Opinion of that noble Person, altho' he was not her Majesty's Lord Chamberlain; upon whose Report of it being every way, an innocent Piece, it was soon after acted with Success.

Reader, by your Leave ——— I will but just speak a Word, or two to any Author, that has not yet writ one Line of his next Play, and then I will come to my Point again—— What I would say to him, is this, Sir, before you set Pen to Paper, think well, and principally of your Design, or chief Action, towards which every Line you write ought to be drawn, as to its Centre: If we can say of your finest Sentiments, This, or That might be left out without maiming the Story you would tell us, depend upon it, that fine thing is said in a wrong Place; and though you may urge, that a bright Thought is not to be resisted, you will not be able to deny, that those very fine Lines would be much finer, if you could find a proper Occasion for them: Otherwise you will be thought to take less Advice from *Aristotle*, or *Horace*, than from Poet *Bays* in the *Rehearsal*, who very smartly says—— *What the Devil is the Plot good for, but to bring in fine Things?* Compliment the Taste of your Hearers, as much as you please with them, provided they belong to your Subject, but don't, like a dainty Preacher, who has his Eye more upon this World, than the next, leave your Text for them. When your Fable is good, every Part of it will cost you much less Labour, to keep your Narration alive, than you will be forced to bestow upon those elegant Discourses, that are not absolutely conducive to your Catastrophe, or main Purpose: Scenes of that kind, shew but at best,  
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the unprofitable, or injudicious Spirit of a Genius. It is but a melancholy Commendation of a fine Thought, to say, when we have heard it, *Well! but what's all this to the Purpose?* Take therefore, in some part, Example by the Author last mention'd! There are three Plays of his, *The Earl of Essex*, *Anna Bullen*, and *Mary Queen of Scots*, which though they are all written in the most barren, barbarous Stile, that was ever able to keep Possession of the Stage, have all interested the Hearts of his Auditors. To what then could this Success be owing, but to the intrinsic, and naked Value of the well-conducted Tales, he has simply told us? There is something so happy in the Disposition of all his Fables; all his chief Characters are thrown into such natural Circumstances of Distress, that their Misery, or Affliction, wants very little Assistance from the Ornaments of Stile, or Words to speak them. When a skilful Actor is so situated, his bare plaintive Tone of Voice, the Cast of Sorrow from his Eye, his slowly graceful Gesture, his humble Sighs of Resignation under his Calamities: All these, I say, are sometimes, without a Tongue, equal to the strongest Eloquence. At such a time, the attentive Auditor supplies from his own Heart, whatever the Poet's Language may fall short of, in Expression, and melts himself into every Pang of Humanity, which the like Misfortunes in real Life could have inspir'd.

After what I have observ'd, whenever I see a Tragedy defective in its Fable, let there be never so many fine Lines in it; I hope I shall be forgiven, if I impute that Defect, to the Idleness, the weak Judgment, or barren Invention of the Author. If

If I should be ask'd, why I have not always, myself, followed the Rules I would impose upon others; I can only answer, that whenever I have not, I lie equally open to the same critical Censure. But having often observ'd a better than ordinary Stile thrown away, upon the loose and wandering Scenes of an ill-chosen Story, I imagin'd these Observations might convince some future Author, of how great Advantage a Fable well plann'd must be to a Man of any tolerable Genius.

All this, I own, is leading my Reader out of the way; but if he has as much Time upon his Hands, as I have, (provided we are neither of us tir'd) it may be equally to the Purpose, what he reads, or what I write of. But as I have no Objection to Method, when it is not troublesome, I return to my Subject.

Hitherto we have seen no very unreasonable Instance of this absolute Power of a Lord Chamberlain, though we were to admit, that no one knew of any real Law, or Construction of Law, by which this Power was given him. I shall now offer some Facts relating to it of a more extraordinary Nature, which I leave my Reader to give a Name to.

About the middle of King *William's* Reign, an Order of the Lord Chamberlain was, then, subsisting, that no Actor of either Company, should presume to go from one, to the other, without a Discharge from their respective Managers, and the Permission of the Lord Chamberlain. Notwithstanding such Order, *Powel* being uneasy, at the Favour, *Wilks* was then rising into, had without such Discharge, left the *Drury-Lane* Theatre, and

and engag'd himself to that of *Lincoln's-Inn-Fields*: But by what follows, it will appear that this Order was not so much intended, to do both of them good, as to do, that which the Court chiefly favour'd (*Lincoln's-Inn-Fields*) no harm. For when *Powel* grew dissatisfy'd at his Station there too, he return'd to *Drury-Lane* (as he had before gone from it) without a Discharge: But halt a little! here, on this Side of the Question, the Order was to stand, in force, and the same Offence against it now, was not to be equally pass'd over. He was the next Day taken up by a Messenger, and confin'd to the Porter's-Lodge, where, to the best of my Remembrance, he remain'd about two Days; when the Managers of *Lincoln's-Inn-Fields*, not thinking an Actor of his loose Character worth their farther Trouble, gave him up; though perhaps he was releas'd, for some better Reason. Upon this occasion, the next Day, behind the Scenes, at *Drury-Lane*, a Person of great Quality, in my hearing, enquiring of *Powel*, into the Nature of his Offence, after he had heard it, told him, That if he had had Patience, or Spirit enough, to have staid in his Confinement, till he had given him Notice of it, he would have found him a handsomer way of coming out of it.

Another time the same Actor, *Powel*, was provok'd at *Will's* Coffee-house, in a Dispute about the Play-house Affairs, to strike a Gentleman, whose Family had been sometimes Masters of it; a Complaint of this Insolence was, in the Absence of the Lord-Chamberlain, immediately made to the Vice-Chamberlain, who so highly resent'd it, that he thought himself bound in Honour, to carry his Power of redressing it, as far as it could possibly

sibly go: For *Powel* having a Part in the Play, that was acted the Day after; the Vice-Chamberlain sent an Order to silence the whole Company, for having suffer'd *Powel* to appear upon the Stage, before he had made that Gentleman Satisfaction, although the Masters of the Theatre had had no Notice of *Powel's* Misbehaviour: However, this Order was obey'd, and remain'd in force for two or three Days, till the same Authority was pleas'd, or advis'd, to revoke it. From the Measures this injur'd Gentleman took for his Redress, it may be judg'd how far it was taken for granted, that a Lord-Chamberlain had an absolute Power over the Theatre.

I shall now give an Instance of an Actor, who had the Resolution to stand upon the Defence of his Liberty, against the same Authority, and was reliev'd by it.

In the same King's Reign, *Dogget*, who tho', from a severe Exactness in his Nature, he could be seldom long easy in any Theatre, where Irregularity, not to say Injustice, too often prevail'd, yet in the private Conduct of his Affairs, he was a prudent honest Man. He therefore took an unusual Care, when he return'd to act under the Patent, in *Drury-Lane*, to have his Articles drawn firm and binding: but having some Reason to think the Patentee had not dealt fairly with him, he quitted the Stage, and would act no more, rather chusing to lose his whatever unsatisfy'd, Demands, than go through the chargeable, and tedious Course of the Law to recover it. But the Patentee, who (from other People's Judgment) knew the Value of him, and who wanted too, to have him sooner back, than the Law could possibly bring

bring him, thought the surer way would be, to desire a shorter Redress from the Authority of the Lord-Chamberlain. Accordingly upon his Complaint, a Messenger was immediately dispatch'd to *Norwich*, where *Dogget* then was, to bring him up, in Custody: But doughty *Dogget*, who had Money in his Pocket, and the Cause of Liberty at his Heart, was not, in the least intimidated, by this formidable Summons. He was observ'd to obey it with a particular Chearfulness, entertaining his Fellow-traveller, the Messenger, all the way in the Coach (for he had protested against Riding) with as much Humour as a Man of his Business might be capable of tasting. And as he found his Charges were to be defray'd, he, at every Inn, call'd for the best Dainties the Country could afford, or a pretended weak Appetite could digest. At this rate they jollily roll'd on, more with the Air of a Jaunt, than a Journey, or a Party of Pleasure, than of a poor Devil in Durance. Upon his Arrival in Town, he immediately apply'd to the Lord Chief Justice *Holt*, for his *Habeas Corpus*. As his Case was something particular, that eminent and learned Minister of the Law took a particular Notice of it: For *Dogget* was not only discharged, but the Process of his Confinement (according to common Fame) had a Censure pass'd upon it, in Court, which I doubt, I am not Lawyer enough to repeat. To conclude, the officious Agents in this Affair finding, that, in *Dogget*, they had mistaken their Man, were mollify'd into milder Proceedings, and (as he afterwards told me) whisper'd something, in his Ear, that took away *Dogget's* farther Uneasiness about it.

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By these Instances we see how naturally Power only founded on Custom, is apt, where the Law is silent, to run into Excesses, and while it laudably pretends to govern others, how hard it is to govern itself. But since the Law has lately open'd its Mouth, and has said plainly, that some Part of this Power to govern the Theatre shall be, and is plac'd in a proper Person; and as it is evident, that the Power of that white Staff, ever since it has been in the noble Hand, that now holds it, has been us'd with the utmost Lenity, I would beg leave of the murmuring Multitude, who frequent the Theatre, to offer them a simple Question or two, *viz.* Pray, Gentlemen, how came you, or rather your Fore-fathers, never to be mutinous, upon any of the occasional Facts I have related? And why have you been so often tumultuous, upon a Law's being made, that only confirms a less Power, than was formerly exercis'd, without any Law to support it? You cannot sure, say, such Discontent is either just, or natural, unless you allow it a Maxim in your Politicks, that Power exercis'd *without* Law, is a less Grievance, than the same Power exercis'd *according* to Law!

Having thus given the clearest View I was able, of the usual Regard paid to the Power of a Lord-Chamberlain, the Reader will more easily conceive, what Influence, and Operation that Power must naturally have, in all Theatrical Revolutions; and particularly in the complete Re-union of both Companies, which happen'd in the Year following.

C H A P.





## C H A P. XI.

*Some Chimærical Thoughts of making the Stage useful: Some to its Reputation. The Patent unprofitable, to all the Proprietors, but one. A fourth Part of it given away to Colonel Brett. A Digression to his Memory. The two Companies of Actors re-united, by his Interest, and Management. The first Direction of Operas only, given to Mr. Swiney.*

**F**ROM the Time, that the Company of Actors, in the *Hay-Market*, was recruited with those from *Drury-Lane*, and came into the Hands of their new Director, *Swiney*, the Theatre, for three or four Years following, suffer'd so many Convulsions, and was thrown every other Winter under such different Interests, and Management, before it came to a firm and lasting Settlement, that I am doubtful, if the most candid Reader will have Patience, to go through a full, and fair Account of it: And yet I would fain flatter myself, that those, who are not too wise, to frequent the Theatre (or have Wit enough to distinguish what sort of Sights there, either do Honour, or Disgrace to it) may think their national Diversion no contemptible Subject, for a more able Historian, than I pretend to be: If I have any particular Qualification, for the Task, more than another, it is that I have been an ocular Witness of the several Facts, that are to fill up the rest of my Volume; and am, perhaps, the only

only Person living (however unworthy) from whom the same Materials can be collected; but let them come from whom they may, whether, at best, they will be worth reading; perhaps a Judgment may be better form'd after a patient Perusal of the following Digression.

In whatever cold Esteem, the Stage may be, among the Wise, and Powerful; it is not so much a Reproach, to those, who contentedly enjoy it in its lowest Condition, as that Condition of it, is to those, who (though they cannot but know, to how valuable a publick Use, a Theatre, well establish'd, might be rais'd) yet in so many civiliz'd Nations, have neglected it. This perhaps will be call'd thinking my own wiser, than all the wise Heads, in *Europe*. But, I hope, a more humble Sense will be given to it; at least I only mean, that if so many Governments have their Reasons, for their Disregard of their Theatres, those Reasons may be deeper, than my Capacity has yet been able to dive into: If therefore my simple Opinion is a wrong one, let the Singularity of it expose me: And tho' I am only building a Theatre in the Air, it is there, however, at so little Expence, and in so much a better Taste, than any I have yet seen, that I cannot help saying of it, as a wiser Man did (it may be) upon a wiser Occasion:

— *Si quid novisti rectius istis,  
Candidus imperti; si non* — Hor.

Give me leave to play, with my Project, in  
Fancy.

I say then, that as I allow nothing is more liable  
to

to debase, and corrupt the Minds of a People, than a licentious Theatre; so under a just, and proper Establishment, it were possible to make it, as apparently the School of Manners, and of Virtue. Were I to collect all the Arguments, that might be given for my Opinion, or to inforce it by exemplary Proofs, it might swell this short Digression to a Volume; I shall therefore trust the Validity of what I have laid down, to a single Fact, that may be still fresh, in the Memory of many living Spectators. When the Tragedy of *Cato* was first acted, let us call to mind the noble Spirit of Patriotism, which that Play then infus'd into the Breasts of a free People, that crowded to it; with what affecting Force, was that most elevated of Human Virtues recommended? Even the false Pretenders to it felt an unwilling Conviction, and made it a Point of Honour to be foremost, in their Approbation; and this too at a time, when the fermented Nation had their different Views of Government. Yet the sublime Sentiments of Liberty, in that venerable Character, rais'd, in every sensible Hearer such conscious Admiration, such compell'd Assent to the Conduct of a suffering Virtue, as even *demand'd* two almost irreconcilable Parties to embrace, and join in their equal Applauses of it. Now, not to take from the Merit of the Writer, had that Play never come to the Stage, how much of this valuable Effect of it must have been lost? It then could have had no more immediate weight with the Publick, than our poring upon the many ancient Authors, thro' whose Works the same Sentiments have been, perhaps, less profitably dispers'd, tho' amongst Millions of Readers; but  
by

by bringing such Sentiments to the Theatre, and into Action, what a superior Lustre did they shine with? There, *Cato* breath'd again, in Life; and though he perish'd in the Cause of Liberty, his Virtue was victorious, and left the Triumph of it in the Heart of every melting Spectator. If Effects, like these, are laudable; if the Representation of such Plays can carry Conviction with so much Pleasure, to the Understanding; have they not vastly the Advantage of any other human Helps to Eloquence? What equal Method can be found to lead, or stimulate the Mind, to a quicker Sense of Truth, and Virtue, or warm a People into the Love, and Practice of such Principles, as might be at once a Defence, and Honour to their Country? In what Shape could we listen to Virtue with equal Delight, or Appetite of Instruction? The Mind of Man is naturally free, and when he is compell'd, or menac'd into any Opinion that he does not readily conceive, he is more apt to doubt the Truth of it, than when his Capacity is led by Delight, into Evidence and Reason. To preserve a Theatre in this Strength, and Purity of Morals, is, I grant, what the wisest Nations, have not been able to perpetuate, or to transmit long to their Posterity: But this Difficulty will rather heighten, than take from the Honour of the Theatre: The greatest Empires have decay'd for want of proper Heads to guide them, and the Ruins of them sometimes have been the Subject of Theatres, that could not be, themselves exempt, from as various Revolutions: Yet may not the most natural Inference from all this be, That the Talents requisite to form good Actors, great Writers, and true Judges, were like those of wise  
and

and memorable Ministers, as well the Gifts of Fortune, as of Nature, and not always to be found, in all Climes or Ages? Or can there be a stronger modern Evidence of the Value of Dramatick Performances, than that in many Countries, where the Papal Religion prevails, the Holy Policy (though it allows not to an Actor Christian Burial) is so conscious of the Usefulness of his Art, that it will frequently take in the Assistance of the Theatre, to give even sacred History, in a Tragedy, a Recommendation to the more patheticke Regard of their People? How can such Principles, in the Face of the World, refuse the Bones of a Wretch the lowest Benefit of Christian Charity, after having admitted his Profession (for which they deprive him of that Charity) to serve the solemn Purposes of Religion? How far then is this Religious Inhumanity short of that famous Painter's, who, to make his *Crucifix* a Master-piece of Nature, stabb'd the Innocent Hireling, from whose Body he drew it; and having heighten'd the holy Portrait, with his last Agonies of Life, then sent it to be the consecrated Ornament of an Altar? Though we have only the Authority of common Fame, for this Story, yet be it true or false, the Comparison will still be just. Or let me ask another Question more humanly political.

How came the *Athenians* to lay out an hundred thousand Pounds upon the Decorations of one single Tragedy of *Sophocles*? Not, sure, as it was merely a Spectacle for Idleness, or Vacancy of Thought to gape at, but because it was the most rational, most instructive, and delightful Composition, that Human Wit had yet arrived at; and consequently the most worthy to be the Entertainment

ment of a wise, and warlike Nation: And it may be still a Question, whether the *Sophocles* inspir'd this publick Spirit, or this publick Spirit inspir'd the *Sophocles*?

But alas! as the Power of giving, or receiving such Inspirations from either of these Causes, seems pretty well at an End; now I have shot my Bolt, I shall descend to talk more like a Man of the Age, I live in: For, indeed, what is all this to a common *English* Reader? Why truly, as *Shakespeare* terms it—*Caviare to the Multitude*! Honest *John Trott* will tell you, that if he were to believe what I have said of the *Athenians*, he is at most, but astonish'd at it; but that if the twentieth Part of the Sum I have mentioned were to be apply'd out of the publick Money, to the Setting off the best Tragedy, the nicest Noddle in the Nation could produce, it would probably raise the Passions higher in those that did not like it, than in those that did; it might as likely meet with an Insurrection, as the Applause of the People, and so, mayhap, be fitter for the Subject of a Tragedy, than for a publick Fund to support it. — Truly, Mr. *Trott*, I cannot but own, that I am very much of your Opinion: I am only concerned, that the Theatre has not a better Pretence to the Care and further Consideration of those Governments, where it is tolerated; but as what I have said, will not probably do it any great Harm, I hope, I have not put you out of Patience, by throwing a few good Wishes after an old Acquaintance.

To conclude this Digression. If for the Support of the Stage, what is generally shewn there, must be lower'd to the Taste of common Spectators;

tators; or if it is inconsistent with Liberty to mend that vulgar Taste, by making the Multitude less merry there; or by abolishing every low and senseless Jollity, in which the Understanding can have no Share; whenever, I say, such is the State of the Stage, it will be as often liable to unanswerable Censure, and manifest Disgraces. Yet there *was* a Time, not yet, out of many People's Memory, when it subsisted upon its own rational Labours; when even Success attended an Attempt to reduce it to Decency; and when Actors themselves were hardy enough to hazard their Interest, in Pursuit of so dangerous a Reformation. And this Crisis, I am myself as impatient, as any tir'd Reader can be, to arrive at. I shall therefore endeavour to lead him the shortest way to it. But as I am a little jealous of the badness of the Road, I must reserve to myself the Liberty of calling upon any Matter, in my way, for a little Refreshment to whatever Company may have the Curiosity, or Goodness to go along with me.

When the sole managing Patentee at *Drury-Lane*, for several Years, could never be persuaded or driven to any Account with the Adventurers; Sir *Thomas Skipwith* (who, if I am rightly inform'd, had an equal Share with him) grew so weary of the Affair, that he actually made a Present of his entire Interest in it, upon the following Occasion.

Sir *Thomas* happen'd, in the Summer preceding the Re-union of the Companies, to make a Visit to an intimate Friend of his, Colonel *Brett*, of *Sandywell*, in *Gloucestershire*; where the Pleasantness of the Place, and the agreeable manner of passing his Time there, had rais'd him to such a

Gallantry of Heart, that, in Return, to the Civilities of his Friend the Colonel, he made him an Offer of his whole Right in the Patent; but not to over-rate the Value of his Present, told him, he himself had made nothing of it, these ten Years: But the Colonel (he said) being a greater Favourite of the People in Power, and (as he believ'd) among the Actors too, than himself was, might think of some Scheme, to turn it to Advantage, and in that Light, if he lik'd it, it was at his Service. After a great deal of Railery on both Sides, of what Sir *Thomas* had not made of it, and the particular Advantages the Colonel was likely to make of it; they came to a laughing Resolution, That an Instrument should be drawn the next Morning, of an absolute Conveyance of the Premises. A Gentleman of the Law, well known to them both, happening to be a Guest there, at the same time, the next Day produced the Deed, according to his Instructions, in the Presence of whom, and of others, it was sign'd, seal'd, and deliver'd to the Purposes therein contain'd.

This Tranfaction may be another Instance (as I have elsewhere observed) at how low a Value, the Interests, in a Theatrical License, were then held; tho' it was visible from the Success of *Swiney* in that very Year, that with tolerable Management, they could, at no time, have fail'd of being a profitable Purchase.

The next Thing to be consider'd was, what the Colonel should do with his new Theatrical Commission, which, in another's Possession, had been of so little Importance. Here it may be necessary to premise, that this Gentleman was the first of any



any Consideration, since my coming to the Stage, with whom I had contracted a Personal Intimacy; which might be the Reason, why, in this Debate, my Opinion had some Weight with him: Of this Intimacy too, I am the more tempted to talk, from the natural Pleasure of calling back, in Age, the Pursuits, and happy Ardours of Youth long past, which, like the Ideas of a delightful Spring, in a Winter's Ruminati<sup>o</sup>n, are sometimes equal to the former Enjoyment of them. I shall, therefore, rather chuse, in this Place to gratify myself, than my Reader, by setting the fairest Side of this Gentleman in view, and by indulging a little conscientious Vanity, in shewing how early in Life, I fell into the Possession of so agreeable a Companion: Whatever Failings he might have to others, he had none to me; nor was he, where he had them, without his valuable Qualities to balance or soften them. Let, then, what was not, to be commended in him, rest with his Ashes, never to be rak'd into: But the friendly Favours I received from him, while living, give me still a Pleasure of paying this only Mite of my Acknowledgment, in my Power, to his Memory. And if my taking this Liberty may find Pardon from several of his fair Relations, still living, for whom I profess the utmost Respect, it will give me but little Concern; tho' my critical Readers should think it all Impertinence.

This Gentleman, then, *Henry*, was the eldest Son of *Henry Brett*, Esq; of *Cowley*, in *Gloucestershire*, who coming early to his Estate of about Two Thousand a Year, by the usual Negligences of young Heirs, had, before this his eldest Son came of age, sunk it to about half that Value,

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and

and that not wholly free from Incumbrances. Mr. *Brett*, whom I am speaking of, had his Education, and I might say, ended it, at the University of *Oxford*; for tho' he was settled some time after at the *Temple*, he so little followed the Law there, that his Neglect of it, made the Law (like some of his fair and frail Admirers) very often follow *him*. As he had an uncommon Share of Social Wit, and a handsome Person, with a sanguine Bloom in his Complexion, no wonder they persuaded him, that he might have a better Chance of Fortune, by throwing such Accomplishments, into the gayer World, than by shutting them up, in a Study. The first View, that fires the Head of a young Gentleman of this modish Ambition, just broke loose, from Business, is to cut a Figure (as they call it) in a Side-box, at the Play, from whence their next Step is, to the *Green Room* behind the Scenes, sometimes their *Non ultra*. Hither, at last then, in this hopeful Quest of his Fortune, came this Gentleman-Errant, not doubting but the fickle Dame, while he was thus qualified to receive her, might be tempted to fall into his Lap. And though, possibly, the Charms of our Theatrical Nymphs might have their Share, in drawing him thither; yet in my Observation, the most visible Cause of his first coming, was a more sincere Passion he had conceived for a fair full-bottom'd Perriwig, which I then wore in my first Play of the *Fool in Fashion*, in the Year 1695. For it is to be noted, that, the *Beaux* of those Days, were of a quite different Cast, from the modern Stamp, and had more of the Stateliness of the Peacock in their Mien, than (which now seems to be their highest Emulation) the pert Air of a Lapwing.

Lapwing. Now whatever Contempt Philosophers may have, for a fine Perriwig; my Friend, who was not to despise the World, but to live in it, knew very well, that so material an Article of Dress, upon the Head of a Man of Sense, if it became him, could never fail of drawing to him a more partial Regard, and Benevolence, than could possibly be hoped for, in an ill-made one. This perhaps may soften the grave Censure, which so youthful a Purchase might otherwise have laid upon him: In a Word, he made his Attack upon this Perriwig, as your young Fellows generally do upon a Lady of Pleasure; first, by a few familiar Praises of her Person, and then a civil Enquiry, into the Price of it. But upon his observing me a little surprized at the Levity of his Question, about a Fop's Perriwig, he began to railly himself with so much Wit, and Humour, upon the Folly of his Fondness for it, that he struck me with an equal Desire of granting any thing, in my Power, to oblige so facetious a Customer. This singular Beginning of our Conversation, and the mutual Laughs that ensued upon it, ended in an Agreement, to finish our Bargain that Night, over a Bottle.

If it were possible, the Relation of the happy Indiscretions which passed between us that Night, could give the tenth Part of the Pleasure, I then received from them, I could still repeat them with Delight: But as it may be doubtful, whether the Patience of a Reader may be quite so strong, as the Vanity of an Author, I shall cut it short, by only saying, that single Bottle was the Sire of many a jolly Dozen, that for some Years following, like orderly Children, whenever they were

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call'd

call'd for, came into the same Company. Nor indeed, did I think from that time, whenever he was to be had, any Evening could be agreeably enjoy'd without him. But the long continuance of our Intimacy, perhaps, may be thus accounted for.

He who can taste Wit in another, may, in some sort, be said to have it himself: Now, as I always had, and (I bless myself for the Folly) still have a quick Relish of whatever did, or can give me Delight: This Gentleman could not but see the youthful Joy, I was generally rais'd to, whenever I had the Happiness of a *Tête à tête* with him; and it may be a moot Point, whether Wit is not as often inspir'd, by a proper Attention, as by the brightest Reply, to it. Therefore as he had Wit enough for any two People, and I had Attention enough for any four, there could not well be wanting a sociable Delight, on either side. And tho' it may be true, that a Man of a handsome Person is apt to draw a partial Ear to every thing he says; yet this Gentleman seldom said any thing, that might not have made a Man of the plainest Person agreeable. Such a continual Desire to please, it may be imagined, could not but, sometimes, lead him into a little venial Flattery, rather than not succeed in it. And I, perhaps, might be one of those Flies that was caught in this Honey. As I was, then, a young successful Author, and an Actor, in some unexpected Favour, whether deservedly, or not, imports not; yet such Appearances, at least were plausible Pretences enough, for an amicable Adulation to enlarge upon; and the Sallies of it a less Vanity, than mine, might not have been able to resist. Whatever this Weakness

ness on my side might be, I was not alone in it; for I have heard a Gentleman of Condition say, who knew the World as well, as most Men, that live in it, that let his Discretion be ever so much upon its Guard, he never fell into Mr. *Brett's* Company, without being loth to leave it, or carrying away a better Opinion of himself, from it. If his Conversation had this Effect among the Men; what must we suppose to have been the Consequence, when he gave it, a yet softer turn among the Fair Sex? Here now, a *French* Novelist would tell you fifty pretty Lies of him; but as I chuse to be tender of Secrets of that sort, I shall only borrow the good Breeding of that Language, and tell you, in a Word, that I knew several Instances of his being *un Homme a bonne Fortune*. But though his frequent Successes might generally keep him, from the usual Disquiets of a Lover, he knew this was a Life too liquorish to last; and therefore had Reflexions enough, to be govern'd by the Advice of his Friends, to turn these his Advantages of Nature to a better Use.

Among the many Men of Condition, with whom his Conversation had recommended him, to an Intimacy, Sir *Thomas Skipwith* had taken a particular Inclination to him; and as he had the Advancement of his Fortune, at Heart, introduced him, where there was a Lady, who had enough, in her Power, to disencumber him of the World, and make him every way, easy for Life.

While he was in pursuit of this Affair, which no time was to be lost in (for the Lady was to be in Town but for three Weeks) I one Day found him idling behind the Scenes, before the Play was begun. Upon sight of him, I took the usual

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Freedom

Freedom he allow'd me, to rate him roundly, for the Madness of not improving every Moment in his Power, in what was of such Consequence to him. Why are you not (said I) where you know you only should be? If your Design should once get Wind, in the Town, the Ill-will of your Enemies, or the Sincerity of the Lady's Friends, may soon blow up your Hopes, which, in your Circumstances of Life, cannot be long supported, by the bare Appearance of a Gentleman.— But it is impossible to proceed, without some Apology, for the very familiar Circumstance, that is to follow—— Yet, as it might not be so trivial in its Effect, as I fear it may be in the Narration, and is a Mark of that Intimacy, which is necessary should be known, had been between us, I will honestly make bold with my Scruples, and let the plain Truth of my Story take its Chance for Contempt, or Approbation.

After twenty Excuses, to clear himself of the Neglect, I had so warmly charged him with, he concluded them, with telling me, he had been out all the Morning, upon Business, and that his Linnen was too much soil'd, to be seen in Company. Oh, ho! said I, is that all? Come along with me, we will soon get over that dainty Difficulty: Upon which I haul'd him, by the Sleeve, into my Shifting-Room, he either staring, laughing, or hanging back all the Way. There, when I had lock'd him in, I began to strip off my upper Cloaths, and bad him do the same; still he either did not, or would not seem to understand me, and continuing his Laugh, cry'd, What! is the Puppy mad? No, no, only positive, said I; for look you, in short, the Play is ready to begin, and the  
Parts

Parts that you, and I, are to act to-day, are not of equal consequence; mine of young *Reveller* (in *Greenwich-Park*) is but a Rake; but whatever you may be, you are not to appear so; therefore take my Shirt, and give me yours; for depend upon't, stay here you shall not, and so go about your Business. To conclude, we fairly chang'd Linnen, nor could his Mother's have wrap'd him up more fortunately; for in about ten Days he marry'd the Lady. In a Year or two after his Marriage, he was chosen a Member of that Parliament, which was sitting, when King *William* dy'd. And, upon raising of some new Regiments, was made Lieutenant-Colonel, to that of *Sir Charles Hotham*. But as his Ambition extended not beyond the Bounds of a Park Wall, and a pleasant Retreat in the Corner of it, which, with too much Expence he had just finish'd, he, within another Year, had leave to resign his Company to a younger Brother.

This was the Figure, in Life, he made, when *Sir Thomas Skipwith* thought him the most proper Person, to oblige (if it could be an Obligation) with the Present of his Interest in the Patent. And from these Anecdotes of my Intimacy with him, it may be less a Surprise, when he came to Town invested with this new theatrical Power, that I should be the first Person, to whom he took any Notice of it. And notwithstanding he knew I was then engag'd, in another Interest, at the *Hay-Market*, he desired we might consider together, of the best Use he could make of it, assuring me, at the same time, he should think it of none to himself, unless it could in some Shape be turn'd to my Advantage. This friendly Declaration, though

N 5 it

it might be generous in him to make, was not needful, to incline me, in whatever might be honestly in my Power, whether by Interest or Negotiation, to serve him. My first Advice, therefore, was, That he should produce his Deeds to the other managing Patentee of *Drury-Lane*, and demand immediate Entrance to a joint Possession of all Effects, and Powers, to which that Deed had given him an equal Title. After which, if he met with no Opposition, to this Demand, (as upon sight of it he did not) that he should be watchful against any Contradiction, from his Colleague, in whatever he might propose, in carrying on the Affair, but to let him see, that he was determin'd in all his Measures. Yet to heighten that Resolution, with an Ease and Temper in his manner, as if he took it for granted, there could be no Opposition made, to whatever he had a Mind to. For that this Method, added to his natural Talent of Persuading, would imperceptibly lead his Colleague, into a Reliance on his superior Understanding, That however little he car'd for Business, he should give himself the Air at least, of Enquiry into what *had* been done, that what he intended to do, might be thought more considerable, and be the readier comply'd with: For if he once suffer'd his Colleague to seem wiser than himself, there would be no End of his perplexing him with absurd, and dilatory Measures; direct, and plain Dealing being a Quality his natural Diffidence would never suffer him to be Master of; of which, his not complying with his Verbal Agreement with *Swiney*, when the *Hay-Market* House was taken for both their Uses, was an Evidence. And though some People thought it  
Depth,



Depth, and Policy in him, to keep things often in Confusion, it was ever my Opinion they over-rated his Skill, and that, in reality his Parts were too weak, for his Post, in which he had always acted, to the best of his Knowledge. That his late Collegue, Sir *Thomas Skipwith*, had trusted too much to his Capacity, for this sort of Business; and was treated by him accordingly, without ever receiving any Profits from it, for several Years: Infomuch that when he found his Interest in such desperate Hands, he thought the best thing he could do with it was, (as he saw) to give it away. Therefore if he (*Mr. Brett*) could once fix himself, as I had advis'd, upon a different Foot, with this, hitherto untractable, Manager, the Business would soon run through whatever Channel, he might have a mind to lead it. And though I allow'd the greatest Difficulty he would meet with, would be in getting his Consent to a Union of the two Companies, which was the only Scheme that could raise the Patent to its former Value, and which, I knew, this close Manager would secretly lay all possible Rubs in the way to; yet it was visible, there was a way of reducing him to Compliance: For though, it was true his Caution would never part with a Straw, by way of Concession, yet to a high Hand, he would give up any thing, provided he were suffer'd to keep his Title to it: If his Hat were taken from his Head, in the Street, he would make no farther Resistance, than to say, *I am not willing to part with it.* Much less would he have the Resolution, openly to oppose any just Measures, when he should find one, who, with an equal Right, to his, and  
with

with a known Interest to bring them about, was resolv'd to go thro' with them.

Now though I knew my Friend was as thoroughly acquainted with this Patentee's Temper, as myself, yet I thought it not amiss to quicken and support his Resolution, by confirming to him, the little Trouble he would meet with, in pursuit of the Union I had advis'd him to; for it must be known, that on our side, Trouble was a sort of Physick we did not much care to take: But as the Fatigue of this Affair was likely to be lower'd by a good deal of Entertainment, and Humour, which would naturally engage him, in his dealing with so exotick a Partner; I knew that this softening the Business, into a Diversion, would lessen every Difficulty, that lay in our way to it.

However copiously I may have indulg'd myself in this Commemoration of a Gentleman, with whom I had pass'd so many of my younger Days, with Pleasure, yet the Reader may by this Insight into his Character, and by that of the other Patentee, be better able to judge of the secret Springs, that gave Motion to, or obstructed so considerable an Event, as that of the Re-union of the two Companies of Actors in 1708. In Histories of more weight, for want of such Particulars, we are often deceiv'd in the true Causes of Facts, that most concern us, to be let into; which sometimes makes us ascribe to Policy, or false Appearances of Wisdom, what perhaps, in reality, was the mere Effect of Chance or Humour.

Immediately after Mr. *Brett* was admitted as a joint Patentee, he made use of the Intimacy he had with the Vice-Chamberlain to assist his Scheme  
of

of this intended Union, in which he so far prevailed, that it was soon after left to the particular Care of the same Vice-Chamberlain, to give him all the Aid, and Power, necessary to the bringing what he desired, to Perfection. The Scheme was, to have but one Theatre for Plays, and another for Operas, under separate Interests. And this the generality of Spectators, as well as the most approv'd Actors, had been some time calling for, as the only Expedient to recover the Credit of the Stage, and the valuable Interest of its Managers.

As the Condition of the Comedians at this time, is taken Notice of in my *Dedication* of the *Wife's Resentment*, to the Marquis (now Duke) of *Kent*, and then Lord-Chamberlain, which was publish'd above thirty Years ago, when I had no thought of ever troubling the World, with this Theatrical History, I see no Reason, why it may not pass, as a Voucher of the Facts I am now speaking of; I shall therefore give them in the very Light I then saw them. After some Acknowledgment for his Lordship's Protection of our (*Hay-Market*) Theatre, it is further said —

“ The Stage has, for many Years, till of late,  
 “ groan'd under the greatest Discouragements,  
 “ which have been very much, if not wholly  
 “ owing to the Mismanagement of those, that  
 “ have aukwardly govern'd it. Great Sums have  
 “ been ventur'd upon empty Projects, and Hopes  
 “ of immoderate Gains; and when those Hopes  
 “ have fail'd, the Loss has been tyrannically de-  
 “ ducted out of the Actors Salary. And if your  
 “ Lordship had not redeem'd them—*This is*  
 “ *meant of our being suffer'd to come over to Swiney—*  
 “ they were very near being wholly laid aside, or,  
 “ at

“ at least, the Use of their Labour was to be  
 “ swallow’d up, in the pretended Merit of Sing-  
 “ ing, and Dancing.”

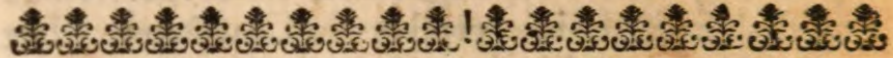
What follows, relates to the Difficulties in dealing with the then impracticable Manager, *viz.*

“ — And though your Lordship’s Tenderneſs  
 “ of oppreſſing, is ſo very juſt, that you have ra-  
 “ ther ſtaid to convince a Man of your good In-  
 “ tentions to him, than to do him even a Service  
 “ againſt his Will; yet ſince your Lordſhip has  
 “ ſo happily begun the Eſta bliſhment of the ſepa-  
 “ rate Diverſions, we live in hope, that the ſame  
 “ Juſtice, and Reſolution, will ſtill perſuade you,  
 “ to go as ſucceſſfully through with it. But while  
 “ any Man is ſuffer’d to confound the Induſtry,  
 “ and Uſe of them, by acting publickly, in op-  
 “ poſition, to your Lordſhip’s equal Intentions,  
 “ under a falſe, and intricate Pretence of not be-  
 “ ing able to comply with them; the Town is  
 “ likely to be more entertain’d with the private  
 “ Diſſenſions, than the publick Performance of  
 “ either, and the Actors, in a perpetual Fear,  
 “ and Neceſſity of petitioning your Lordſhip every  
 “ Season, for new Relief.”

Such was the State of the Stage, immediately preceding the time of Mr. *Brett’s* being admitted a joint Patentee, who, as he ſaw, with clearer Eyes, what was its evident Intereſt, left no proper Meaſures unattempted, to make this, ſo long deſpair’d-of, Union practicable. The moſt apparent Difficulty to be got over, in this Affair, was, what could be done for *Swiney*, in conſideration of his being oblig’d to give up thoſe Actors, whom the Power and Choice of the Lord-Chamberlain, had the Year before, ſet him at the Head  
 of,

of, and by whose Management, those Actors had found themselves in a prosperous Condition. But an Accident, at this time, happily contributed, to make that Matter easy. The Inclination of our People of Quality for foreign Operas, had now reach'd the Ears of *Italy*, and the Credit of their Taste had drawn over from thence, without any more particular Invitation, one of their capital Singers, the famous Signior *Cavaliero Nicolini*: From whose Arrival, and the Impatience of the Town, to hear him, it was concluded, that Operas, being, now, so completely provided, could not fail of Success; and that, by making *Swiney* sole Director of them, the Profits must be an ample Compensation, for his Resignation of the Actors. This Matter being thus adjusted, by *Swiney's* Acceptance of the Opera only to be perform'd at the *Hay-Market* House; the Actors were all order'd to return to *Drury-Lane*, there to remain (under the Patentees) her Majesty's only Company of Comedians.

C H A P.



## C H A P. XII.

*A short View of the Opera, when first divided from the Comedy. Plays recover their Credit. The old Patentee uneasy at their Success. Why. The Occasion of Colonel Brett's throwing up his Share in the Patent. The Consequences of it. Anecdotes of Goodman the Actor. The Rate of favourite Actors, in his Time. The Patentees, by endeavouring to reduce their Price, lose them all a second time. The principal Comedians return to the Hay-Market in Shares with Swiney. They alter that Theatre. The original and present Form of the Theatre in Drury-Lane, compar'd. Operas fall off. The Occasion of it. Farther Observations upon them. The Patentee disposess'd of Drury-Lane Theatre. Mr. Collier, with a new License, heads the Remains of that Company.*

**P**LAYS, and Operas, being thus established, upon separate Interests, they were now left, to make the best of their way, into Favour, by different Merit. Although the Opera is not a Plant of our Native Growth, nor what our plain-er Appetites are fond of, and is of so delicate a Nature, that without excessive Charge, it cannot live long among us; especially while the nicest *Connoisseurs* in Musick fall into such various Heresies in Taste, every Sect pretending to be the true one: Yet, as it is called a Theatrical Entertainment, and by its Alliance, or Neutrality, has  
more,

more, or less affected our Domestick Theatre, a short view of its Progress may be allow'd a Place in our History.

After this new Regulation, the first Opera that appear'd, was *Pyrrhus*. Subscriptions, at that time were not extended, as of late, to the whole Season, but were limited to the first six Days only of a new Opera. The chief Performers, in this, were *Nicolini*, *Valentini*, and Mrs. *Tofts*; and for the inferior Parts, the best that were then to be found. Whatever Praises may have been given to the most famous Voices, that have been heard since *Nicolini*; upon the whole, I cannot but come into the Opinion, that still prevails among several Persons of Condition, who are able to give a Reason for their liking, that no Singer, since his Time, has so justly, and gracefully acquitted himself, in whatever Character he appear'd, as *Nicolini*. At most, the Difference between him and the greatest Favourite of the Ladies, *Farinelli*, amounted but to this, that he might sometimes more exquisitely surprize us, but *Nicolini* (by pleasing the Eye, as well as the Ear) fill'd us with a more various, and *rational* Delight. Whether in this Excellence, he has since had any Competitor, perhaps, will be better judg'd, by what the Critical Censor of *Great Britain* says of him in his 115th *Tatler*, viz.

“ *Nicolini* sets off the Character he bears in an  
 “ Opera, by his Action, as much as he does the  
 “ Words of it, by his Voice; every Limb, and  
 “ Finger, contributes to the Part he acts, inso-  
 “ much that a deaf Man might go along with  
 “ him in the Sense of it. There is scarce a  
 “ beautiful Posture, in an old Statue, which he  
 “ does

“ does not plant himself in, as the different Cir-  
 “ cumstances of the Story give occasion for it.—  
 “ He performs the most ordinary Action, in a  
 “ manner suitable to the Greatness of his Cha-  
 “ racter, and shews the Prince, even in the  
 “ giving of a Letter, or dispatching a Mes-  
 “ sage, &c.”

His Voice at this first Time of being among us, (for he made us a second Visit when it was impair'd) had all that strong, clear, Sweetness of Tone, so lately admired in *Senesino*. A blind Man could scarce have distinguish'd them; but in Volubility of Throat, the former had much the Superiority. This so excellent Performer's Agreement was Eight Hundred Guineas for the Year, which is but an eighth Part more, than half the Sum that has since been given, to several, that could never totally surpass him: The Consequence of which is, that the Losses by Operas, for several Seasons, to the End of the Year 1738, have been so great, that those Gentlemen of Quality, who last undertook the Direction of them, found it ridiculous any longer to entertain the Publick, at so extravagant an Expence, while no one particular Person thought himself oblig'd by it.

Mrs. *Tofts*, who took her first Grounds of Musick here in her own Country, before the *Italian* Taste had so highly prevail'd, was then not an Adept in it: Yet whatever Defect the fashionably Skilful might find in her manner, she had in the general Sense of her Spectators, Charms that few of the most learned Singers ever arrive at. The Beauty of her fine proportioned Figure, and exquisitely sweet, silver Tone of her Voice,



Voice, with that peculiar, rapid Swiftneſs of her Throat, were Perfections not to be imitated by Art, or Labour. *Valentini* I have already mention'd, therefore need only ſay farther of him, that though he was every way inferior to *Nicolini*, yet as he had the Advantage of giving us our firſt Impreſſion of a good Opera Singer, he had ſtill his Admirers, and was of great Service in being ſo ſkilful a Second to his Superior.

Three ſuch excellent Performers, in the ſame kind of Entertainment at once, *England* till this Time had never ſeen: Without any farther Compariſon, then, with the much dearer bought, who have ſucceeded them; their Novelty, at leaſt, was a Charm that drew vaſt Audiences of the fine World after them. *Swiney* their ſole Director was proſperous, and in one Winter, a Gainer by them of a moderate younger Brother's Fortune. But as Muſick, by ſo profuſe a Diſpenſation of her Beauties, could not always ſupply our dainty Appetites, with equal Variety, nor for ever pleaſe us with the ſame Objects; the Opera, after one luxurious Season, like the fine Wife of a roving Huſband, began to loſe its Charms, and every Day diſcovered to our Satiety, Imperfections, which our former Fondneſs had been blind to: But of this I ſhall obſerve more in its Place: In the mean time, let us enquire into the Productions of our native Theatre.

It may eaſily be conceiv'd, that by this entire Re-union of the two Companies, Plays muſt generally have been perform'd to a more than uſual Advantage, and Exactneſs: For now every chief Actor, according to his particular Capacity, piqued himſelf upon rectifying thoſe Errors, which

which during their divided State, were almost unavoidable. Such a Choice of Actors added a Richness to every good Play, as it was, then, serv'd up, to the publick Entertainment: The common People crowded to them, with a more joyous Expectation, and those of the higher Taste, return'd to them, as to old Acquaintances, with new Desires, after a long Absence. In a Word, all Parties seem'd better pleas'd, but he, who one might imagine had most Reason to be so, the (lately) sole managing Patentee. He, indeed, saw his Power daily mould'ring from his own Hands, into those of Mr. *Brett*; whose Gentlemanly manner of making every one's Business easy to him, threw their old Master under a Disregard, which he had not been us'd to, nor could with all his happy Change of Affairs, support. Although this grave Theatrical Minister, of whom I have been oblig'd to make such frequent mention, had acquired the Reputation of a most profound Politician, by being often incomprehensible, yet I am not sure, that his Conduct at this Juncture, gave us not an evident Proof, that he was, like other frail Mortals, more a Slave to his Passions, than his Interest; for no Creature ever seem'd more fond of Power, that so little knew how to use it, to his Profit and Reputation; otherwise he could not possibly have been so discontented, in his secure and prosperous State of the Theatre, as to resolve, at all Hazards, to destroy it. We shall now see what infallible Measures he took, to bring this laudable Scheme to Perfection.

He plainly saw, that as this disagreeable Prosperity was chiefly owing to the Conduct of  
Mr.

Mr. *Brett*, there could be no hope of recovering the Stage to its former Confusion, but by finding some effectual Means to make Mr. *Brett* weary of his Charge: The most probable he could, for the present, think of, in this Distress, was to call in the Adventurers (whom for many Years, by his Defence in Law, he had kept out) now to take care of their visibly improving Interests. This fair Appearance of Equity, being known to be his own Proposal, he rightly guess'd would incline these Adventurers to form a Majority of Votes on his Side, in all theatrical Questions; and consequently become a Check upon the Power of Mr. *Brett*, who had so visibly alienated the Hearts of his theatrical Subjects, and now began to govern without him. When the Adventurers, therefore, were re-admitted to their old Government; after having recommended himself to them, by proposing to make some small Dividend of the Profits (though he did not design that Jest should be repeated) he took care that the Creditors of the Patent, who were, then, no inconsiderable Body, should carry off the every Weeks clear Profits, in proportion to their several Dues and Demands. This Conduct, so specially just, he had Hopes would let Mr. *Brett* see, that his Share, in the Patent, was not so valuable an Acquisition as, perhaps, he might think it; and probably make a Man of his Turn to Pleasure, soon weary of the little Profit, and great Plague it gave him. Now, though these might be all notable Expedients, yet I cannot say they would have wholly contributed to Mr. *Brett*'s quitting his Post, had not a Matter of much stronger Moment, an unexpected Dispute between

tween him, and Sir *Thomas Skipwith*, prevailed with him to lay it down: For in the midst of this flourishing State of the Patent, Mr. *Brett* was surpriz'd with a Subpœna into Chancery, from Sir *Thomas Skipwith*, who alledg'd in his Bill, that the Conveyance he had made of his Interest in the Patent, to Mr. *Brett*, was only intended in Trust. (Whatever the Intent might be, the Deed itself, which I then read, made no mention of any Trust whatever.) But whether Mr. *Brett*, as Sir *Thomas* farther asserted, had previously, or after the Deed was sign'd, given his Word of Honour, that if he should ever make the Stage turn to any Account, or Profit, he would certainly restore it: That indeed, I can say nothing to; but the Deed valid, or void, the Facts that apparently follow'd were, that tho' Mr. *Brett*, in his Answer to this Bill, absolutely deny'd his receiving this Assignment, either in Trust, or upon any limited Condition, of what kind soever; yet he made no farther Defence in the Cause. But since he found Sir *Thomas* had thought fit, on any Account, to sue for the Restitution of it; and Mr. *Brett* himself being conscious, that, as the World knew, he had paid no Consideration for it: his keeping it might be misconstrued, or not favourably spoken of; or perhaps finding, tho' the Profits were great, they were constantly swallow'd up (as has been observ'd) by the previous Satisfaction of old Debts, he grew so tir'd of the Plague, and Trouble, the whole Affair had given him, and was likely still to engage him in, that in a few Weeks after, he withdrew himself, from all Concern with the Theatre, and quietly left Sir *Thomas* to find his better Account in it. And thus

thus stood this undecided Right, till upon the Demise of Sir *Thomas*, Mr. *Brett* being allow'd the Charges he had been at, in this Attendance, and Prosecution of the Union, reconvey'd this Share of the Patent to Sir *George Skipwith*, the Son, and Heir of Sir *Thomas*.

Our Politician, the old Patentee, having thus fortunately got rid of Mr. *Brett*, who had so rashly brought the Patent once more to be a profitable Tenure, was now again at Liberty, to chuse rather to lose all, than not to have it all to himself.

I have, elsewhere, observ'd, that nothing can so effectually secure the Strength, or contribute to the Prosperity of a good Company, as the Directors of it having always, as near as possible, an amicable Understanding, with three or four of their best Actors, whose good, or ill-will, must naturally make a wide Difference, in their profitable, or useless manner of serving them: While the principal are kept reasonably easy, the lower Class can never be troublesome, without hurting themselves: But when a valuable Actor is hardly treated, the Master must be a very cunning Man, that finds his Account in it. We shall now see how far Experience will verify this Observation.

The Patentees thinking themselves secure, in being restor'd to their former absolute Power, over, this, now, only Company, chose rather to govern it by the Reverse of the Method I have recommended: For tho' the daily Charge of their united Company amounted not, by a good deal, to what either of the two Companies, now in *Drury-Lane*, or *Covent-Garden*, singly, arises; they

they notwithstanding fell into their former Politics, of thinking every Shilling taken from a hired Actor, so much clear Gain to the Proprietor: Many of their People, therefore, were actually, if not injudiciously, reduced in their Pay, and others given to understand, the same Fate was design'd them; of which last Number, I, myself, was one; which occurs to my Memory, by the Answer I made to one of the Adventurers; who, in Justification of their intended Proceeding told me, that my Salary, tho' it should be less, than it was, by ten Shillings a Week, would still be more than ever *Goodman* had, who was a better Actor, than I could pretend to be: To which I reply'd, This may be true, but then you know, Sir, it is as true, that *Goodman* was forced to go upon the High-way for a Livelihood. As this was a known Fact of *Goodman*, my mentioning it, on that Occasion, I believe, was of Service to me; at least my Salary was not reduced after it. To say a Word or two more of *Goodman*, so celebrated an Actor, in his Time, perhaps may set the Conduct of the Patentees in a clearer Light. Tho' *Goodman* had left the Stage, before I came to it, I had some slight Acquaintance with him. About the Time of his being expected to be an Evidence against Sir *John Fenwick*, in the Assassination-Plot, in 1696, I happen'd to meet him at Dinner, at Sir *Thomas Skipwith's*, who, as he was an agreeable Companion himself, liked *Goodman* for the same Quality. Here it was, that *Goodman*, without Disguise, or sparing himself, fell into a laughing Account of several loose Passages of *his* younger Life; as his being expell'd the University of

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*Cambridge,*

*Cambridge*, for being one of the hot-headed Sparks, who were concern'd in the cutting, and defacing the Duke of *Monmouth's* Picture, then Chancellor of that Place. But this Disgrace, it seems, had not disqualified him for the Stage; which, like the Sea-Service, refuses no Man, for his Morals, that is able-bodied: There, as an Actor, he soon grew into a different Reputation; but whatever his Merit might be, the Pay of a hired Hero, in those Days, was so very low, that he was forced, it seems, to take the Air (as he call'd it) and borrow what Money the first Man he met, had about him. But this being his first Exploit of that kind, which the Scantiness of his theatrical Fortune had reduced him to, King *James* was prevail'd upon, to pardon him: Which *Goodman* said, was doing him so particular an Honour, that no Man could wonder, if his Acknowledgment had carried him a little farther, than ordinary, into the Interest of that Prince: But as he had, lately, been out of Luck, in backing his old Master, he had now no way to get home the Life he was out, upon his Account, but by being under the same Obligations to King *William*.

Another Anecdote of him, though not quite so dishonourably enterprizing, which I had from his own Mouth, at a different Time, will equally shew, to what low shifts in Life, the poor Provision for good Actors, under the early Government of the Patent, reduced them. In the younger Days of their Heroism, Captain *Griffin*, and *Goodman* were confined by their moderate Salaries, to the Oeconomy of lying together, in the same Bed, and having but one whole Shirt

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between them: One of them being under the Obligation of a Rendezvous, with a fair Lady, insisted upon his wearing it, out of his Turn, which occasion'd so high a Dispute, that the Combat was immediately demanded, and accordingly their Pretensions to it, were decided by a fair Tilt upon the Spot, in the Room, where they lay: But whether *Clytus*, or *Alexander* was obliged to see no Company, till a worse could be wash'd for him, seems not to be a material Point in their History, or to my Purpose.

By this Rate of *Goodman*, who, till the Time of his quitting the Stage, never had more, than what is call'd forty Shillings a Week, it may be judg'd, how cheap the Labour of Actors had been formerly; and the Patentees thought it a Folly to continue the higher Price, (which their Divisions had since raised them to) now there was but one Market for them; but alas! they had forgot their former fatal Mistake of squabbling with their Actors, in 1695; nor did they make any Allowance for the Changes and Operations of Time, or enough consider the Interest the Actors had in the Lord-Chamberlain, on whose Protection they might always rely, and whose Decrees had been less restrain'd by Precedent, than those of a Lord-Chancellor.

In this mistaken View of their Interest, the Patentees, by treating their Actors as Enemies, really made them so: And when once the Masters of a hired Company think not their Actors Hearts as necessary, as their Hands, they cannot be said to have agreed for above half the Work, they are able to do in a Day: Or, if an unexpected Success should, notwithstanding, make the Profits



Profits, in any gross Disproportion, greater than the Wages; the Wages will always have something worse, than a Murmur, at the Head of them, that will not only measure the Merit of the Actor, by the Gains of the Proprietor, but will never naturally be quiet, till every Scheme of getting into Property has been tried, to make the Servant his own Master: And this, as far as Experience can make me judge, will always be, in either of these Cases, the State of our *English* Theatre. What Truth there may be, in this Observation, we are now coming to a Proof of.

To enumerate all the particular Acts of Power, in which the Patentees daily bore hard, upon *this*, now only Company of Actors, might be as tedious, as unnecessary; I shall therefore come, at once, to their most material Grievance, upon which they grounded their Complaint to the Lord-Chamberlain, who, in the Year following, 1709, took effectual Measures for their Relief.

The Patentees observing that the Benefit-Plays of the Actors, towards the latter End of the Season, brought the most crowded Audiences in the Year; began to think their own Interests too much neglected, by these partial Favours of the Town, to their Actors; and therefore judg'd, it would not be impolitick, in such wholesome annual Profits, to have a Fellow-feeling with them. Accordingly, an *Indulto* was laid of one Third, out of the Profits of every Benefit, for the proper Use, and Behoof of the Patent. But, that a clear Judgment may be form'd of the Equity, or Hardship of this Imposition, it will be necessary to

shew from whence, and from what Causes, the Actors Claim to Benefits originally proceeded.

During the Reign of King *Charles*, an Actor's Benefit had never been heard of. The first Indulgence of this kind, was given to Mrs. *Barry* (as has been formerly observed) in King *James's* Time, in Consideration of the extraordinary Applause, that had followed her Performance: But there this Favour rested, to her alone, till after the Division of the only Company in 1695, at which Time the Patentees were soon reduced to pay their Actors, half in good Words, and half in ready Money. In this precarious Condition, some particular Actors (however binding their Agreements might be) were too poor, or too wise to go to Law with a Lawyer; and therefore rather chose to compound their Arrears, for their being admitted to the Chance of having them made up, by the Profits of a Benefit-Play. This Expedient had this Consequence; that the Patentees, tho' their daily Audiences, might, and did sometimes, mend, still kept the short Subsistence of their Actors, at a stand, and grew more steady in their Resolution so to keep them, as they found them less apt to mutiny, while their Hopes of being clear'd off, by a Benefit, were depending. In a Year, or two, these Benefits grew so advantageous, that they became, at last, the chief Article, in every Actor's Agreement.

Now though the Agreements of these united Actors, I am speaking of in 1708, were as yet, only Verbal; yet that made no Difference in the honest Obligation, to keep them: But, as Honour at that time happen'd to have but a loose hold of their Consciences, the Patentees rather chose to give

give it the slip, and went on with their Work without it. No Actor, therefore, could have his Benefit fix'd, till he had first sign'd a Paper, signifying his voluntary Acceptance of it, upon the, above, Conditions, any Claims from Custom, to the contrary, notwithstanding. Several at first refus'd to sign this Paper; upon which the next in Rank were offer'd on the same Conditions, to come before the Refusers; this smart Expedient got some few of the Fearful the Preference to their Seniors; who, at last, seeing the Time was too short for a present Remedy, and that they must either come into the Boat, or lose their Tide, were forc'd to comply, with what, they, as yet, silently, resent as the severest Injury. In this Situation, therefore, they chose to let the principal Benefits be over, that their Grievances might swell into some Bulk, before they made any Application for Redress to the Lord-Chamberlain; who, upon hearing their general Complaint, order'd the Patentees to shew cause, why their Benefits had been diminish'd one Third, contrary to the common Usage? The Patentees pleaded the sign'd Agreement, and the Actors Receipts of the other two Thirds, in full Satisfaction. But these were prov'd to have been exacted from them, by the Methods already mentioned. They notwithstanding insist upon them as lawful. But as Law, and Equity do not always agree, they were look'd upon as unjust, and arbitrary. Whereupon the Patentees were warn'd at their Peril, to refuse the Actors full Satisfaction. But here it was thought necessary, that Judgment should be for some time respited, till the Actors, who had leave so to do, could form a Body strong enough to make the In-

clination of the Lord-Chamberlain to relieve them, practicable.

Accordingly *Swiney* (who was then sole Director of the Opera only) had Permission to enter into a private Treaty, with such of the united Actors in *Drury-Lane*, as might be thought fit to head a Company, under their own Management, and to be Sharers with him in the *Hay-Market*. The Actors chosen for this Charge, were *Wilks*, *Dogget*, *Mrs. Oldfield*, and Myself. But, before I proceed, lest it should seem surprizing, that neither *Betterton*, *Mrs. Barry*, *Mrs. Bracegirdle*, or *Booth*, were Parties in this Treaty; it must be observ'd, that *Betterton* was now seventy-three, and rather chose, with the Infirmities of Age, upon him, to rely on such Salary, as might be appointed him, than to involve himself, in the Cares, and Hurry, that must unavoidably attend the Regulation of a new Company. As to the two celebrated Actresses I have named, this has been my first proper Occasion of making it known, that they had both quitted the Stage the Year before this Transaction was thought of. And *Booth*, as yet, was scarce out of his Minority as an Actor, or only in the Promise of that Reputation, which in about four or five Years after, he happily arriv'd at. However, at this Juncture, he was not so far overlook'd, as not to be offer'd a valuable Addition to his Salary: But this he declin'd, being, while the Patentees were under this Distress, as much, if not more, in favour, with their chief Manager, as a Schematist, than as an Actor: And indeed he appear'd, to my Judgment, more inclin'd to risque his Fortune in *Drury-Lane*, where he should have no Rival in Parts, or Power, than on any Terms  
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to embark in the *Hay-Market*; where he was sure to meet with Opponents in both. However this his Separation from our Interest, when our All was at Stake, afterwards kept his Advancement, to a Share with us, in our more successful Days, longer postpon'd, than otherwise it probably might have been.

When Mrs. *Oldfield* was nominated as a joint Sharer, in our new Agreement to be made with *Swiney*; *Dogget*, who had no Objection to her Merit, insisted that our Affairs could never be upon a secure Foundation, if there was more, than one Sex admitted to the Management of them. He therefore hop'd, that if we offer'd Mrs. *Oldfield*, a *Carte Blanche*, instead of a Share, she would not think herself slighted. This was instantly agreed to, and Mrs. *Oldfield* receiv'd it rather as a Favour, than a Disobligation: Her Demands therefore were Two Hundred Pounds a Year certain, and a Benefit clear of all Charges; which were readily sign'd to. Her Easiness on this Occasion, some Years after, when our Establishment was in Prosperity, made us, with less Reluctancy, advance her Two Hundred Pounds, to Three Hundred Guineas *per Annum*, with her usual Benefit, which upon an Average for several Years, at least, doubled that Sum.

When a sufficient Number of Actors were engag'd, under our Confederacy with *Swiney*, it was then judg'd a proper time, for the Lord-Chamberlain's Power, to operate, which, by lying above a Month dormant, had so far recover'd the Patentees, from any Apprehensions of what might fall upon them, from their late Usurpations on the Benefits of the Actors, that they began to set

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their Marks upon those who had distinguish'd themselves, in the Application for Redress. Several little Disgraces were put upon them; particularly in the Disposal of Parts, in Plays to be reviv'd, and as visible a Partiality was shewn in the Promotion of those in their Interest, though their Endeavours to serve them could be of no extraordinary use. How often does History shew us, in the same State of Courts, the same Politicks have been practis'd? All this while, the other Party were passively silent; till one Day, the Actor who particularly solicited their Cause, at the Lord-Chamberlain's Office, being shewn there the Order sign'd, for absolutely silencing the Patentees, and ready to be serv'd, flew back with the News to his Companions, then at a Rehearsal, in which he had been wanted; when being call'd to his Part, and something hastily question'd by the Patentee, for his Neglect of Business: This Actor, I say, with an erected Look, and a Theatrical Spirit, at once threw off the Mask, and roundly told him ——— *Sir, I have now no more Business Here, than you have; in half an Hour, you will neither have Actors to command, nor Authority, to employ them.* — The Patentee, who though he could not readily comprehend his mysterious manner of Speaking, had just a Glimpse of Terror enough from the Words, to soften his Reproof into a cold formal Declaration, That *if he would not do his Work, he should not be paid.* — But now, to complete the Catastrophe of these Theatrical Commotions, enters the Messenger, with the Order of Silence in his Hand, whom the same Actor officiously introduc'd, telling the Patentee, that the Gentleman wanted to speak with him,

him, from the Lord-Chamberlain. When the Messenger had delivered the Order, the Actor throwing his Head over his Shoulder, towards the Patentee, in the manner of *Shakespear's Harry the Eighth* to Cardinal *Wolfey*, cry'd — *Read o'er that! and now — to Breakfast, with what Appetite you may.* Tho' these Words might be spoken, in too vindictive, and insulting a manner, to be commended; yet from the Fullness of a Heart injuriously treated, and now reliev'd by that instant Occasion, why might they not be pardon'd?

The Authority of the Patent now no longer subsisting, all the confederate Actors immediately walk'd out of the House, to which they never return'd, till they became themselves the Tenants, and Masters of it.

Here again, we see an higher Instance of the Authority of a Lord-Chamberlain, than any of those I have elsewhere mentioned: From whence that Power might be deriv'd, as I have already said, I am not Lawyer enough to know; however it is evident that a Lawyer obey'd it, though to his Cost; which might incline one to think, that the Law was not clearly against it: Be that as it may, since the Law has lately made it no longer a Question, let us drop the Enquiry, and proceed to the Facts, which follow'd this Order, that silenc'd the Patent.

From this last injudicious Disagreement of the Patentees with their principal Actors, and from what they had suffered on the same Occasion, in the Division of their only Company in 1695, might we not imagine there was something of Infatuation, in their Management? For though I allow Actors, in general, when they are too much

indulg'd, or govern'd by an unsteady Head, to be as unruly a Multitude as Power can be plagued with; yet there is a Medium, which, if cautiously observed by a candid use of Power, making them always know, without feeling, their Superior, neither suffering their Encroachments, nor invading their Rights, with an immoveable Adherence to the accepted Laws, they are to walk by; such a Regulation, I say, has never fail'd, in my Observation, to have made them a tractable, and profitable Society. If the Government of a well-establish'd Theatre were to be compar'd to that of a Nation; there is no one Act of Policy, or Misconduct in the one, or the other, in which the Manager might not, in some parallel Case (laugh, if you please) be equally applauded, or condemned with the Statesman. Perhaps this will not be found so wild a Conceit, if you look into the 193<sup>d</sup> *Tatler*, Vol 4. where the Affairs of the State, and those of the very Stage, which I am now treating of, are, in a Letter from *Downs* the Prompter, compar'd, and with a great deal of Wit and Humour, set upon an equal Foot of Policy. The Letter is suppos'd to have been written, in the last Change of the Ministry in *Queen Anne's* Time. I will therefore venture, upon the Authority of that Author's Imagination, to carry the Comparison as high as it can possibly go, and say, That as I remember one of our Princes, in the last Century, to have lost his Crown, by too arbitrary a Use of his Power, though he knew how fatal the same Measures had been to his unhappy Father before him; why should we wonder, that the same Passions taking Possession of Men, in lower Life, by an equally impolitick Usage of  
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their Theatrical Subjects, should have involved the Patentees, in proportionable Calamities.

During the Vacation, which immediately follow'd the Silence of the Patent, both Parties were at leisure to form their Schemes for the Winter: For the Patentee would still hold out, notwithstanding his being so miserably maim'd, or overmatch'd: He had no more Regard to Blows, than a blind Cock of the Game; he might be beaten, but would never yield, the Patent was still in his Possession, and the Broad-Seal to it visibly as fresh as ever: Besides, he had yet some Actors in his Service, at a much cheaper Rate than those who had left him, the Salaries of which last, now they would not work for him, he was not oblig'd to pay. In this way of thinking, he still kept together such, as had not been invited over to the *Hay-Market*, or had been influenc'd by *Booth*, to follow his Fortune to *Drury-Lane*.

By the Patentee's keeping these Remains of his broken Forces together, it is plain, that he imagin'd this Order of Silence, like others of the same Kind, would be recall'd of course, after a reasonable time of Obedience had been paid to it: But, it seems, he had rely'd too much upon former Precedents; nor had his Politicks yet div'd, into the Secret, that the Court Power, with which the Patent had been so long, and often at variance, had now a mind to take the publick Diversions more absolutely into their own Hands: Not that I have any stronger Reasons for this Conjecture, than that the Patent, never after this Order of Silence, got leave to play during the Queen's Reign. But upon the Accession of his late Majesty, Power having then a different Aspect, the  
Patent

Patent found no Difficulty in being permitted to exercise its former Authority for acting Plays, &c. which, however from this time of their lying still, in 1709, did not happen till 1714, which the old Patentee never liv'd to see: For he dy'd about six Weeks before the new-built Theatre in *Lincoln's-Inn-Fields* was open'd, where the first Play acted was the *Recruiting Officer*, under the Management of his Heirs and Successors. But of that Theatre, it is not yet time to give any further Account.

The first Point resolv'd on, by the Comedians now re-establish'd in the *Hay-Market*, was to alter the auditory Part of their Theatre; the Inconveniencies of which have been fully enlarged upon in a former Chapter. What embarrass'd them most in this Design, was, their want of Time to do it in a more complete manner than it now remains in, otherwise they had brought it, to the original Model of that in *Drury-Lane*, only in a larger Proportion, as the wider Walls of it would require; as there are not many Spectators who may remember what Form the *Drury-Lane* Theatre stood in, about forty Years ago, before the old Patentee, to make it hold more Money, took it in his Head to alter it, it were but Justice to lay the original Figure, which Sir *Christopher Wren* first gave it, and the Alterations of it, now standing, in a fair Light; that equal Spectators may see, if they were at their choice, which of the Structures would incline them to a Preference. But in this Appeal, I only speak to such Spectators as allow a good Play, well acted, to be the most valuable Entertainment of the Stage. Whether such Plays (leaving the Skill of the dead, or living Actors equally out of the Question) have been  
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more, or less, recommended in their Presentation, by either of these different Forms of that Theatre, is our present Matter of Enquiry.

It must be observed then, that the Area, or Platform of the old Stage, projected about four Foot forwarder, in a Semi-oval Figure, parallel to the Benches of the Pit; and that the former, lower Doors of Entrance for the Actors were brought down between the two foremost (and then only) Pilasters; in the Place of which Doors, now the two Stage-Boxes are fixt. That where the two Doors of Entrance now are, there formerly stood two additional Side-Wings, in front to a full Set of Scenes, which had then almost a double Effect, in their Loftiness, and Magnificence.

By this Original Form, the usual Station of the Actors, in almost every Scene, was advanc'd at least ten Foot nearer to the Audience, than they now can be; because, not only from the Stage's being shorten'd, in front, but likewise from the additional Interposition of those Stage-Boxes, the Actors (in respect to the Spectators, that fill them) are kept so much more backward from the main Audience, than they us'd to be: But when the Actors were in Possession of that forwarder Space, to advance upon, the Voice was then more in the Centre of the House, so that the most distant Ear had scarce the least Doubt, or Difficulty, in hearing what fell from the weakest Utterance: All Objects were thus drawn nearer to the Sense; every painted Scene was stronger; every grand Scene and Dance more extended; every rich or fine-coloured Habit had a more lively Lustre: Nor was the minutest Motion of a Feature

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ture (properly changing with the Passion, or Humour it suited) ever lost, as they frequently must be in the Obscurity of too great a Distance: And how valuable an Advantage the Facility of hearing distinctly, is to every well-acted Scene, every common Spectator is a Judge. A Voice scarce raised above the Tone of a Whisper, either in Tenderness, Resignation, innocent Distress, or Jealousy suppress'd, often have as much concern with the Heart, as the most clamorous Passions; and when on any of these Occasions, such affecting Speeches are plainly heard, or lost, how wide is the Difference, from the great or little Satisfaction received from them? To all this, a Master of a Company may say, I now receive Ten Pounds more, than could have been taken formerly, in every full House! Not unlikely. But might not his House be oftener full, if the Auditors were oftener pleas'd? Might not every bad House too, by a Possibility of being made every Day better, add as much to one Side of his Account, as it could take from the other? If what I have said, carries any Truth in it, why might not the original Form of this Theatre be restor'd? But let this Digression avail what it may, the Actors now return'd to the *Hay-Market*, as I have observ'd, wanting nothing but length of Time to have govern'd their Alteration of that Theatre, by this original Model of *Drury-Lane*, which I have recommended. As their time therefore was short, they made their best use of it; they did something to it: They contracted its Wideness, by three Ranges of Boxes on each Side; and brought down its enormous high Ceiling, within so proportionable a Compass, that it effectually cur'd those

those hollow Undulations of the Voice formerly complain'd of. The Remedy had its Effect; their Audiences exceeded their Expectation. There was now no other Theatre open against them; they had the Town to themselves; they were their own Masters, and the Profits of their Industry came into their own Pockets.

Yet with all this fair Weather, the Season of their uninterrupted Prosperity was not yet arriv'd; for the great Expence, and thinner Audiences of the Opera (of which they then were equally Directors) was a constant Drawback upon their Gains, yet not so far, but that their Income this Year was better than in their late Station at *Drury-Lane*. But by the short Experience we had then had of Operas; by the high Reputation they seem'd to have been arriv'd at, the Year before; by their Power of drawing the whole Body of Nobility, as by Enchantment, to their Solemnities; by that Prodigality of Expence, at which they were so willing to support them; and from the late extraordinary Profits *Swiney* had made of them; what Mountains did we not hope from this Mole-hill? But alas! the fairy Vision was vanish'd, this Bridal Beauty was grown familiar to the general Taste, and Satiety began to make Excuses for its want of Appetite: Or what is still stranger, its late Admirers now as much valued their Judgment, in being able to find out the Faults of the Performers, as they had before, in discovering their Excellencies. The Truth is, that this kind of Entertainment being so entirely sensual, it had no Possibility of getting the better of our Reason, but by its Novelty; and that Novelty could never be supported but by an annual Change

Change of the best Voices, which like the finest Flowers bloom but for a Season, and when that is over, are only dead Nose-gays. From this Natural Cause, we have seen within these two Years, even *Farinelli* singing to an Audience of five and thirty Pounds; and yet, if common Fame may be credited, the same Voice, so neglected in one Country, has in another had Charms sufficient to make that Crown sit easy on the Head of a Monarch, which the Jealousy of Politicians (who had their Views in his keeping it) fear'd without some such extraordinary Amusement, his Satiety of Empire might tempt him, a second time, to resign.

There is too, in the very Species of an *Italian* Singer, such an innate, fantastical Pride, and Caprice, that the Government of them (here at least) is almost impracticable. This Distemper, as we were not sufficiently warn'd, or apprized of, threw our musical Affairs into Perplexities, we knew not easily how to get out of. There is scarce a sensible Auditor in the Kingdom, that has not, since that time, had Occasion to laugh at the several Instances of it: But what is still more ridiculous, these costly Canary-Birds have sometimes infested the whole Body of our dignified Lovers of Musick, with the same childish Animosities: Ladies have been known to decline their Visits, upon Account of their being of a different musical Party. *Cæsar*, and *Pompey* made not a warmer Division, in the *Roman* Republick, than those Heroines, their Country Women, the *Faustina* and *Cuzzoni* blew up in our Commonwealth, of Academical Musick, by their implacable Pretensions to Superiority! And while this  
Greatness

Greatness of Soul, is their unalterable Virtue, it will never be practicable to make two capital Singers of the same Sex, do as they should do in one Opera, at the same time! no, not tho' *England* were to double the Sums it has already thrown after them: For even in their own Country, where an extraordinary Occasion has called a great Number of their best, to sing together, the Mischief they have made has been proportionable; an Instance of which, if I am rightly inform'd, happen'd at *Parma*, where upon the Celebration of the Marriage of that Duke, a Collection was made of the most eminent Voices, that Expence, or Interest, could purchase, to give as complete an Opera, as the whole vocal Power of *Italy* could form. But when it came to the Proof of this musical Project, behold! what woful Work they made of it! every Performer would be a *Cæsar*, or Nothing; their several Pretensions to Preference were not to be limited within the Laws of Harmony; they would all choose their own Songs, but not more to set off themselves, than to oppose, or deprive another of an Occasion to shine: Yet any one would sing a bad Song, provided no body else had a good one, till at last, they were thrown together like so many feather'd Warriors, for a Battle-royal, in a Cock-pit, where every one was oblig'd to kill another, to save himself! What Pity it was these froward Misses, and Masters of Musick had not been engag'd to entertain the Court of some King of *Morocco*, that could have known a good Opera from a bad one! with how much Ease would such a Director have brought them to better Order? But alas! as it has been said of greater Things,

*Suis*

*Suis et ipsa Roma viribus ruit.* Hor.

Imperial *Rome* fell, by the too great Strength of its own Citizens! So fell this mighty Opera, ruin'd by the too great Excellency of its Singers! For, upon the whole, it proved to be as barbarously bad, as if Malice itself had compos'd it.

Now though something of this kind, equally provoking, has generally embarrass'd the State of Operas, these thirty Years; yet it was the Misfortune of the managing Actors, at the *Hay-Market*, to have felt the first Effects of it: The Honour of the Singer, and the Interest of the Undertaker, were so often at Variance, that the latter began to have but a bad Bargain of it. But not to impute more to the Caprice of those Performers, than was really true, there were two different Accidents, that drew Numbers from our Audiences, before the Season was ended; which were, another Company permitted to act in *Drury-Lane*, and the long Trial of Doctor *Sacheverel*, in *Westminster-Hall*: By the way, it must be observed, that this Company was not under the Direction of the Patent (which continued still silenc'd) but was set up by a third Interest, with a License from Court. The Person to whom this new License was granted, was *William Collier*, Esq; a Lawyer of an enterprising Head, and a jovial Heart; what sort of Favour he was in, with the People, then, in Power, may be judg'd, from his being often admitted to partake with them those detach'd Hours of Life, when Business was to give way to Pleasure: But this was not all his Merit, he was, at the same Time, a Member of Parliament



Parliament for *Truro* in *Cornwall*, and we cannot suppose a Person so qualified could be refused such a Trifle, as a License to head a broken Company of Actors. This sagacious Lawyer, then, who had a Lawyer to deal with, observing that his Antagonist kept Possession of a Theatre, without making use of it, and for which he was not obliged to pay Rent, unless he actually *did* use it, wisely conceived it might be the Interest of the joint Landlords, since their Tenement was in so precarious a Condition, to grant a Lease to one, who had an undisputed Authority, to be liable, by acting Plays in it, to pay the Rent of it; especially when he tempted them with an Offer of raising it from three, to four Pounds *per Diem*. His Project succeeded, the Lease was sign'd; but the Means of getting into Possession were to be left to his own Cost, and Discretion. This took him up but little Time, he immediately laid Siege to it, with a sufficient Number of Forces, whether lawless, or lawful, I forget, but they were such as obliged the old Governor to give it up; who, notwithstanding had got Intelligence of his Approaches, and Design, time enough to carry off every thing, that was worth moving, except a great Number of old Scenes, and new Actors, that could not easily follow him.

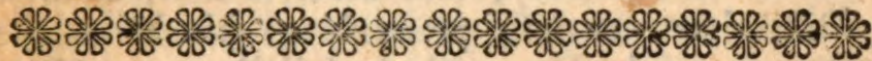
A ludicrous Account of this Transaction, under fictitious Names, may be found in the 99th *Tatler*, Vol. 2. which this Explanation may now render more intelligible, to the Readers of that agreeable Author.

This other new License being now in Possession of the *Drury-Lane* Theatre; those Actors, whom the Patentee, ever since the Order of Silence, had

had retain'd in a State of Inaction, all to a Man came over to the Service of *Collier*. Of these, *Booth* was then the chief. The Merit of the rest had as yet made no considerable Appearance, and as the Patentee had not left a Rag of their Cloathing behind him, they were but poorly equip'd for a publick Review; consequently, at their first Opening, they were very little able to annoy us. But during the Trial of *Sacheverel*, our Audiences were extremely weaken'd, by the better Rank of People's daily attending it: While, at the same time, the lower Sort, who were not equally admitted to that grand Spectacle, as eagerly crowded into *Drury-Lane*, to a new Comedy, call'd *The fair Quaker of Deal*. This Play, having some low Strokes of natural Humour in it, was rightly calculated, for the Capacity of the Actors, who play'd it, and to the Taste of the Multitude, who were now, more disposed, and at leisure to see it: But the most happy Incident, in its Fortune, was the Charm of the fair Quaker, which was acted by Miss *Santlow*, (afterwards Mrs. *Booth*) whose Person was then in the full Bloom of what Beauty she might pretend to: Before this, she had only been admired as the most excellent Dancer; which, perhaps, might not a little contribute to the favourable Reception she now met with, as an Actress, in this Character, which so happily suited her Figure, and Capacity: The gentle Softness of her Voice, the composed Innocence of her Aspect, the Modesty of her Dress, the reserved Decency of her Gesture, and the Simplicity of the Sentiments, that naturally fell from her, made her seem the amiable Maid she represented: In a Word, not the enthusiastick Maid of *Orleans*,  
was

was more serviceable of old, to the *French* Army, when the *English* had distressed them, than this fair Quaker was, at the Head of that dramattick Attempt, upon which the Support of their weak Society depended.

But when the Trial, I have mention'd, and the Run of this Play was over, the Tide of the Town beginning to turn again in our Favour, *Collier* was reduced to give his theatrical Affairs a different Scheme; which advanced the Stage another Step towards that Settlement, which, in my Time was of the longest Duration.



## C H A P. XIII.

*The Patentee, having now no Actors, rebuilds the new Theatre in Lincoln's-Inn-Fields. A Guess at his Reasons for it. More Changes, in the State of the Stage. The Beginning of its better Days, under the Triumvirate of Actors. A Sketch of their governing Characters.*

**A**S coarse Mothers may have comely Children; so Anarchy has been the Parent of many a good Government; and by a Parity of possible Consequences we shall find, that from the frequent Convulsions of the Stage, arose, at last, its longest Settlement, and Prosperity; which many of my Readers (or if I should happen to have but few of them, many of my Spectators, at least) who, I hope, have not yet liv'd half their Time, will be able to remember.

Though the Patent had been often under Distresses, it had never felt any Blow, equal to this  
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unrevoked Order of Silence; which it is not easy to conceive, could have fallen upon any other Person's Conduct, than that of the old Patentee: For if he was conscious, of his being under the Subjection of that Power, which had silenc'd him, why should he incur the Danger of a Suspension, by his so obstinate, and impolitick Treatment of his Actors? If he thought such Power over him illegal, how came he to obey it now, more than before, when he slighted a former Order, that injoin'd him to give his Actors their Benefits, on their usual Conditions? But to do him Justice, the same Obstinacy, that involv'd him, in these Difficulties, at last, preserv'd to his Heirs the Property of the Patent, in its full Force, and Value; yet to suppose that he foresaw a milder use of Power, in some future Prince's Reign, might be more favourable to him, is begging at best but a cold Question. But whether he knew that this broken Condition of the Patent would not make his troublesome Friends, the Adventurers, fly from it, as from a falling House, seems not so difficult a Question. However, let the Reader form his own Judgment of them, from the Facts, that follow'd: It must therefore be observ'd, that the Adventurers seldom came near the House, but when there was some visible Appearance of a Dividend: But I could never hear, that upon an ill Run of Audiences they had ever returned, or brought in a single Shilling, to make good the Deficiencies of their daily Receipts. Therefore, as the Patentee, in Possession, had alone, for several Years, supported, and stood against this Uncertainty of Fortune, it may be imagin'd, that his Accounts were under so voluminous a Perplexity, that

that few of those Adventurers would have Leisure, or Capacity enough to unravel them: And as they had formerly thrown away their Time, and Money at Law, in a fruitless Enquiry into them, they now seem'd to have intirely given up their Right and Interest: And, according to my best Information, notwithstanding the subsequent Gains of the Patent have been sometimes extraordinary, the farther Demands, or Claims of Right, of the Adventurers, have lain dormant, above these five and twenty Years.

Having shewn by what means *Collier* had dispossess'd this Patentee, not only of the *Drury-Lane* House, but likewise of those few Actors, which he had kept, for some time unemploy'd in it; we are now led to consider another Project of the same Patentee, which, if we are to judge of it by the Event, has shewn him more a Wise, than a Weak Man; which I confess at the time he put it in Execution, seem'd not so clear a Point: For notwithstanding he now saw the Authority, and Power of his Patent was superseded, or was at best but precarious, and that he had not one Actor left, in his Service; yet under all these Dilemma's, and Distresses, he resolv'd upon rebuilding the New Theatre in *Lincoln's-Inn-Fields*, of which he had taken a Lease, at a low Rent, ever since *Betterton's* Company had first left it. This Conduct seem'd too deep for my Comprehension! What are we to think of his taking this Lease, in the height of his Prosperity, when he could have no Occasion for it? Was he a Prophet? Could he then foresee, he should, one time or other, be turn'd out of *Drury-Lane*? Or did his mere Appetite of Architecture urge him to  
build

build a House, while he could not be sure, he should ever have leave to make use of it? But of all this, we may think as we please; whatever was his Motive, he, at his own Expence, in this Interval of his having nothing else to do, rebuilt that Theatre from the Ground, as it is now standing. As for the Order of Silence he seem'd little concern'd at it, while it gave him so much uninterrupted Leisure to supervise a Work, which he naturally took Delight in.

After this Defeat of the Patentee, the Theatrical Forces of *Collier* in *Drury-Lane*, notwithstanding their having drawn the Multitude after them, for about three Weeks, during the Trial of *Sacheverel*, had made but an indifferent Campaign, at the end of the Season. *Collier*, at least, found so little Account in it, that it obliged him to push his Court-Interest (which, wherever the Stage was concern'd, was not inconsiderable) to support him in another Scheme; which was, that in consideration of his giving up the *Drury-Lane* Cloaths, Scenes, and Actors, to *Swiney*, and his joint Sharers, in the *Hay-Market*, he (*Collier*) might be put into an equal Possession of the *Hay-Market* Theatre, with all the Singers, &c. and be made sole Director of the Opera. Accordingly, by Permission of the Lord-Chamberlain, a Treaty was enter'd into, and in a few Days ratified by all Parties, conformable to the said Preliminaries. This was that happy Crisis of Theatrical Liberty, which the labouring Comedians had long sigh'd for; and which, for above twenty Years following, was so memorably fortunate to them.

However, there were two hard Articles, in this Treaty, which though it might be Policy in the Actors

Actors to comply with, yet the Imposition of them seem'd little less despotick, than a Tax upon the Poor, when a Government did not want it.

The first of these Articles was, That whereas the sole License for acting Plays, was presum'd to be a more profitable Authority, than that for acting Operas only; that therefore Two hundred Pounds a Year should be paid to *Collier*, while Master of the Opera, by the Comedians; to whom a verbal Assurance was given by the *Ple-nipo's* on the Court-side, that while such Payment subsisted, no other Company should be permitted to act Plays against them, within the Liberties, &c. The other Article was, That on every *Wednesday*, whereon an Opera could be perform'd, the Plays should, *toties quoties*, be silent at *Drury-Lane*, to give the Opera a fairer Chance for a full House.

This last Article, however partial in the Intention, was, in its Effect, of great Advantage to the sharing Actors: For in all publick Entertainments, a Day's Abstinence naturally increases the Appetite to them: Our every *Thursday's* Audience, therefore, was visibly the better, by thus making the Day before it a Fast. But as this was not a Favour design'd us, this Prohibition of a Day, methinks, deserves a little farther Notice, because it evidently took a sixth Part of their Income, from all the hired Actors, who were only paid in Proportion to the Number of acting Days. This extraordinary Regard to Operas, was, in Effect, making the Day-labouring Actors the principal Subscribers to them, and the shutting out People from the Play every *Wednesday*, many murmur'd at, as an Abridgment of their usual Liberty. And tho' I was one of those,

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who

who profited by that Order, it ought not to bribe me into a Concealment of what was then said and thought of it. I remember a Nobleman of the first Rank, then in a high Post, and not out of Court-Favour, said openly behind the Scenes — *It was shameful to take part of the Actors Bread from them, to support the silly Diversion of People of Quality.* But alas! what was all this Grievance, when weighed against the Qualifications of so grave, and stanch a Senator, as *Collier*? Such visible Merit, it seems, was to be made easy, tho' at the Expence of the — I had almost said, *Honour* of the Court, whose gracious Intention for the Theatrical Common-wealth, might have shone with thrice the Lustre, if such a paltry Price had not been paid for it. But as the Government of the Stage, is but that of the World in Miniature, we ought not to have wonder'd, that *Collier* had Interest enough to quarter the Weakness of the Opera, upon the Strength of the Comedy. General good Intentions are not always practicable to a Perfection. The most necessary Law can hardly pass, but a Tenderness to some private Interest, shall often hang such Exceptions upon particular Clauses, till at last it comes out lame, and lifeless, with the Loss of half its Force, Purpose, and Dignity. As for Instance; how many fruitless Motions have been made in Parliaments, to moderate the enormous Exactions, in the Practice of the Law? And what sort of Justice must that be call'd, which, when a Man has not a Mind to pay you a Debt of Ten Pounds, it shall cost you Fifty, before you can get it? How long too has the Publick been labouring for a Bridge at *Westminster*? But the Wonder, that it was not built a Hundred Years



Years ago ceases, when we are told, That the Fear of making one End of *London*, as rich as the other, has been, so long, an Obstruction to it: And though it might seem a still greater Wonder, when a new Law for building one, had at last got over that Apprehension, that it should meet with any farther Delay; yet Experience has shewn us, that the Structure of this useful Ornament to our Metropolis, has been so clogg'd by private Jobs, that were to be pick'd out of the Undertaking, and the Progress of the Work so disconcerted, by a tedious Contention of private Interests, and Endeavours to impose upon the Publick abominable Bargains, that a whole Year was lost, before a single Stone could be laid to its Foundation. But Posterity will owe its Praises to the Zeal, and Resolution of a truly Noble Commissioner, whose distinguish'd Impatience has broke thro' those narrow Artifices, those false and frivolous Objections, that delay'd it, and has already began to raise, above the Tide, that future Monument of his publick Spirit.

How far all this may be allow'd applicable to the State of the Stage, is not of so great Importance, nor so much my Concern, as that what is observed upon it should always remain a memorable Truth, to the Honour of that Nobleman. But now I go on: *Collier* being thus possess'd of his Musical Government, thought his best Way would be to farm it out to a Gentleman, *Aaron Hill*, Esq; (who, he had Reason to suppose, knew something more of Theatrical Matters than himself) at a Rent, if I mistake not, of Six Hundred Pounds *per Annum*: But before the Season was ended (upon what Occasion, if I could remember, it might not be ma-

terial to say) took it into his Hands again: But all his Skill, and Interest, could not raise the Direction of the Opera, to so good a Post, as he thought due to a Person of his Consideration: He therefore, the Year following, enter'd upon another high-handed Scheme, which, till the Demise of the Queen, turn'd to his better Account.

After the Comedians were in Possession of *Drury-Lane*, from whence, during my time upon the Stage, they never departed, their Swarm of Audiences exceeded all that had been seen in thirty Years before; which, however, I do not impute so much to the Excellence of their Acting, as to their indefatigable Industry, and good Management; for, as I have often said, I never thought, in the general, that we stood in any Place of Comparison with the eminent Actors before us; perhaps too, by there being now an End of the frequent Divisions, and Disorders, that had from time to time broke in upon, and frustrated their Labours, not a little might be contributed to their Success.

*Collier*, then, like a true liquorish Courtier, observing the Prosperity of a Theatre, which he, the Year before, had parted with, for a worse, began to meditate an Exchange of Theatrical Posts with *Swiney*, who had visibly very fair Pretensions to that he was in, by his being first chosen, by the Court, to regulate, and rescue the Stage from the Disorders it had suffer'd, under its former Managers: Yet *Collier* knew that sort of Merit could stand in no Competition, with his being a Member of Parliament: He therefore had Recourse to his Court-Interest (where mere Will, and Pleasure, at that time, was the only Law, that dispos'd of all Theatrical Rights)

to

to oblige *Swiney* to let him be off, from his bad Bargain, for a better. To this, it may be imagin'd, *Swiney* demurr'd, and, as he had Reason, strongly remonstrated against it: But as *Collier* had list'd his Conscience under the Command of Interest, he kept it to strict Duty, and was immoveable; insomuch that Sir *John Vanbrugh*, who was a Friend to *Swiney*, and who by his Intimacy with the People in Power, better knew the Motive of their Actions, advis'd *Swiney* rather to accept of the Change, than by a Non-compliance to hazard his being excluded from any Post, or Concern in either of the Theatres: To conclude, it was not long before *Collier* had procur'd a new License for acting Plays, &c. for himself, *Wilks*, *Dogget*, and *Cibber*, exclusive of *Swiney*, who by this new Regulation, was reduc'd to his *Hobson's* Choice of the Opera.

*Swiney* being thus transferr'd to the Opera, in the sinking Condition *Collier* had left it, found the Receipts of it, in the Winter following 1711, so far short of the Expences, that he was driven to attend his Fortune in some more favourable Climate, where he remain'd twenty Years an Exile, from his Friends, and Country; though there has been scarce an *English* Gentleman, who in his *Tour* of *France*, or *Italy*, has not renew'd, or created an Acquaintance with him. As this is a Circumstance, that many People may have forgot, I cannot remember it, without that Regard, and Concern it deserves from all that know him: Yet it is some Mitigation of his Misfortune, that since his Return to *England*, his grey Hairs, and cheerful Disposition, have still found a general Welcome among his foreign, and former domestick Acquaintance.

*Collier*, being now first-commission'd Manager with the Comedians, drove them too, to the last Inch of a hard Bargain (the natural Consequence of all Treaties between Power, and Necessity.) He not only demanded six hundred a Year, neat Money, the Price at which he had farm'd out his Opera, and to make the Business a *Sine-cure* to him; but likewise insisted upon a Moiety of the Two hundred, that had been levied upon us the Year before, in Aid of the Operas; in all 700*l*. These large, and ample Conditions, considering in what Hands we were, we resolv'd to swallow without wry Faces; rather chusing to run any Hazard, than contend with a formidable Power, against which we had no Remedy: But so it happen'd, that Fortune took better Care of our Interest, than we ourselves had like to have done: For had *Collier* accepted of our first Offer, of an equal Share with us, he had got three hundred Pounds a Year more, by complying with it, than by the Sum he impos'd upon us; our Shares being never less than a thousand annually, to each of us, till the End of the Queen's Reign, in 1714. After which *Collier's* Commission was superseded; his Theatrical Post, upon the Accession of his late Majesty, being given to Sir *Richard Steele*.

From these various Revolutions, in the Government of the Theatre, all owing to the Patentees mistaken Principle of increasing their Profits, by too far enslaving their People, and keeping down the Price of good Actors (and I could almost insist, that giving large Salaries to bad Ones, could not have had a worse Consequence) I say, when it is consider'd, that the Authority for acting Plays, &c. was thought of so little  
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Worth, that (as has been observ'd) Sir *Thomas Skipwith* gave away his Share of it, and the Adventurers had fled from it; that Mr. *Congreve*, at another time, had voluntarily resign'd it; and Sir *John Vanbrugh* (merely to get the Rent of his new House paid) had, by Leave of the Court, farm'd out his License to *Swiney*, who not without some Hesitation had ventur'd upon it; let me say again, out of this low Condition of the Theatre, was it not owing to the Industry of three, or four Comedians, that a new Place was now created for the Crown to give away, without any Expence attending it, well worth the Acceptance of any Gentleman, whose Merit, or Services had no higher Claim to Preferment, and which *Collier*, and Sir *Richard Steele*, in the two last Reigns, successively enjoy'd? Tho', I believe, I may have said something like this, in a former Chapter, I am not unwilling it should be twice taken notice of.

We are now come to that firm Establishment of the Theatre, which except the Admittance of *Booth* into a Share, and *Dogget's* retiring from it, met with no Change, or Alteration, for above twenty Years after.

*Collier*, as has been said, having accepted of a certain Appointment of seven hundred *per Annum*; *Wilks*, *Dogget*, and Myself were now the only acting Managers, under the Queen's License; which being a Grant, but during Pleasure, oblig'd us to a Conduct that might not undeserve that Favour. At this Time we were all in the Vigour of our Capacities as Actors; and our Prosperity enabled us to pay, at least, double the Salaries, to what the same Actors had usually receiv'd, or could have hoped for under the Government

vernment of the Patentees. *Dogget*, who was naturally an Oeconomist, kept our Expences, and Accounts, to the best of his Power, within regulated Bounds, and Moderation. *Wilks*, who had a stronger Passion for Glory than Lucre, was a little apt to be lavish, in what was not always as necessary for the Profit as the Honour of the Theatre: For Example, at the Beginning of almost every Season, he would order two or three Suits to be made, or refresh'd, for Actors of moderate Consequence, that his having constantly a new one for himself, might seem less particular, tho' he had, as yet, no new Part for it. This expeditious Care of doing us good, without waiting for our Consent to it, *Dogget* always look'd upon with the Eye of a Man in Pain: But I, who hated Pain, (tho' I as little liked the Favour as *Dogget* himself) rather chose to laugh at the Circumstance, than complain of what I knew was not to be cured, but by a Remedy worse than the Evil. Upon these Occasions, therefore, whenever I saw him, and his Followers, so prettily dress'd out, for an old Play, I only commended his Fancy; or at most but whisper'd him not to give himself so much Trouble about others, upon whose Performance it would but be thrown away: To which, with a smiling Air of Triumph, over my want of Penetration, he has reply'd—Why, now, that was what I really did it for! to shew others, that I love to take care of them, as well as of myself. Thus whenever he made himself easy, he had not the least Conception, let the Expence be what it would, that we could possibly dislike it. And from the same Principle, provided a thinner Audience were liberal of their Applause, he gave himself little Concern

cern about the Receipt of it. As in these different Tempers of my Brother-Managers, there might be equally something right, and wrong, it was equally my Business to keep well with them both: And tho' of the two, I was rather inclin'd to *Dogget's* way of thinking, yet I was always under the disagreeable Restraint of not letting *Wilks* see it: Therefore, when in any material Point of Management, they were ready to come to a Rupture, I found it adviseable to think neither of them, absolutely in the wrong; but by giving to one as much of the Right, in his Opinion this way, as I took from the other in that; their Differences were sometimes softened into Concessions, that I have Reason to think prevented many ill Consequences, in our Affairs, that otherwise might have attended them. But this was always to be done with a very gentle Hand; for as *Wilks* was apt to be easily hurt by Opposition, so when he felt it, he was as apt to be insupportable. However, there were some Points, in which we were always unanimous. In the twenty Years, while we were our own Directors, we never had a Creditor that had Occasion to come twice for his Bill; every *Monday* Morning discharged us of all Demands, before we took a Shilling for our own Use. And from this time, we neither ask'd any Actor, nor were desired by them, to sign any written Agreement (to the best of my Memory) whatsoever: The Rate of their respective Salaries were only enter'd in our daily Pay-Roll; which plain Record every one look'd upon as good as City-Security: For where an honest Meaning is mutual, the mutual Confidence will be Bond enough, in Conscience, on both Sides: But that I may not ascribe more to our  
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Conduct, than was really its Due, I ought to give Fortune her Share of the Commendation; for had not our Success exceeded our Expectation, it might not have been in our Power, so thoroughly to have observed those Rules of Oeconomy, Justice, and Lenity, which so happily supported us: But the Severities, and Oppression we had suffer'd under our former Masters, made us incapable of imposing them upon others; which gave our whole Society the cheerful Looks of a rescued People. But notwithstanding this general Cause of Content, it was not above a Year or two before the Imperfection of human Nature began to shew itself in contrary Symptoms. The Merit of the Hazards which the Managers had run, and the Difficulties they had combated, in bringing to Perfection, that Revolution, by which they had all so amply profited, in the Amendment of their general Income, began now to be forgotten; their Acknowledgements, and thankful Promises of Fidelity, were no more repeated, or scarce thought obligatory: Ease and Plenty, by an habitual Enjoyment, had lost their Novelty, and the Largeness of their Salaries, seem'd rather lessen'd than advanc'd, by the extraordinary Gains of the Undertakers; for that is the Scale in which the hired Actor will always weigh his Performance; but whatever Reason there may seem to be, in his Case, yet as he is frequently apt to throw a little Self-partiality into the Balance, that Consideration may a good deal alter the Justness of it. While the Actors, therefore, had this way of thinking, happy was it for the Managers, that their united Interest was so inseparably the same, and that their Skill and Power in Acting, stood in a Rank so far  
above



above the rest, that if the whole Body of private Men had deserted them, it would yet have been an easier Matter for the Managers to have pick'd up Recruits, than for the Deserters to have found proper Officers to head them. Here, then, in this Distinction lay our Security: Our being Actors ourselves, was an Advantage to our Government, which all former Managers, who were only idle Gentlemen, wanted: Nor was our Establishment easily to be broken, while our Health and Limbs enabled us to be Joint-labourers in the Work we were Masters of.

The only Actor, who, in the Opinion of the Publick, seem'd to have had a Pretence of being advanced to a Share with us, was certainly *Booth*: But when it is consider'd, how strongly he had opposed the Measures that had made us Managers, by setting himself (as has been observ'd) at the Head of an opposite Interest, he could not as yet, have much to complain of: Beside, if the Court had thought him, now, an equal Object of Favour, it could not have been in our Power to have oppos'd his Preferment: This I mention, not to take from his Merit, but to shew, from what Cause it was not, as yet, better provided for. Therefore it may be no Vanity to say, our having at that time, no visible Competitors on the Stage, was the only Interest that rais'd us to be the Managers of it.

But here, let me rest a while, and since, at my time of Day, our best Possessions are but Ease, and Quiet, I must be content, if I will have Sal- lies of Pleasure, to take up with those only, that are to be found in Imagination. When I look back, therefore, on the Storms of the Stage, we had been to's'd in; when I consider, that various Vi-  
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ciffitude of Hopes and Fears, we had for twenty Years struggled with, and found ourselves, at last, thus safely set on Shore, to enjoy the Produce of our own Labours; and to have rais'd those Labours by our Skill, and Industry, to a much fairer Profit, than our Task-masters, by all their severe, and griping Government, had ever reap'd from them; a good-natur'd Reader, that is not offended at the Comparison of great things, with small, will allow was a Triumph, in Proportion, equal to those, that have attended the most heroic Enterprizes for Liberty! What Transport could the first *Brutus* feel, upon his Expulsion of the *Tarquins*, greater than that which now danc'd in the Heart of a poor Actor, who from an injur'd Labourer, unpaid his Hire, had made himself, without Guilt, a legal Manager of his own Fortune? Let the Grave and Great contemn, or yawn at these low Conceits, but let me be happy, in the Enjoyment of them! To this Hour my Memory runs o'er that pleasing Prospect of Life past, with little less Delight, than when I was first, in the real Possession of it. This is the natural Temper of my Mind, which my Acquaintance are frequently Witnesses of: And as this was all the Ambition, Providence had made my obscure Condition capable of, I am thankful, that Means were given me to enjoy the Fruits of it.

————— *Hoc est*  
*Vivere bis, vitâ posse priore frui.*

Something like the Meaning of this, the less learned Reader may find in my Title Page.

*The End of the FIRST VOLUME.*

A N  
A P O L O G Y

For the LIFE of  
COLLEY CIBBER,  
COMEDIAN,  
AND LATE PATENTEE OF THE  
THEATRE - ROYAL.

With an Historical View of the STAGE  
during his OWN TIME.

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WRITTEN BY HIMSELF.

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—————Hoc est  
Vivere bis, vitâ posse priore frui. MART. lib 2.  
When Years no more of active Life retain,  
'Tis Youth renew'd, to laugh them o'er again. Anonym.

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The FOURTH EDITION.

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V O L. II.

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With an Account of the Rise and Progress  
of the ENGLISH STAGE:  
A Dialogue on OLD PLAYS, and OLD PLAYERS:  
A N D  
A List of Dramatic AUTHORS and their WORKS.

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L O N D O N:

Printed for R. and J. DODSLEY, in *Pall-Mall*.

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Generated at University of Pennsylvania on 2020-09-10 16:04 GMT / <https://hdl.handle.net/2027/njp.32101067567881>  
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A N

# A P O L O G Y

FOR THE LIFE OF

## Mr. COLLEY CIBBER, &c.

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C H A P. XIV.

*The Stage, in its highest Prosperity. The Managers not without Errors, Of what kind. Cato first acted. What brought it to the Stage. The Company go to Oxford. Their Success, and different Auditors there. Booth made a Sharer. Dogget objects to him. Quits the Stage upon his Admittance. That not his true Reason. What was. Dogget's Theatrical Character.*

**N**OTWITHSTANDING the Managings, Actors were, now, in a happier Situation, than their utmost Pretensions could have expected; yet it is not to be suppos'd, but wiser Men might have mended it. As we could not all govern ourselfes, there

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were Seasons, when we were not all fit to govern others. Our Passions, and our Interest, drew not always the same Way. *Self*, had a great Sway in our Debates: We had our Partialities; our Prejudices; our Favourites of less Merit; and our Jealousies of those who came too near us; Frailties, which Societies of higher Consideration, while they are compos'd of Men, will not always be free from. To have been constantly capable of Unanimity, had been a Blessing too great for our Station: One Mind, among three People, were to have had three Masters, to one Servant; but when that one Servant is called three different Ways, at the same Time, whose Business is to be done first? For my own Part, I was forced, almost all my Life, to give up my Share of him. And if I could, by Art, or Persuasion, hinder others from making, what I thought, a wrong Use of their Power, it was the All, and utmost I desired. Yet whatever might be our personal Errors, I shall think I have no Right to speak of them farther, than where the publick Entertainment was affected by them. If therefore, among so many, some particular Actors were remarkable in any Part of their private Lives, that might sometimes make the World merry without Doors; I hope, my laughing Friends will excuse me, if I do not so far comply with their Desires, or Curiosity, as to give them a Place, in my History. I can only recommend such Anecdotes to the Amusement, of a noble Person, who (in case I conceal them) does me the flattering Honour, to threaten my Work, with a Supplement. 'Tis enough for me, that such Actors had their Merits, to the Publick:

Publick: Let those recite their Imperfections, who are themselves without them: It is my Misfortune not to have that Qualification. Let us see, then (whatever was amiss in it) how our Administration went forward.

When we were first invested, with this Power; the Joy of our so unexpectedly coming into it, kept us, for some time, in Amity, and Good-Humour, with one another: And the Pleasure of reforming the many false Measures, Absurdities, and Abuses, that, like Weeds, had suck'd up the due Nourishment from the Fruits of the Theatre, gave us, as yet, no Leisure for private Dissentions. Our daily Receipts exceeded our Imagination: And we seldom met, as a Board, to settle our weekly Accounts, without the Satisfaction of Joint-Heirs, just in Possession of an unexpected Estate, that had been distantly intail'd upon them. Such a sudden Change of our Condition, it may be imagin'd, could not but throw out of us a new Spirit, in almost every Play we appear'd in: Nor did we ever sink into that common Negligence, which is apt to follow Good-Fortune: Industry, we knew, was the Life of our Business; that it not only conceal'd Faults, but was of equal Value to greater Talents without it; which the Decadence once of *Betterton's* Company in *Lincoln's-Inn-Fields*, had lately shewn us a Proof of.

This then was that happy Period, when both Actors and Managers were in their highest Enjoyment of general Content, and Prosperity: Now it was that the politer World too, by their decent Attention, their sensible Taste, and their generous Encouragements to Authors, and Actors, once more saw, that the Stage, under a due Regulation,

gulation, was capable of being what the wisest Ages thought it *might* be, The most rational Scheme, that Human Wit could form, to dissipate, with Innocence, the Cares of Life; to allure even the Turbulent, or Ill-dispos'd from worse Meditations, and to give the leisure Hours of Business, and Virtue, an instructive Recreation.

If this grave Assertion is less recommended, by falling from the Pen of a Comedian; I must appeal, for the Truth of it, to the Tragedy of *Cato*, which was first acted in 1712. I submit to the Judgment of those, who were then the sensible Spectators of it, if the Success, and Merit of that Play, was not an Evidence of every Article of that Value, which I have given to a decent Theatre? But (as I was observing) it could not be expected the Summer Days, I am speaking of, could be the constant Weather of the Year; we had our clouded Hours, as well as our Sun-shine, and were not always in the same Good-Humour with one another: Fire, Air, and Water, could not be more vexatiously opposite, than the different Tempers of the Three Managers, though they might equally have their useful, as well as their destructive Qualities. How variously these Elements, in our several Dispositions, operated, may be judged from the following single Instance, as well as a thousand others; which, if they were all to be told, might possibly make my Reader wish I had forgot them.

Much about this time, then, there came over from *Dublin* Theatre two uncelebrated Actors, to pick up a few Pence among us, in the Winter, as *Wilks* had a Year, or two before, done on their side the Water, in the Summer. But it was not  
so



so clear to *Dogget*, and myself, that it was in their Power, to do us the same Service in *Drury-Lane*, as *Wilks* might have done them in *Dublin*. However, *Wilks* was so much a Man of Honour, that he scorned to be outdone in the least Point of it, let the Cost be what it would, to his Fellow-Managers, who had no particular Accounts of Honour open with them. To acquit himself therefore with a better Grace, *Wilks* so order'd it, that his *Hibernian* Friends were got upon our Stage, before any other Manager had well heard of their Arrival. This so generous Dispatch of their Affair, gave *Wilks* a very good Chance of convincing his Friends, that Himself was sole Master of the Masters of the Company. Here now, the different Elements in our Tempers began to work with us. While *Wilks* was only animated by a grateful Hospitality to his Friends, *Dogget* was ruffled into a Storm, and look'd upon this Generosity, as so much Insult, and Injustice upon himself, and the Fraternity. During this Disorder, I stood by, a seeming quiet Passenger, and, since talking to the Winds, I knew, could be to no great Purpose, (whatever Weakness it might be call'd) could not help smiling, to observe with what officious Ease, and Delight, *Wilks* was treating his Friends at our Expence, who were scarce acquainted with them: For, it seems, all this was to end in their having a Benefit-Play, in the Height of the Season, for the unprofitable Service they had done us, without our Consent, or Desire to employ them. Upon this *Dogget* bounc'd, and grew almost as untractable as *Wilks* himself. Here, again, I was forc'd to clap my Patience to the Helm, to weather this difficult Point between

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them: Applying myself therefore to the Person, I imagin'd was most likely to hear me, I desired *Dogget*, “ to consider, that I must naturally, be  
 “ as much hurt, by this vain, and over-bearing  
 “ Behaviour in *Wilks*, as he could be; and that  
 “ tho' it was true, these Actors had no Pretence,  
 “ to the Favour design'd them; yet we could not  
 “ say they had done us any farther Harm, than  
 “ letting the Town see, the Parts they had been  
 “ shewn in, had been better done by those, to  
 “ whom they properly belong'd: Yet as we had  
 “ greatly profited, by the extraordinary Labour of  
 “ *Wilks*, who acted long Parts almost every Day,  
 “ and at least twice to *Dogget's* once; and that I  
 “ granted it might not be so much his Considera-  
 “ tion of our common Interest, as his Fondness  
 “ for Applause, that set him to Work; yet even  
 “ that Vanity, if he supposed it such, had its  
 “ Merit to us; and as we had found our Account  
 “ in it, it would be Folly upon a Punctilio, to  
 “ tempt the Rashness of a Man, who was capa-  
 “ ble to undo all he had done, by any Act of Ex-  
 “ travagance, that might fly into his Head: That  
 “ admitting this Benefit might be some little Loss  
 “ to us, yet to break with him upon it, could not  
 “ but be ten times of worse Consequence, than  
 “ our over-looking his disagreeable manner of  
 “ making the Demand upon us.”

Though, I found, this had made *Dogget* drop the Severity of his Features, yet he endeavoured still to seem uneasy, by his starting a new Objection, which was, That we could not be sure even of the Charge, they were to pay for it: For *Wilks*, said he, you know will go any Length, to make it a good Day, to them, and may whisper the Door-keepers,

keepers, to give them the Ready-money taken, and return the Account, in such Tickets only, as these Actors, have not themselves disposed of. To make this easy too, I gave him my Word, to be answerable for the Charge, myself. Upon this he acceded, and accordingly they had the Benefit-Play. But so it happen'd (whether as *Dogget* had suspected, or not, I cannot say) the Ready-money receiv'd, fell Ten Pounds short of the Sum, they had agreed to pay for it. Upon the *Saturday* following, (the Day on which we constantly made up our Accounts) I went early to the Office, and inquired, if the Ten Pounds had yet been paid in; but not hearing that one Shilling of it had found its way thither, I immediately supply'd the Sum out of my own Pocket, and directed the Treasurer to charge it received from me, in the deficient Receipt of the Benefit-Day. Here, now, it might be imagined, all this silly Matter was accommodated, and that no one could so properly say, he was aggrieved, as myself: But let us observe what the Consequence says—why, the Effect of my insolent interposing Honesty prov'd to be this: That the Party most oblig'd, was the most offended; and the Offence was imputed to me, who had been Ten Pounds out of Pocket, to be able to commit it: For when *Wilks* found, in the Account, how spitefully the Ten Pounds had been paid in, he took me aside into the adjacent Stone-Passage, and with some Warmth ask'd me, What I meant by pretending to pay in this Ten Pounds? And that, for his part, he did not understand such Treatment. To which I reply'd, That tho' I was amaz'd, at his thinking himself ill-treated, I would give him a plain, justifiable Answer.—That

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I had given my Word to *Dogget*, the Charge of the Benefit should be fully paid, and since his Friends had neglected it, I found myself bound to make it good. Upon which he told me, I was mistaken, if I thought, he did not see into the bottom of all this—That *Dogget*, and I, were always endeavouring to thwart, and make him uneasy; but he was able to stand upon his own Legs, and we should find he would not be used so: That he took this Payment of the Ten Pounds, as an Insult upon him, and a Slight to his Friends; but rather than suffer it, he would tear the whole Business to pieces: That I knew it was in his Power to do it; and if he could not do a civil thing to a Friend, without all this senseless Rout about it, he could be received in *Ireland* upon his own Terms, and could as easily mend a Company there, as he had done here: That if he were gone, *Dogget* and I would not be able to keep the Doors open a Week, and, by G—, he would not be a Drudge for nothing. As I knew all this was but the Foam of the high Value he had set upon himself, I thought it not amiss, to seem a little silently concerned, for the helpless Condition, to which his Resentment of the Injury I have related, was going to reduce us: For I knew I had a Friend, in his Heart, that, if I gave him a little time to cool, would soon bring him to Reason: The sweet Morfel of a Thousand Pounds a Year, was not to be met with at every Table, and might tempt a nicer Palate than his own to swallow it, when he was not out of Humour. This I knew would always be of Weight with him, when the best Arguments I could use, would be of none. I therefore gave him no farther Provocation, than  
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by gravely telling him, We all had it in our Power to do one another a Mischief; but I believed none of us much cared to hurt ourselves; that if he was not of my Opinion, it would not be in my Power to hinder whatever new Scheme, he might resolve upon; that *London* would always have a Play-house, and I should have some Chance in it, tho' it might not be so good as it had been; that he might be sure, if I had thought my paying in the Ten Pounds could have been so ill received; I should have been glad to have saved it. Upon this he seem'd to mutter something to himself, and walk'd off, as if he had a mind to be alone. I took the Occasion, and return'd to *Dogget*, to finish our Accounts. In about six Minutes *Wilks* came in, to us; not in the best Humour, it may be imagined, yet not in so ill a one, but that he took his Share of the Ten Pounds, without shewing the least Contempt of it; which, had he been proud enough to have refused, or to have paid in himself, I might have thought, he intended to make good his Menaces, and that the Injury I had done him would never have been forgiven; but, it seems, we had different ways of thinking.

Of this kind, more or less delightful, was the Life I led, with this impatient Man, for full twenty Years. *Dogget*, as we shall find, could not hold it so long; but as he had more Money than I, he had not Occasion for so much Philosophy. And thus were our Theatrical Affairs frequently disconcerted by this irascible Commander, this *Achilles* of our Confederacy; who, I may be bold to say, came very little short of the Spirit *Horace* gives to that Heroe in his.—

*Impiger, iracundus, inexorabilis, acer.*

This, then, is one of those Personal Anecdotes of our Variances, which, as our publick Performances were affected by it, could not, with regard to Truth, and Justice, be omitted.

From this time to the Year 1712, my Memory (from which Repository alone, every Article of what I write is collected) has nothing worth mentioning, till the first acting of the Tragedy of *Cato*. As to the Play itself, it might be enough to say, That the Author, and the Actors had their different Hopes of Fame, and Profit, amply answer'd by the Performance; but as its Success was attended with remarkable Consequences, it may not be amiss to trace it, from its several Years Concealment, in the Closet, to the Stage.

In 1703, nine Years before it was acted, I had the Pleasure of reading the first four Acts (which was all of it then written) privately with Sir *Richard Steele*: It may be needless, to say it was impossible to lay them out of my Hand, till I had gone thro' them; or to dwell upon the Delight, his Friendship to the Author receiv'd, upon my being so warmly pleas'd with them: But my Satisfaction was as highly disappointed, when he told me, Whatever Spirit Mr. *Addison* had shewn in his writing it, he doubted, he would never have Courage enough, to let his *Cato* stand the Censure of an *English* Audience; that it had only been the Amusement of his leisure Hours in *Italy*, and was never intended for the Stage. This Poetical Diffidence Sir *Richard* himself spoke of with some  
Concern,

Concern, and in the Transport of his Imagination, could not help saying, *Good God! what a Part would Betterton make of Cato!* But this was seven Years before *Betterton* died, and when *Booth* (who afterwards made his Fortune by acting it) was in his Theatrical Minority. In the latter end of *Queen Anne's* Reign, when our National Politicks had changed Hands; the Friends of *Mr. Addison*, then thought it a proper time to animate the Publick with the Sentiments of *Cato*; in a word, their Importunities were too warm to be resisted; and it was no sooner finish'd, than hurried to the Stage, in *April* 1712, at a time when three Days a Week were usually appointed for the Benefit Plays of particular Actors: But a Work of that critical Importance was to make its way, through all private Considerations; nor could it possibly give place to a Custom, which the Breach of could very little prejudice the Benefits, that on so unavoidable an Occasion, were (in part, tho' not wholly) postpon'd; it was therefore (*Mondays* excepted) acted every Day for a Month to constantly crowded Houses. As the Author had made us a Present of whatever Profits he might have claim'd from it, we thought ourselves obliged, to spare no Cost, in the proper Decorations of it. Its coming so late in the Season, to the Stage, prov'd of particular Advantage, to the sharing Actors; because the Harvest of our annual Gains was generally over, before the middle of *March*; many select Audiences being then, usually reserv'd, in favour to the Benefits of private Actors; which fixt Engagements naturally abated the Receipts of the Days, before and after them: But this unexpected After-crop of *Cato*,  
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largely supplied to us, those Deficiencies; and was almost equal to two fruitful Seasons, in the same Year; at the Close of which, the three managing Actors found themselves, each a Gainer of thirteen hundred and fifty Pounds: But to return to the first Reception of this Play from the Publick.

Although *Cato* seems plainly written upon what are called *Whig* Principles; yet the *Tories* of that Time had Sense enough not to take it, as the least Reflection, upon their Administration; but, on the contrary, they seem'd to brandish, and vaunt their Approbation of every Sentiment in Favour of Liberty, which by a publick Act of their Generosity, was carried so high, that one Day, while the Play was acting, they collected fifty Guineas in the Boxes, and made a Present of them to *Booth*, with this Compliment —  
*For his honest Opposition to a perpetual Dictator;*  
*and his dying so bravely in the Cause of Liberty:*  
 What was insinuated, by any Part of these Words, is not my Affair; but so publick a Reward, had the Appearance of a laudable Spirit, which only such a Play, as *Cato*, could have inspired; nor could *Booth* be blam'd, if upon so particular a Distinction of his Merit, he began himself to set more Value upon it: How far he might carry it, in making Use of the Favour he stood in with a certain Nobleman, then in Power, at Court, was not difficult to penetrate; and indeed, ought always to have been expected by the managing Actors: For which of them (making the Case every way his own) could with such Advantages, have contented himself, in the humble Station of an hired Actor? But let us see  
 how



how the Managers stood severally affected, up on this Occasion.

*Dogget*, who expected, though he fear'd not. the Attempt of what after happen'd, imagin'd he had thought of an Expedient to prevent it: And to cover his Design with all the Art of a Statesman, he insinuated to us (for he was a staunch *Whig*) that this Present of fifty Guineas, was a sort of a *Tory* Triumph, which they had no Pretence to; and that for his Part, he could not bear, that so redoubted a Champion for Liberty, as *Cato*, should be bought off, to the Cause of a Contrary Party: He therefore, in the seeming Zeal of his Heart, propos'd, that the Managers themselves should make the same Present to *Booth*, which had been made him from the Boxes, the Day before. This, he said, would recommend the Equality, and liberal Spirit of our Management, to the Town, and might be a Means, to secure *Booth* more firmly in our Interest; it never having been known, that the Skill of the best Actor had received so round a Reward, or Gratuity, in one Day, before. *Wilks*, who wanted nothing but Abilities to be as cunning as *Dogget*, was so charm'd with the Proposal, that he long'd that Moment, to make *Booth* the Present, with his own Hands; and though he knew he had no Right to do it, without my Consent, had no Patience to ask it; upon which I turn'd to *Dogget*, with a cold Smile, and told him, that if *Booth* could be purchased at so cheap a Rate, it would be one of the best Proofs of his Oeconomy, we had ever been beholden to: I therefore desired we might have a little Patience; that our doing it too hastily might be only making

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ing sure of an Occasion to throw the fifty Guineas away; for if we should be obliged to do better for him, we could never expect, that *Booth* would think himself bound, in Honour, to refund them. This seem'd so absurd an Argument to *Wilks*, that he began with his usual Freedom of Speech, to treat it as a pitiful Evasion of their intended Generosity: But *Dogget*, who was not so wide of my Meaning; clapping his Hand upon mine, said, with an Air of Security, O! don't trouble yourself! there must be two Words to that Bargain; let me alone to manage that Matter. *Wilks*, upon this dark Discourse, grew uneasy, as if there were some Secret between us, that he was to be left out of. Therefore, to avoid the Shock of his Intemperance, I was reduc'd to tell him, that it was my Opinion, that *Booth* would never be made easy, by any thing we could do for him, till he had a Share, in the Profits, and Management; and that, as he did not want Friends to assist him, whatever his Merit might be before, every one would think, since his acting of *Cato*, he had now enough to back his Pretensions to it. To which *Dogget* reply'd, that nobody could think his Merit was slighted by so handsome a Present, as fifty Guineas; and that for his farther Pretensions, whatever the License might avail, our Property of House, Scenes, and Cloaths were our own, and not in the Power of the Crown to dispose of. To conclude, my Objections, that the Money would be only thrown away, &c. were over-rul'd, and the same Night *Booth* had the fifty Guineas, which he receiv'd with a Thankfulness, that made *Wilks* and *Dogget* perfectly easy; insomuch that they seem'd,  
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for some time, to triumph in their Conduct, and often endeavour'd to laugh my Jealousy out of Countenance : But in the following Winter, the Game happen'd to take a different Turn ; and then, if it had been a laughing Matter, I had as strong an Occasion to smile at their former Security. But before I make an End of this Matter, I cannot pass over the Good-Fortune of the Company that follow'd us, to the Act at *Oxford*, which was held in the intervening Summer : Perhaps too, a short View of the Stage, in that different Situation, may not be unacceptable to the Curious.

After the Restoration of King *Charles*, before the *Cavalier*, and *Round-head* Parties, under their new Denomination of *Whig*, and *Tory*, began again to be politically troublesome, publick Acts at *Oxford* (as I find by the Date of several Prologues written by *Dryden*, for *Hart*, on those Occasions) had been more frequently held than in later Reigns. Whether the same Party-Dissensions may have occasion'd the Discontinuance of them, is a Speculation, not necessary to be enter'd into. But these Academical Jubilees have usually been look'd upon as a kind of congratulatory Compliment, to the Accession of every new Prince, to the Throne, and generally, as such, have attended them. King *James*, notwithstanding his Religion, had the Honour of it ; at which the Players, as usual, assisted. This I have only mention'd, to give the Reader a Theatrical Anecdote of a Liberty, which *Tony Leigh*, the Comedian took with the Character of the well known *Obadiab Walker*, then Head of *University* College, who, in that Prince's Reign, had

had turn'd *Roman Catholick*: The Circumstance is this.

In the latter End of the Comedy call'd the *Committee*, *Leigh*, who acted the Part of *Teague*, hauling in *Obadiab*, with an Halter about his Neck, whom, according to his written Part, he was to threaten to hang, for no better Reason than his refusing to drink the King's Health (but here *Leigh*) to justify his Purpose, with a stronger Provocation, put himself into a more than ordinary Heat, with his Captive *Obadiab*, which having heighten'd his Master's Curiosity, to know what *Obadiab* had done to deserve such Usage, *Leigh*, folding his Arms, with a ridiculous Stare of Astonishment, reply'd — *Upon my Shoule he has shange his Religion*. As the Merit of this Jest lay chiefly in the Auditors sudden Application of it, to the *Obadiab* of *Oxford*, it was received with all the Triumph of Applause, which the Zeal of a different Religion could inspire. But *Leigh* was given to understand, that the King was highly displeas'd at it, inasmuch as it had shewn him, that the Univerfity was in a Temper to make a Jest of his Profelyte. But to return to the Conduct of our own Affairs there, in 1712.

It had been a Custom for the Comedians, while at *Oxford*, to act twice a Day; the first Play ending every Morning before the College Hours of dining, and the other never to break into the time of shutting their Gates in the Evening. This extraordinary Labour gave all the hired Actors a Title to double Pay, which, at the Act, in King *William's* Time, I had myself accordingly received there. But the present Managers considering, that by acting only once a Day, their  
Spirits

Spirits might be fresher for every single Performance, and that by this Means, they might be able to fill up the Term of their Residence, without the Repetition of their best and strongest Plays; and as their Theatre was contrived to hold a full third more, than the usual Form of it had done, one House well fill'd, might answer the Profits of two but moderately taken up: Being enabled too, by their late Success, at *London*, to make the Journey pleasant, and profitable to the rest of their Society, they resolv'd to continue to them their double Pay, notwithstanding this new Abatement of half their Labour. This Conduct of the Managers more than answer'd their Intention, which was rather to get nothing themselves, than not let their Fraternity be the better for the Expedition. Thus they laid an Obligation upon their Company, and were themselves considerably, though unexpected, Gainers by it. But my chief Reason for bringing the Reader to *Oxford*, was to shew the different Taste of Plays there, from that which prevail'd at *London*. A great deal of that false, flashy Wit, and forc'd Humour, which had been the Delight of our Metropolitan Multitude, was only rated there at its bare, intrinsick Value; Applause was not to be purchased there, but by the true Sterling, the *Sal Atticum* of a Genius; unless where the Skill of the Actor pass'd it upon them, with some extraordinary Strokes of Nature. *Shakespeare*, and *Johnson* had, there, a sort of classical Authority; for whose masterly Scenes they seem'd to have as implicit a Reverence, as formerly, for the Ethics of *Aristotle*; and were as incapable of allowing Moderns to be their Competitors, as of chang-

changing their Academical Habits for gaudy Colours, or Embroidery. Whatever Merit, therefore, some few of our more politely written Comedies might pretend to, they had not the same Effect upon the Imagination there, nor were received with that extraordinary Applause, they had met with, from the People of Mode, and Pleasure, in *London*; whose vain Accomplishments did not dislike themselves, in the Glass, that was held to them: The elegant Follies of higher Life, were not, at *Oxford*, among their Acquaintance, and consequently might not be so good Company, to a learned Audience, as Nature, in her plain Dress, and unornamented, in her Pursuits and Inclinations, seem'd to be.

The only distinguish'd Merit, allow'd to any modern Writer, was to the Author of *Cato*, which Play being the Flower of a Plant, raised in that learned Garden (for there Mr. *Addison* had his Education) what Favour may we not suppose was due to him, from an Audience of Brethren, who from that local Relation to him, might naturally have a warmer Pleasure, in their Benevolence to his Fame? But not to give more Weight to this imaginary Circumstance, than it may bear, the Fact was, that on our first Day of acting it, our House was, in a manner, invested; and Entrance demanded by twelve o' Clock at Noon, and before one, it was not wide enough for many, who came too late for Places. The same Crowds continued for three Days together, (an uncommon Curiosity in that Place) and the Death of *Cato* triumph'd over the Injuries of *Cæsar*, every where. To conclude, our Reception at *Oxford*, whatever our Merit might be, exceeded

ceeded our Expectation. At our taking Leave, we had the Thanks of the Vice-Chancellor, for the Decency, and Order, observ'd by our whole Society; an Honour which had not always been paid, upon the same Occasions; for at the Act, in King *William's* Time, I remember some Pranks of a different Nature had been complain'd of. Our Receipts had not only enabled us (as I have observ'd) to double the Pay of every Actor, but to afford out of them, towards the Repair of St. *Mary's* Church, the Contribution of fifty Pounds: Besides which, each of the three Managers had to his respective Share, clear of all Charges, one hundred and fifty more, for his one and twenty Days Labour; which being added to his thirteen hundred and fifty shared in the Winter preceding, amounted, in the whole, to fifteen hundred; the greatest Sum ever known to have been shared, in one Year, to that Time: And to the Honour of our Auditors, here, and elsewhere, be it spoken, all this was rais'd, without the Aid of those barbarous Entertainments, with which, some few Years after (upon the Re-establishment of two contending Companies) we were forc'd to disgrace the Stage, to support it.

This, therefore, is that remarkable Period, when the Stage, during my Time upon it, was the least reproachable: And it may be worth the publick Observation (if any thing I have said of it can be so) that *One* Stage may, as I have prov'd it has done, very laudably support itself, by such Spectacles only, as are fit to delight a sensible People; but the equal Prosperity of *Two* Stages has always been of a very short Duration. If therefore the Publick should ever recover, into  
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the true Taste of that Time, and stick to it; the Stage must come into it, or *starve*; as whenever the general Taste is vulgar, the Stage must come down to it, to *live*. — But I ask Pardon of the Multitude, who, in all Regulations of the Stage, may expect, to be a little indulg'd, in what they like: If therefore they *will* have a May-pole, why, the Players must *give* them a May-pole; but I only speak, in case they should keep an old Custom of changing their Minds; and by their Privilege of being in the *wrong*, should take a Fancy, by way of Variety, of being in the *right*. — Then, in such a Case, what I have said may appear to have been no intended Design, against their Liberty of judging, for themselves

After our Return, from *Oxford*, *Booth* was at full Leisure, to solicit his Admission, to a Share, in the Management; in which he succeeded, about the Beginning of the following Winter: Accordingly a new License (recalling all former Licenses) was issued, wherein *Booth's* Name was added, to those of the other Managers. But still, there was a Difficulty, in his Qualification, to be adjusted; what Consideration he should allow, for an equal Title to our Stock of Cloaths, Scenes, &c. without which, the License was of no more Use, than the Stock was without the License; or, at least, if there were any Difference, the former Managers seem'd to have the Advantage, in it; the Stock being entirely theirs, and three Parts in four of the License; for *Collier*, though now but a fifth Manager, still insisted on his former Appointment of 700*l* a Year; which, in Equity, ought certainly to have been proportionably abated: But Court-Favour was not always  
measur'd



measur'd by *that* Yard; *Collier's* Matter was soon out of the Question; his Pretensions were too visible, to be contested; but the Affair of *Booth* was not so clear a Point: The Lord Chamberlain, therefore, only recommended it, to be adjusted among ourselves; which, to say the Truth, at that Time, was a greater Indulgence than I expected. Let us see, then, how this critical Case was handled.

*Wilks* was of Opinion, that to set a good round Value upon our Stock, was the only way, to come near an Equivalent, for the Diminution of our Shares, which the Admission of *Booth* must occasion: But *Dogget* insisted, that he had no mind to dispose of any Part of his Property, and therefore would set no Price upon it at all. Tho' I allow'd, that Both these Opinions might be grounded on a good deal of Equity, yet I was not sure that either of them was practicable; and therefore told them, that when they could Both agree, which of them could be made so, they might rely on my Consent, in any Shape. In the mean time, I desired they would consider, that as our License subsisted only during Pleasure, we could not pretend, that the Queen might not recall, or alter it: But that to speak out, without mincing the Matter on either Side, the Truth was plainly this: That *Booth* had a manifest Merit, as an Actor; and as he was not supposed to be a *Whig*, it was as evident, that a good deal for that Reason, a Secretary of State had taken him into his Protection, which I was afraid the weak Pretence of our invaded Property would not be able to contend with: That his having signaliz'd himself, in the Character of *Cato* (whose Prin-

Principles the *Tories* had affected to have taken, into their own Possession) was a very popular Pretence of making him free of the Stage, by advancing him, to the Profits of it. And, as we had seen, that the Stage was frequently treated, as if it was not suppos'd, to have any Property at all; this Favour intended to *Booth*, was thought a right Occasion, to avow that Opinion, by disposing of its Property, at Pleasure: But be that as it might, I own'd, it was not so much my Apprehensions of what the *Court* might do, that sway'd me, into an Accommodation with *Booth*, as what the *Town* (in whose Favour he now apparently stood) might think *ought* to be done: That there might be more Danger in contesting their arbitrary Will, and Pleasure, than in disputing this less terrible Strain of the Prerogative. That if *Booth* were only impos'd upon us, from his Merit to the Court, we were then, in the Condition of other Subjects: Then, indeed, Law, Right, and Possession, might have a tolerable Tug, for our Property: But as the *Town* would always look upon his Merit to *them*, in a stronger Light, and be Judges of it themselves, it would be a weak and idle Endeavour, in us, not to sail with the Stream, when we might possibly make a Merit of our cheerfully admitting him: That though his former Opposition to our Interest, might, between Man and Man, a good deal justify our not making an earlier Friend of him; yet that was a Disobligation, out of the *Town's* Regard, and consequently would be of no Weight, against so approv'd an Actor's being preferr'd. But all this, notwithstanding, if they could both agree, in a different Opinion, I would,

would, at the Hazard of any Consequence, be guided by it.

Here, now, will be shewn another Instance of our different Tempers: *Dogget* (who in all Matters that concern'd our common Weal, and Interest, little regarded our Opinion, and, even to an Obstinacy, walked by his own) look'd only out of Humour, at what I had said, and without thinking himself oblig'd to give any Reason for it, declar'd, he would maintain his Property. *Wilks*, (who, upon the same Occasions, was as remarkably ductile, as when his Superiority on the Stage, was in question, he was assuming, and intractable) said, for his Part, provided our Business of acting was not interrupted, he did not care what we did: But, in short, he was for playing on, come what would of it. This last Part of his Declaration I did not dislike, and therefore I desir'd, we might all enter into an immediate Treaty with *Booth*, upon the Terms of his Admission. *Dogget* still fullenly reply'd, that he had no Occasion, to enter into any Treaty. *Wilks* then, to soften him, propos'd, that, if I liked it, *Dogget* might undertake it himself. I agreed. No! he would not be concern'd in it. I then offer'd the same Trust to *Wilks*, if *Dogget* approv'd of it. *Wilks* said, he was not good at making of Bargains, but if I was willing, he would rather leave it to me. *Dogget*, at this, rose up, and said, we might both do as we pleas'd, but that nothing but the Law, should make him part with his Property—and so went out of the Room. After which, he never came among us more, either as an Actor, or Manager.

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By his having, in this abrupt Manner, abdicated his Post, in our Government; what he left of it, naturally devolv'd upon *Wilks*, and Myself. However, this did not so much distress our Affair, as I have Reason to believe *Dogget* thought it would: For though, by our Indentures tripartite, we could not dispose of his Property, without his Consent; yet those Indentures could not oblige us to fast, because he had no Appetite; and if the Mill did not grind, we could have no Bread: We therefore determin'd, at any Hazard, to keep our Business still going, and that our safest Way would be, to make the best Bargain we could with *Booth*; one Article of which was to be, That *Booth* should stand equally answerable with us, to *Dogget*, for the Consequence: To which *Booth* made no Objection, and the rest of his Agreement, was to allow us Six hundred Pounds for his Share, in our Property, which was to be paid by such Sums as should arise from half his Profits of Acting, till the whole was discharged: Yet so cautious were we in this Affair, that this Agreement was only Verbal on our Part, tho' written, and sign'd by *Booth*, as what entirely contented him: However, Bond and Judgment, could not have made it more secure, to him; for he had his Share, and was able to discharge the Incumbrance upon it, by his Income of that Year only. Let us see what *Dogget* did in this Affair, after he had left us.

Might it not be imagin'd, that *Wilks*, and Myself, by having made this Matter easy to *Booth*, should have deserv'd the Approbation at least, if not the Favour of the Court, that had exerted so much Power to prefer him? But shall I be believed,

lieved, when I affirm, that *Dogget*, who had so strongly oppos'd the Court, in his Admission to a Share, was very near getting the better of us both, upon that Account, and for some time appear'd to have more Favour there, than either of us? Let me tell out my Story, and then think what you please of it.

*Dogget*, who was equally oblig'd, with us, to act upon the Stage, as to assist, in the Management of it, tho' he had refus'd to do either, still demanded of us his whole Share of the Profits, without considering what Part of them *Booth* might pretend to, from our late Concessions. After many fruitless Endeavours to bring him back to us, *Booth* join'd with us in making him an Offer of half a Share, if he had a mind totally to quit the Stage, and make it a *Sine-cure*. No! he wanted the Whole, and to sit still himself, while we (if we pleas'd) might work for him, or let it alone, and none of us all, neither he, nor we, be the better for it. What we imagin'd encourag'd him to hold us at this short Defiance, was, that he had laid up enough to live upon, without the Stage (for he was one of those close Oeconomists, whom Prodigals call a Miser) and therefore partly from an Inclination, as an invincible *Whig*, to signalize himself in Defence of his Property, and as much presuming that our Necessities would oblige us to consent to his own Terms, he was determin'd (even against the Opinion of his Friends) to make no other Peace, with us. But not being able by this inflexible Perseverance, to have his wicked Will of us, he was resolv'd to go to the Fountain-head of his own Distress, and try, if from thence, he could

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turn the Current against us. He appeal'd to the Vice-Chamberlain, to whose Direction, the adjusting of all these Theatrical Difficulties, was then committed : But there, I dare say, the Reader does not expect he should meet with much Favour : However, be that as it may ; for whether any Regard was had, to his having some Thousands, in his Pocket ; or that he was consider'd as a Man, who would, or could make more Noise in the Matter, than Courtiers might care for : Or what Charms, Spells, or Conjurations he might make use of, is all Darknes to me ; yet so it was, he one way or other, play'd his Part so well, that, in a few Days after, he receiv'd an Order, from the Vice-Chamberlain, positively commanding us, to pay *Dogget* his whole Share, notwithstanding we had complain'd before of his having withdrawn himself from acting on the Stage, and from the Management of it. This I thought was a dainty Distinction indeed ! that *Dogget's* Defiance of the Commands in Favour of *Booth*, should be rewarded with so ample a *Sine-cure* ; and that we, for our Obedience, should be condemn'd to dig in the Mine, to pay it him ! This bitter Pill, I confess, was more than I could down with, and therefore soon determin'd, at all Events, never to take it. But as I had a Man of Power to deal with, it was not my Business to speak *out* to him, or to set forth our Treatment, in its proper Colours. My only Doubt was, Whether I could bring *Wilks* into the same Sentiments (for he never cared to litigate any thing, that did not affect his Figure upon the Stage.) But I had 'the good Fortune to lay our Condition in so precarious and disagreeable

able a Light to him, if we submitted to this Order, that he fir'd, before I could get thro' half the Consequences of it; and I began now to find it more difficult to keep him within Bounds, than I had before to alarm him. I then propos'd to him this Expedient: That we should draw up a Remonstrance, neither seeming to refuse, or comply with this Order; but to start such Objections, and perplexing Difficulties, that should make the Whole impracticable: That under such Distractions, as this should raise in our Affairs, we could not be answerable to keep open our Doors, which consequently would destroy the Fruit of the Favour lately granted to *Booth*, as well as of this intended to *Dogget* himself. To this Remonstrance we receiv'd an Answer in Writing, which varied something in the Measures, to accommodate Matters with *Dogget*. This was all I desired, when I found the Style of *Sic jubeo* was alter'd, when this formidable Power began to *parley* with us, we knew there could not be much to be fear'd, from it: For I would have remonstrated till I had died, rather than have yielded to the roughest, or smoothest Persuasion, that could intimidate or deceive us. By this Conduct, we made the Affair, at last, too troublesome for the Ease of a Courtier to go thro' with. For when it was consider'd, that the principal Point, the Admission of *Booth*, was got over, *Dogget* was fairly left to the Law, for Relief.

Upon this Disappointment, *Dogget* accordingly prefer'd a Bill in *Chancery* against us. *Wilks*, who hated all Business, but that of entertaining the Publick, left the Conduct of our Cause to me; in which we had, at our first setting out, this Ad-

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vantage of *Dogget*, that we had three Pockets to support our Expence, where he had but One. My first Direction to our Solicitor was, to use all possible Delay, that the Law would admit of; a Direction, that Lawyers seldom neglect; by this means we hung up our Plaintiff about two Years, in *Chancery*, till we were at full Leisure to come to a Hearing before the Lord Chancellor *Cowper*; which did not happen till after the Accession of his late Majesty. The Issue of it was this. *Dogget* had about fourteen Days allow'd him to make his Election, whether he would return to act, as usual: But he declaring, by his Counsel, That he rather chose to quit the Stage, he was decreed Six Hundred Pounds for his Share, in our Property, with 15 *per Cent.* Interest, from the Date of the last License: Upon the Receipt of which, both Parties were to sign General-Releases, and severally to pay their own Cofts. By this Decree, *Dogget*, when his Lawyer's Bill was paid, scarce got one Year's Purchase, of what we had offer'd him without Law, which (as he surviv'd but seven Years after it) would have been an Annuity of Five Hundred Pounds, and a *Sine-cure* for Life.

Tho' there are many Persons living, who know every Article of these Facts to be true; yet it will be found, that the strongest of them, was not the strongest Occasion of *Dogget's* quitting the Stage. If therefore the Reader should not have Curiosity enough to know, how the Publick came to be depriv'd of so valuable an Actor, let him consider, that he is not obliged to go through the rest of this Chapter, which I fairly tell him before-hand, will only be fill'd up  
with



with a few idle Anecdotes, leading to that Discovery.

After our Law-suit was ended, *Dogget*, for some few Years could scarce bear the Sight of *Wilks*, or myself; tho' (as shall be shewn) for different Reasons: Yet it was his Misfortune to meet with us almost every Day. *Button's* Coffee-house, so celebrated in the *Tatlers*, for the Good-Company, that came there, was at this time in its highest Request. *Addison*, *Steele*, *Pope*, and several other Gentlemen of different Merit, then made it their constant *Rendezvous*. Nor could *Dogget* decline the agreeable Conversation there, tho' he was daily sure to find *Wilks*, or myself, in the same Place, to sour his Share of it: For as *Wilks*, and He were differently proud; the one rejoicing in a captious, over-bearing, valiant Pride; and the other in a stiff, fullen, Purse-Pride, it may be easily conceiv'd, when two such 'Temperers met, how agreeable the Sight of one was to the other. And as *Dogget* knew, I had been the Conductor of our Defence, against his Law-suit, which had hurt him more, for the Loss he had sustain'd, in his Reputation of understanding Business, which he valued himself upon, than his Disappointment had, of getting so little by it; it was no Wonder if I was intirely out of his good Graces, which I confess, I was inclin'd upon any reasonable Terms to have recover'd; he being of all my Theatrical Brethren, the Man I most delighted in: For when he was not in a Fit of Wisdom, or not over-concerned about his Interest, he had a great deal of entertaining Humour: I therefore, notwithstanding his Reserve, always left the Door open to our former Intimacy, if he were

inclined to come into it. I never failed to give him my Hat, and, *Your Servant*, wherever I met him; neither of which he would ever return, for above a Year after; but I still persisted, in my usual Salutation, without observing, whether it was civilly received, or not. This ridiculous Silence, between two Comedians, that had so lately liv'd in a constant Course of Raillery with one another, was often smil'd at, by our Acquaintance, who frequented the same Coffee-house: And one of them carried his Jest upon it so far, that when I was at some Distance from Town, he wrote me a formal Account, that *Dogget* was actually dead. After the first Surprize, his Letter gave me, was over, I began to consider, that this coming from a droll Friend to both of us, might possibly be written, to extract some Merriment out of my real Belief of it: In this I was not unwilling to gratify him, and returned an Answer, as if I had taken the Truth of his News for granted; and was not a little pleas'd, that I had so fair an Opportunity of speaking my Mind freely of *Dogget*, which I did, in some Favour of his Character; I excus'd his Faults, and was just to his Merit. His Law-suit with us, I only imputed to his having naturally deceiv'd himself in the Justice of his Cause. What I most complain'd of was, his irreconcilable Disaffection to me, upon it, whom he could not reasonably blame, for standing in my own Defence; that not to endure me after it, was a Reflection upon his Sense, when all our Acquaintance had been Witnesses of our former Intimacy; which my Behaviour in his Life-time, had plainly shewn him, I had a mind to renew. But since he was now gone (however  
great

great a Churl he was to me) I was sorry my Correspondent had lost him.

This Part of my Letter, I was sure, if *Dogget's* Eyes were still open, would be shewn to him; if not, I had only writ it to no Purpose. But about a Month after, when I came to Town, I had some little Reason to imagine it had the Effect I wish'd from it: For, one Day sitting over-against him, at the same Coffee-house, where we often mixt at the same Table, tho' we never exchange'd a single Syllable, he graciously extended his Hand, for a Pinch of my Snuff: As this seem'd, from him, a sort of breaking the Ice of his Temper, I took Courage upon it, to break Silence on my Side, and ask'd him how he lik'd it? To which, with a slow Hesitation, naturally assist'd by the Action of his taking the Snuff, he reply'd—*Umb! the best—Umb!—I have tasted a great while!*— If the Reader, who may possibly think all this extremely trifling, will consider that Trifles sometimes shew Characters in as strong a Light, as Facts of more serious Importance, I am in hopes he may allow, that my Matter less needs an Excuse, than the Excuse itself does; if not, I must stand condemn'd at the end of my Story.— But let me go on.

After a few Days of these coy, Lady-like Compliances, on his Side, we grew into a more conversable Temper: At last, I took a proper Occasion, and desired he would be so frank with me, as to let me know, what was his real Dislike, or Motive, that made him throw up so good an Income, as his Share with us annually brought him in? For though by our Admision of *Booth*, it might not probably amount to so much by a Hun-

dred, or two a Year, as formerly; yet the Remainder was too considerable, to be quarrel'd with, and was likely to continue more, than the best Actors before us, had ever got, by the Stage. And farther, to encourage him to be open, I told him, If I had done any thing, that had particularly disobligh'd him, I was ready, if he could put me in the way, to make him any Amends in my Power; if not, I desired he would be so just to himself, as to let me know the real Truth, without Reserve: But Reserve he could not, from his natural Temper, easily shake off. All he said came from him, by half Sentences, and *Inuendos*, as—No, he had not taken any thing particularly ill—for his Part, he was very easy, as he was; but where others were to dispose of his Property as they pleas'd—if you had flood it out, as I did, *Booth* might have paid a better Price for it.—You were too much afraid of the Court—but that's all over.—There were other things in the Play-house.—No Man of Spirit.—In short, to be always pester'd, and provok'd by a trifling Wasp—a—vain—shallow!—A Man would sooner beg his Bread, than bear it.—Here it was easy to understand him: I therefore ask'd him, what he had to bear, that I had not my Share of? No! it was not the same thing, he said.—You can play with a Bear, or let him alone, and do what he would; but I could not let him lay his Paws upon me, without being hurt; you did not feel him, as I did.—And for a Man to be cutting of Throats, upon every Trifle, at my time of Day!—If I had been as covetous, as he thought me, may be I might have born it, as well as you—but I would not be a Lord of the Treasury, if such a  
Temper,

Temper, as *Wilks's*, were to be at the Head of it. —

Here, then, the whole Secret was out. The rest of our Conversation was but explaining upon it. In a Word, the painful Behaviour of *Wilks* had hurt him so sorely, that the Affair of *Booth* was look'd upon, as much a Relief, as a Grievance, in giving him so plausible a Pretence to get rid of us all, with a better Grace.

*Booth* too, in a little time, had his Share of the same Uneasiness, and often complain'd of it to me: Yet as we neither of us could, then, afford to pay *Dogget's* Price, for our Remedy: all we could do, was to avoid every Occasion, in our Power, of inflaming the Distemper: So that we both agreed, tho' *Wilks's* Nature was not to be changed, it was a less Evil to live with him, than without him.

Tho' I had often suspected, from what I had felt myself, that the Temper of *Wilks* was *Dogget's* real Quarrel, to the Stage; yet I could never thoroughly believe it, till I had it from his own Mouth. And I, then, thought the Concern he had shewn at it was a good deal inconsistent with that Understanding, which was generally allow'd him. When I give my Reasons for it, perhaps the Reader will not have a better Opinion of my own: Be that as it may, I cannot help wondering, that he, who was so much more capable of Reflexion, than *Wilks*, could sacrifice so valuable an Income, to his Impatience of another's natural Frailty! And tho' my Stoical way of thinking may be no Rule, for a wiser Man's Opinion; yet if it should happen to be right, the Reader may make his Use of it. Why then should we not

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always,

always consider, that the Rashness of Abuse is but the false Reason of a weak Man? and that offensive Terms are only used, to supply the want of Strength in Argument? Which, as to the common Practice of the sober World, we do not find, every Man, in Business, is oblig'd to resent, with a military Sense of Honour: Or if he should, would not the Conclusion amount to this? Because another wants Sense and Manners, I am obliged to be a Madman: For such every Man is, more, or less, while the Passion of Anger is in Possession of him. And what less can we call that proud Man, who would put another out of the World, only for putting him out of Humour? If Accounts of the Tongue were always to be made up with the Sword, all the Wisemen in the World might be brought in Debtors, to Block-heads. And when Honour pretends, to be Witness, Judge, and Executioner, in its own Cause, if Honour were a Man, would it be an Untruth, to say Honour is a very impudent Fellow? But in *Dogget's Case*, it may be ask'd, How was he to behave himself? Were passionate Insults, to be born, for Years together? To these Questions, I can only answer with two, or three more, Was he to punish himself, because another was in the wrong? How many sensible Husbands endure the teizing Tongue of a froward Wife, only because she is the weaker Vessel? And why should not a weak Man have the same Indulgence? Daily Experience will tell us, that the fretful Temper of a Friend, like the Personal Beauty of a fine Lady, by Use, and Cohabitation, may be brought down, to give us neither Pain, nor Pleasure. Such, at least, and no more, was the Distress I found myself

self in, upon the same Provocations, which I generally return'd with humming an Air to myself; or if the Storm grew very high, it might, perhaps, sometimes ruffle me enough, to sing a little out of Tune: Thus too (if I had any ill Nature to gratify) I often saw the unruly Passion of the Aggressor's Mind punish itself, by a restless Disorder of the Body.

What inclines me, therefore, to think the Conduct of *Dogget* was as rash, as the Provocations he complain'd of, is, that in some time after he had left us, he plainly discover'd he had repented it. His Acquaintance observ'd to us, that he sent many a long Look after his Share, in the still prosperous State of the Stage: But, as his Heart was too high to declare (what we saw too) his shy Inclination to return, he made us no direct Overtures. Nor, indeed, did we care (though he was a golden Actor) to pay too dear for him: For as most of his Parts had been pretty well supply'd, he could not, now, be of his former Value, to us. However, to shew the Town, at least, that he had not forsworn the Stage, he, one Day, condescended, to play for the Benefit of *Mrs. Porter*, in the *Wanton Wife*, at which he knew his late Majesty was to be present. Now (tho' I speak it not of my own Knowledge) yet it was not likely *Mrs. Porter* would have ask'd that Favour of him, without some previous Hint, that it would be granted. His coming among us, for that Day only, had a strong Appearance of his laying it in our way, to make him Proposals, or that he hoped the Court, or Town, might intimate to us, their Desire of seeing him oftener: But as he acted only to do a particular Favour, the

the Managers ow'd him no Compliment for it, beyond Common Civilities. And, as that might not be all he propos'd by it, his farther Views (if he had any) came to nothing. For after this Attempt, he never returned to the Stage.

To speak of him, as an Actor: He was the most an Original, and the strictest Observer of Nature, of all his Contemporaries. He borrow'd from none of them: His Manner was his own: He was a Pattern to others, whose great Merit was, that they had sometimes tolerably imitated him. In dressing a Character to the greatest Exactness, he was remarkably skilful; the least Article of whatever Habit he wore, seem'd in some degree to speak and mark the different Humour he presented; a necessary Care in a Comedian, in which many have been too remiss, or ignorant. He could be extremely ridiculous, without stepping into the least Impropriety, to make him so. His greatest Success was in Characters of lower Life, which he improv'd, from the Delight he took, in his Observations of that Kind, in the real World. In Songs, and particular Dances too, of Humour, he had no Competitor. *Congreve* was a great Admirer of him, and found his Account, in the Characters he expressly wrote for him. In those of *Fondlewife*, in his *Old Batchelor*; and *Ben*, in *Love for Love*, no Author, and Actor could be more obliged to their mutual masterly Performances. He was very acceptable to several Persons of high Rank and Taste: Tho' he seldom car'd to be the Comedian, but among his more intimate Acquaintance.

And now, let me ask the World a Question. When Men have any valuable Qualities, why are the



the generality of our modern Wits so fond of exposing their Failings only, which the wisest of Mankind will never wholly be free from? Is it of more use to the Publick, to know their Errors than their Perfections? Why is the Account of Life to be so unequally stated? Tho' a Man may be sometimes Debtor to Sense, or Morality, is it not doing him Wrong, not to let the World see, at the same time, how far he may be Creditor to both? Are Defects and Disproportions, to be the only labour'd Features in a Portrait? But perhaps such Authors may know how to please the World better than I do, and may naturally suppose, that what is delightful to themselves, may not be disagreeable to others. For my own part, I confess myself a little touch'd in Conscience, at what I have, just now, observ'd to the Disadvantage of my other Brother-Manager.

If therefore, in discovering the true Cause of the Publick's losing so valuable an Actor, as *Dogget*, I have been oblig'd to shew the Temper of *Wilks*, in its natural Complexion, ought I not, in amends, and Balance of his Imperfections, to say at the same time of him, That if he was not the most Correct, or Judicious, yet (as *Hamlet* says of the King his Father) *Take him for All, in All, &c.* he was certainly the most diligent, most laborious, and most useful Actor, that I have seen upon the Stage in Fifty Years.

C H A P.



## C H A P. XV.

*Sir Richard Steele succeeds Collier, in the Theatre-Royal. Lincoln's-Inn-Fields House rebuilt. The Patent restored. Eight Actors at once desert, from the King's Company. Why. A new Patent obtained, by Sir Richard Steele, and assign'd in Shares, to the managing Actors of Drury-Lane. Of modern Pantomimes. The Rise of them. Vanity invincible, and sham'd. The Non-juror acted. The Author, not forgiven; and rewarded for it.*

**U**PON the Death of the Queen, Plays (as they always had been on the like Occasions) were silenc'd for six Weeks. But this happening on the First of *August*, in the long Vacation of the Theatre, the Observance of that Ceremony, which at another Juncture would have fallen like wet Weather upon their Harvest, did them now no particular Damage. Their License however being of course to be renewed, that Vacation gave the Managers Time to cast about, for the better Alteration of it: And since they knew the Pension of seven hundred a Year, which had been levied upon them for *Collier*, must still be paid to somebody, they imagin'd the Merit of a *Whig* might now have as good a Chance of getting into it, as that of a *Tory* had for being continued in it: Having no Obligations, therefore, to *Collier*, who had made the last Penny of them; they apply'd themselves to *Sir Richard Steele*, who had distinguished

guished himself by his Zeal for the House of *Hannover*, and had been expell'd the House of Commons, for carrying it (as was judg'd at a certain Crisis) into a Reproach of the Government. This we knew was his Pretension to that Favour, in which he now stood, at Court: We knew too, the Obligations the Stage had to his Writings; there being scarce a Comedian of Merit, in our whole Company, whom his *Tatlers* had not made better, by his publick Recommendation of them. And many Days had our House been particularly fill'd, by the Influence and Credit of his Pen. Obligations of this kind from a Gentleman, with whom they all had the Pleasure of a personal Intimacy, the Managers thought could not be more justly return'd, than by shewing him some warm Instance of their Desire, to have him, at the Head of them. We therefore beg'd him to use his Interest, for the Renewal of our License, and that he would do us the Honour of getting our Names to stand with His, in the same Commission. This, we told him, would put it still farther into his Power of supporting the Stage, in that Reputation, to which his Lucubrations had already so much contributed; and that therefore we thought no Man had better Pretences to partake of its Success.

Though it may be no Addition to the favourable Part of this Gentleman's Character, to say with what Pleasure he receiv'd this Mark of our Inclination to him, yet my Vanity longs to tell you, that it surpriz'd him into an Acknowledgment, that People, who are shy of Obligations, are cautious of confessing. His Spirits took such a lively turn upon it, that had we been all his

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own Sons, no unexpected Act of filial Duty could have more endear'd us to him.

It must be observ'd, then, that as *Collier* had no Share, in any Part of our Property, no Difficulties from that Quarter, could obstruct this Proposal. And the usual Time of our beginning to act for the Winter-Season now drawing near, we press'd him not to lose any Time in his Solicitation of this new License. Accordingly Sir *Richard* apply'd himself to the Duke of *Marlborough*, the Hero of his Heart, who, upon the first mention of it, obtain'd it of his Majesty, for Sir *Richard*, and the former Managers, who were Actors. *Collier* we heard no more of.

The Court, and Town, being crowded very early, in the Winter-Season, upon the critical Turn of Affairs, so much expected from the *Hanover* Succession, the Theatre had its particular Share of that general Blessing, by a more than ordinary Concourse of Spectators.

About this Time the Patentee, having very near finish'd his House in *Lincoln's-Inn-Fields*, began to think of forming a new Company; and in the mean time, found it necessary to apply for Leave to employ them. By the weak Defence he had always made against the several Attacks upon his Interest, and former Government of the Theatre, it might be a Question, if his House had been ready, in the Queen's Time, whether he would, then, have had the Spirit to ask, or Interest enough to obtain Leave to use it: But in the following Reign, as it did not appear he had done any thing to forfeit the Right of his Patent, he prevail'd with Mr. *Craggs* the Younger, (afterwards Secretary of State) to lay his Case before the  
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the King, which he did in so effectual a manner, that (as Mr. *Craggs* himself told me) his Majesty was pleas'd to say upon it, "That he remember'd, " when he had been in *England* before, in King " *Charles* his Time, there had been two Thea- " tres in *London*; and as the Patent seem'd to be a " lawful Grant, he saw no Reason, why 'Two " Play-houses might not be continued."

The Suspension of the Patent being thus taken off, the younger Multitude seem'd to call aloud for two Play-houses! Many desired another, from the common Notion, that *Two* would always create Emulation, in the Actors (an Opinion, which I have consider'd in a former Chapter.) Others too, were as eager for them, from the natural Ill-will that follows the Fortunate, or Prosperous, in any Undertaking. Of this low Malevolence we had, now and then, had remarkable Instances; we had been forced to dismiss an Audience of a hundred and fifty Pounds, from a Disturbance spirited up, by obscure People, who never gave any better Reason for it, than that it was their Fancy, to support the idle Complaint of one rival Actress, against another, in their several Pretensions to the chief Part in a new Tragedy. But as this Tumult seem'd only to be the Wantonness of *English* Liberty, I shall not presume to lay any farther Censure upon it.

Now, notwithstanding this publick Desire of re-establishing two Houses; and though I have allow'd the former Actors greatly our Superiors; and the Managers I am speaking of, not to have been without their private Errors. Yet under all these Disadvantages, it is certain, the Stage, for twenty Years before this time, had never been in so flourishing a Condition: And it was as evident to all

all sensible Spectators, that this Prosperity could be only owing to that better Order, and closer Industry, now daily observ'd; and which had formerly been neglected by our Predecessors. But that I may not impose upon the Reader a Merit, which was not generally allow'd us, I ought honestly to let him know, that about this time, the publick Papers, particularly *Mist's* Journal, took upon them very often to censure our Management, with the same Freedom, and Severity, as if we had been so many Ministers of State: But so it happen'd, that these unfortunate Reformers of the World, these self-appointed *Censors* hardly ever hit upon what was really wrong, in us; but taking up Facts upon Trust, or Hear-say, piled up many a pompous Paragraph, that they had ingeniously conceiv'd was sufficient to demolish our Administration, or, at least, to make us very uneasy in it; which, indeed, had so far its Effect, that my equally-injur'd Brethren *Wilks*, and *Booth*, often complain'd to me of these disagreeable Aspersions, and propos'd, that some publick Answer might be made to them, which I always oppos'd, by, perhaps, too secure a Contempt of what such Writers could do to hurt us; and my Reason for it was, that I knew but of one Way to silence Authors of that Stamp; which was, to grow insignificant, and good for nothing, and then we should hear no more of them: But while we continued in the Prosperity of pleasing others, and were not conscious of having deserv'd what they said of us, why should we gratify the little Spleen of our Enemies, by wincing at it, or give them fresh Opportunities to dine upon any Reply they might make to our publickly taking Notice of them? And tho'

Silence

Silence might in some Cases, be a Sign of Guilt or Error confess'd, our Accusers were so low, in their Credit and Sense, that the Content we gave the Publick, almost every Day, from the Stage, ought to be our only Answer to them.

However (as I have observ'd) we made many Blots, which these unskilful Gamesters never hit: But the Fidelity of an Historian, cannot be excus'd the Omission of any Truth, which might make for the other Side of the Question. I shall therefore confess a Fact, which, if a happy Accident had not interven'd, had brought our Affairs, into a very tottering Condition. This too, is that Fact, which in a former Chapter, I promis'd to set forth as a Sea-Mark of Danger, to future Managers, in their Theatrical Course of Government.

When the new-built Theatre, in *Lincoln's-Inn-Fields* was ready to be open'd, seven or eight Actors, in one Day, deserted from us, to the Service of the Enemy, which oblig'd us to postpone many of our best Plays, for want of some inferior Parts in them, which these Deserters had been used to fill: But the Indulgence of the Royal Family, who then frequently honour'd us, by their Presence, was pleas'd to accept of whatever could be hastily got ready for their Entertainment. And tho' this critical Good-Fortune prevented, in some measure, our Audiences falling so low, as otherwise they might have done, yet it was not sufficient to keep us in our former Prosperity: For that Year, our Profits amounted not to above a third Part of our usual Dividends; though in the following Year we intirely recover'd them. The Chief of these Deserters were *Keene, Bullock,*

*lock, Pack, Leigh*, Son of the famous *Tony Leigh*, and others of less note. 'Tis true, they none of them had more than a negative Merit, in being only able to do us more Harm by their leaving us, without Notice, than they could do us Good, by remaining with us: For though the best of them could not support a Play, the worst of them, by their Absence, could maim it; as the Loss of the least Pin, in a Watch, may obstruct its Motion. But to come to the true Cause of their Desertion: After my having discover'd the (long unknown) Occasion that drove *Dogget* from the Stage, before his settled Inclination to leave it; it will be less incredible, that these Actors, upon the first Opportunity to relieve themselves, should all, in one Day, have left us from the same Cause of Uneasiness. For, in a little time after, upon not finding their Expectations answer'd in *Lincoln's-Inn-Fields*, some of them, who seem'd to answer for the rest, told me, the greatest Grievance they had, in our Company, was the shocking Temper of *Wilks*, who, upon every, almost no Occasion, let loose the unlimited Language of Passion upon them, in such a manner as their Patience was not longer able to support. This, indeed, was what we could not justify! This was a Secret, that might have made a wholesome Paragraph, in a critical News-Paper! But as it was our Good-Fortune, that it came not to the Ears of our Enemies, the Town was not entertain'd, with their publick Remarks upon it.

After this new Theatre had enjoy'd that short Run of Favour, which is apt to follow Novelty; their Audiences began to flag: But whatever good Opinion we had of our own Merit, we had not

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so good a one of the Multitude, as to depend too much upon the Delicacy of their Taste: We knew too, that this Company being so much nearer to the City, than we were, would intercept many an honest Customer, that might not know a good Market from a bad one; and that the thinnest of their Audiences, must be always taking something from the Measure of our Profits. All these Disadvantages, with many others, we were forced to lay before Sir *Richard Steele*, and farther to remonstrate to him, that as he now stood in *Collier's Place*, his Pension of 700 *l.* was liable to the same Conditions, that *Collier* had receiv'd it upon; which were, that it should be only payable during our being the only Company permitted to act, but in case another should be set up against us, that then this Pension was to be liquidated into an equal Share with us; and which we now hoped he would be contented with. While we were offering to proceed, Sir *Richard* stopt us short, by assuring us, that as he came among us, by our own Invitation, he should always think himself oblig'd, to come into any Measures, for our Ease, and Service: That to be a Burthen to our Industry, would be more disagreeable to him, than it could be to us; and as he had always taken a Delight, in his Endeavours for our Prosperity, he should be still ready on our own Terms, to continue them. Every one who knew Sir *Richard Steele*, in his Prosperity (before the Effects of his Good-nature had brought him to Distresses) knew that this was his manner of dealing with his Friends, in Business: Another Instance of the same nature will immediately fall in my way.

When

When we propos'd to put this Agreement into Writing, he desir'd us not to hurry ourselves; for that he was advis'd, upon the late Desertion of our Actors, to get our License (which only subsisted during Pleasure) enlarg'd into a more ample, and durable Authority, and which he said he had Reason to think would be more easily obtain'd, if we were willing, that a Patent for the same Purpose might be granted to him only, for his Life, and three Years after, which he would then assign over to us. This was a Prospect beyond our Hopes; and what we had long wish'd for; for though I cannot say, we had ever Reason to grieve at the Personal Severities, or Behaviour, of any one Lord Chamberlain in my Time, yet the several Officers, under them, who had not the Hearts of Noblemen, often treated us (to use *Shakespear's* Expression) with all the *Insolence of Office*, that narrow Minds are apt to be elated with; but a Patent, we knew, would free us from so abject a State of Dependency. Accordingly, we desir'd Sir *Richard* to lose no time; he was immediately promis'd it: In the Interim, we founded the Inclination of the Actors, remaining with us; who had all Sense enough to know, that the Credit and Reputation we stood in, with the Town, could not but be a better Security for their Salaries, than the Promise of any other Stage, put into Bonds, could make good to them. In a few Days after, Sir *Richard* told us, that his Majesty being apprised that others had a joint Power with him, in the License, it was expected we should, under our Hands, signify, that his Petition for a Patent, was preferr'd, by the Consent of us all. Such an Acknowledgment was immediately

mediately sign'd, and the Patent thereupon pass'd the Great Seal; for which I remember the Lord Chancellor *Cowper*, in Compliment to Sir *Richard*, would receive no Fee.

We receiv'd the Patent *January 19, 1718*, and {Sir *Richard* being oblig'd the next Morning to set out for *Burrowbridge* in *Yorkshire*, where he was soon after elected Member of Parliament) we were forced that very Night, to draw up in a Hurry (till our Counsel might more advisably perfect it) his Assignment to us of equal Shares, in the Patent, with farther Conditions of Partnership: But here I ought to take Shame to myself, and at the same time to give this second Instance of the Equity, and Honour of Sir *Richard*: For this Assignment (which I had myself the hasty Penning of) was so worded, that it gave Sir *Richard* as equal a Title to our Property, as it had given us to his Authority in the Patent: But Sir *Richard*, notwithstanding, when he return'd to Town, took no Advantage of the Mistake, and consented in our second Agreement, to pay us Twelve Hundred Pounds, to be equally intitled to our Property, which at his Death, we were obliged to repay (as we afterwards did) to his Executors; and which, in case any of us had died before him, the Survivors were equally obliged to have paid to the Executor of such deceased Person, upon the same Account. But Sir *Richard's* Moderation with us was rewarded with the Reverse of *Collier's* Stiffness: *Collier*, by insisting on his Pension, lost Three hundred Pounds a Year; and Sir *Richard*, by his accepting a Share in lieu of it, was, one Year with another, as much a Gainer.

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The Grant of this Patent having assured us of a competent Term, to be relied on, we were now embolden'd, to lay out larger Sums, in the Decorations of our Plays: Upon the Revival of *Dryden's All for Love*, the Habits of that Tragedy, amounted to an Expence of near Six Hundred Pounds; a Sum unheard of, for many Years before, on the like Occasions. But we thought such extraordinary Marks of our own Acknowledgment were due to the Favours, which the Publick were now, again pouring in upon us. About this time we were so much in Fashion, and followed, that our Enemies (who they were, it would not be fair to guess, for we never knew them) made their Push of a good round Lye upon us, to terrify those Auditors, from our Support, whom they could not mislead by their private Arts, or publick Invectives. A current Report, that the Walls, and Roof of our House were liable to fall, had got such Ground in the Town, that on a sudden, we found our Audiences unusually decreased by it: *Wilks* was immediately for denouncing War, and Vengeance on the Author of this Falshood, and for offering a Reward, to whoever could discover him. But it was thought more necessary first to disprove the Falshood, and then to pay what Compliments might be thought adviseable to the Author. Accordingly an Order from the King was obtained, to have our Tenement survey'd by Sir *Thomas Hewet*, then the proper Officer; whose Report of its being in a safe, and sound Condition, and sign'd by him, was publish'd in every News-Paper. This had so immediate an Effect, that our Spectators, whose Apprehensions had lately kept them absent, now made up our Losses by

by returning to us, with a fresh Inclination, and in greater Numbers.

When it was first publickly known, that the New Theatre would be open'd against us; I cannot help going a little back to remember the Concern that my Brother-Managers express'd at what might be the Consequences of it. They imagin'd, that now, all those who wish'd Ill to us, and particularly a great Party, who had been disobliged, by our shutting them out, from behind our Scenes, even to the Refusal of their Money, would now exert themselves, in any partial, or extravagant Measures, that might either hurt us, or support our Competitors: These too were some of those farther Reasons, which had discouraged them from running the Hazard of continuing to Sir *Richard Steele* the same Pension, which had been paid to *Collier*. Upon all which I observed to them, that for my own Part, I had not the same Apprehensions; but that I foresaw as many good, as bad Consequences from two Houses: That tho' the Novelty might possibly at first abate a little of our Profits; yet if we slacken'd not our Industry, that Loss would be amply balanced, by an equal Increase of our Ease and Quiet: That those turbulent Spirits which were always molesting us, would now have other Employment: That the question'd Merit of our Acting would now stand in a clearer Light, when others were faintly compared to us: That though Faults might be found with the best Actors, that ever were, yet the egregious Defects, that would appear in others, would now be the effectual means to make our Superiority shine, if we had any Pre-  
tence to it: And that what some People hoped

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might

might ruin us, would in the End reduce them to give up the Dispute, and reconcile them to those who could best entertain them.

In every Article of this Opinion, they afterwards found I had not been deceived; and the Truth of it may be so well remember'd by many living Spectators, that it would be too frivolous and needless a Boast, to give it any farther Observation.

But, in what I have said, I would not be understood to be an Advocate for two Play-houses: For we shall soon find that two Sets of Actors, tolerated in the same Place, have constantly ended in the Corruption of the Theatre; of which the auxiliary Entertainments, that have so barbarously supply'd the Defects of weak Action, have, for some Years past, been a flagrant Instance; it may not, therefore, be here improper to shew how our childish Pantomimes first came to take so gross a Possession of the Stage.

I have upon several Occasions, already observ'd, that when one Company is too hard for another, the lower in Reputation, has always been forced to exhibit fine new-fangled Foppery, to draw the Multitude after them: Of these Expedients, Singing and Dancing had formerly been the most effectual; but, at the Time I am speaking of, our *English* Musick had been so discountenanced, since the Taste of *Italian* Operas prevail'd, that it was to no Purpose to pretend to it. Dancing therefore was, now, the only Weight, in the opposite Scale, and as the New Theatre sometimes found their Account in it, it could not be safe for us, wholly to neglect it. To give even Dancing therefore some Improvement, and to  
make



enough to starve, by opposing a Multitude, that would have been too hard for me. Now let me ask an odd Question: Had *Harry the Fourth of France* a better Excuse for changing his Religion? I was still in my Heart, as much as he could be, on the Side of Truth and Sense, but with this Difference, that I had their Leave to quit them, when they could not support me: For what Equivalent could I have found for my falling a Martyr to them? How far the Heroe, or the Comedian was in the wrong, let the Clergy, and the Criticks decide. Necessity will be as good a Plea for the one, as the other. But let the Question go which way it will, *Harry IV.* has always been allow'd a great Man: And what I want of his Grandeur, you see by the Inference, Nature has amply supply'd to me, in Vanity; a Pleasure which neither the Pertness of Wit, or the Gravity of Wisdom, will ever persuade me to part with. And why is there not as much Honesty in owning, as in concealing it? For though to hide it, may be Wisdom, to be without it is impossible; and where is the Merit of keeping a Secret, which every body is let into? To say we have no Vanity then, is shewing a great deal of it; as to say we *have* a great deal, cannot be shewing so much: And tho', there may be Art, in a Man's accusing himself, even then it will be more pardonable than Self-commendation. Do not we find, that even good Actions have their Share of it; that it is inseparable from our Being, as our Nakedness? And though it may be equally decent to cover it, yet the wisest Man can no more be without it, than the weakest can believe he was born, in his Cloaths. If then what we  
say



say of ourselves be true, and not prejudicial to others, to be called vain upon it, is no more a Reproach, than to be called a brown, or a fair Man. Vanity is of all Complexions; 'tis the Growth of every Clime, and Capacity; Authors of all Ages have had a Tincture of it; and yet you read *Horace*, *Montaign*, and Sir *William Temple*, with Pleasure. Nor am I sure, if it were curable by Precept, that Mankind would be mended by it! Could Vanity be eradicated, from our Nature, I am afraid, that the Reward of most human Virtues, would not be found, in this World! And happy is he, who has no greater Sin to answer for, in the next!

But what is all this to the Theatrical Follies I was talking of? Perhaps, not a great deal; but it is to my Purpose; for though I am an Historian, I do not write to the Wise, and Learned only; I hope to have Readers of no more Judgment, than some of my *quondam* Auditors; and I am afraid they will be as hardly contented, with dry Matters of Fact, as with a plain Play without Entertainments: This Rhapsody, therefore, has been thrown in, as a Dance between the Acts, to make up for the Dullness of what would have been by itself only proper. But now I come to my Story again.

Notwithstanding, then, this our Compliance with the vulgar Taste; we generally made use of these Pantomimes, but as Crutches to our weakest Plays: Nor were we so lost to all Sense of what was valuable, as to dishonour our best Authors in such bad Company: We had still a due Respect to several select Plays, that were able to be their own Support; and in which we found our

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constant Account, without painting, and patching them out, like Prostitutes, with these Follies, in fashion: If therefore we were not so strictly chaste, in the other part of our Conduct, let the Error of it stand among the silly Consequences of Two Stages. Could the Interest of both Companies have been united, in one only Theatre; I had been one of the Few, that would have us'd my utmost Endeavour of never admitting to the Stage any Spectacle, that ought not to have been seen there; the Errors of my own Plays, which I could not see, excepted. And though, probably, the Majority of Spectators would not have been so well pleas'd with a Theatre so regulated; yet Sense, and Reason cannot lose their intrinsic Value, because the Giddy, and the Ignorant, are blind and deaf, or numerous; and I cannot help saying, it is a Reproach to a sensible People, to let Folly so publickly govern their Pleasures.

While I am making this grave Declaration of what I *would* have done, had One only Stage been continued; to obtain an easier Belief of my Sincerity, I ought to put my Reader in mind of what I *did* do, even after Two Companies were again establish'd.

About this Time *Jacobitism* had lately exerted itself, by the most unprovoked Rebellion, that our Histories have handed down to us, since the *Norman* Conquest: I therefore thought that to set the Authors, and Principles of that desperate Folly in a fair Light, by allowing the mistaken Consciences of some their best Excuse, and by making the artful Pretenders to Conscience, as ridiculous, as they were ungratefully wicked, was a Subject fit for the honest Satire of Comedy, and what might,

might, if it succeeded, do Honour to the Stage, by shewing the valuable Use of it. And considering what Numbers, at that time, might come to it, as prejudic'd Spectators, it may be allow'd that the Undertaking was not less hazardous, than laudable.

To give Life, therefore, to this Design, I borrow'd the *Tartuffe* of *Moliere*, and turn'd him, into a modern *Nonjuror*: Upon the Hypocrisy of the *French* Character, I ingrafted a stronger Wick- edness, that of an *English* Popish Priest, lurking under the Doctrine of our own Church, to raise his Fortune, upon the Ruin of a worthy Gentle- man, whom his dissembled Sanctity had seduc'd into the treasonable Cause of a *Roman Catholick* Out-law. How this Design, in the Play, was ex- ecuted, I refer to the Readers of it; it cannot be mended, by any critical Remarks, I can make, in its Favour: Let it speak for itself. All the Reason I had to think it no bad Performance, was, that it was acted eighteen Days running, and that the Party, that were hurt by it (as I have been told) have not been the smallest Num- ber of my back Friends ever since. But happy was it for this Play, that the very Subject was its Protection; a few Smiles of silent Contempt were the utmost Disgrace, that on the first Day of its Appearance it was thought safe to throw upon it; as the Satire was chiefly employ'd on the Enemies of the Government, they were not so hardy, as to own themselves such, by any higher Disapproba- tion, or Repentment. But as it was then probable I might write again, they knew it would not be long before they might with more Security give a Loose to their Spleen, and make up Accounts

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with me. And to do them Justice, in every Play I afterwards produced, they paid me the Balance, to a Tittle. But to none was I more beholden, than that celebrated Author Mr. *Mist*, whose *Weekly Journal*, for about fifteen Years following, scarce ever fail'd of passing some of his Party Compliments upon me: The State, and the Stage, were his frequent Parallels, and the Ministers, and *Minbeer Keiber* the Manager, were as constantly droll'd upon: Now, for my own Part, though I could never persuade my Wit to have an open Account with him (for as he had no Effects of his own, I did not think myself oblig'd to answer his Bills;) notwithstanding, I will be so charitable to his real *Manes*, and to the Ashes of his Paper, as to mention one particular Civility, he paid to my Memory, after he thought he had ingeniously kill'd me. Soon after the *Nonjuror* had receiv'd the Favour of the Town, I read, in one of his Journals, the following short Paragraph, viz. *Yesterday died Mr. Colley Cibber, late Comedian of the Theatre-Royal, notorious for writing the Nonjuror.* The Compliment, in the latter Part, I confess, I did not dislike, because it came from so impartial a Judge; and it really so happen'd, that the former Part of it was very near being true; for I had that very Day just crawl'd out, after having been some Weeks laid up by a Fever: However, I saw no use, in being thought to be thoroughly dead, before my Time, and therefore had a mind to see, whether the Town cared to have me alive again: So the Play of the *Orphan* being to be acted that Day, I quietly stole myself into the Part of the *Chaplain*, which I had not been seen in, for many Years before. The Sur-

Surprize of the Audience at my unexpected Appearance on the very Day, I had been dead in the News, and the Paleness of my Looks, seem'd to make it a Doubt whether I was not the Ghost, of my real Self departed: But when I spoke, their Wonder eas'd itself by an Applause; which convinc'd me, they were then satisfied, that my Friend *Mist* had told a *Fib* of me. Now, if simply to have shown myself in broad Life, and about my Business, after he had *notoriously* reported me dead, can be called a Reply, it was the only one, which his Paper, while alive, ever drew from me. How far I may be vain, then, in supposing that this Play brought me into the Disfavour of so many Wits, and valiant Auditors, as afterwards appear'd against me, let those who may think it worth their Notice judge. In the mean time, till I can find a better Excuse for their, sometimes particular, Treatment of me, I cannot easily give up my Suspicion: And if I add a more remarkable Fact, that afterwards confirm'd me in it, perhaps, it may incline others to join in my Opinion.

On the first Day of the *Provok'd Husband*, ten Years after the *Nonjuror* had appear'd; a powerful Party, not having the Fear of publick Offence, or private Injury before their Eyes, appear'd most impetuously concern'd for the Demolition of it; in which they so far succeeded, that for some Time I gave it up for lost; and to follow their Blows, in the publick Papers of the next Day, it was attack'd, and triumph'd over, as a dead, and damn'd Piece; a swinging Criticism was made upon it, in general invective Terms, for they disdain'd to trouble the World

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with Particulars; their Sentence, it seems, was Proof enough of its deserving the Fate it had met with. But this damn'd Play was, notwithstanding, acted twenty-eight Nights together, and left off, at a Receipt of upwards of a hundred and forty Pounds; which happen'd to be more, than in fifty Years before, could be then said, of any one Play whatsoever.

Now, if such notable Behaviour could break out upon so successful a Play (which too, upon the Share Sir *John Vanbrugh* had in it, I will venture to call a good one) what shall we impute it to? Why may not I plainly say, it was not the Play, but Me, who had a Hand in it, they did not like? And for what Reason? if they were not ashamed of it, why did not they publish it? No! the Reason had publish'd itself, I was the Author of the *Nonjuror*! But, perhaps, of all Authors, I ought not to make this sort of Complaint, because I have Reason to think, that that particular Offence has made me more honourable Friends than Enemies; the latter of which I am not unwilling should know (however unequal the Merit may be to the Reward) that Part of the Bread I now eat, was given me, for having writ the *Nonjuror*.

And yet I cannot but lament with many quiet Spectators, the helpless Misfortune, that has so many Years attended the Stage! That no Law has had Force enough to give it absolute Protection! for till we can civilize its Auditors, the Authors, that write for it, will seldom have a greater Call to it, than Necessity; and how unlikely is the Imagination of the Needy, to inform, or delight the many, in Affluence? or how often does

Does Necessity make many unhappy Gentlemen turn Authors, in spite of Nature?

What a Blessing, therefore, is it! what an enjoy'd Deliverance! after a Wretch has been driven by Fortune to stand so many wanton Buffets of unmanly Fierceness, to find himself, at last, quietly lifted above the Reach of them!

But let not this Reflection fall upon my Auditors, without Distinction; for though Candour, and Benevolence, are silent Virtues, they are as visible, as the most vociferous Ill-nature; and I confess, the Publick has given me more frequent Reason to be thankful, than to complain.



## CHAP. XVI.

*The Author steps out of his Way. Pleads his Theatrical Cause, in Chancery. Carries it. Plays acted at Hampton-Court. Theatrical Anecdotes in former Reigns. Ministers, and Managers always censur'd. The Difficulty of supplying the Stage, with good Actors, consider'd. Courtiers and Comedians govern'd by the same Passions. Examples of both. The Author quits the Stage. Why.*

**H**AVING brought the Government of the Stage through such various Changes, and Revolutions, to this settled State, in which it continued to almost the Time of my leaving it; it cannot be suppos'd, that a Period of so much Quiet, and so long a Train of Success (though happy for those, who enjoy'd it) can afford such  
Matter

Matter of Surprize, or Amusement, as might arise, from Times of more Distress, and Disorder. A quiet Time, in History, like a Calm, in a Voyage, leaves us, but in an indolent Station: To talk of our Affairs, when they were no longer ruffled, by Misfortunes, would be a Picture without Shade, a flat Performance, at best. As I might, therefore, throw all that tedious Time of our Tranquillity into one Chasm, in my History, and cut my Way short, at once, to my last Exit from the Stage, I shall, at least, fill it up with such Matter only, as I have a mind should be known, how few soever may have Patience to read it: Yet, as I despair not of some Readers, who may be most awake, when they think others have most occasion to sleep; who may be more pleas'd to find me languid, than lively, or in the wrong, than in the right; why should I scruple (when it is so easy a Matter too) to gratify their particular Taste, by venturing upon any Error, that I like, or the Weakness of my Judgment misleads me to commit? I think too, I have a very good Chance, for my Success, in this passive Ambition, by shewing myself in a Light, I have not been seen in.

By your Leave then, Gentlemen! let the Scene open, and at once discover your Comedian, at the Bar! There you will find him a Defendant, and pleading his own Theatrical Cause, in a Court of *Chancery*: But, as I chuse, to have a Chance of pleasing others, as well as of indulging you, Gentlemen; I must first beg leave, to open my Case to them; after which, my whole Speech, upon that Occasion, shall be at your Mercy.

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In all the Transactions of Life, there cannot be a more painful Circumstance, than a Dispute at Law, with a Man, with whom we have long liv'd, in an agreeable Amity: But when Sir *Richard Steele*, to get himself out of Difficulties, was oblig'd to throw his Affairs, into the Hands of Lawyers, and Trustees, that Consideration, then, could be of no weight: The Friend, or the Gentleman, had no more to do in the Matter! Thus, while Sir *Richard* no longer acted, from himself, it may be no Wonder, if a Flaw was found in our Conduct, for the Law to make Work with. It must be observed then, that about two, or three Years, before this Suit was commenc'd, upon Sir *Richard's* totally absenting himself from all Care, and Management of the Stage (which by our Articles of Partnership, he was equally, and jointly oblig'd with us, to attend) we were reduc'd to let him know, that we could not go on, at that Rate; but that if he expected to make the Business a *Sine-cure*, we had as much Reason to expect a Consideration for our extraordinary Care of it; and that during his Absence, we therefore intended to charge ourselves at a Salary of 1*l.* 13*s.* 4*d.* every acting Day (unless he could shew us Cause, to the contrary) for our Management: To which, in his compos'd manner, he only answer'd; That to be sure, we knew what was fitter to be done, than he did; that he had always taken a Delight, in making us easy, and had no Reason to doubt of our doing him Justice. Now whether, under this easy Stile of Approbation, he conceal'd any Dislike of our Resolution, I cannot say. But, if I may speak my private Opinion, I really believe, from his natural Negli-

Negligence of his Affairs, he was glad, at any Rate, to be excus'd an Attendance, which he was now grown weary of. But whether I am deceiv'd, or right in my Opinion, the Fact was truly this, that he never once, directly, nor indirectly, complain'd, or objected to our being paid the above-mention'd daily Sum, in near three Years together; and yet still continued to absent himself from us, and our Affairs. But notwithstanding, he had seen, and done all this with his Eyes open; his Lawyer thought here was still a fair Field, for a Battle, in Chancery, in which, though his Client might be beaten, he was sure his Bill must be paid for it: Accordingly, to work with us he went. But not to be so long, as the Lawyers were in bringing this Cause to an Issue, I shall, at once, let you know, that it came to a Hearing, before the late Sir *Joseph Jekyll*, then Master of the Rolls, in the Year 1726. Now, as the chief Point, in Dispute, was, of what Kind, or Importance, the Business of a Manager was, or in what it principally consisted; it could not be suppos'd, that the most learned Council could be so well appriz'd of the Nature of it, as one, who had himself gone through the Care, and Fatigue of it. I was therefore encourag'd by our Council, to speak to that particular Head myself; which I confess I was glad he suffer'd me to undertake; but when I tell you, that two of the learned Council against us, came, afterwards, to be successively Lord Chancellors, it sets my Presumption in a Light, that I still tremble to shew it in: But however, not to assume more Merit, from its Success, than was really its Due, I ought fairly to let you know, that I was not so hardy,

as

as to deliver my Pleading without Notes, in my Hand, of the Heads I intended to enlarge upon; for though I thought I could conquer my Fear, I could not be so sure of my Memory: But when it came to the critical Moment, the Dread, and Apprehension of what I had undertaken, so disconcerted my Courage, that though I had been us'd to talk to above Fifty Thousand different People every Winter, for upwards of thirty Years together; an involuntary, and unaffected Proof of my Confusion, fell from my Eyes; and, as I found myself quite out of my Element, I seem'd rather gasping for Life, than in a Condition to cope with the eminent Orators, against me. But however, I soon found, from the favourable Attention of my Hearers, that my Diffidence had done me no Disservice; And as the Truth, I was to speak to, needed no Ornament of Words, I delivered it, in the plain manner following, *viz.*

In this Cause, Sir, I humbly conceive, there are but two Points, that admit of any material Dispute. The first is, Whether Sir *Richard Steele*, is as much obliged to do the Duty, and Business of a Manager, as either *Wilks*, *Booth*, or *Cibber*: And the second is, Whether by Sir *Richard's* totally withdrawing himself from the Business of a Manager, the Defendants are justifiable, in charging to each of themselves the 1 *l.* 13 *s.* 4 *d.* *per Diem*; for their particular Pains, and Care, in carrying on the whole Affairs of the Stage, without any Assistance from Sir *Richard Steele*.

As to the First, if I don't mistake the Words of the Assignment, there is a Clause in it, that says, All Matters relating to the Government or  
 Manage-

Management of the Theatre, shall be concluded by a Majority of Voices. Now I presume, Sir, there is no room left to alledge, that Sir *Richard* was ever refused his Voice, though, in above three Years, he never desir'd to give it: And I believe there will be as little room to say, that he could have a Voice, if he were not a Manager. But, Sir, his being a Manager is so self-evident, that it is amazing how he could conceive that he was to take the Profits, and Advantages of a Manager, without doing the Duty of it. And I will be bold to say, Sir, that his Affignment of the Patent, to *Wilks, Booth, and Cibber*, in no one Part of it, by the severest Construction in the World, can be wrested to throw the heavy Burthen of the Management only upon their Shoulders. Nor does it appear, Sir, that either in his Bill, or in his Answer to our Cross-Bill, he has offer'd, any Hint, or Glimpse of a Reason, for his withdrawing from the Management, at all; or so much as pretend, from the Time complained of, that he ever took the least Part of his Share of it. Now, Sir, however unaccountable this Conduct of Sir *Richard* may seem, we will still allow, that he had some Cause for it; but whether or no, that Cause, was a reasonable one, your Honour will the better judge, if I may be indulged in the Liberty of explaining it.

Sir, the Case, in plain Truth and Reality, stands thus: Sir *Richard*, though no Man alive, can write better of Oeconomy than himself, yet, perhaps he is above the Drudgery of practising it: Sir *Richard*, then, was often in want of Money; and while we were in Friendship with him, we often assisted his Occasions: But those Compliances

ances had so unfortunate an Effect, that they only heightened his Importunity, to borrow more, and the more we lent, the less he minded us, or shew'd any Concern for our Welfare. Upon this, Sir, we stopt our Hands, at once, and peremptorily refus'd to advance another Shilling, till by the Balance of our Accounts, it became due to him. And this Treatment (though we hope, not in the least unjustifiable) we have Reason to believe so ruffled his Temper, that he at once, was as short with us, as we had been with him; for, from that Day, he never more came near us: Nay, Sir, he not only continued to neglect, what he *should* have done, but actually did, what he ought *not* to have done: He made an Assignment of his Share, without our Consent, in a manifest Breach of our Agreement: For, Sir, we did not lay that Restriction upon ourselves, for no Reason: We knew, before-hand, what Trouble, and Inconvenience it would be, to unravel, and expose our Accounts to Strangers, who, if they were to do us no hurt, by divulging our Secrets, we were sure could do us no good, by keeping them. If Sir *Richard* had had our common Interest at Heart, he would have been as warm in it, as we were, and as tender of hurting it: But supposing his assigning his Share to others, may have done us no great Injury, it is, at least, a shrewd Proof, that he did not care whether he did us any, or no. And if the Clause was not strong enough to restrain him from it, in Law, there was enough in it, to have restrain'd him, in Honour, from breaking it. But take it, in its best Light, it shews him as remis a Manager, in our Affairs, as he naturally was in his own. Suppose, Sir, we had

all been as careless as himself, which I can't find he has any more Right to be, than we have, must not our whole Affair have fallen to Ruin? And may we not, by a parity of Reason, suppose, that by his Neglect a fourth Part of it *does* fall to Ruin? But, Sir, there is a particular Reason to believe, that, from our want of Sir *Richard*, more, than a fourth Part *does* suffer by it: His Rank, and Figure, in the World, while he gave us the Assistance of them, were of extraordinary Service to us: He had an easier Access, and a more regarded Audience at Court, than our low Station of Life could pretend to, when our Interest wanted (as it often did) a particular Solicitation there. But since we have been deprived of him, the very End, the very Consideration of his Share in our Profits, is not perform'd on his Part. And will Sir *Richard*, then, make us no Compensation, for so valuable a Loss, in our Interests, and so palpable an Addition to our Labour? I am afraid, Sir, if we were all to be as indolent in the Managing-part, as Sir *Richard* presumes he has a Right to be; our Patent would soon run us, as many Hundreds, in Debt, as he had (and still seems willing to have) his Share of, for doing of nothing.

Sir, our next Point, in question, is whether *Wilks*, *Booth*, and *Cibber*, are justifiable, in charging the 1 l. 13 s. 4 d. *per diem*, for their extraordinary Management, in the Absence of Sir *Richard Steele*. I doubt, Sir, it will be hard to come to the Solution of this Point, unless we may be a little indulg'd, in setting forth, what is the daily, and necessary Business, and Duty of a Manager. But, Sir, we will endeavour to be as short, as the Circumstances will admit of.

Sir,

Sir, by our Books, it is apparent, that the Managers have under their Care, no less than One Hundred and Forty Persons, in constant daily Pay : And among such Numbers, it will be no wonder, if a great many of them are unskilful, idle, and sometimes untractable ; all which Tempers are to be led, or driven, watch'd, and restrain'd by the continual Skill, Care, and Patience of the Managers. Every Manager is oblig'd, in his turn, to attend two, or three Hours every Morning, at the Rehearsal of Plays, and other Entertainments for the Stage, or else every Rehearsal would be but a rude Meeting of Mirth and Jollity. The same Attendance, is as necessary at every Play, during the Time of its publick Action, in which one, or more of us, have constantly been punctual, whether we have had any Part, in the Play, then acted, or not. A Manager ought to be at the Reading of every new Play, when it is first offer'd to the Stage, though there are seldom one of those Plays in twenty, which upon hearing, proves to be fit for it ; and upon such Occasions the Attendance must be allow'd to be as painfully tedious, as the getting rid of the Authors of such Plays, must be disagreeable, and difficult. Besides this, Sir, a Manager is to order all new Cloaths, to assist in the Fancy, and Propriety of them, to limit the Expence, and to withstand the unreasonable Importunities of some, who are apt to think themselves injur'd, if they are not finer than their Fellows. A Manager, is to direct and oversee the Painters, Machinists, Musicians, Singers, and Dancers ; and to have an Eye upon the Doorkeepers, Under-servants, and Officers, that without such Care, are too often apt to defraud us, or neglect their Duty. And

And all this, Sir, and more, much more, which we hope will be needless to trouble you with, have we done every Day, without the least Assistance from Sir *Richard*, even at times when the Concern, and Labour of our Parts, upon the Stage, have made it very difficult, and irksome to go through with it.

In this Place, Sir, it may be worth observing, that Sir *Richard*, in his Answer to our Cross-Bill, seems to value himself, upon *Cibber's* confessing, in the Dedication of a Play, which he made to Sir *Richard*, that he (Sir *Richard*) had done the Stage very considerable Service, by leading the Town to our Plays, and filling our Houses, by the Force and Influence of his *Tatlers*. But Sir *Richard* forgets, that those *Tatlers* were written in the late Queen's Reign, long before he was admitted to a Share in the Play-house: And in Truth, Sir, it was our real Sense of those Obligations, and Sir *Richard's* assuring us they should be continued, that first and chiefly inclin'd us to invite him to share the Profits of our Labours, upon such farther Conditions, as in his Assignment of the Patent to us, are specified. And, Sir, as *Cibber's* publick Acknowledgment of those Favours is at the same time an equal Proof of Sir *Richard's* Power to continue them; so, Sir, we hope, it carries an equal Probability, that without his Promise to *use* that Power, he would never have been thought on, much less have been invited by us, into a Joint-Management of the Stage, and into a Share of the Profits: And indeed what Pretence could he have form'd, for asking a Patent from the Crown, had he been possess'd of no eminent Qualities, but in common with other  
Men?



Men? But, Sir, all these Advantages, all these Hopes, nay, Certainties of greater Profits, from those great Qualities, have we been utterly depriv'd of by the wilful, and unexpected Neglect of Sir *Richard*. But we find, Sir, it is a common thing, in the Practice of Mankind, to justify one Error, by committing another: For Sir *Richard* has not only refused us the extraordinary Assistance, which he is able, and bound to give us; but on the contrary, to our great Expence, and Loss of Time, now calls us to Account, in this honourable Court, for the Wrong we have done him, in not doing his Business of a Manager, for nothing. But, Sir, Sir *Richard* has not met with such Treatment from us: He has not writ Plays for us, for *Nothing*; we paid him very well, and in an extraordinary manner, for his late Comedy of the *Conscious Lovers*: And though, in writing that Play, he had more Assistance from one of the Managers, than becomes me to enlarge upon, of which Evidence has been given upon Oath, by several of our Actors; yet, Sir, he was allow'd the full, and particular Profits of that Play, as an Author, which amounted to Three Hundred Pounds, besides about Three Hundred more, which he received as a Joint-sharer of the general Profits, that arose from it. Now, Sir, tho' the Managers are not all of them able to write Plays, yet they have all of them been able to do (I won't say, as good, but at least) as profitable a thing. They have invented, and adorn'd a Spectacle, that for Forty Days together has brought more Money, to the House, than the best Play that ever was writ. The Spectacle, I mean, Sir, is that of the Coronation-Ceremony of *Anna Bullen*: And tho'

we

we allow a good Play to be the more laudable Performance, yet, Sir, in the profitable Part of it, there is no Comparifon. If therefore, our Spectacle brought in as much, or more Money, than *Sir Richard's* Comedy, what is there, on his Side, but Usage, that intitles him, to be paid for one, more, than we are, for t'other? But then, Sir, if he is fo profitably diftinguifh'd for his Play, if we yield him up the Preference, and pay him, for his extraordinary Compofition, and take nothing for our own, tho' it turn'd out more to our common Profit; fure, Sir, while we do fuch extraordinary Duty, as Managers, and while he neglects his Share of that Duty, he cannot grudge us the moderate Demand we make for our feparate Labour?

To conclude, Sir, if by our constant Attendance, our Care, our Anxiety (not to mention the difagreeable Contefts, we fometimes meet with, both within, and without Doors, in the Management of our Theatre) we have not only faved the whole from Ruin, which if we had all follow'd *Sir Richard's* Example, could not have been avoided; I fay, Sir, if we have ftill made it fo valuable an Income to him, without his giving us the leaft Affiftance for feveral Years paff; we hope, Sir, that the poor Labourers, that have done all this for *Sir Richard*, will not be thought unworthy of their Hire.

How far our Affairs, being fet in this particular Light, might affift our Caufe, may be of no great Importance to guefs; but the Ifsue of it was this: That *Sir Richard* not having made any Objection, to what we had charged for Management, for three Years together; and as our Proceedings had

had been all transacted, in open Day, without any clandestine Intention of Fraud; we were allow'd the Sums, in dispute, above-mention'd; and Sir *Richard* not being advised, to appeal to the Lord Chancellor, both Parties paid their own Cofts, and thought it their mutual Interest, to let this be the last of their Law-suits.

And now, gentle Reader, I ask Pardon, for so long an Imposition on your Patience: For tho' I may have no ill Opinion of this Matter myself; yet to you, I can very easily conceive it may have been tedious. You are therefore, at your own Liberty of charging the whole Impertinence of it, either to the Weakness of my Judgment, or the Strength of my Vanity; and I will so far join in your Censure, that I farther confess, I have been so impatient to give it you, that you have had it out of its Turn: For, some Years, before this Suit was commenced, there were other Facts, that ought to have had a Precedence in my History: But that, I dare say, is an Oversight you will easily excuse, provided you afterwards find them worth reading. However, as to that Point, I must take my Chance, and shall therefore proceed to speak of the Theatre, which was order'd by his late Majesty to be erected in the Great old Hall at *Hampton-Court*; where Plays were intended to have been acted twice a Week, during the Summer-Season. But before the Theatre could be finish'd, above half the Month of *September* being elapsed, there were but seven Plays acted before the Court returned to *London*. This throwing open a Theatre, in a Royal Palace, seem'd to be reviving the Old *English* hospitable Grandeur, where the lowest Rank of neighbour-

ing

ing Subjects might make themselves merry at Court, without being laugh'd at themselves. In former Reigns, Theatrical Entertainments at the Royal Palaces, had been perform'd at vast Expence, as appears by the Description of the Decorations, in several of *Ben. Johnson's* Masques, in King *James*, and *Charles the First's* Time; many curious and original Draughts of which, by *Inigo Jones*, I have seen in the *Musæum* of our greatest Master, and Patron of Arts, and Architecture, whom it would be a needless Liberty to name. But when our Civil Wars ended in the Decadence of Monarchy, it was then an Honour to the Stage, to have fallen with it: Yet, after the Restoration of *Charles II.* some faint Attempts were made to revive these Theatrical Spectacles at Court; but I have met with no Account of above one Masque acted there, by the Nobility; which was that of *Calisto*, written by *Crown*, the Author of *Sir Courthly Nice*. For what Reason *Crown* was chosen to that Honour, rather than *Dryden*, who was then Poet-Laureat, and out of all Comparison his Superior, in Poetry, may seem surprizing: But if we consider the Offence which the then Duke of *Buckingham* took at the Character of *Zimri*, in *Dryden's Absalom*, &c. (which might probably be a Return, to his Grace's *Draw-cansir*, in the *Rehearsal*) we may suppose the Prejudice and Recommendation of so illustrious a Pretender to Poetry, might prevail, at Court, to give *Crown* this Preference. In the same Reign, the King had his Comedians at *Windfor*, but upon a particular Establishment; for tho' they acted in *St. George's Hall*, within the Royal Palace, yet (as I have been inform'd by an Eye-witness) they were permitted

permitted to take Money at the Door, of every Spectator; whether this was an Indulgence, in Conscience, I cannot say; but it was a common Report among the principal Actors, when I first came to the *Theatre-Royal*, in 1690, that there was, then, due to the Company, from that Court, about One Thousand Five Hundred Pounds, for Plays commanded, &c. and yet it was the general Complaint, in that Prince's Reign, that he paid too much Ready-money, for his Pleasures: But these Assertions I only give, as I received them, without being answerable, for their Reality. This Theatrical Anecdote, however, puts me in mind of one of a more private nature, which I had from old solemn *Boman*, the late Actor of venerable Memory. *Boman*, then a Youth, and fam'd for his Voice, was appointed to sing some Part, in a Concert of Musick at the private Lodgings of Mrs. *Gwin*; at which were only present, the King, the Duke of *York*, and one, or two more, who were usually admitted upon those detach'd Parties of Pleasure. When the Performance was ended, the King express'd himself highly pleas'd, and gave it extraordinary Commendations: Then, Sir, said the Lady, to shew you don't speak like a Courtier, I hope you will make the Performers a handsome Present: The King said, he had no Money about him, and ask'd the Duke if he had any? To which the Duke reply'd, I believe, Sir, not above a Guinea, or two. Upon which the laughing Lady, turning to the People about her, and making bold with the King's common Expression, cry'd, *Od's Fish! what Company am I got into?*

VOL. II.

E

Whether

Whether the reverend Historian of his *Own Time*, among the many other Reasons of the same Kind, he might have for styling this Fair One the *indiscreetest, and wildest Creature, that ever was in a Court*, might know this to be one of them, I can't say: But if we consider her in all the Disadvantages of her Rank, and Education, she does not appear to have had any criminal Errors more remarkable, than her Sex's Frailty to answer for: And, if the same Author, in his latter End of that Prince's Life, seems to reproach his Memory, with too kind a Concern for her Support, we may allow, that it becomes a Bishop to have had no Eyes, or Taste for the frivolous Charms or playful *Badinage* of a King's Mistress: Yet, if the common Fame of her may be believ'd, which in my Memory was not doubted, she had less to be laid to her Charge, than any other of those Ladies, who were in the same State of Preferment: She never meddled in Matters of serious Moment, or was the Tool of working Politicians: Never broke into those amorous Infidelities, which others, in that grave Author, are accus'd of; but was as visibly distinguish'd, by her particular Personal Inclination to the King, as her Rivals were, by their Titles, and Grandeur. Give me leave to carry (perhaps, the Partiality of) my Observation a little farther. The same Author, in the same Page, 263, tells us, That, "Another of the King's  
 " Mistresses, the Daughter of a Clergyman, Mrs.  
 " Roberts, in whom her first Education had so  
 " deep a Root, that tho' she fell into many scan-  
 " dalous Disorders, with very dismal Adventures  
 " in them all, yet a Principle of Religion was so  
 " deep laid in her, that tho' it did not restrain  
 " her,

“ her, yet it kept alive in her, such a constant  
 “ Horror of Sin, that she was never easy, in an  
 “ ill course, and died with a great Sense of her  
 “ former ill Life.”

To all this let us give an implicit Credit : Here is the Account of a frail Sinner made up, with a reverend Witness ! Yet I cannot but lament, that this Mitred Historian, who seems to know more Personal Secrets, than any that ever writ before him, should not have been as inquisitive after the last Hours of our other Fair Offender, whose Repentance, I have been unquestionably inform'd, appear'd in all the contrite Symptoms of a Christian Sincerity. If therefore you find I am so much concern'd to make this favourable mention of the one, because she was a Sister of the *Theatre*, why may not—But I dare not be so presumptuous, so uncharitably bold, as to suppose the other was spoken better of, merely because she was the Daughter of a *Clergyman*. Well, and what then ? What's all this idle Prate, you may say, to the matter in hand ? Why, I say, your Question is a little too critical ; and if you won't give an Author leave, now and then, to embellish his Work, by a natural Reflexion, you are an ungentle Reader. But I have done with my Digression, and return to our Theatre at *Hampton-Court*, where I am not sure the Reader, be he ever so wise, will meet with any thing more worth his notice : However, if he happens to read, as I write, for want of something better to do, he will go on ; and perhaps, wonder, when I tell him, that

A Play presented at Court, or acted on a publick Stage, seems to their different Auditors, a

different Entertainment. Now hear my Reason for it. In the common Theatre, the Guests are at home, where the politer Forms of Good-breeding are not so nicely regarded: Every one there, falls to, and likes or finds fault, according to his natural Taste, or Appetite. At Court, where the Prince gives the Treat, and honours the Table with his own Presence, the Audience is under the Restraint of a Circle, where Laughter, or Applause, rais'd higher than a Whisper, would be star'd at. At a publick Play they are both let loose, even till the Actor is, sometimes, pleas'd with his not being able to be heard, for the Clamour of them. But this Coldness or Decency of Attention, at Court, I observ'd, had but a melancholy Effect, upon the impatient Vanity of some of our Actors, who seem'd inconsolable, when their flashy Endeavours to please had pass'd unheeded: Their not considering where they were, quite disconcerted them; nor could they recover their Spirits, till from the lowest Rank of the Audience, some gaping *John*, or *Joan*, in the fullness of their Hearts, roar'd out their Approbation: And indeed, such a natural Instance of honest Simplicity, a Prince himself, whose Indulgence knows where to make Allowances, might reasonably smile at, and perhaps not think it the worst part of his Entertainment. Yet it must be own'd, that an Audience may be as well too much reserv'd, as too profuse of their Applause: For tho', it is possible a *Betterton* would not have been discourag'd, from throwing out an Excellence, or elated into an Error, by his Auditors being too little, or too much pleas'd; yet as Actors of his Judgment are Rarities, those of less Judgment may



may sink into a Flatness, in their Performance, for want of that Applause, which from the generality of Judges, they might, perhaps, have some Pretence to: And the Auditor, when not seeming to feel what ought to affect him, may rob himself of something more, that he might have had, by giving the Actor his Due, who measures out his Power to please, according to the Value he sets upon his Hearer's Taste, or Capacity. But however, as we were not, here, itinerant Adventurers, and had properly but one Royal Auditor to please; after that Honour was attain'd to, the rest of our Ambition had little to look after: And that the King was often pleas'd, we were not only assur'd, by those who had the Honour to be near him; but could see it, from the frequent Satisfaction in his Looks at particular Scenes, and Passages: One Instance of which I am tempted to relate, because it was at a Speech, that might more naturally affect a Sovereign Prince, than any private Spectator. In *Shakespear's Harry the Eighth*, that King commands the Cardinal to write circular Letters of Indemnity, into every County, where the Payment of certain heavy Taxes had been disputed: Upon which the Cardinal whispers the following Directions to his Secretary *Cromwell*:

——— *A Word with you:*

*Let there be Letters writ to every Shire,  
Of the King's Grace, and Pardon: The griev'd  
Commons*

*Hardly conceive of me. Let it be nois'd,  
That through our Intercession this Revokement,  
And Pardon, comes.—I shall anon advise you  
Farther, in the Proceeding* ———

The Solitude of this Spiritual Minister, in filching from his Master the Grace, and Merit of a good Action, and dressing up himself in it, while himself had been Author of the Evil complain'd of, was so easy a Stroke of his Temporal Conscience, that it seem'd to raise the King into something more than a Smile, whenever that Play came before him: And I had a more distinct Occasion, to observe this Effect; because my proper stand on the Stage, when I spoke the Lines, required me to be near the Box, where the King usually sat. In a Word, this Play is so true a Dramatick Chronicle of an old *English* Court, and where the Character of *Harry the Eighth* is so exactly drawn, even to a humourous Likeness, that it may be no wonder why his Majesty's particular Taste for it, should have commanded it three several times in one Winter.

This too calls to my Memory an extravagant Pleasantry of Sir *Richard Steele*, who being ask'd by a grave Nobleman, after the same Play had been presented at *Hampton-Court*, how the King lik'd it; reply'd, *So terribly well, my Lord, that I was afraid I should have lost all my Actors! For I was not sure, the King would not keep them to fill the Posts at Court, that he saw them so fit for in the Play.*

It may be imagin'd, that giving Plays to the People at such a Distance from *London*, could not but be attended with an extraordinary Expence; and it was some Difficulty, when they were first talk'd of, to bring them under a moderate Sum; I shall therefore, in as few Words as possible, give a Particular of what Establishment they were then brought to, that in case the same Entertain-  
ments

ments should at any Time hereafter be call'd to the same Place, future Courts may judge, how far the Precedent may stand good, or need an Alteration.

Though the stated Fee, for a Play acted at *Whitehall*, had been formerly, but Twenty Pounds; yet, as that hinder'd not the Company's acting on the same Day, at the Publick Theatre, that Sum was almost all clear Profits to them: But this Circumstance not being practicable, when they were commanded to *Hampton-Court*, a new, and extraordinary Charge was unavoidable: The Managers, therefore, not to inflame it, desir'd no Consideration, for their own Labour, farther than the Honour of being employ'd, in his Majesty's Commands; and, if the other Actors might be allow'd, each their Day's Pay, and travelling Charges, they should hold themselves ready, to act any Play, there, at a Day's Warning: And that the Trouble might be less, by being divided, the Lord-Chamberlain was pleas'd to let us know, that the Household-Musick, the Wax-Lights, and a *Chaise-Marine*, to carry our moving Wardrobe to every different Play, should be under the Charge of the proper Officers. Notwithstanding these Assistances, the Expence of every Play amounted to fifty Pounds: Which Amount, when all was over, was not only allow'd us, but his Majesty was graciously pleas'd to give the Managers two hundred Pounds more, for their particular Performance, and Trouble, in only seven times acting. Which last Sum, tho' it might not be too much, for a Sovereign Prince to give, it was certainly more than our utmost Merit ought to have hop'd for: And I confess, when I receiv'd the

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Order

Order for the Money, from his Grace the Duke of *Newcastle*, then Lord-Chamberlain, I was so surpris'd, that I imagin'd his Grace's Favour, or Recommendation of our Readiness, or Diligence, must have contributed to so high a Consideration of it, and was offering my Acknowledgments, as I thought them due; but was soon stopt short, by his Grace's Declaration, That we had no Obligations for it, but to the King himself, who had given it, from no other Motive, than his own Bounty. Now whether we may suppose that Cardinal *Wolfey*, (as you see *Shakespear* has drawn him) would silently have taken such low Acknowledgments to himself, perhaps may be as little worth Consideration, as my mentioning this Circumstance has been necessary: But if it is due to the Honour and Integrity of the (then) Lord-Chamberlain, I cannot think it wholly impertinent.

Since that time, there has been but one Play given at *Hampton-Court*, which was for the Entertainment of the Duke of *Lorraine*; and for which his present Majesty was pleas'd to order us a hundred Pounds.

The Reader may, now, plainly see, that I am ransacking my Memory, for such remaining Scraps of Theatrical History, as may not, perhaps, be worth his Notice: But if they are such as tempt me to write them, why may I not hope, that in this wide World, there may be many an idle Soul, no wiser than myself, who may be equally tempted to read them?

I have so often had occasion to compare the State of the Stage to the State of a Nation, that I yet feel a Reluctancy to drop the Comparison,  
or

or speak of the one, without some Application to the other. How many Reigns, then, do I remember, from that of *Charles* the Second, thro' all which, there has been, from one half of the People, or the other, a Succession of Clamour against every different Ministry for the Time being? And yet, let the Cause of this Clamour have been never so well grounded, it is impossible, but that some of those Ministers must have been wiser, and honest Men than others: If this be true, as true, I believe, it is, why may I not then say, as some Fool in a *French* Play does, upon a like Occasion—*Justement, comme chez nous!* 'Twas exactly the same with our Management! let us have done never so well, we could not please every body: All I can say, in our Defence, is, that though many good Judges, might possibly conceive how the State of the Stage might have been mended, yet the best of them never pretended to remember the Time when it was better! or could shew us the way to make their imaginary Amendments practicable.

For though I have often allow'd, that our best Merit, as Actors, was never equal to that of our Predecessors, yet I will venture to say, that in all its Branches, the Stage had never been under so just, so prosperous, and so settled a Regulation, for forty Years before, as it was at the Time I am speaking of. The most plausible Objection to our Administration, seem'd to be, that we took no Care to breed up young Actors, to succeed us; and this was imputed as the greater Fault, because it was taken for granted, that it was a Matter as easy as planting so many Cabbages: Now might not a Court as well be reproach'd for not breed-

E 5 ing

ing up a Succession of complete Ministers? And yet it is evident, that if Providence, or Nature, don't supply us with both, the State, and the Stage will be but poorly supported. If a Man of an ample Fortune, should take it into his Head, to give a younger Son an extraordinary Allowance, in order to breed him a great Poet, what might we suppose would be the Odds, that his Trouble, and Money would be all thrown away? Not more than it would be against the Master of a Theatre, who should say, this, or that young Man, I will take care shall be an excellent Actor! Let it be our Excuse then, for that mistaken Charge against us; that since there was no Garden, or Market, where accomplished Actors grew, or were to be sold, we could only pick them up, as we do Pebbles of Value, by Chance: We may polish a thousand, before we can find one fit to make a Figure, in the Lid of a Snuff-Box. And how few soever we were able to produce, it is no Proof, that we were not always in search of them: Yet, at worst, it was allow'd, that our Deficiency of Men Actors, was not so visible, as our Scarcity of tolerable Women: But when it is consider'd, that the Life of Youth and Beauty is too short for the bringing an Actress to her Perfection; were I to mention too, the many frail Fair Ones, I remember, who, before they could arrive to their Theatrical Maturity, were feloniously stolen from the Tree, it would rather be thought our Misfortune, than our Fault, that we were no better provided.

Even the Laws of a Nunnery, we find, are thought no sufficient Security against Temptations, without Iron Grates, and high Walls to inforce them;

them; which the Architecture of a Theatre will not so properly admit of: And yet, methinks, Beauty that has not those artificial Fortresses about it, that has no Defence but its natural Virtue (which upon the Stage has more than once been met with) makes a much more meritorious Figure, in Life, than that immur'd Virtue, which could never be try'd. But alas! as the poor Stage is but the Show-glass to a Toy-shop, we must not wonder, if now and then, some of the Bawbles should find a Purchaser.

However, as to say more, or less than Truth, are equally unfaithful in an Historian; I cannot but own, that in the Government of the Theatre, I have known many Instances, where the Merit of promising Actors has not always been brought forward, with the Regard, or Favour, it had a Claim to: And if I put my Reader in mind, that in the early Part of this Work, I have shewn, thro' what continued Difficulties, and Discouragements, I myself made my way up the Hill of Preferment; he may justly call it, too strong a Glare of my Vanity: I am afraid he is in the right; but I pretend not to be one of those chaste Authors, that know how to write without it: When Truth is to be told, it may be as much Chance, as Choice, if it happens to turn out in my Favour: But to shew that this was true of others, as well as myself, *Booth* shall be another Instance. In 1707, when *Swiney* was the only Master of the Company in the *Hay-Market*; *Wilks*, tho' he was, then, but an hired Actor himself, rather chose to govern, and give Orders, than to receive them; and was so jealous of *Booth's* rising, that, with a high Hand, he gave the Part of *Pierre*, in  
*Venice*.

*Venice Prefer'd*, to *Mills* the elder, who (not to undervalue him) was out of Sight, in the Pretensions that *Booth*, then young, as he was, had to the same Part: And this very Discouragement, so strongly affected him, that not long after, when several of us became Sharers with *Swiney*, *Booth* rather chose to risque his Fortune, with the old Patentee in *Drury-Lane*, than come into our Interest, where he saw he was like to meet with more of those Partialities. And yet, again, *Booth* himself, when he came to be a Manager, would sometimes suffer his Judgment to be blinded by his Inclination to Actors, whom the Town seem'd to have but an indifferent Opinion of. This, again, inclines me to ask another of my odd Questions, *viz.* Have we never seen the same Passions govern a Court! How many white Sticks, and great Places do we find, in our Histories, have been laid at the Feet of a Monarch, because they chose not to give way to a Rival, in Power, or hold a second Place in his Favour? How many *Whigs* and *Tories* have chang'd their Parties, when their good or bad Pretensions have met with a Check to their higher Preferment?

Thus, we see, let the Degrees, and Rank of Men, be ever so unequal, Nature throws out their Passions from the same Motives; 'tis not the Eminence, or Lowliness of either, that makes the one, when provok'd, more or less a reasonable Creature than the other: The Courtier, and the Comedian, when their Ambition is out of Humour, take just the same Measures to right themselves.

If this familiar Stile of talking should, in the Nostrils of Gravity, and Wisdom, smell a little  
too



too much of the Presumptuous, or the Pragmatical, I will, at least, descend lower, in my Apology for it, by calling to my Assistance the old, humble Proverb, *viz.* 'Tis an ill Bird that, &c. Why then should I debase my Profession, by setting it in vulgar Lights, when I may shew it to more favourable Advantages? And when I speak of our Errors, why may I not extenuate them by illustrious Examples? or by not allowing them greater, than the greatest Men have been subject to? Or why, indeed, may I not suppose, that a sensible Reader will rather laugh than look grave, at the Pomp of my Parallels?

Now, as I am tied down to the Veracity of an Historian, whose Facts cannot be supposed, like those in a Romance, to be in the Choice of the Author, to make them more marvellous, by Invention; if I should happen to sink into a little farther Insignificancy, let the simple Truth of what I have farther to say, be my Excuse for it. I am obliged, therefore, to make the Experiment, by shewing you the Conduct of a Theatrical Ministry in such Lights, as on various Occasions it appear'd in.

Tho' *Wilks* had more Industry, and Application, than any Actor I had ever known, yet we found it possible that those necessary Qualities might sometimes be so misconducted, as not only to make them useless, but hurtful to our Commonwealth; for while he was impatient to be foremost, in every thing, he frequently shock'd the honest Ambition of others, whose Measures might have been more serviceable, could his Jealousy have given way to them. His own Regards for himself, therefore, were, to avoid a disagreeable

able Dispute with him, too often complied with : But this leaving his Diligence, to his own Conduct, made us, in some Instances, pay dearly for it : For Example ; he would take as much, or more Pains in forwarding to the Stage, the Water-gruel Work of some insipid Author, that happen'd rightly to make his Court to him, than he would for the best Play, wherein it was not his Fortune to be chosen for the best Character. So great was his Impatience to be employ'd, that I scarce remember, in twenty Years, above one profitable Play, we could get to be reviv'd, wherein he found he was to make no considerable Figure, independent of him : But the *Tempest* having done Wonders formerly, he could not form any Pretensions, to let it lie longer dormant : However, his Coldness to it was so visible, that he took all Occasions to postpone, and discourage its Progress, by frequently taking up the Morning-Stage with something more to his Mind. Having been myself particularly sollicitous for the reviving this Play, *Dogget* (for this was before *Booth* came into the Management) consented that the extraordinary Decorations, and Habits, should be left to my Care, and Direction, as the fittest Person, whose Temper could jostle through the petulant Opposition, that he knew *Wilks* would be always offering to it, because he had but a middling Part in it, that of *Ferdinand* : Notwithstanding which, so it happen'd, that the Success of it shew'd (not to take from the Merit of *Wilks*) that it was possible to have good Audiences, without his extraordinary Assistance. In the first six Days of acting it, we paid all our constant, and incidental Expence, and shar'd each of us a hundred Pounds :  
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The greatest Profit that in so little a Time had yet been known within my Memory! But, alas! what was paltry Pelf, to Glory? That was the darling Passion of *Wilks's* Heart! and not to advance in it, was, to so jealous an Ambition, a painful Retreat, a mere Shade to his Laurels! and the common Benefit was but a poor Equivalent, to his want of particular Applause! To conclude, not Prince *Lewis* of *Baden*, though a Confederate General, with the Duke of *Marlborough*, was more inconsolable, upon the memorable Victory at *Blenheim*, at which he was not present, than our Theatrical Hero was, to see any Action prosperous, that he was not himself at the Head of. If this then was an Infirmity in *Wilks*, why may not my shewing the same Weakness in so great a Man, mollify the Imputation, and keep his Memory in Countenance.

This laudable Appetite for Fame, in *Wilks*, was not, however, to be fed, without that constant Labour, which only himself was able to come up to: He therefore bethought him of the means, to lessen the Fatigue, and at the same time, to heighten his Reputation; which was by giving up, now and then, a Part to some raw Actor, who he was sure would disgrace it, and consequently put the Audience in mind of his superior Performance: Among this Sort of Indulgences to young Actors, he happen'd once to make a Mistake, that set his Views in a clear Light. The best Criticks, I believe, will allow, that in *Shakespear's Macbeth*, there are in the Part of *Macduff* two Scenes, the one of Terror, in the second Act; and the other of Compassion, in the fourth, equal to any that dramattick Poetry has

has produc'd: These Scenes *Wilks* had acted with Success, tho' far short of that happier Skill and Grace, which *Monfort* had formerly shewn, in them. Such a Part, however, one might imagine would be one of the last, a good Actor would chuse to part with: But *Wilks* was of a different Opinion; for *Macbeth* was thrice as long, had more great Scenes of Action, and bore the Name of the Play: Now, to be a Second in any Play, was what he did not much care for, and had been seldom us'd to: This Part of *Macduff*, therefore, he had given to one *Williams*, as yet no extraordinary, though a promising Actor. *Williams*, in the Simplicity of his Heart, immediately told *Booth*, what a Favour *Wilks* had done him. *Booth*, as he had Reason, thought *Wilks* had here carried his Indulgence, and his Authority, a little too far; for as *Booth* had no better a Part, in the same Play, than that of *Banquo*, he found himself too much disregarded, in letting so young an Actor take Place of him: *Booth*, therefore, who knew the Value of *Macduff*, propos'd to do it himself, and to give *Banquo* to *Williams*; and to make him farther Amends, offer'd him any other of his Parts that he thought might be of Service to him. *Williams* was content with the Exchange, and thankful for the Promise. This Scheme, indeed, (had it taken Effect) might have been an Ease to *Wilks*, and possibly no Disadvantage to the Play; but softly——That was not quite what we had a mind to! No sooner then, came this Proposal to *Wilks*, but off went the Masque, and out came the Secret! For though *Wilks* wanted to be eas'd of the Part, he did not desire to be *excell'd* in it; and as he was not sure but that might be  
the

the case, if *Booth* were to act it, he wisely retracted his own Project, took *Macduff* again to himself, and while he liv'd, never had a Thought of running the same Hazard, by any farther Offer to resign it.

Here, I confess, I am at a Loss for a Fact in History, to which this can be a Parallel! To be weary of a Post, even to a real Desire of resigning it; and yet to chuse, rather to drudge on in it, than suffer it to be well supply'd (though to share in that Advantage) is a Delicacy of Ambition, that *Machiavel* himself has made no mention of: Or if in old *Rome*, the Jealousy of any pretended Patriot, equally inclin'd to abdicate his Office, may have come up to it; 'tis more than my reading remembers.

As nothing can be more impertinent, than shewing too frequent a Fear, to be thought so, I will, without farther Apology, rather risque that Imputation, than not tell you another Story, much to the same Purpose, and of no more Consequence than my last. To make you understand it, however, a little Preface will be necessary.

If the Merit of an Actor (as it certainly does) consists more in the Quality, than the Quantity of his Labour; the other Managers had no visible Reason to think, this needless Ambition of *Wilks*, in being so often, and sometimes so unnecessarily employ'd, gave him any Title to a Superiority; especially when our Articles of Agreement, had allow'd us all to be equal. But what are narrow Contracts to great Souls with growing Desires? *Wilks* therefore, who thought himself lessen'd, in appealing to any Judgment, but his own, plainly discovered by his restless Behaviour

haviour (though he did not care to speak out) that he thought he had a Right to some higher Consideration, for his Performance: This was often *Booth's* Opinion, as well as my own. It must be farther observ'd, that he actually had a separate Allowance of Fifty Pounds a Year, for writing our daily Play-Bills, for the Printer: Which Province, to say the Truth, was the only one we car'd to trust to his particular Intendance, or could find out for a Pretence to distinguish him. But, to speak a plainer Truth, this Pension, which was no part of our original Agreement, was merely paid to keep him quiet, and not that we thought it due to so insignificant a Charge, as what a Prompter had formerly executed. This being really the Case, his frequent Complaints of being a Drudge to the Company, grew something more, than disagreeable to us: For we could not digest the Imposition of a Man's setting himself to work, and then bringing in his own Bill for it. *Booth*, therefore, who was less easy, than I was, to see him so often setting a Merit upon this Quantity of his Labour, which neither could be our Interest, or his own to lay upon him; propos'd to me, that we might remove this pretended Grievance, by reviving some Play, that might be likely to live, and be easily acted, without *Wilks's* having any Part in it. About this time, an unexpected Occasion offer'd itself, to put our Project, in practice: What follow'd our Attempt, will be all (if any thing be) worth Observation, in my Story.

In 1725, we were call'd upon, in a manner, that could not be resist'd, to revive the *Provok'd Wife*, a Comedy, which, while we found our  
Account,

Account, in keeping the Stage clear of those loose Liberties, it had formerly, too justly been charg'd with, we had laid aside, for some Years. The Author, Sir *John Vanbrugh*, who was conscious of what it had too much of, was prevail'd upon, to substitute a new-written Scene in the Place of one, in the fourth Act, where the Wantonness of his Wit, and Humour, had (originally) made a Rake talk like a Rake, in the borrow'd Habit of a Clergyman: To avoid which Offence, he clapt the same Debauchee, into the Undress of a Woman of Quality: Now the Character, and Profession of a fine Lady, not being so indelibly sacred as that of a Churchman; whatever Follies he expos'd, in the Petticoat, kept him, at least, clear of his former Prophaneness, and were now innocently ridiculous to the Spectator.

This Play being thus refitted for the Stage, was, as I have observ'd, call'd for, from Court, and by many of the Nobility. Now, then, we thought was a proper time to come to an Explanation with *Wilks*: Accordingly, when the Actors were summon'd to hear the Play read, and receive their Parts; I address'd myself to *Wilks*, before them all, and told him, That as the Part of *Constant*, which he seem'd to chuse, was a Character of less Action, than he generally appear'd in, we thought this might be a good Occasion, to ease himself, by giving it to another.—Here he look'd grave.—That the Love-Scenes of it were rather serious, than gay, or humourous, and therefore might sit very well upon *Booth*.—Down dropt his Brow, and furl'd were his Features.—That if we were never to revive a tolerable Play without him, what would become of us, in case of his Indisposition?—  
Here

Here he pretended to stir the Fire.—That as he could have no farther Advantage, or Advancement, in his Station, to hope for, his acting in this Play was but giving himself an unprofitable Trouble, which neither *Booth*, nor I, desired to impose upon him.—Softly.—Now the Pill began to gripe him.—In a Word, this provoking Civility plung'd him into a Passion, which he was no longer able to contain; out it came, with all the Equipage of unlimited Language, that on such Occasions his Displeasure usually set out with; but when his Reply was stript of those Ornaments, it was plainly this: That he look'd upon all I had said, as a concerted Design, not only to signalize ourselves, by laying him aside; but a Contrivance to draw him into the Disfavour of the Nobility, by making it suppos'd his own Choice, that he did not act in a Play so particularly ask'd for; but we should find, he could stand upon his own Bottom, and it was not all our little cabaling should get our Ends of him. To which I answer'd, with some Warmth, That he was mistaken in our Ends; for those, Sir, said I, you have answer'd already, by shewing the Company, you cannot bear to be left out of any Play. Are not you every Day complaining of your being over-labour'd? And now, upon our first offering to ease you, you fly into a Passion, and pretend to make that a greater Grievance, than t'other. But, Sir, if your being In, or Out of the Play, is a Hardship, you shall impose it upon yourself: The Part is in your Hand, and to us, it is a Matter of Indifference now, whether you take it, or leave it. Upon this, he threw down the Part upon the Table, cross'd his Arms, and sat knocking



ing his Heel, upon the Floor, as seeming to threaten most, when he said least; but when nobody persuaded him to take it up again, *Booth*, not chusing to push the Matter too far, but rather to split the Difference of our Dispute, said, That for his Part, he saw no such great Matter in acting every Day; for he believed it the wholesomest Exercise in the World; it kept the Spirits in Motion, and always gave him a good Stomach. Though this was, in a manner, giving up the Part to *Wilks*, yet it did not allow, he did us any Favour in receiving it. Here, I observ'd Mrs. *Oldfield* began to titter, behind her Fan: But *Wilks*, being more intent upon what *Booth* had said, reply'd, Every one could best feel for himself, but he did not pretend to the Strength of a Pack-horse; therefore if Mrs. *Oldfield* would chuse any body else to play with her, he should be very glad to be excus'd: This throwing the Negative upon Mrs. *Oldfield*, was, indeed, a sure way to save himself; which I could not help taking notice of, by saying, It was making but an ill Compliment, to the Company, to suppose there was but one Man in it, fit to play an ordinary Part with her. Here Mrs. *Oldfield* got up, and turning me half round to come forward, said, with her usual Frankness, Pooh! you are all a Parcel of Fools, to make such a Rout about nothing! Rightly judging, that the Person, most out of humour, would not be more displeas'd at her calling us all, by the same Name. As she knew too, the best way of ending the Debate, would be to help the Weak; she said, she hop'd Mr. *Wilks* would not so far mind what had past, as to refuse his acting the Part, with her; for tho' it might

might not be so good, as he had been us'd to; yet, she believed, those who had bespoke the Play, would expect to have it done to the best Advantage; and it would make but an odd Story abroad, if it were known, there had been any Difficulty in that point among ourselves. To conclude, *Wilks* had the Part, and we had all we wanted; which was an Occasion to let him see, that the Accident, or Choice of one Manager's being more employ'd than another, would never be allow'd a Pretence, for altering our Indentures, or his having an extraordinary Consideration for it.

However disagreeable it might be, to have this unfociable Temper daily to deal with; yet I cannot but say, that from the same impatient Spirit, that had so often hurt us, we still drew valuable Advantages: For as *Wilks* seem'd to have no Joy, in Life, beyond his being distinguish'd on the Stage; we were not only sure of his always doing his best, there, himself; but of making others more careful, than without the Rod of so irascible a Temper over them, they would have been. And I much question, if a more temperate, or better Usage of the hired Actors, could have so effectually kept them to Order. Not even *Betterton* (as we have seen) with all his good Sense, his great Fame, and Experience, could, by being only a quiet Example of Industry himself, save his Company from falling, while neither Gentleness could govern, or the Consideration of their common Interest reform them. Diligence, with much the inferior Skill, or Capacity, will beat the best negligent Company, that ever came upon a Stage. But when a certain dreaming Idleness, or jolly  
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Negligence of Rehearsals gets into a Body of the Ignorant, and Incapable (which before *Wilks* came into *Drury-Lane*, when *Powel* was at the Head of them, was the Case of that Company) then, I say, a sensible Spectator might have look'd upon the fallen Stage, as *Portius* in the Play of *Cato*, does upon his ruin'd Country, and have lamented it, in (something near) the same Exclamation, *viz.*

— O ye immortal Bards!  
*What Havock do these Blockheads make among your Works!*  
*How are the boasted Labours of an Age,*  
*Defac'd, and tortur'd, by ungracious Action?*

Of these wicked Doings, *Dryden* too complains in one of his Prologues, at that Time, where speaking of such lewd Actors, he closes a Couplet with the following Line, *viz.*

*And murder Plays, which they miscall Reviving.*

The great Share, therefore, that *Wilks*, by his exemplary Diligence, and Impatience of Neglect, in others, had in the Reformation of this Evil, ought in Justice to be remembered; and let my own Vanity here take Shame, to itself, when I confess, That had I had half his Application, I still think I might have shewn myself twice the Actor, that in my highest State of Favour, I appear'd to be. But, if I have any Excuse for that Neglect (a Fault, which if I loved not Truth, I need not have mentioned) it is, that so much of my Attention was taken up in an incessant Labour  
to

to guard against our private Animosities, and preserve a Harmony, in our Management, that I hope, and believe, it made ample Amends, for whatever Omission, my Auditors might sometimes know it cost me some pains to conceal. But Nature takes care to bestow her Blessings, with a more equal Hand than Fortune does, and is seldom known to heap too many upon one Man: One tolerable Talent, in an Individual, is enough to preserve him, from being good for nothing; and, if that was not laid to my Charge, as an Actor, I have in this Light too, less to complain of, than to be thankful for.

Before I conclude my History, it may be expected, I should give some further View of these my last Cotemporaries of the Theatre, *Wilks*, and *Booth*, in their different acting Capacities. If I were to paint them in the Colours they laid upon one another, their Talents would not be shewn with half the Commendation, I am inclined to bestow upon them, when they are left to my own Opinion. But People of the same Profession, are apt to see themselves in their own clear Glass of Partiality, and look upon their Equals through a Mist of Prejudice. It might be imagin'd too, from the difference of their natural Tempers, that *Wilks* should have been more blind, to the Excellencies of *Booth*, than *Booth* was to those of *Wilks*; but it was not so: *Wilks* would sometimes commend *Booth* to me; but when *Wilks* excell'd, the other was silent: *Booth* seem'd to think nothing valuable, that was not tragically Great, or Marvellous: Let that be as true, as it may; yet I have often thought, that from his having no Taste of Humour himself, he might be too much inclin'd

to depreciate the Acting of it in others. The very slight Opinion, which in private Conversation with me, he had of *Wilks's* acting Sir *Harry Wildair*, was certainly more, than could be justified; not only from the general Applause that was against that Opinion (tho' Applause is not always infallible) but from the visible Capacity which must be allow'd to an Actor, that could carry such slight Materials to such a height of Approbation: For tho' the Character of *Wildair*, scarce in any one Scene will stand against a just Criticism; yet in the Whole, there are so many gay, and false Colours of the fine Gentleman, that nothing but a Vivacity in the Performance, proportionably extravagant, could have made them so happily glare, upon a common Audience.

*Wilks*, from his first setting out, certainly form'd his manner of Acting, upon the Model of *Montfort*; as *Booth* did his, on that of *Betterton*. But ——— *Haud passibus æquis*: I cannot say, either of them came up to their Original. *Wilks* had not that easy regulated Behaviour, or the harmonious Elocution of the One, nor *Booth* that Conscious Aspect of Intelligence, nor requisite Variation of Voice, that made every Line the Other spoke seem his own, natural, self-deliver'd Sentiment: Yet there is still room for great Commendation of Both the first mentioned; which will not be so much diminish'd, in my having said, they were only excell'd by such Predecessors, as it will be rais'd, in venturing to affirm, it will be a longer time, before any Successors will come near them. Thus one of the greatest Praises given to *Virgil* is, that no Successor in Poetry came so near *Him*, as *He* himself did to *Homer*.

VOL. II.

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Though the Majority of Publick Auditors are but bad Judges of Theatrical Action, and are often deceiv'd into their Approbation of what has no solid Pretence to it; yet, as there are no other appointed Judges to appeal to, and as every single Spectator has a Right to be one of them, their Sentence will be definitive, and the Merit of an Actor must, in some degree, be weigh'd by it: By this Law, then, *Wilks* was pronounced an Excellent Actor; which if the few true Judges did not allow him to be, they were at least too candid to slight, or discourage him. *Booth* and he were Actors so directly opposite in their Manner, that, if either of them could have borrowed a little of the other's Fault, they would Both have been improv'd by it: If *Wilks* had sometimes too violent a Vivacity; *Booth* as often contented himself with too grave a Dignity: The Latter seem'd too much to heave up his Words, as the other to dart them to the Ear, with too quick and sharp a Vehemence: Thus *Wilks*, would too frequently break into the Time and Measure of the Harmony, by too many spirited Accents, in one Line; and *Booth*, by too solemn a Regard to Harmony, would as often lose the necessary Spirit of it: So that (as I have observ'd) could we have sometimes rais'd the one, and sunk the other, they had both been nearer to the mark. Yet this could not be always objected to them: They had their Intervals of unexceptionable Excellence, that more, than balanc'd their Errors. The Master-piece of *Booth* was *Othello*: There, he was most in Character, and seem'd not more to animate, or please himself, in it, than his Spectators. 'Tis true, he owed his last, and highest Advancement, to his acting

acting *Cato*: But it was the Novelty, and critical Appearance of that Character, that chiefly swell'd the Torrent of his Applause: For let the Sentiments of a declaiming Patriot have all the Sublimity, that Poetry can raise them to; let them be deliver'd too, with the utmost Grace, and Dignity of Elocution, that can recommend them to the Auditor: Yet this is but one Light, wherein the Excellence of an Actor can shine: But in *Othello* you may see him, in the Variety of Nature: There the Actor is carried through the different Accidents of domestick Happiness, and Misery, occasionally torn, and tortur'd by the most distracting Passion, that can raise Terror, or Compassion, in the Spectator. Such are the Characters that a Master Actor would delight in; and therefore in *Othello*, I may safely aver, that *Booth* shew'd himself thrice the Actor, that he could in *Cato*. And yet his Merit in acting *Cato* need not be diminish'd by this Comparison.

*Wilks* often regretted, that in Tragedy, he had not the full, and strong Voice of *Booth* to command, and grace his Periods with: But *Booth* us'd to say, That if his Ear had been equal to it, *Wilks* had Voice enough to have shewn himself a much better Tragedian. Now tho' there might be some Truth in this; yet these two Actors were of so mixt a Merit, that even in Tragedy, the Superiority was not always on the same side: In Sorrow, Tenderness, or Resignation, *Wilks* plainly had the Advantage, and seem'd more pathetically to feel, look, and express his Calamity: But, in the more turbulent Transports of the Heart, *Booth* again bore the Palm, and left all Competitors behind him. A Fact perhaps will set this Difference, in

a clearer Light. I have formerly seen *Wilks* act *Othello*, and *Booth* the *Earl of Essex*, in which they both miscarried: Neither the exclamatory Rage, or Jealousy of the one, or the plaintive Distresses of the other, were happily executed, or became either of them; though in the contrary Characters, they were both excellent.

When an Actor becomes, and naturally Looks the Character he stands in, I have often observ'd it to have had as fortunate an Effect, and as much recommended him to the Approbation of the common Auditors, as the most correct, or judicious Utterance of the Sentiments: This was strongly visible, in the favourable Reception *Wilks* met with in *Hamlet*, where I own the Half of what he spoke, was as painful to my Ear, as every Line, that came from *Betterton* was charming; and yet it is not impossible, could they have come to a Poll, but *Wilks* might have had a Majority of Admirers: However, such a Division had been no Proof, that the Præeminence had not still remain'd in *Betterton*; and if I should add, that *Booth* too, was behind *Betterton* in *Othello*, it would be saying no more, than *Booth* himself had Judgment, and Candour enough to know, and confess. And if both he, and *Wilks*, are allow'd, in the two above-mention'd Characters, a second Place, to so great a Master, as *Betterton*, it will be a Rank of Praise, that the best Actors, since my Time, might have been proud of.

I am now come towards the End of that Time, through which our Affairs had long gone forward in a settled Course of Prosperity. From the Visible Errors of former Managements, we had, at last, found the necessary Means to bring our private



vate Laws, and Orders, into the general Observance, and Approbation of our Society: Diligence, and Neglect, were under an equal Eye; the one never fail'd of its Reward, and the other, by being very rarely excused, was less frequently committed. You are now to consider us in our height of Favour, and so much in fashion, with the politer part of the Town, that our House, every *Saturday*, seem'd to be the appointed Assembly of the First Ladies of Quality: Of this too, the common Spectators were so well appriz'd, that for twenty Years successively, on that Day, we scarce ever fail'd of a crowded Audience; for which Occasion we particularly reserv'd our best Plays, acted in the best Manner we could give them.

Among our many necessary Reforms; what not a little preserv'd to us the Regard of our Auditors, was the Decency of our clear Stage; from whence we had now, for many Years, shut out those idle Gentlemen, who seem'd more delighted to be pretty Objects themselves, than capable of any Pleasure, from the Play: Who took their daily Stands, where they might best elbow the Actor, and come in for their Share of the Auditor's Attention. In many a labour'd Scene of the warmest Humour, and of the most affecting Passions, have I seen the best Actors disconcerted, while these buzzing Muscatos have been fluttering round their Eyes, and Ears. How was it possible an Actor, so embarrass'd, should keep his Impatience, from entering into that different Temper which his personated Character might require him to be Master of.

Future Actors may perhaps wish I would set this Grievance in a stronger Light; and, to say the

the Truth, where Auditors are ill-bred, it cannot well be expected, that Actors should be polite. Let me therefore shew, how far an Artift in any Science is apt to be hurt by any sort of Inattention to his Performance.

While the famous *Corelli*, at *Rome*, was playing some musical Composition of his own, to a select Company in the private Apartment of his Patron-Cardinal, he observed, in the height of his Harmony, his Eminence was engaging, in a detach'd Conversation; upon which he suddenly stopt short, and gently laid down his Instrument: The Cardinal, surpriz'd at the unexpected Cessation, ask'd him, if a String was broke? To which, *Corelli*, in an honest Conscioufness of what was due to his Musick, reply'd, No, Sir, I was only afraid I interrupted Business. His Eminence, who knew that a Genius could never shew itself to Advantage, where it had not its proper Regards, took this Reproof in good Part, and broke off his Conversation, to hear the whole *Concerto* play'd over again.

Another Story will let us see, what Effect a mistaken Offence of this kind had upon the *French* Theatre; which was told me by a Gentleman of the long Robe, then at *Paris*, and who was himself the innocent Author of it. At the Tragedy of *Zaire*; while the celebrated Mademoiselle *Goffin* was delivering a Soliloquy, this Gentleman was seiz'd with a sudden Fit of Coughing, which gave the Actres some Surprize, and Interruption; and his Fit increasng, she was forced to stand silent so long, that it drew the Eyes of the uneasy Audience upon him; when a *French* Gentleman leaning forward to him, ask'd him, If this Actres had

had given him any particular Offence, that he took so publick an Occasion to resent it? The *English* Gentleman, in the utmost Surprize, assured him, So far from it, that he was a particular Admirer of her Performance; that his Malady was his real Misfortune, and if he apprehended any Return of it, he would rather quit his Seat, than disoblige either the Actres, or the Audience.

This publick Decency in their Theatre, I have myself seen carried so far, that a Gentleman in their *second Lodge*, or Middle-Gallery, being observ'd to sit forward himself, while a Lady sat behind him, a loud Number of Voices call'd out to him, from the Pit, *Place à la Dame! Place à la Dame!* When the Person so offending, either not apprehending the Meaning of the Clamour, or possibly being some *John Trott*, who fear'd no Man alive; the Noise was continued for several Minutes; nor were the Actors, though ready on the Stage, suffer'd to begin the Play, till this unbred Person was laugh'd out of his Seat, and had placed the Lady before him.

Whether this Politeness, observ'd at Plays, may be owing to their Clime, their Complexion, or their Government, is of no great Consequence; but, if it is to be acquir'd, methinks it is pity our accomplish'd Countrymen, who every Year, import so much of this Nation's gawdy Garniture, should not, in this long Course of our Commerce with them, have brought over a little of this Theatrical Good-breeding too.

I have been the more copious upon this Head, that it might be judg'd, how much it stood us upon, to have got rid of those improper Spectators, I have been speaking of: For whatever Re-

F 4. gard

gard we might draw by keeping them at a Distance, from our Stage, I had observed, while they were admitted behind our Scenes, we but too often shew'd them the wrong Side of our Tapestry; and that many a tolerable Actor was the less valued, when it was known, what ordinary Stuff he was made of.

Among the many more disagreeable Distresses, that are almost unavoidable, in the Government of the Theatre, those we so often met with from the Persecution of bad Authors, were what we could never entirely get rid of. But let us state both our Cases, and then see, where the Justice of the Complaint lies. 'Tis true, when an ingenious Indigent had taken, perhaps, a whole Summer's Pains, *invitâ Minervâ*, to heap up a Pile of Poetry, into the Likeness of a Play, and found, at last, the gay Promise of his Winter's Support, was rejected, and abortive, a Man almost ought to be a Poet himself, to be justly sensible of his Distress! Then, indeed, great Allowances ought to be made for the severe Reflections, he might naturally throw upon those pragmatistical Actors, who had no Sense or Taste of good Writing. And yet, if his Relief was only to be had, by his imposing a bad Play upon a good Set of Actors, methinks the Charity that first looks at home, has as good an Excuse for its Coldness, as the unhappy Object of it had a Plea for his being reliev'd, at their Expence. But immediate Want was not always confess'd their Motive for Writing; Fame, Honour, and *Parnassian* Glory had sometimes taken a romantick Turn in their Heads; and then they gave themselves the Air of talking to us, in a higher Strain — Gentlemen  
were

were not to be so treated! the Stage was like to be finely govern'd, when Actors pretended to be Judges of Authors, &c. But, dear Gentlemen! if they were good Actors, why not? How should they have been able to act, or rise to any Excellence, if you supposed them not to feel, or understand what you offered them? Would you have reduc'd them, to the mere Mimickry of Parrots, and Monkies, that can only prate, and play a great many pretty Tricks, without Reflection? Or how are you sure, your Friend, the infallible Judge, to whom you read your fine Piece, might be sincere in the Praises he gave it? Or, indeed, might not you have thought the best Judge a bad one, if he had disliked it? Consider too, how possible it might be, that a Man of Sense would not care to tell you a Truth, he was sure you would not believe! And, if neither *Dryden*, *Congreve*, *Steele*, *Addison*, nor *Farquhar*, (if you please) ever made any Complaint of their Incapacity to judge, why is the World to believe the Sights you have met with from them, are either undeserved, or particular? Indeed! indeed, I am not conscious that we ever did you, or any of your Fraternity the least Injustice! Yet this was not all we had to struggle with; to supersede our Right of rejecting, the Recommendation, or rather Imposition of some great Persons (whom it was not Prudence to disoblige) sometimes came in, with a high Hand, to support their Pretensions; and then, *cout que cout*, acted it must be! So when the short Life of this wonderful Nothing was over, the Actors were, perhaps, abus'd in a Preface, for obstructing the Success of it, and the Town publickly damn'd us, for our private Civility.

F 5

I cannot

I cannot part with these fine Gentlemen Authors, without mentioning a ridiculous *Disgraccia*, that befel one of them, many Years ago: This solemn Bard, who, like *Bays*, only writ for Fame, and Reputation; on the second Day's publick Triumph of his Muse, marching in a stately full-bottom'd Perriwig into the Lobby of the House, with a Lady of Condition in his Hand, when raising his Voice to the Sir *Fopling* Sound, that became the Mouth of a Man of Quality, and calling out—Hey! Box-keeper, where is my Lady such-a-one's Servant, was unfortunately answer'd, by honest *John Trott*, (which then happen'd to be the Box-keeper's real Name) Sir, we have dismiss'd, there was not Company enough to pay Candles. In which mortal Astonishment, it may be sufficient to leave him. And yet had the Actors refus'd this Play, what Resentment might have been thought too severe for them?

Thus was our Administration often censur'd for Accidents, which were not in our Power to prevent: A possible Case, in the wisest Governments. If therefore some Plays have been prefer'd to the Stage, that were never fit to have been seen there, let this be our best Excuse for it. And yet, if the Merit of our rejecting the many bad Plays, that press'd hard upon us, were weigh'd against the few, that were thus impos'd upon us, our Conduct, in general, might have more Amendments of the Stage to boast of, than Errors to answer for. But it is now time to drop the Curtain.

During our four last Years, there happen'd so very little unlike what has been said before, that I shall conclude, with barely mentioning those unavoid-

unavoidable Accidents, that drew on our Dissolution. The first, that for some Years had led the way to greater, was the continued ill State of Health, that render'd *Booth* incapable of appearing on the Stage. The next was the Death of *Mrs. Oldfield*, which happen'd on the 23d of *October*, 1730. About the same Time too *Mrs. Porter*, then in her highest Reputation for Tragedy, was lost to us, by the Misfortune of a dislocated Limb, from the overturning of a *Chaise*. And our last Stroke was the Death of *Wilks*, in *September*, in the Year following, 1731.

Notwithstanding such irreparable Losses; whether, when these favourite Actors were no more to be had, their Successors might not be better borne with, than they could possibly have hop'd, while the former were in being; or that the generality of Spectators, from their want of Taste, were easier to be pleas'd, than the few who knew better: Or that at worst, our Actors were still preferable to any other Company, of the several, then subsisting: Or to whatever Cause it might be imputed, our Audiences were far less abated, than our Apprehensions had suggested. So that, tho' it began to grow late in Life with me; having still Health, and Strength enough, to have been as useful on the Stage, as ever, I was under no visible Necessity of quitting it: But so it happen'd, that our surviving Fraternity having got some chimerical, and as I thought, unjust Notions into their Heads, which though I knew they were without much Difficulty to be surmounted; I chose not, at my time of Day, to enter into new Contentions; and, as I found an Inclination in some of them, to purchase the whole Power of the

the Patent into their own Hands; I did my best, while I staid with them, to make it worth their while to come up to my Price; and then patiently sold out my Share, to the first Bidder, wishing the Crew, I had left in the Vessel, a good Voyage.

What Commotions the Stage fell into, the Year following, or from what Provocations, the greatest Part of the Actors revolted, and set up for themselves, in the little House, in the *Hay-Market*, lies not within the Promise of my Title-Page to relate: Or as it might set some Persons living, in a Light, they possibly might not chuse to be seen in, I will rather be thankful, for the involuntary Favour they have done me, than trouble the Publick, with private Complaints of fancied, or real Injuries.



T H E





THE  
RISE and PROGRESS  
OF THE  
ENGLISH THEATRE,  
FROM

Its earliest Beginning, to the Death of  
King *CHARLES* the First.

*Extracted from the Preface to the Collection of  
Old Plays, in 12 vols.*

**B**EFORE I proceed to my principal Design, it may not be unentertaining to the Reader, just to take a View of the great Similarity that appears in the Rise and Progress of the modern Stage, in all the principal Countries of *Europe*. The *Italian* is perhaps the earliest of the modern *Italian* Theatres; nay, they pretend it was *Theatre*. never intirely silent from the Imperial

Times!

Times. But tho' there might be some insipid Buffooneries, performed by idle People strolling about from Town to Town, and acting in open and publick Places to the Mob they gather'd round them; yet they had no Poetry till the Time of the \* *Provençals*, nor any thing like a Theatre, till they began to exhibit the *Mysteries of Religion*. And these, as is affirmed by *Octavio Pancirolli*, in his *Tesoro Nascasto di Roma*, begun but with the Establishment of the Fraternity *del Gonfalone*, in the Year 1264: From the Statutes of which Company he quotes the following Paragraph.

• The principal Design of our Fraternity, being  
 • to represent the Passion of *Jesus Christ*; we or-  
 • dain, that when the Mysteries of the said Pas-  
 • sion

\* *Bouche*, in his History of *Provence*, says, the *Provençal* Poets began to be esteemed throughout *Europe* in the twelfth Century, and were at the Height of their Credit about the Middle of the fourteenth. Their Poetry consisted of pastoral Songs, Sonnets, *Serventes* and *Tençons*, i. e. Satires and Love-Disputes. And in the List of their Poets are found Persons of the first Dignity. In particular the Emperor *Frederick* the First, and our King *Richard*, surnam'd *Cœur de Lion*. This Poetry receiv'd its fatal Stroke in the Death of *Joan* the First, Queen of *Naples*, and Countess of *Provence*; for neither *Lewis* the First, her adopted Son, nor *Lewis* the Second, his Successor, shew'd any Regard to it. *Le fin de cette Poësie fut le Commencement celle des Italiens*; for all there before *Dante* were rather Rhimers than Poets: He and *Petrarch* were *les deux vraies Fontaines de la Poësie Italienne*; mais *Fontaines, qui pierent leurs sources dans la Poësie Provençale*.

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tion are represented, our ancient Orders be ever observ'd; together with what shall be prescribed by the general Congregation.' But *Cresimbini*, in his History of Poetry, says, the first Piece of this Nature was written by *Francis Belliari* on the Story of *Abraham* and *Isaac*; and acted at *Florence*, in the Church of *St. Mary Magdalen*, about 1449: And that about the same time, or soon after, the History of *Christ's* Passion was first represented in the *Colliseum* at *Rome*. These two Accounts I will leave to be adjusted by the Criticks.

The *Spanish* Theatre boasts great Antiquity; but it is difficult to fix its precise *Æra*. Their first Theatrical Pieces were small Farces of one Act, call'd *Entermises*, or *Jordanas*, which they perform'd in Thorough-fares, or the most publick Places of the Towns. The Action of the Piece turn'd upon some Subject of ridiculous and low Life; which being heighten'd with Strokes of Wit and Satire, and perform'd with antick Gestures, made an Entertainment not unlike the *Latin Mimes*. To these succeeded what they call'd the *Autos Sacramentales*; being indeed Mysteries, but more artificial than those of the rest of *Europe*, which were simple Representations, while these were always allegorical. There are prodigious Numbers of them in *Spain*, but those of *Calderon* are reckon'd the best.

The *French* pretend to draw the Original of their Drama from the *Provençal* Poets in the thirteenth Century. I suppose because one *Nouez*, who died in the Year 1220, is mention'd by

*Spanish*  
*Theatre.*

*French*  
*Theatre.*

*Nostra-*

*Nostradamus* as a good Actor. This Man by going about to the Houses of the Nobility, singing, dancing, and making Faces, gain'd not only a good Livelihood, but much Applause. He had, they tell us, the Art of speaking either in a Man's or a Woman's Key, and by changing his Accent, Gesture, and Countenance at Pleasure, could himself personate two Actors. These kinds of extempore Farces, or Dialogues, continued till they were displaced by the Exhibition of the Mysteries. The first, of which we have any Account, was the Mystery of the Passion, represented at *St. Maur's* in 1398. But the *French Theatre*, tho' it got as early rid of these Barbarities as any other, yet continued long very rude and imperfect, and destitute of all good Comedy till the Time of *Corneille* and *Moliere*; the former born in 1606, the latter in 1621.

The *Dutch Theatre* had its Original from what they call in that Country *Reden Rychkers Kameran*, that is, Companies or Societies of Rhetoricians and Poets, not unlike the Academies in *Italy*. The Members of these Societies were the Wits of the Place, who, when any one was married, buried, prefer'd to an Office, &c. were applied to for Epithalamiums, Elegies, or Panegyrick. They also compos'd theatrical Pieces, which they acted in the Society Room; from whence these old Pieces are call'd Society Plays, as those of *Italy* were call'd Academy Plays. Sometimes the *Reden Rychkers*, or Poets of one Village, went to perform their Pieces at Fair-times in another; which, in its turn, gave the first its Revenge. Sometimes again, the Poets of one Village disputed

puted the Prize of Wit with the Poets of another, in extempore Pieces. These kinds of Entertainments, if they can be properly call'd theatrical, are said to be as old as the Provinces themselves: But the most eminent Piece of their more reform'd Theatre, is, *De Spiegel der Minne*, the Mirror of Love; written by *Colin Van Ryffele*, and printed at *Haerlem* in 1561. The *Dutch*, like all other Theatres in their State of Ignorance, had a great Passion for the Marvellous. In one of their old Tragedies a Princess has her Lover's Head before her on a Plare: To this she sits down and address'es herself, and receives as pertinent Answers as if it had been still upon his Shoulders. But the *Dutch* Theatre is now more refin'd, and these Extravagances are seldom represented but on some State-holiday, to please the common People.

The *Germans* deduce the first Rise of their Theatre from the ancient *German* Bards, who used to sing the Elogies of *Theatre*. their Heroes; and I believe with just as much Truth as the *French* do theirs from the *Provençals*. To these Bards, they tell us, succeeded their *Master Sanger*, that is, Master Singers; who form'd themselves into Societies in all the principal Cities of *Germany*. One of these merry Societies is actually subsisting at *Strasburg* to this Day, compos'd of Shoemakers, Taylors, Weavers, Millers, &c. who enjoy certain Privileges, which they pretend were granted them by *Otho* the Great and *Maximilian* the First: But neither did these attempt any thing dramattick till after the fifteenth Century. About the middle of the sixteenth, a  
Shoe-

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Shoemaker at *Nuremburgh*, named *Haansacks*, composed many dramattick Pieces, both sacred and profane. Among the first are *Adam* and *E e*, *Jacob* and *Esau*, *Esther*, *Tobias*, *Job*, *Judith*, the *Prodigal Son*, and others; among the latter are, *Jocasta*, *Charon*, *Griselda*, the *Judgment of Paris*, and many others. And this Shoemaker is now in as much Honour among them for his *Mysteries* in Poetry, as *Jacob Behman*, another of the same Craft, for his *Mysteries* in Divinity. But all these were very rude imperfect Pieces; nor did the *German Theatre* arrive to any tolerable Perfection till after the Year 1626, when a Company of *Dutch Players* went to *Hambourg*, and, by exhibiting some Pieces of a more perfect kind, led them to a better Taste. It is not forty Years since the Mystery of the Passion was exhibited at *Vienna*. It consisted of five Acts, and represented in order the Terrestrial Paradise, the Creation of *Adam* and *Eve*, their Fall, the Death of *Abel*, *Moses* in the Desert, the Travels of *Joseph*, *Mary*, and the Child *Jesus* into *Egypt*. *Jesus* was represented by a full-grown Lad; but to shew that he was a Child, they fed him on the Stage with Spoon-Meat. Then you saw him disputing with the Doctors in the *Temple*, his Prayer in the Garden, his Seizing, his Passion, his Death on the Cross, and his Burial, which closed the Representation. Thus all the modern Theatres in *Europe* began with Singing, Dancing, and *extempore* Dialogues or Farces; from thence they proceeded to the Mysteries of Religion, and till the sixteenth Century none of them attempted to exhibit either Tragedy or Comedy.

I come

I come now more particularly to consider the Rise and Progress of the *English Stage*, which was the principal *Theatre*. Design of this *Preface*. It is generally, I believe, imagined, that the *English Stage* rose later than the rest of its Neighbours. Those in this Opinion will, perhaps, wonder to be told of Theatrical Entertainments almost as early as the Conquest; and yet nothing is more certain, if you will believe an honest Monk, one *William Stephanides*, or *Fitz-Stephen*, in his *Descriptio Nobilissimæ Civitatis Londoniæ*, who writes thus \*; “*London*, instead of common Interludes  
 “ belonging to the Theatre, hath Plays of a more  
 “ holy Subject; Representations of those Mira-  
 “ cles which the holy Confessors wrought, or of  
 “ the Sufferings wherein the glorious Constancy  
 “ of the Martyrs did appear.” This Author was a Monk of *Canterbury*, who wrote in the Reign of *Henry II.* and died in that of *Richard I.* 1191: And as he does not mention these Representations as Novelties to the People, (for he is describing all the common Diversions in use at that time) we can hardly fix them lower than the Conquest. And this I believe is an earlier Date than any other Nation of *Europe* can produce for their Theatrical Representations. About 140 Years after this, in the Reign of *Edward III.* it was ordained by Act of Parliament, that a Company of Men called  
*Vagrants*,

\* *Londoniæ pro spectaculis theatralibus, pro ludis scenicis, ludos habent sanctiores, representationes miraculorum, quæ sancti confessores operati sunt, seu representationes passionum, quibus claruit constantia martyrum. The whole Piece is preserv'd in Stow,* and is very curious.

*Vagrants*, who had made *Masquerades* thro' the whole City, should be whipt out of *London*, because they represented scandalous Things in the little Alehouses, and other Places where the Populace assembled. What the Nature of these scandalous Things were, we are not told; whether lewd and obscene, or impious and profane: But I should rather think the former, for the Word *Masquerades* has an ill Sound, and I believe they were no better in their Infancy than at present. 'Tis true, the *Mysteries of Religion* were soon after this Period made very free with all over *Europe*, being represented in so stupid and ridiculous a manner, that the Stories of the *New Testament* in particular, were thought to encourage *Libertinism* and Infidelity. In all Probability therefore the Actors last mentioned were of that Species called \* *Mummers*; these were wont to stroll about the Country dress'd in an antick Manner, dancing, mimicking, and shewing Postures. This Custom is still continued in many Parts of *England*; but it was formerly so general, and drew the common People so much from their Business, that it was deemed a very pernicious Custom: And as these *Mummers* always went mask'd and disguis'd, they but too frequently encouraged themselves to commit violent Outrages, and were guilty of † many lewd Disorders. However, as bad as they were, they

\* A Word signifying one who masks and disguises himself to play the Fool, without speaking. Hence, perhaps, comes our Country Word *Mum*; hold your tongue, say nothing.

† These Disorders afterwards so much increased, that in the third Year of *Henry VIII.* an Act was



they seem to be the true original Comedians of *England*; and their Excellence altogether consisted, as that of their Successors does in part still, in Mimickry and Humour.

In an Act of Parliament made the fourth Year of *Henry IV.* Mention is made of certain *Wastors*, *Master-Rimours*, *Minstrels*, and other Vagabonds, who infested the Land of *Wales*; And it is enacted, that no Master-Rimour, Minstrel, or other Vagabond, be in any wise sustain'd in the Land of *Wales*, to make *Commoiths* or Gatherings upon the People there. What these *Master-Rimours* were, which were so troublesome in *Wales* in particular, I cannot tell; possibly they might be the degenerate Descendants of the ancient Bards. It is also difficult to determine what is meant by their making *Commoiths*. The Word signifies, in *Welch*, any District, or Part of a Hundred or Cantred, containing about one Half of it, that is, 50 Villages; and might possibly be made use of by these *Master-Rimours* when they had fix'd upon a Place to act in, and gave Intimation thereof for ten or twelve Miles round, which is a Circuit that I believe will take in about 50 Villages. And that this was commonly done, appears from *Carew's* Survey of *Cornwall*, which was wrote in Queen *Elizabeth's* Time. Speaking of the Diversions of the People, "The *Guary-Miracle*, (says he) "in *English* a Miracle-Play, is a kind of "Interlude compil'd in *Cornish*, out of some "Scripture-History. For representing it they "raise

made against *Mummers*, in which the Penalty for selling *Vifors*, or keeping them in any House, was 20 Shillings each *Vifor*. *Vide Statutes*.

“ raise an Amphitheatre in some open Field, hav-  
 “ ing the Diameter of this inclos’d Plain, some  
 “ 40 or 50 Foot. The Country People flock  
 “ from all Sides many Miles off, to see and hear  
 “ it; for they have therein Devils and Devices  
 “ to delight as well the Eye as the Ear.” Mr.  
*Carew* has not been so exact as to give us the  
 Time when these *Guary-Miracles* were exhibited  
 in *Cornwall*; but, by the manner of it, the Cus-  
 tom seems to be very ancient.

The Year 1378 is the earliest Date I can find,  
 in which express mention is made of the Repre-  
 sentation of Mysteries in *England*. In this Year  
 the Scholars of *Paul’s* School presented a Petition  
 to *Richard II.* praying his Majesty “ to prohibit  
 “ some unexpert People from presenting the His-  
 “ tory of the Old Testament, to the great Pre-  
 “ judice of the said Clergy, who have been at  
 “ great Expence in order to represent it publicly  
 “ at *Christmas.*” About twelve Years afterwards,  
*viz.* in 1390, the Parish-Clerks of *London* are  
 said to have play’d Interludes at *Skinners Well,*  
*July 18, 19, and 20th.* And again, in 1409, the  
 tenth Year of *Henry IV.* they acted at *Clerkenwell*  
 (which took its Name from this Custom of the  
 Parish-Clerks acting Plays there) for eight Days  
 successively, a Play concerning the Creation of the  
 World, at which were present most of the Nobil-  
 ity and Gentry of the Kingdom. These Instances  
 are sufficient to prove that we had the Mysteries  
 here very early, tho’ perhaps not so soon as some  
 of our Neighbours. How long they continued to  
 be exhibited among us, cannot be exactly deter-  
 mined. This Period one might call the dead Sleep  
 of the Muses. And when this was over, they did  
 not

not presently awake, but, in a kind of Morning Dream, produced the *Moralities* that followed. However, these jumbled Ideas had some Shadow of Meaning. The Mysteries only represented, in a senseless manner, some miraculous History from the Old or New Testament: But in these *Moralities* something of Design appear'd, a Fable and a Moral; something also of Poetry, the Virtues, Vices, and other Affections of the Mind being frequently personified \*. But the Moralities were also very often concerned wholly in religious Matters. For Religion then was every one's Concern, and it was no Wonder if each Party employed all Arts to promote it. Had they been in Use now, they would doubtless have turned as much upon Politicks. Thus, the *New Custom*, which I have chosen

\* In an old Morality, entitled, *All for Money*, the Persons of the Drama are;

<i>Theology.</i>	<i>Pride.</i>
<i>Science.</i>	<i>Gluttony.</i>
<i>Art.</i>	<i>Learning with Money.</i>
<i>Money.</i>	<i>Learning without Money.</i>
<i>Adulation.</i>	<i>Money without Learning.</i>
<i>Godly Admonition.</i>	<i>Neither Money nor Learning.</i>
<i>Mischievous Help.</i>	<i>Moneyless.</i>
<i>Pleasure.</i>	<i>Moneyless and Friendless.</i>
<i>Prest for Pleasure.</i>	<i>Nychol.</i>
<i>Sin.</i>	<i>Gregory Graceless.</i>
<i>Swift to Sin.</i>	<i>Mother Crook.</i>
<i>Virtue.</i>	<i>Judas.</i>
<i>Humility.</i>	<i>Dives.</i>
<i>Charity.</i>	
<i>All for Money.</i>	And
<i>Damnation.</i>	<i>William with the two</i>
<i>Satan.</i>	<i>Wives.</i>

chosen as a Specimen of this kind of writing, was certainly intended to promote the Reformation, when it was revived in the Reign of Queen *Elizabeth*. And in the more early Days of the Reformation, it was so common for the Partizans of the old Doctrines, (and perhaps also of the new) to defend and illustrate their Tenets this Way, that in the 24th Year of *Henry VIII.* in an Act of Parliament made for the promoting true Religion, I find a Clause restraining all Rimors or Players from singing in Songs, or playing in Interludes, any thing that should contradict the establish'd Doctrines. It was also customary at this time to act these moral and religious Drama's in private Houses, for the Edification and Improvement, as well as the Diversion of well-disposed Families: And for this Purpose the Appearance of the \* Persons of the Drama was so disposed, as that five or six Actors might represent twenty Personages.

What has been said of the Mysteries and Moralities, it is hop'd will be sufficient just to shew the Reader what the Nature of them was. I should have been glad to be more particular; but where Materials are not to be had, the Building must be deficient. And, to say the Truth, a more particular Knowledge of these Things, any farther than as it serves to shew the Turn and Genius of our Ancestors, and the progressive Refinement of our Language, was so little worth preserving, that the Loss of it is scarce to be regretted. I proceed therefore with my Subject. The Muse might now be said to be just awake when she began to trifle in the old Interludes, and aim'd at  
some-

\* Vide *New Custom*, Vol. I.

Something like Wit and Humour. And for these  
 \* *John Heywood* the Epigrammatist undoubtedly  
 claims the earliest, if not the foremost Place. He  
 was Jester to King *Henry VIII.* but liv'd till the  
 Beginning of Queen *Elizabeth's* Reign. *Gammer*  
*Gurton's Needle*, which is generally call'd our first  
 Comedy, and not undeservedly, appear'd soon after  
 the Interludes: It is indeed altogether of a Comic  
 Cast, and wants not Humour, tho' of a low and  
 fordid kind. And now Dramatick Writers, pro-  
 perly so called, began to appear and turn their  
 Talents to the Stage. *Henry Parker*, Son of Sir  
*William Parker*, is said to have wrote several Tra-  
 gedies and Comedies in the Reign of *Henry VIII.*  
 and one *John Hoker*, in 1535, wrote a Comedy  
 called *Piscator*, or the *Fisher caught*. Mr. *Richard*  
*Edwards*, who was born in 1523, and in the Be-  
 ginning of Queen *Elizabeth's* Reign, was made  
 one of the Gentlemen of her Majesty's Chapel,  
 and Master of the Children there, being both an  
 excellent Musician and a good Poet, wrote two  
 Comedies, one called *Palæmon* and *Arcite*, in  
 which a Cry of Hounds in hunting was so well  
 imitated, that the Queen and the Audience were  
 extremely delighted: The other call'd *Damon* and  
*Pithias*, the two faithfullest Friends in the World.  
 This last I have inserted. After him came *Thomas*  
*Sack-*

\* What the Nature and Merits of his Interludes  
 were, may be guess'd by the Specimen I have pre-  
 serv'd of them in this Collection. *Tom Tyler and his*  
*Wife*, *The Disobedient Child*, and some others of the  
 same Cast, were wrote something later, but not at  
 all better than *Heywood*.

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*Sackville*, Lord *Buckhurst*, and *Thomas † Norton*, the Writers of *Gorboduc*, the first Dramatick Piece of any Consideration in the *English Language*. Of these and some others, hear the Judgment of *Puttenham*, in his *Art of Poetry*, wrote in the Reign of Queen *Elizabeth*; “ I think, says “ he, for Tragedy the Lord of *Buckhurst*, and “ Maister *Edward Ferrers*, for such Doings “ as I have seen of theirs, do deserve the highest “ Price: The Earl of *Oxford*, and Maister *Edwards* of her Majesty’s Chappel, for Comedy “ and Interlude.” And in another Place he says,—“ But the principal Man in this Profession “ (of Poetry) at the same time, (*viz. Edward VI.*) “ was Maister *Edward Ferrers*, a Man of no less “ Mirth and Felicity than *John Heywood*, but of “ much more Skill and Magnificence in his “ Metre, and therefore wrote for the most part “ to the Stage in Tragedy, and sometimes in “ Comedy or Interlude; wherein he gave the “ King so much good Recreation, as he had “ thereby many good Rewards.” Of this *Edward Ferrers*, so considerable a Writer, I can find no Remains, nor even the Titles of any Thing he wrote. After these followed *John Lillie*, famous in his time for Wit, and for having greatly improved the *English Language*, in a Romance which he wrote, entitled, *Euphues and his England, or the Anatomy of Wit*; of which it is said by

† This *Thomas Norton* was the same Person who had a Hand with *Sternbold* and *Hopkins* in several of our singing Psalms: I think those translated by him are distinguish’d by the Letter *N*.

by the \* Publisher of his Plays, “ Our Nation  
 “ are in his Debt for a new *English* which he  
 “ taught them, *Euphues and his England* began  
 “ first that Language. All our Ladies were then  
 “ his Scholars, and that Beauty in Court who  
 “ could not *parle Euphuism*, was as little regard-  
 “ ed as she which now there speaks not *French*.”  
 This extraordinary Romance, so famous for its  
 Wit, so fashionable in the Court of Queen *Eliza-  
 beth*, and which is said to have introduced so re-  
 markable a Change in our Language, I have seen  
 and read †. It is an unnatural affected Jargon,  
 in

\* Mr. *Blount*, who published six of his Plays in the  
 Year 1632.

† A few Sentences from it, will give a Taste of  
 the manner of its Composition.

“ There must in every Triangle be three Lines ;  
 “ the first beginneth, the second augmenteth, the  
 “ third concludeth it a Figure : So in Love three  
 “ Virtues ; Affection, which draweth the Heart ;  
 “ Secresy, which encreaseth the Hope ; Constancy,  
 “ which finisheth the Work : Without any of these  
 “ Rules there can be no Triangle ; without any of  
 “ these Virtues, no Love.

Again. “ Fire cannot be hidden in the Flax with-  
 “ out Smoke, nor Musk in the Bosom without Smell,  
 “ nor Love in the Breast without Suspicion.

Once more. “ She is the Flower of Courtesy, the  
 “ Picture of Comeliness ; one that shameth *Venus*, be-  
 “ ing somewhat fairer, and much more virtuous ; and  
 “ staineth *Diana*, being as chaste, but much more  
 “ amiable. But the more Beauty she hath, the more  
 “ Pride ; and the more Virtue, the more Preciseness.  
 “ The Peacock is a Bird for none but *Juno*, the Dove  
 “ for none but *Vesta* : None must wear *Venus* in a

in which the perpetual Use of Metaphors, Allusions, Allegories, and Analogies, is to pass for Wit; and stiff Bombast for Language. And with this Nonsense the Court of Queen *Elizabeth* (whose times afforded better Models for Stile and Composition, than almost any since) became miserably infected, and greatly helped to let in all the vile Pedantry of Language in the following Reign. So much Mischief the most ridiculous Instrument may do, when he proposes to improve upon the Simplicity of Nature.

Though Tragedy and Comedy began now to lift up their Heads, yet they could do no more for some time than bluster and quibble; and how imperfect they were in all Dramatick Art, appears from an excellent Criticism of Sir *Philip Sianey* \*,  
on

“ Table but *Alexander*; none *Pallas* in a Ring but  
“ *Ulysses*: For as there is but one Phoenix in the  
“ World, so there is but one Tree in *Arabia* where  
“ she buildeth; and as there is but one *Camilla* to be  
“ heard of, so there is but one *Cæsar* that she will  
“ like of.” His Plays are of the same Strain, as  
may be seen by that I have preserv’d.

\* Our Tragedies and Comedies, says he, observe Rules neither of honest Civility, nor skilful Poetry. Here you shall have *Asia* of the one Side, and *Africk* of the other, and so many other Under Kingdoms, that the Player when he comes in, must ever begin with telling where he is, or else the Tale will not be conceived. Now you shall have three Ladies walk to gather Flowers, and then we must believe the Stage to be a Garden. By and by we hear News of a Shipwreck in the same Place, then we are to blame if we accept it not for a Rock. Upon the back of that comes out a hideous Monster with Fire and  
Smoke,



on the Writers of that Time. Yet they seem to have had a Disposition to do better had they known how, as appears by the several Efforts they used to lick the Lump into a Shape: For some of their Pieces they adorned with dumb Shews, some with Choruses, and some they introduced and explained by an Interlocutor. Yet imperfect as they were, we had made a far better Progress at this Time than our Neighbours the *French*: The *Italians* indeed, by early Translations of the old Dramatick Writers, had arrived to greater Perfection; but we were at least upon a Footing with the other Nations of *Europe*.

But now, as it were, all at once (as it happened in *France*, though in a much later Period) the true Drama received Birth and Perfection from the creative Genius of *Shakespear*, *Fletcher*, and *Johnson*, whose several Characters are so well known, that it would be superfluous to say any more of them.

Having thus traced the Dramatick Muse thro' all her Characters and Transformations, till she had acquired a reasonable Figure, let us now re-

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turn;

Smoke, and then the miserable Beholders are bound to take it for a Cave: While in the mean time two Armies flie in, represented with four Swords and Bucklers, and then what hard Heart will not receive it for a pitched Field? Now of Time they are much more liberal. For ordinary it is that two young Princes fall in Love, after many Traverses she is got with Child, delivered of a fair Boy, he is lost, groweth a Man, falleth in Love, and is ready to get another Child; and all this in two Hours Space: which how absurd it is in Sense, even Sense may imagine.

*Defence of Poesy.*

turn, and take a more particular View of the Stage and the Actors. The first Company of Players we have any Account of in History, are the Children of *Paul's* in 1378, mentioned before in Page 118. About twelve Years afterwards the Parish Clerks of *London* are said to have acted the Mysteries at *Skinners Well*. Which of these two Companies may have been the earliest, is not certain; but as the Children of *Paul's* are first mentioned, we must in Justice give the Priority to them. It is certain, the Mysteries and Moralities were acted by these two Societies many Years before any other regular Companies appeared. And the Children of *Paul's* continued to act long after Tragedies and Comedies came in vogue, even till the Year 1618, when a Comedy called *Jack Drum's Entertainment* was acted by them. I believe the next Company regularly established was, the Children of *The Royal Chapel*, in the Beginning of Queen *Elizabeth's* Reign, the Direction of which was given to Mr. *Richard Edwards* before mentioned: And some few Years afterwards, as the Subjects of the Stage became more gay and ludicrous, a Company was formed under the Denomination of *The Children of the Revels*. The Children of the Chapel and of the *Revels* became very famous, and all *Lillie's* Plays, and many of *Shakespear's*, *Johnson's*, and others, were first acted by them. Nay, so great was their Vogue and Estimation, that the common Players, as may be gathered from a Scene in *Hamlet*, grew jealous of them. However, they served as an excellent Nursery for the Theatres, many who afterwards became approved Actors being educated among them.

It

It is surprizing to consider what a Number of Play-houses were supported in *London* about this Time. From the Year 1570 to the Year 1629, when the Play-house in *White-Friers* was finish'd, no less than 17 Play-houses had been built. The Names of most of them I have collected from the Title Pages of old Plays \*. And as the Theatres were so numerous, the Companies of Players were in Proportion. Besides the Children of the Chapel, and of the Revels, we are told that Queen *Elizabeth*, at the Request of Sir *Francis Walsingham*, establish'd in handsome Salaries twelve of the principal Players of that time, who went under the Name of her Majesty's Comedians and Servants. But exclusive of these, many † Noblemen retain'd Companies of Players, who acted

\* *St. Paul's Singing-school, the Globe on the Bankside Southwark, the Swan and the Hope there, the Fortune between Whitecross-street and Golden-Lane, which Maistland tells us was the first Play-house erected in London, the Red Bull in St. John's-street, the Cross-Keys in Grace-Church-street, Juns, the Theatre, the Curtain, the Nursery in Barbican, one in Black-Friers, one in White-Friers, one in Salisbury-Court, and the Cock-pit, and the Phœnix in Drury-Lane.*

† Thus *Shakespear's Titus Andronicus* was acted by the Earls of *Derby, Pembroke, and Essex's* Servants; his *Romeo and Juliet* in 1596, which some say was his first Play, by Lord *Hunsdon's* Servants; and his *Merry Wives of Windsor* in 1602, by the Lord-Chamberlain's Servants. The Earl of *Nottingham*, Lord High Admiral, had a Company in 1594, and in 1599 the *Pinner of Wakefield* was acted by the Earl of

acted not only privately in their Lords Houses, but publickly under their License and Protection. Agreeable to this is the Account which *Stow* gives us—“ Players in former Times, says he, were  
 “ Retainers to Noblemen, and none had the Pri-  
 “ vilege to act Plays but such. So in Queen *Eli-*  
 “ *zabeth's* Time, many of the Nobility had Ser-  
 “ vants and Retainers who were Players, and  
 “ went about getting their Livelihood that Way:  
 “ The Lord Admiral had Players, so had Lord  
 “ *Strange*, that play'd in the City of *London*. And  
 “ it was usual on any Gentleman's Complaint of  
 “ them for indecent Reflections in their Plays, to  
 “ have put them down. Thus once the Lord  
 “ Treasurer signify'd to the Lord Mayor to have  
 “ these Players of Lord Admiral and Lord *Strange*  
 “ prohibited, at least for some Time, because one  
 “ Mr. *Tilney* had for some Reasons dislike'd them.  
 “ Whereupon the Mayor sent for both Compa-  
 “ nies, and gave them strict Charge to forbear  
 “ playing till farther Orders. The Lord Admi-  
 “ ral's Players obey'd; but the Lord *Strange's* in  
 “ a contemptuous Manner went to the *Cross-*  
 “ *Keys*, and play'd that Afternoon. Upon which  
 “ the Mayor committed two of them to the  
 “ *Compter*, and prohibited all playing for the fu-  
 “ ture, till the Treasurer's Pleasure was farther  
 “ known. This was in 1589.” And in another  
 Part

of *Suffex's* Servants. In short, Plays were acted by the Lawyers in the Inns of Court, by the Students of several Halls and Colleges in the Universities, and even by *London* Prentices; so that now the Saying was almost literally true, *Totus Mundus agit Histrionem.*

Part of his Survey of *London*, speaking of the Stage, he says, “ This which was once a Recreation, “ and us’d therefore now and then occasionally, “ afterwards by Abuse became a Trade and Calling, and so remains to this Day. In those former Days, ingenious Tradesmen, and Gentlemen’s Servants, would sometimes gather a Company of themselves, and learn Interludes to expose Vice, or to represent the noble Actions of our Ancestors. These they play’d at Festivals, in private Houses, at Weddings or other Entertainments. But in Process of Time it became an Occupation; and these Plays being commonly acted on <sup>Sundays</sup> \* Sundays and Festivals, the Churches were forsaken, and the Play-houses throng’d. Great Inns were us’d for this Purpose, which had secret Chambers and Places, as well as open Stages and Galleries. Here Maids and good Citizens Children were inveigled and allur’d to private and unmeet Contracts; here were publicly utter’d popular and seditious Matters, unchaste, uncomely and unshamefac’d Speeches, and many other enormities. The Consideration of these Things occasion’d in 1574, Sir *James Hawes* being Mayor, an Act of Common Council, where in it was ordain’d, that no Play should be openly acted within the Liberty of the City, wherein should be utter’d any Words, Ex-  
amples,  
The Custom of acting on Sundays possibly took rise from the Exhibition of the Mysteries on that Day, which was partly considered as an Act of Religion.

“ amples, or Doings of any Unchastity, Sedition,  
 “ or such like unfit and uncomely Matter, under  
 “ the Penalty of five Pounds, and fourteen Days  
 “ Imprisonment. That no Play should be acted  
 “ till first perus'd and allow'd by the Lord Mayor  
 “ and Court of Aldermen; with many other Re-  
 “ strictions. Yet it was provided that this Act  
 “ should not extend to Plays show'd in private  
 “ Houses, the Lodgings of a Nobleman, Citi-  
 “ zen, or Gentleman, for the Celebration of  
 “ any Marriage, or other Festivity, and where  
 “ no Collection of Money was made from the  
 “ Auditors. But these Orders were not so well  
 “ observ'd as they should be; the lewd Matters  
 “ of Plays encreas'd, and they were thought dan-  
 “ gerous to Religion, the State, Honesty of  
 “ Manners, and also for Infection in the Time  
 “ of Sickness. Wherefore they were afterwards  
 “ for some Time totally suppress'd. But upon  
 “ Application to the Queen and the Council  
 “ they were again tolerated, under the following  
 “ Restrictions. That no Plays be acted on *Sun-*  
 “ *days* at all, nor on any other Holidays till after  
 “ Evening-Prayer. That no playing be in the  
 “ Dark, nor continue any such Time, but as  
 “ any of the Auditors may return to their Dwel-  
 “ lings in *London* before Sunset, or at least be-  
 “ fore it be dark. That the Queen's Players only  
 “ be tolerated, and of them their Number and  
 “ certain Names to be notify'd in the Lord  
 “ Treasurer's Letters to the Lord Mayor, and  
 “ to the Justices of *Middlesex* and *Surry*. And  
 “ those her Players not to divide themselves in  
 “ several Companies. And that for breaking any  
 “ of

“ of these Orders, their Toleration cease. But  
“ all these Prescriptions were not sufficient to  
“ keep them within due Bounds, but their Plays,  
“ so abusive oftentimes of Virtue, or particular  
“ Persons, gave great Offence, and occasioned  
“ many Disturbances: Whence they were now  
“ and then stop’d and prohibited.” I hope this  
long Quotation from *Stow* will be excus’d, as it  
serves not only to prove several Facts, but to show  
the Customs of the Stage at that Time, and the  
early Depravity of it. But that the Plays not only  
of that Age, but long before, were sometimes  
Personal Satires, appears from a Manuscript Letter  
which I have seen from Sir *John Hallies* to the  
Lord Chancellor *Burleigh*, found among some  
Papers belonging to the House of Commons, in  
which the Knight accuses his Lordship of having  
said several dishonourable Things of him and his  
Family, particularly that his Grandfather, who  
had then been dead seventy Years, was a Man  
so remarkably covetous, that the common Players  
represented him before the Court with great  
Applause.

Thus we see the Stage no sooner began to talk,  
than it grew scurrilous: And its first Marks of  
Sense were seen in Ribaldry and Lasciviousness.  
This occasion’d much Offence; the Zeal of the  
Pulpit, and the Gravity of the City equally con-  
curred to condemn it. Many Pamphlets were wrote  
on both Sides. *Stephen Goffson*, in the Year 1579,  
published a Book, entitul’d, *The School of Abuse, or  
a pleasant Invective against Poets, Pipers, Players,  
Jesters, and such like Caterpillars of the Common-  
wealth: dedicated to Sir Philip Sidney*. He also  
wrote,

wrote, *Plays confuted in five Actions*: Proving that they are not to be suffer'd in a *Christian Commonwealth*: dedicated to *Sir Francis Walsingham*. The Defendants in this Controversy were *Thomas Lodge*, who wrote an old Play, call'd, *A Looking-glass for London and England*, and that voluminous Dramatick Writer *Thomas Heywood*.

But to proceed: The Stage soon after recover'd its Credit, and rose to a higher Pitch than ever. In 1603, the first Year of King *James's* Reign, a License was granted under the Privy Seal to *Shakespear, Fletcher, Burbage, Hemmings, Condel*, and others, authorizing them to act Plays, not only at their usual House, the *Globe* on the *Bank-side*, but in any other Part of the Kingdom, during his Majesty's Pleasure. And now, as there liv'd together at this time many eminent Players, it may not be amiss just to set down what we can collect, which will be but very little, of the most considerable of them, with regard to their Talents and Abilities. And first, "who is of  
 " more Report, says the Author of the *Return*  
 " from *Parnassus*, than *Dick Burbage* and *Will*  
 " *Kempe*? He is not counted a Gentleman that  
 " knows not *Dick Burbage* and *Will Kempe*:  
 " There's not a Country Wench that can dance  
 " *Sellenger's Round*, but can talk of *Dick Bur-*  
 " *bage* and *Will Kempe*." *Burbage* was the *Bet-*  
 " *terton*, and *Kempe* the *Nokes* of that Age. *Burbage*  
 " was the original *Richard* the Third, and greatly  
 " distinguish'd himself in that Character: *Kempe*  
 " was inimitable in the Part of a Clown. " He  
 " succeeded *Tarleton* (says *Heywood*) as well in  
 " the Favour of her Majesty Queen *Elizabeth*,  
 " as



“ as in the Opinion and good Thoughts of the  
 “ general Audiēce.” And *Tarleton*, says Sir  
*Richard Baker* in his Chronicle, for the Part of  
 a Clown, never had his Match, nor ever will  
 have. The Epitaph of *Burbage* is preserv'd in  
*Cambden's Remains*, and is only EXIT BURBAGE.  
 The Epitaph of *Tarleton* is preserv'd by the same  
 Historian as follows :

*Hic situs est, cujus Vox, Vultus, Actio possit  
 Ex Heraclito reddere Democritum.*

The next I shall mention is *Edward Allen*, the  
 Founder of *Dulwich Hospital*; as famous for his  
 Honesty, says *Baker*, as for his Acting; and two  
 such Actors as he and *Burbage*, no Age must  
 ever look to see again. He's a Man, says *Hey-*  
*wood* in his Prologue to the *Jew of Malta*,

*Whom we may rank with (doing no more Wrong)  
 Proteus for Shapes, and Roscius for a Tongue.*

Here also *Ben Johnson*, whose Praise is of more  
 Weight, as it never was lightly bestow'd :

*If Rome so great, and in her wisest Age,  
 Fear'd not to boast the Glories of her Stage,  
 As skilful Roscius, and grave Æsop, Men,  
 Yet crown'd with Honours as with Riches, then,  
 Who had no less a Trumpet of their Name  
 Than Cicero, whose very Breath was Fame :  
 How can so great Example die in me,  
 That, Allen, I should pause to publish to thee ?  
 Who both their Graces in thyself hast more  
 Outstript, than they did all that went before ;*

*And*

*And present Worth in all doth so contract,  
As others speak, but only thou dost act.  
Wear this Renown: 'Tis just that who did give  
So many Poets Life, by one should live.*

*Thomas Green* was famous for performing the Part of a Clown with great Propriety and Humour; and from his excellent Performance of the Character of *Bubble*, in a Comedy written by Mr. *John Cooke*, the Author call'd it after his Name, *Green's Tu quoque*. "There was not an Actor, says *Heywood*, of his Nature, in his time, of better Ability in his Performance, more applauded by the Audience, of greater Grace at Court, or of more general Love in the City."

*Hemmings* and *Condel* were two considerable Actors in most of *Shakespear's*, *Johnson's*, and *Fletcher's* Plays; the first in Tragedy, the last in Comedy! But they are better known for being the first Editors of *Shakespear's* Works in Folio, in the Year 1623, seven Years after his Death.

*Lowin*, *Taylor*, and *Benfield* are mentioned by *Massinger* as famous Actors. In a Satire against *Ben Johnson* are these two Lines:

*Let Lowin cease, and Taylor scorn to touch,  
The loathed Stage, for thou hast made it such.*

*Lowin*, tho' something later than *Burbage*, is said to have been the first Actor of *Hamlet*, and also the original *Henry* the Eighth; from an Observation of whose acting it in his later Days, Sir  
*William*

*William Davenant* convey'd his Instruction to *Mr. Betterton*.

And now the Theatre seems to have been at its Height of Glory and Reputation. Dramatick Authors abounded, and every Year produc'd a Number of new Plays: Nay, so great was the Passion at this time for Shew or Representation, that it was the Fashion for the Nobility to celebrate their Weddings, Birth-Days, and other Occasions of Rejoicings, with Masques and Interludes, which were exhibited with surprizing Expence; that great Architect *Inigo Jones* being frequently employ'd to furnish Decorations with all the Magnificence of his Invention. The King and his Lords, the Queen and her Ladies, frequently perform'd in these Masques at Court, and all the Nobility in their own private Houses: In short, no publick Entertainment was thought complete without them; and to this Humour it is we owe, and perhaps 'tis all we owe it, the inimitable *Masque at Ludlow Castle*. For the same universal Eagerness after Theatrical Diversions, continued during the whole Reign of King *James*, and great Part of *Charles* the First, till Puritanism, which had now gather'd great Strength, more openly oppos'd them as wicked and diabolical. If we may judge of this Spirit from *Prynne's* famous *Histrionomastix*, or *Players Scourge*, it appears to have been a Zeal much without Knowledge. This was a heavy Load of dull Abuse, publish'd in 1633, against Plays, Players, and all who favour'd them, by *William Prynne*, Esq; a Barrister of *Lincoln's-Inn*. The best way the Parties concern'd thought of, in Answer to this Work, was  
to

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to publish all the best old Plays that could then be found; so that many that had never yet seen the Light, were now brought forth: I have observ'd myself more than Fifty that were printed this Year. In short, the Patrons of the Stage for some short time prevail'd; *Prynne's* Book was deem'd an infamous Libel both against the Church and State, against the Peers, Prelates, and Magistrates; and particularly against the King and Queen, where he says, that *Princes dancing in their own Persons, was the Cause of their untimely Ends: That our English Ladies, shorn and frizzled Madams, had lost their Modesty: That Plays were the chief Delight of the Devil, and all that frequented them were damn'd.* As he knew the King and Queen frequented them daily, this was thought to reflect on their Majesties. To all Musick he has an utter Antipathy, but Church-musick in particular, which he calls the *Bleating of brute Beasts*; and says, *the Choristers bellow the Tenor as if they were Oxen, bark a Counter-point like a Kennel of Hounds, roar a Treble as if they were Bulls, and grunt out a Base like a Parcel of Hogs.* For these and many other Passages, it was order'd to be burnt by the Hands of the common Hangman: And his Sentence was to be put from the Bar, excluded the Society of *Lincoln's-Inn*, and degraded by the University of *Oxford*, to stand in the Pillory at *Westminster* and in *Cheapside*, to lose an Ear at each Place, and stand with a Paper on his Head, declaring his Offence to be the publishing an infamous Libel against both their Majesties, and the Government; to be fin'd 5000 *l.* and suffer perpetual Imprisonment. This Sentence

tence was executed on him with great Rigour. But Puritanism, from a thousand concurrent Causes every Day gathering Strength, in a little time overturn'd the Constitution; and, amongst their many Reformati<sup>o</sup>ns this was one, the total Suppression of all Plays and Play-houses.

Thus I have brought down this imperfect Essay on the Rise and Progress of the *English* Stage, to the Period which I at first intended: To pursue it farther, and take it up again at the Restoration, when a new † Patent was granted to Sir *William Davenant*, would be needless; because from that time the Affairs of the Stage are tolerably well known. If what I have done shall give any Satisfaction to the Curious, it is more than I have dared to promise myself, from my own Sense of its great Imperfection; but I hope it will be consider'd, what slender Materials either the Ignorance of those Times, or the Injury of following, have afforded us. I am, as it were, the first Adventurer on these Discoveries, and it is not reasonable to expect more Perfection than is commonly found in the first Attempts of this Nature. All that I can say is, that I have thrown together a Number of curious Circumstances on the Subject, that the Reader would seek for with great Trouble elsewhere.

† It may not be amiss to take Notice of a Clause in this Patent, which says, “ That whereas the Women’s Parts in Plays have hitherto been acted by Men in the Habits of Women, at which some have taken Offence, we do permit and give Leave, for the time to come, that all Women’s Parts be acted by Women.” And from this time Women began to appear upon the Stage.

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where. And if the Novelty of them should excite the Curiosity of any Person of greater Abilities, better Health, or more Leisure, to make a stricter Enquiry into this Matter, he would certainly oblige me, and perhaps the Publick. It is enough for me that I have led the Way, and been the first, however imperfect Discoverer.



**A D I A.**



A  
DIALOGUE  
ON  
Old PLAYS and Old PLAYERS.

---

*Lovewit, Trueman.*

*Lovewit.*

**H**ONEST old Cavalier! well met, 'faith  
I'm glad to see thee.

*Truem.* Have a care what you call  
me; Old is a Word of Disgrace a-  
mong the Ladies; to be honest is to be poor and  
foolish, (as some think;) and Cavalier is a Word  
as much out of Fashion as any of 'em.

*Lovew.* The more's the Pity: but what said  
the Fortune-teller in *Ben Johnson's Mask of  
Gypsies*, to the then Lord Privy Seal.

*Honest and Old!  
In these the good Part of a Fortune is told.*

*Truem.*

*Truem.* *Ben Johnson!* how dare you name *Ben Johnson* in these Times, when we have such a Cloud of Poets of a quite different Genius; the least of which thinks himself as well able to correct *Ben Johnson*, as he could a Country School-Mistress that taught to spell?

*Lovew.* We have, indeed, Poets of a different Genius; so are the Plays: but in my Opinion, they are all of 'em (some few excepted) as much inferior to those of former Times, as the Actors now in being (generally speaking) are, compared to *Hart, Mohun, Burt, Lacy, Clun,* and *Shatterel*; for I can reach no farther backward.

*Truem.* I can; and dare assure you, if my Fancy and Memory are not partial, (for Men of my Age are apt to be over-indulgent to the Thoughts of their youthful Days) I say, the Actors that I have seen before the Wars, *Lowin, Taylor, Pollard,* and some others, were almost as far beyond *Hart* and his Company, as those were beyond these now in being.

*Lovew.* I am willing to believe it, but cannot readily; because I have been told, that those whom I have mention'd, were bred up under the others of your Acquaintance, and followed their manner of Action, which is now lost: So far, that when the Question has been ask'd, why these Players do not revive the *Silent Woman*, and some other of *Johnson's* Plays? (once of highest Esteem) they have answered, truly, because there are none now living who can rightly humour those Parts, for all who related to the *Black-friers*, (where they were acted in perfection) are now dead and almost forgotten.

*Truem.*



Old Plays and Old Players. 141

*Truem.* 'Tis very true, *Hart* and *Clun* were bred up Boys at the *Black-friers*, and acted Women's Parts; *Hart* was *Robinson's* Boy, or Apprentice; he acted the Dutchess in the Tragedy of the *Cardinal*, which was the first Part that gave him Reputation. *Cartwright* and *Wintershal* belong'd to the private House in *Salisbury-Court*; *Burt* was a Boy first under *Shank* at the *Black-friers*, then under *Beefton* at the *Cock-pit*; and *Mobun* and *Shatterel* were in the same Condition with him, at the last Place. There *Burt* used to play the principal Women's Parts, in particular *Clariana*, in *Love's Cruelty*; and at the same time *Mobun* acted *Bellamente*, which Part he retained after the Restoration.

*Lovew.* That I have seen, and can well remember. I wish they had printed in the last Age, (so I call the Times before the Rebellion) the Actors Names over-against the Parts they acted, as they have done since the Restoration: And thus one might have guess'd at the Action of the Men, by the Parts which we now read in the old Plays.

*Truem.* It was not the Custom and Usage of those Days, as it hath been since. Yet some few old Plays there are, that have the Names set against the Parts, as the *Dutchess of Malfy*; the *Picture*; the *Roman Actor*; the *Deserving Favourite*; the *Wild-Goose Chace*; at the *Black-friers*: the *Wedding*; the *Renegado*; the *Fair Maid of the West*; *Hannibal and Scipio*; *King John and Matilda*; at the *Cock-pit*: and *Holland's Leaguer*, at *Salisbury-Court*.

*Lovew.* These are but few indeed: but pray, Sir, what Master-Parts can you remember the old

old *Black-friers* Men to act in *Johnson*, *Shakespear*, and *Fletcher's* Plays?

*Truem.* What I can at present recollect I'll tell you; *Shakespear*, (who, as I have heard, was a much better Poet than Player) *Burbage*, *Hemmings*, and others of the older sort, were dead before I knew the Town; but in my Time, before the Wars, *Lowin* used to act, with mighty Applause, *Falstaff*, *Morose*, *Volpone*, and *Mammon* in the *Alchymist*; *Melancius*, in the *Maid's Tragedy*; and at the same time *Amyntor* was play'd by *Stephen Hammerton*, (who was at first a most noted and beautiful Woman Actor, but afterwards he acted with equal Grace and Applause, a young Lover's Part); *Taylor* acted *Hamlet* incomparably well, *Jago*, *Truewit* in the *Silent Woman*, and *Face* in the *Alchymist*; *Swanston* us'd to play *Othello*; *Pollard* and *Robinson* were Comedians; so was *Shank*, who us'd to act *Sir Roger* in the *Scornful Lady*: these were of the *Black-friers*. Those of principal Note at the *Cock-pit*, were *Perkins*, *Michael Bowyer*, *Sumner*, *William Allen*, and *Bird*, eminent Actors, and *Robins* a Comedian. Of the other Companies I took little Notice.

*Lovew.* Were there so many Companies?

*Truem.* Before the Wars there were in being all these Play-houses at the same time. The *Black-friers*, and *Globe* on the *Bank-side*, a Winter and Summer-House, belonging to the same Company, call'd the King's Servants; the *Cock-pit* or *Phoenix*, in *Drury-Lane*, call'd the Queen's Servants; the private House in *Salisbury-Court*, call'd the Prince's Servants; the *Fortune* near *Whitecross-Street*, and the *Red Bull* at the upper End of *St. John*-

*St. John-Street*: the two last were mostly frequented by Citizens, and the meaner sort of People. All these Companies got Money, and liv'd in Reputation; especially those of the *Black-friers*, who were Men of grave and sober Behaviour.

*Lovew.* Which I admire at, that the Town much less than at present, could then maintain five Companies, and yet now Two can hardly subsist.

*Truem.* Do not wonder, but consider, that tho' the Town was then, perhaps, not much more than half so populous as now, yet then the Prices were small, (there being no Scenes) and better Order kept among the Company that came; which made very good People think a Play an innocent Diversion for an idle Hour or two, the Plays themselves being then, for the most part, more instructive and moral. Whereas, of late, the Play-houses are so extremely pestered with Vizard-Masks and their Trade, (occasioning continual Quarrels and Abuses) that many of the more civiliz'd Part of the Town are uneasy in the Company, and shun the Theatre as they would a House of Scandal. It is an Argument of the Worth of the Plays and Actors of the last Age, and easily inferred, that they were much beyond ours in this, to consider that they could support themselves merely from their own Merit, the Weight of the Matter, and Goodness of the Action, without Scenes and Machines; whereas, the present Plays, with all that Shew, can hardly draw an Audience, unless there be the additional Invitation of a *Signior Fideli*, a *Monfieur l' Abbe*, or some such foreign Regale express'd in the bottom of the Bill.

*Lovew.*

*Lovew.* To wave this Digression, I have read of one *Edward Allen*, a Man so fam'd for excellent Action, that among *Ben Johnson's* Epigrams, I find one directed to him, full of Encomium, and concluding thus :

*Wear this Renown, 'tis just that who did give  
So many Poets Life, by one should live.*

Was he one of the *Black-friers* ?

*Truem.* Never, as I have heard ; (for he was dead before my time.) He was Master of a Company of his own, for whom he built the *Fortune* Play-houfe from the Ground, a large, round Brick Building. This is he that grew so rich, that he purchas'd a great Estate in *Surrey* and elsewhere ; and having no Issue, he built and largely endowed *Dulwich* College, in the Year 1619, for a Master, a Warden, four Fellows, twelve aged poor People, and twelve poor Boys, &c. A noble Charity !

*Lovew.* What kind of Play-houfes had they before the Wars ?

*Truem.* The *Black-friers*, *Cock-pit*, and *Salisbury-Court*, were called private Houfes, and were very small to what we see now. The *Cock-pit* was standing since the Restoration, and *Rhode's* Company acted there for some time.

*Lovew.* I have seen that.

*Truem.* Then you have seen the other two, in effect ; for they were all three built almost exactly alike, for Form and Bigness. Here they had Pits for the Gentry, and acted by Candle-light. The *Globe*, *Fortune*, and *Bull*, were large Houfes, and lay partly open to the Weather, and there they always acted by Day-light.

*Lovew.*

*Lowew.* But pr'ythee, *Trueman*, what became of these Players when the Stage was put down, and the Rebellion rais'd?

*Truem.* Most of 'em, except *Lowin*, *Taylor* and *Pollard* (who were superannuated) went into the King's Army, and like good Men and true, serv'd their old Master, tho' in a different, yet more honourable Capacity. *Robinson* was kill'd at the taking of a Place, (I think *Basing-house*) by *Harrison*, he that was after hang'd at *Charing-cross*, who refused him Quarter, and shot him in the Head when he had laid down his Arms; abusing Scripture at the same time, in saying, *Cursed is he that doth the Work of the Lord negligently.* *Mohun* was a Captain (and after the Wars were ended here, served in *Flanders*, where he received Pay as a Major.) *Hart* was a Lieutenant of Horse under Sir *Thomas Dallison*, in Prince *Rupert's* Regiment; *Burt* was Cornet in the same Troop, and *Shatterel* Quarter-master: *Allen* of the *Cock-pit* was a Major, and Quarter-master-general at *Oxford*. I have not heard of one of these Players of any Note that sided with the other Party, but only *Swanston*, and he profess'd himself a Presbyterian, took up the Trade of a Jeweller, and liv'd in *Aldermanbury*, within the Territory of *Father Calamy*; the rest either lost, or expos'd their Lives for their King. When the Wars were over, and the Royalists totally subdued; most of them who were left alive gather'd to *London*, and for a Subsistence endeavour'd to revive their old Trade privately. They made up one Company out of all the scatter'd Members of several; and in the Winter before the King's Murder, 1648, they ventured to act some Plays with as much Caution

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and Privacy as could be, at the *Cock-pit*. They continued undisturbed for three or four Days; but at last, as they were presenting the Tragedy of the *Bloody Brother* (in which *Lowin* acted *Aubrey*, *Taylor Rollo*, *Pollard* the Cook, *Burt Latorch*, and I think *Hart Otto*) a Party of Foot-Soldiers beset the House, surprized them about the middle of the Play, and carried them away in their Habits, not admitting them to shift, to *Hatton-house*, then a Prison, where having detain'd them some time, they plundered them of their Cloaths, and let them loose again. Afterwards, in *Oliver's* Time, they used to act privately three or four Miles out of Town, now here, now there, sometimes in Noblemen's Houses, in particular *Holland-house* at *Kensington*, where the Nobility and Gentry who met (but in no great Numbers) used to make a Sum for them, each giving a broad Piece, or the like. And *Alexander Goffe*, the Woman-Actor at *Black-friers* (who had made himself known to Persons of Quality) used to be the Jackall, and give notice of Time and Place. At *Christmas* and *Bartholomew Fair*, they used to bribe the Officer who commanded the Guard at *White-hall*, and were thereupon connived at to act for a few Days at the *Red Bull*; but were sometimes notwithstanding disturb'd by Soldiers. Some pick'd up a little Money by publishing the Copies of Plays never before printed, but kept up in Manuscript. For instance, in the Year 1652, *Beaumont* and *Fletcher's Wild Goose Chace* was printed in Folio, for the publick Use of all the Ingenious, as the Title-page says, and private Benefit of *John Lowin* and *Joseph Taylor*, Servants to his late Majesty; and by them dedicated to the honoured few Lovers  
of

of Dramatick Poesy, wherein they modestly intimate their Wants; and that with sufficient Cause; for whatever they were before the Wars, they were after reduced to a necessitous Condition. *Lowin*, in his latter Days, kept an Inn, the *Three Pigeons* at *Brentford*, where he died very old, for he was an Actor of eminent Note in the Reign of King *James I.* and his Poverty was as great as his Age. *Taylor* died at *Richmond*, and was there buried. *Pollard*, who lived single, and had a competent Estate, retired to some Relations he had in the Country, and there ended his Life. *Perkins* and *Summer* of the *Cock-pit*, kept House together at *Clerkenwell*, and were there buried. These all died some Years before the Restoration; what follow'd after, I need not tell you; you can easily remember.

*Lowew.* Yes; presently after the Restoration, the King's Players acted publicly at the *Red Bull* for some time, and then removed to a new-built Play-house in *Vere-street*, by *Clare-market*. There they continued for a Year or two, and then removed to the Theatre Royal in *Drury-Lane*, where they first made use of Scenes, which had been a little before introduced upon the publick Stage, by Sir *William Davenant*, at the Duke's Old Theatre in *Lincoln's-Inn-Fields*, but afterwards very much improved, with the Addition of curious Machines by Mr. *Betterton* at the New Theatre in *Dorset-Garden*, to the great Expence and continual Charge of the Players. This much improved their Profit o'er what it was before; for I have been inform'd by one of 'em, that for several Years next after the Restoration, every whole Sharer in Mr. *Hart's* Company, got 1000 l. per

H 2 *Ann.*

*Ann.* About the same Time that Scenes first enter'd upon the Stage at *London*, Women were taught to act their own Parts ; since when, we have seen at both Houses several Actresses, justly famed as well for Beauty, as perfect good Action. And some Plays, in particular the *Parson's Wedding*, have been presented all by Women, as formerly all by Men. Thus it continued for about 20 Years, when Mr. *Hart*, and some of the old Men began to grow weary, and were minded to leave off ; then the two Companies thought fit to unite ; but of late you see, they have thought it no less fit to divide again, though both Companies keep the same Name of his Majesty's Servants. All this while the Play-house Musick improved yearly, and is now arrived to greater Perfection than ever I knew it. Yet for all these Advantages, the Reputation of the Stage, and People's Affection to it, are much decayed. Some were lately severe against it, and would hardly allow Stage-plays fit to be longer permitted. Have you seen Mr. *Collier's* Book ?

*Truem.* Yes, and his Opposer's.

*Love.* And what think you ?

*Truem.* In my Mind Mr. *Collier's* Reflections are pertinent, and true in the main ; the Book ingeniously wrote, and well intended ; but he has overshot himself in some Places, and his Respondents perhaps in more. My Affection inclines me not to engage on either Side, but rather mediate. If there be Abuses relating to the Stage, which I think is too apparent, let the Abuse be reformed, and not the Use, for that Reason only, abolished. 'Twas an old Saying when I was a Boy,

*Abfit*



*Absit abusus, non desit totaliter usus.*

I shall not run through Mr. *Collier's* Book ; I will only touch a little on two or three general Notions, in which, I think, he may be mistaken. What he urges out of the primitive Councils and Fathers of the Church, seems to me to be directed against the Heathen Plays, which were a Sort of religious Worship with them, to the Honour of *Ceres, Flora,* or some of their false Deities ; they had always a little Altar on their Stages, as appears plain enough from some Places in *Plautus.* And Mr. *Collier* himself, p. 235. tells us out of *Livy,* that Plays were brought in upon the Score of Religion, to pacify the Gods. No Wonder then, they forbid Christians to be present at them, for it was almost the same as to be present at their Sacrifices. We must also observe, that this was in the Infancy of Christianity, when the Church was under severe, and almost continual Persecutions, and when all its true Members were of most strict and exemplary Lives, not knowing when they should be called to the Stake, or thrown to wild Beasts. They communicated daily, and expected Death hourly ; as their Thoughts were intent upon the next World, they abstain'd almost wholly from all Diversions and Pleasures, (tho' lawful and innocent) in this. Afterwards when Persecution ceased, and the Church flourish'd, Christians being then freed from their former Terrors, allow'd themselves, at proper Times, the lawful Recreations of Conversation, and among other, no Doubt, this of Shews and Representations. After this Time, the Censures of the

H 3 Church

Church indeed might be continued, or revived upon Occasion, against Plays and Players, tho', in my Opinion, it cannot be understood generally, but only against such Players who were of vicious and licentious Lives, and represented profane Subjects, inconsistent with the Morals and Probity of Manners requisite to Christians; and frequented chiefly by such loose and debauch'd People as were much more apt to corrupt than divert those who associated with them. I say, I cannot think the Canons and Censures of the Fathers can be applied to all Players, *quatenus* Players; for if so, how could Plays be continued among the Christians, as they were, on divine Subjects, and scriptural Stories? A late *French* Author speaking of the *Hôtel de Bourgogne*, a Playhouse in *Paris*, says, that the ancient Dukes of that Name gave it to the Brotherhood of the Passion, established in the Church of *Trinity-hospital* in the *Rue S. Denis*, on condition that they should represent here Interludes of Devotion; and adds, that there have been publick Shews in this Place six hundred Years ago. The *Spanish* and *Portuguese* continue still to have, for the most part, such ecclesiastical Stories for the Subject of their Plays: And if we may believe *Gage*, they are acted in their Churches in *Mexico*, and the *Spanish West-Indies*.

*Lovew.* That's a great way off, *Trueman*; I had rather you would come nearer home, and confine your Discourse to *Old England*.

*Truem.* So I intend. The same has been done here in *England*; for otherwise how comes it to be prohibited in the 88th Canon, among those pass'd in Convocation in 1603? Certain it is, that

that our ancient Plays were of religious Subjects, and had for their Actors, if not Priests, yet Men of the Church.

*Lovew.* How does that appear?

*Truem.* Nothing clearer. *Stow*, in his *Survey of London*, has one Chapter of the Sports and Pastimes of old time used in this City; and there he tells us, that in the Year 1391, which was 15 *Richard II.* a Stage-play was play'd by the Parish-Clerks of *London*, at the *Skinners Well* beside *Smithfield*, which Play continued three Days together, the King, Queen, and Nobles of the Realm being present. And another was play'd in the Year 1409, 11 *Henry IV.* which lasted eight Days, and was of Matter from the Creation of the World; whereat were present most part of the Nobility and Gentry of *England*. *Sir William Dugdale*, in his *Antiquities of Warwickshire*, p. 116. speaking of the *Gray-Friers*, or *Franciscans*, at *Coventry*, says, Before the Suppression of the Monasteries, this City was very famous for the Pageants that were play'd therein upon *Corpus-Christi Day*; which Pageants being acted with mighty State and Reverence by the Friers of this House, had Theatres for the several Scenes very large and high, placed upon Wheels, and drawn to all the eminent Parts of the City, for the better Advantage of the Spectators; and contained the Story of the *New Testament*, composed in old *English Rhime*. An ancient Manuscript of the same is now to be seen in the *Cottonian Library*, *Sub Effig. Vesp. D. 8.* Since the Reformation in *Queen Elizabeth's* time, Plays were frequently acted by Choristers and Singing-boys; and several of our old Comedies have printed in the Title-page,

H 4

Acted

Acted by the Children of *Paul's*, (not the School, but the Church) others, by the Children of her Majesty's Chapel; in particular, *Cynthia's Revels*, and the *Poetaster*, were play'd by them; who were at that time famous for good Action. Among *Ben Johnson's* Epigrams you may find an Epitaph on *S. P. (Sal. Pavy)* one of the Children of *Queen Elizabeth's* Chapel; part of which runs thus,

*Years he counted scarce thirteen,  
When Fates turn'd cruel,  
Yet three fill'd Zodiacks he had been  
The Stage's Jewel;  
And did act (what now we moan)  
Old Man so duly,  
As, sooth, the Parcæ thought him one,  
He play'd so truly.*

Some of these Chapel Boys, when they grew Men, became Actors at the *Black-friers*; such were *Nath. Field* and *John Underwood*. Now I can hardly imagine that such Plays and Players as these, are included in the severe Censure of the Councils and Fathers; but such only who are truly within the Character given by *Didacus de Tapia*, cited by *Mr. Collier*, p. 276. viz. *The infamous Play-house; a Place of Contradiction to the Strictness and Sobriety of Religion; a Place hated by God, and haunted by the Devil.* And for such I have as great an Abhorrence as any Man.

*Lowew.* Can you guess of what Antiquity the representing of religious Matters on the Stage hath been in *Enland*?

*Truem.* How long before the Conquest I know not, but that it was used in *London* not long after, appears

appears by *Fitz-stevens*, an Author who wrote in the Reign of King *Henry* the Second. His Words are, *Londonia pro spectaculis theatralibus, pro ludis scenicis, ludos habet sanctiores, representationes miraculorum, quæ sancti confessores operati sunt, seu representationes passionum quibus claruit constantia martyrum.* Of this, the Manuscript which I lately mentioned, in the *Cottonian* Library, is a notable Instance. Sir *William Dugdale* cites this Manuscript, by the Title of *Ludus Coventriæ*; but in the printed Catalogue of that Library, p. 113, it is named thus, *A Collection of Plays in old English Metre; h. e. Dramata sacra, in quibus exhibentur historiæ Veteris & N. Testamenti, introductis quasi in scenam personis illic memoratis, quas secum invicem colloquentes pro ingenio fingit poeta. Videntur olim coram populo, sive ad instruendum, sive ad placendum, a fratribus mendicantibus repræsentata.* It appears by the latter end of the Prologue, that these Plays or Interludes were not only play'd at *Coventry*, but in other Towns and Places upon Occasion. And possibly this may be the same Play which *Stow* tells us was play'd in the Reign of King *Henry* IV. which lasted for eight Days. The Book seems by the Character and Language to be at least 300 Years old. It begins with a general Prologue, giving the Arguments of 40 Pageants or Gesticulations (which were as so many several Acts or Scenes) representing all the Histories of both Testaments, from the Creation, to the chusing of St. *Matthias* to be an Apostle. The Stories of the *New Testament* are more largely express'd, viz. the Annunciation, Nativity, Visitation; but more especially all Matters relating

to the Passion, very particularly the Resurrection, Ascension, the Choice of *St. Matthias*. After which is also represented the Assumption, and last Judgment. All these things were treated of in a very homely Stile, as we now think, infinitely below the Dignity of the Subject : But it seems the Gust of that Age was not so nice and delicate in these Matters ; the plain and incurious Judgment of our Ancestors, being prepar'd with Favour, and taking every thing by the right and easiest Handle : For Example, in the Scene relating to the Visitation.

M A R I A.

*But Husband of oo thyng pray you most mekeley,  
I have knowing that our Cosyn Elizabeth with  
Childe is,  
That it please yow to go to her hastily,  
If ought we myth comfort her, it wer to me Blys.*

J O S E P H.

*A Gods sake, is she with Child, sche ?  
Than will her Husband Zachary be mery.  
In Montana they dwelle, fer hence, so moty the,  
In the City of Juda, I know it verily ;  
It is hence, I trowe, Myles two a fifty,  
We are like to be wery or we come at the same.  
I wole with a good Will, blessyd Wyff, Mary ;  
New go we forth then in Goddys Name, &c.*

A little before the Resurrection.

*Nunc dormient milites, & veniet anima Christi de  
inferno, cum Adam & Eva, Abraham, John  
Baptist, & aliis.*

Anima

Anima Christi.

*Come forth Adam, and Eve with the,  
And all my Fryndes that herein be,  
In Paradys come forth with me  
In Blyffe for to dwelle.*

*The Fende of Hell that is your Foo  
He shall be wrappyd and woundyn in Woo:  
Fro Wo to Welth now shall ye go,  
With Myrth ever mor to melle.*

A D A M.

*I thank the Lord of thy grete Grace  
That now is forgiven my gret Trespace,  
Now shall we dwellyn blyssful Place, &c.*

The last Scene or Pageant, which represents the Day of Judgment, begins thus.

M I C H A E L.

*Surgite. All Men aryse,  
Venite ad iudicium,  
For now is set the High Justice,  
And hath assignyd the Day of Dome:  
Kepe you redyly to this grett Assyse,  
Both Gret and Small, all and sum,  
And of your Answer you now advise,  
What you shall say, when that you come, &c.*

These and such like were the Plays which in former Ages were presented publicly: Whether they had any settled and constant Houses for that Purpose, does not appear; I suppose not. But it is notorious that in former times there was hardly ever any solemn Reception of Princes, or noble Persons, but Pageants, that is, Stages erect-  
ed

ed in the open Street, were Part of the Entertainment. On which there were Speeches by one or more Persons, in the Nature of Scenes; and be sure one of the Speakers must be some Saint of the same Name with the Party to whom the Honour is intended. For Instance, there is an ancient Manuscript at *Coventry*, call'd the *Old Leet-Book*, wherein is set down in a very particular Manner, p. 168. the Reception of Queen *Margaret*, Wife of *Henry VI.* who came to *Coventry*; and, I think, with her, her young Son Prince *Edward*, on the Feast of the Exaltation of the Holy-Cross, 35 *Hen. VI.* 1456. Many Pageants and Speeches were made for her welcome; out of all which, I shall observe but two or three, in the old *English*, as it is recorded.

St. EDWARD.

*Moder of Mekenes, dame Margarete, Princes  
most excellent,*

*I king Edward wellcome you with Affection cordial,  
Yestefying to your Highnes mekely myn Entent.  
For the wele of the King and you hertily pray I shall,  
And for Prince Edward my gostly Chylde, who I  
love principal,  
Praying the, John Evangelist, my Help therein  
to be,  
On that Condition right humbly I give this Ring to the.*

JOHN Evangelist.

*Holy Edward, crowned King, Brother in Vir-  
ginity,  
My Power plainly I will prefer thy Will to amplefy,  
Most excellēt Princes of Wymen mortal, your Bede-  
man will I be.*

*I know*



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*I know your Life so vertuous that God is pleased  
thereby.*

*The Birth of you unto this Reme shall cause great  
Melody :*

*The vertuous Voice of Prince Edward shall dayly  
well encrease,*

*St. Edward his Godfader, and I shall prey there-  
fore doubtlese.*

St. MARGARET.

*Most notabul Princes of Wymen earthle,  
Dame Margarete, the chefe Myrthe of this Empyre,  
Ye be bertely welcome to this Cyte.*

*To the Plesure of your Highbnesse I wyll set my De-  
syre ;*

*Both Nature and Gentlenesse doth me require,  
Seth we be both of one Name to shew you Kindnesse ;  
Wherefore by my Power ye shall have no Distresse.*

*I shall pray to the Prince that is endlese  
To socour you with solas of his high Grace ;  
He will here my Petition, this is doubtlesse,  
For I wrought all my Life that his Will wace.  
Therefore, Lady, when you be in any dredful Case,  
Call on me boldly, thereof I pray you,  
And trust in me feythfully, I will do that may pay  
you.*

In the next Reign, as appears in the same Book, fol. 221. another Prince *Edward*, Son of King *Edward IV.* came to *Coventry* on the 28th of *April*, 14 *Edward IV.* 1474, and was entertained with many Pageants and Speeches, among which I shall observe only two ; one was of *St. Edward* again, who was then made to speak thus :

*Noble*

*Noble Prince Edward, my Cousin and my Knight,  
 And very Prince of our Line com yn dissent,  
 I St. Edward have pursued for your Fader's Impe-  
 rial Right,  
 Whereof he was excluded by full furious intent.  
 Unto this your Chamber, as Prince full excellent,  
 Ye be right welcome. Thanked be Crist of his sonde,  
 For that he was ours is now in your Fader's Honde.*

The other Speech was from St. George, and thus saith the Book.

“ ——— Also upon the Conдите in the Cros-  
 cheping was St. George armed, and a King's  
 Daughter kneeling afore him with a Lamb, and  
 the Fader and the Moder being in a Towre aboven,  
 beholding St. George saving their Daughter from  
 the Dragon, and the Conдите renning Wine in  
 four Places, and minstralcy of Organ playing,  
 and St. George having this Speech under-  
 written.”

*O mighty God our all Succour celestially,  
 Which this Royme hast given in Dower  
 To thi Moder, and to me George Protection perpe-  
 tuall  
 It to defend from Enimys fer and nere,  
 And as this Mayden defended was here  
 By thy Grace from this Dragon's Devour,  
 So, Lord, preserve this noble Prince, and ever be his  
 Socour.*

*Lover. I perceive these holy Matters confisted  
 very much of praying; but I pity poor St. Edward  
 the*

*the Confessor*, who in the Compass of a few Years, was made to promise his Favour and Assistance to two young Princes of the same Name indeed, but of as different and opposite Interests as the two Poles. I know not how he could perform to both.

*Truem.* Alas! they were both unhappy, notwithstanding these fine Shews and seeming Carefles of Fortune, being both murder'd, one by the Hand, the other by the Procurement of *Richard Duke of Gloucester*. I will produce but one Example more of this Sort of Action, or Representations, and that is of later Time, and an Instance of much higher Nature than any yet mentioned; it was at the Marriage of Prince *Arthur*, eldest Son of King *Henry VII.* to the Princess *Catharine of Spain*, *An. 1501.* Her Passage through *London* was very magnificent, as I have read it described in an old MS. Chronicle of that Time. The Pageants and Speeches were many; the Persons represented *St. Catharine*, *St. Ursula*, a Senator, Noblesse, Virtue, an Angel, King *Alphonse*, *Job*, *Boetius*, &c. among others one is thus described—“ *When this Spech was ended, she held on*  
 “ *her way tyll she came unto the Standard in Chepe,*  
 “ *where was ordeyned the fifth Pagend made like*  
 “ *an Hevyn, theryn syttyng a Personage representing*  
 “ *the Fader of Hevyn, beyng all formyd of Gold,*  
 “ *and brennyng beffor his Trone vii Candyilis of*  
 “ *Wax standyng in vii Candylstykis, of Gold, the*  
 “ *said Personage beyng environed wyth sundry Hy-*  
 “ *rarchies off Angelis, and sytting in a Cope of most*  
 “ *rich Cloth of Tyssu, garnisbyd wyth Stoon and*  
 “ *Perle in most sumptuous wyse. Foragain which*  
 “ *said Pagend upon the Sowth-syde of the Strete*  
 “ *stood at that Tyme, in a Hows wheryn that Tyme*  
 “ *dwellyd*

“ dwellyd William Geffrey Habyrdasher, the King,  
 “ the Quene, my Lady the Kingys Moder, my Lord  
 “ of Oxynfford, wyth many other Lordys and Ladys,  
 “ and Perys of this Realm, wyth also certayn Am-  
 “ bassadors of France lately sent from the French  
 “ King: and so passyng the said Estatys, eyther  
 “ guyving to other due and convenyent Saluts and  
 “ Countenancs, so sone as byr Grace was approachid  
 “ unto the sayd Pagend, the Fader began his Spech  
 “ as followyth.”

Hunc veneram locum, septeno lumine septum.  
 Dignumque *Arthuri* totidem astra micant.

*I am Begynnyng and Ende, that made ech Creature  
 My sylfe, and for my sylfe, but Man especially  
 Both Male and Female, made aftyр myne aun fygure,  
 Whom I joyned togyder in Matrimony,  
 And that in Paradyse, declaring opynly  
 That Men shall Weddyng in my Chyrch solemprize,  
 Fyгурid and signified by the ertbly Paradyze.*

*In thys my Chyrch I am allway recydent  
 As my chyeff tabernacle, and most chosyn Place,  
 Among these goldyn Candylstikkis, which represent  
 My Catholyk Chyrch shynnyng affor my Face,  
 With lyght of Feyth, Wisdom, Doctryne, and Grace,  
 And mervelously eke enflamyd toward me  
 Wyth the extyngwible Fyre of Charyte.  
 Wherefore, my welbelovid Dowthyr Katharyn,  
 Syth I have made yow to myne awn semblance  
 In my Chyrch to be maried, and your noble Childryn  
 To regn in this Land as in their Enherytance,  
 Se that y have me in speciall Remembrance:*

*Love*

*Love me and my Chyrch your spiritual Modyr.  
For ye dyspyssing that oon, dyspyse that othyr.*

*Look that ye walk in my Precepts, and obey them  
well:*

*And here I give you the same Blyssyng that I  
Gave my well beloved Chylder of Israell;  
Blyssyd be the Fruyt of your Bely;  
Yower Substance and Frutys I shall encrease and mul-  
typly;  
Yower rebellious Enimyys I shall put in your Hand,  
Encreasing in Honour both you and your Land.*

*Lovew.* This would be censured now a-days as profane to the highest Degree.

*Truem.* No doubt on't: yet you see there was a Time when People were not so nicely censorious in these Matters, but were willing to take Things in the best Sense; and then this was thought a noble Entertainment for the greatest King in *Europe* (such I esteem King *Henry VII.* at that Time) and proper for that Day of mighty Joy and Triumph. And I must farther observe out of Lord *Bacon's* History of *Henry VII.* that the chief Man who had the Care of that Day's Proceedings was Bishop *Fox*, a grave Counsellor for War or Peace, and also a good Surveyor of Works, and a good Master of Ceremonies, and it seems he approv'd it. The said Lord *Bacon* tells us farther, that whosoever had those Toys in compiling, they were not altogether pedantical.

*Lovew.* These Things however are far from that which we understand by the Name of a Play.

*Truem.* It may be so; but these were the Plays of those Times. Afterwards in the Reign of King  
*Henry*

*Henry VIII*, both the Subject and Form of these Plays began to alter, and have since varied more and more. I have by me, a thing called *A merry Play between the Pardoner and the Frere, the Curate and Neybour Pratte*, printed the 5th of April 1533, which was the 24 *Henry VIII*. (a few Years before the Dissolution of Monasteries.) The Design of this Play was to ridicule Friars and Pardoners. Of which I'll give you a Taste. To begin it, the Frier enters with these Words :

*Deus hic; the Holy Trynyte  
Preserve all that now here be.  
Dere Bretherne, yf ye will consyder  
The Cause why I am com byder,  
Ye wolde be glad to knowe my Entent;  
For I com not byther for Mony nor for Rent,  
I com not byther for Meat nor for Meale,  
But I com byther for your Soules Heale, &c.*

After a long Preamble, he addressses himself to preach, when the Pardoner enters with these Words :

*God and St. Leonarde fend ye all his Grace,  
As many as ben assembled in this Place, &c,*

And makes a long Speech, shewing his Bulls and his Reliques, in order to sell his Pardons, for the raising some Money towards the rebuilding

*Of the holy Chappell of sweet saynt Leonarde,  
Which late by Fyre was destroyed and marde.*

Both these speaking together, with continual Interruption,

terruption, at last they fall together by the Ears.  
Here the Curate enters (for you must know the  
Scene lies in the Church)

*Hold your Hands; a vengeance on ye both two,  
That ever ye came bytbr to make this ado,  
To polute my chyrche, &c.*

**Fri.** *Mayster Parson, I marvayll ye will give lycence.*

*To this false Knave in this Audience  
To publish his Ragman Rolles with lyes.  
I desyred him ywys more than ones or twyse  
To hold his Peas tyll that I had done,  
But he would here no more than the Man in the  
Mone.*

**Pard.** *Why sholde I suffre the, more than thou me?  
Mayster Parson gave me Lycence before the.  
And I wolde thou knowest it I have Relykes here,  
Othe maner stuffe than thou dost bere:  
I wyll edefy more with the Syght of it,  
Than will all thy pratyngc of holy Wryt:  
For that except that the Precher himselfe lyve well,  
His Predycacyon wyll helpe never a dell, &c.*

**Parf.** *No more of this wranglyng in my Chyrch:  
I shrewe yowr Hertys bothe for this Lurche.  
Is there any Blood shed here between these Knaves?  
Thanked be God they had no Stavys,  
Nor Egotoles, for then it had ben wronge.  
Well, ye shall synge another Songe.*

Here he calls his Neighbour *Prat*, the Con-  
stable, with design to apprehend 'em, and fet 'em  
in

in the Stocks. But the Frier and Pardoner prove sturdy, and will not be stock'd, but fall upon the poor Parson and Constable, and hang them both so well favour'dly, that at last they are glad to let them go at Liberty: and so the Farce ends with a drawn Battle. Such as this were the Plays of that Age, acted in Gentlemen's Halls at Christmas, or such like festival Times, by the Servants of the Family, or Strollers who went about and made it a Trade. It is not unlikely that the \* Lords in those Days, and Persons of eminent Quality, had their several Gangs of Players, as some have now of Fiddlers, to whom they give Cloaks and Badges. The first Comedy that I have seen that looks like regular, is *Gammer Gurton's Needle*, writ, I think, in the Reign of King Edward VI. This is composed of five Acts, the Scenes unbroken, and the Unities of Time and Place duly observed. It was acted at *Christ's College* in *Cambridge*; there not being as yet any settled and publick Theatres.

*Lovew.* I observe, *Trueman*, from what you have said, that Plays in *England* had a Beginning much like those of *Greece*; the *Monologues* and *Pageants* drawn from Place to Place on Wheels, answer exactly to the Cart of *Thespis*, and the Improvements have been by such little Steps and Degrees, as among the Ancients, till at last, to use the Words of *Sir George Buck* (in his Third University of *England*) "Dramatick Poesy is so  
"lively exprefs'd and represented upon the pub-  
"lick

\* *Till the 25th Year of Queen Elizabeth, the Queen had not any Players; but in that Year twelve of the best of all those who belonged to several Lords, were chosen, and sworn her Servants.* *Stow's Annals*, p. 698.



“ lick Stages and Theatres of this City, as *Rome*  
“ in the Auge (the highest Pitch) of her Pomp  
“ and Glory, never saw it better performed, I  
“ mean (says he) in respect of the Action and  
“ Art, and not of the Cost and Sumptuousness.”  
This he writ about the Year 1631. But can you  
inform me, *Trueman*, when the publick Theatres  
were first erected for this Purpose in *London*?

*Truem.* Not certainly; but, I presume, about  
the Beginning of Queen *Elizabeth's* Reign. For  
*Stow* in his Survey of *London* (which Book was  
first printed in the Year 1598) says, “ Of late  
“ Years in place of these Stage-plays, (*i. e.* those  
“ of religious Matters) have been used Come-  
“ dies, Tragedies, Interludes, and Histories, both  
“ true and feigned; for the Acting whereof cer-  
“ tain publick Places, as the Theatre, the Cur-  
“ tine, &c. have been erected.” And the Con-  
tinuator of *Stow's* Annals, p. 1004, says, that in  
sixty Years before the Publication of that Book,  
(which was *Ann. Dom.* 1629) no less than seven-  
teen publick Stages, or common Play-houfes, had  
been built in and about *London*. In which Num-  
ber he reckons five Inns or common Osteries, to  
have been in his Time turned into Play-houfes,  
one *Cock-pit*, *St. Paul's* singing School, one in  
the *Black-friers*, one in the *White-friers*, and one  
in former Time at *Newington-Butts*; and adds,  
before the Space of sixty Years past, I never  
knew, heard, or read of any such Theatres, or  
Stages, or Play-houfes, as have been purposely  
built within Man's Memory.

*Lovew.* After all, I have been told, that Stage-  
plays are inconsistent with the Laws of this King-  
dom, and Players made Rogues by Statute.

*Truem.*

*Truem.* He that told you so, strain'd a Point of Truth. I never met with any Law wholly to suppress them: sometimes indeed they have been prohibited for a Season; as in times of Lent, general Mourning, or publick Calamities, or upon other Occasions, when the Government saw fit. Thus by Proclamation, 7 of *April*, in the first Year of Queen *Elizabeth*, Plays and Interludes were forbid till *Al-hallow-tide* next following. *Hollinshed* p. 1184. Some Statutes have been made for their Regulation or Reformation, not general Suppression. By the Stat. 39 *Eliz.* cap. 4. (which was made for the suppressing of Rogues, Vagabonds, and sturdy Beggars) it is enacted, S. 2. "That all Persons that be, or utter themselves to be, " Proctors, Procurers, Patent Gatherers, or Col- " lectors for Goals, Prisons, or Hospitals, or " Fencers, Bearwards, common Players of Inter- " ludes and Minstrels, wandering abroad, (other " than Players of Interludes belonging to any Baron " of this Realm, or any other honourable Personage " of greater Degree, to be authoriz'd to play under " the Hand and Seal of Arms of such Baron or Per- " sonage) all Juglers, Tinkers, Pedlars, and petty " Chapmen, wand'ring abroad, all wand'ring Per- " sons, &c. able in Body, using loytering, and re- " fusing to work for such reasonable Wages as is " commonly given, &c. These shall be adjudged " and deemed Rogues, Vagabonds, and sturdy Beg- " gars, and punished as such."

*Lover.* But this Privilege of Authorising or Licensing, is taken away by the Stat. *Jac.* I. Ch. 7. S. 1. and therefore all of them (as Mr. *Collier* says, p. 242.) are expressly brought under the aforesaid Penalty, without Distinction.

*Truem.*

Old Plays and Old Players. 167

*Truem.* If he means all Players, without Distinction, 'tis a great Mistake. For the Force of the Queen's Statute extends only to wand'ring Players, and not to such as are the King or Queen's Servants, and establish'd in settled Houses, by Royal Authority. On such, the ill Character of vagrant Players (or as they are now called, Strollers) can cast no more Aspersions, than the wand'ring Proctors, in the same Statute mentioned, on those of *Doctors-Commons*. By a Stat. made 3 Jac. I. ch. 21. it was enacted, "That if any Person shall in any Stage-play, Interlude, Shew, May-game or Pageant, jestingly or profanely speak or use the holy Name of God, Christ Jesus, or of the Trinity, he shall forfeit for every such Offence 10l." The Stat. 1 Charles I. Ch. 1. enacts, "That no Meetings, Assemblies, or Concourse of People shall be out of their own Parishes, on the Lord's-Day, for any Sports or Pastimes whatsoever, nor any Bear-baiting, Bull-baiting, Interludes, common Plays, or other unlawful Exercises and Pastimes, used by any Person or Persons within their own Parishes." These are all the Statutes that I can think of, relating to the Stage and Players; but nothing to suppress them totally, till the two Ordinances of the Long Parliament, one on the 22d of October 1647, the other of the 11th of Feb. 1647. By which all Stage-plays and Interludes are absolutely forbid; the Stages, Seats, Galleries, &c. to be pulled down; all Players, tho' calling themselves the King or Queen's Servants, if convicted of acting within two Months before such Conviction, to be punished as Rogues according to Law; the Money received by them to go to the Poor of the Parish;

Parish; and every Spectator to pay five Shillings to the Use of the Poor. Also Cock-fighting was prohibited by one of *Oliver's* Acts of 31 *March*, 1654. But I suppose no Body pretends these Things to be Laws. I could say more on this Subject, but I must break off here, and leave you, *Lovewit*; my Occasions require it.

*Lovew.* Farewell, old Cavalier.

*Truem.* 'Tis properly said; we are almost all of us, now, gone and forgotten.



A  
L I S T  
OF  
DRAMATIC AUTHORS,  
AND THEIR  
WORKS.

VOL. II. I

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A  
L I S T  
O F  
DRAMATIC AUTHORS, &c.

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*Dramatic AUTHORS in the 16th Century.*

*The Right Rev. Father in God JOHN  
BALE Bishop of OSSORY.*

**T**HIS learned *Prelate* was born at *Cowie* in *Suffolk*, in 1495, and for his early and great Learning, made one of the *Carmelites* at *Norwich*; from thence he was entered a Student of *Jesus College, Cambridge*.

He was one of the first that embraced the Protestant Religion; for which he was compelled to fly, to avoid the Persecution of *Lee* Bishop of *York*, and *Stokeley* Bishop of *London*.

Being recalled by King *Edward VI.* he was made Bishop of *Ossory* in *Ireland* in 1552; but in six Months after Queen *Mary* ascended the Throne, he retired again, and in his Voyage to *Brabant* was taken by *Pirates*; however he procured his Ransom, and made *Bafil* his Asylum, till once more recalled by Queen *Elizabeth*, when he rather chose a *Prebendary* of *Canterbury*, than to sue for his former See of *Ossory*.

I 2

He

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He died in *November 1563*, in the 68th Year of his Age. He was a severe Writer against the Church of *Rome*, and Author of the first Dramatic Pieces we find printed in the *English* Language. His Books are particularly prohibited in the expurgatory Index published in Folio at *Madrid*, in 1667. His Dramatic Pieces are,

I. A Tragedie, or Interlude; manifestinge the chiefe PROMISES of GOD unto Man in all Ages, from the Begynnyng of the Worlde, to the Deathe of *Jesus Christe*, a Mysterie, 1538, and reprinted in Mr. *Dodsley's* Collection of Old Plays.

The running Title of this Play, is, *God hys Promises*. The Interlocutors, *Pæter Cælestis, Justus Noah, Moses Sanctus, Esaias Propheta, Adam primus homo, Abraham fidelis, David rex pius, Joannes Baptista*.

II. A Breve Comedie, or Interlude, of *Johan Baptystes* preachynge in the Wyldernesse, openynge the crafty Assaultes of the Hypocrytes, wythe the gloryouse Baptyfime of the *Lord Jesus Christe*, 1538.

III. A Comedie concerning the Laws of *Nature, Moses*, and *Chryst*, corrupted by the *Sodomytes* and *Papysfs*, 1538.

This Play is to be seen in *St. Sepulchre's* Library, *Dublin*.

He has also translated the Tragedies of *Pammachius*; and, in his Account of the Writers of *Britain*, besides the Plays already mentioned, he has given the following List of his other Dramatic Performances.

IV. The Life of *St. John Baptist*.

V. Of *Christ* when he was twelve Years old, one Comedie.

VI. Of *Baptism* and *Temptation*, two Comedies.

VII. Of *Lazarus* raised from the Dead, one Comedie.

VIII. Of the Councill of *Bishops*, one Comedie.

IX. Of *Simon* the Leper, one Comedie.

X. Of the *Lord's Supper* and washing the Feet, one Comedie.

XI. Of the Passion of *Chryst*, two Comedies.

XII. Of the *Sepulture* and *Resurrection*, two Comedies.

XIII. Upon both Marriages of the King.

XIV. Against *Momus's* and *Zoilus's*.

XV. The Treacheries of the *Papysfs*.

XVI. Against those who adulterate the Word of *God*.

XVII. Of *John King* of *England*.

XVIII. Of the Impostures of *Thomas Becket*.

XIX. Of



- XIX. Of the Temptation of *Christ*.  
 XX. Corruptions of the Divine Laws.  
 XXI. The Image of Love.

## JOHN SKELTON.

One of the most considerable Poets in the Reign of *Henry VIII.* who, besides a Volume of Poems which were lately printed in *London*, hath written,

The Comedy of Virtue and Good Order.

He is thought to have had his Birth in *Northumberland*, was educated at *Oxford*, was made Rector of *Dyffe* in *Norfolk*, and was buried at *Westminster* in 1529.

## JOHN HOKER,

Author of a Comedy called, *Piscator*, or, the Fisher caught, 1535.

## JOHN RASTALL,

Was born at *London*, educated at *Oxford*, married the Sister of Sir *Thomas More*, and died in 1536. He wrote, as *Anthony Wood* tells us, a large and ingenious Comedy called,

*Natura Naturata*, containing a Description of *Asia*, *Africa*, and *Europe*; adorned with Cuts.

## NICHOLAS UDALL,

Was admitted Student of *Corpus Christi* in 1520, became afterwards Master of *Iton*, and about 1550 was in great Reputation. He wrote the Tragedy of *Popery*: as also several Comedies.

## HENRY PARKER,

(Created Lord *Morley* by *Henry VIII.*)

Was the Son of Sir *William Parker*, Knt. He wrote the Lives of Sectaries, a Declaration of the 94th Psalm, printed in 1539, and several Tragedies and Comedies, whose Names are lost.

## Dr. PALSEGRAVE.

Was Chaplain to King *Henry VIII.* and wrote one Play, called *Accolastus*, a Comedie, 1540.

## RALPH RADCLIFF.

Was of an ancient Family in *Cheshire*, received his Education in *Brazen-nose* College, *Oxford*, opened a School

## 174 A LIST OF DRAMATIC AUTHORS,

at *Hitchin* in *Hertfordshire*, 1538, where he erected a Stage for the Use of his Scholars, to initiate them in the Art and Practice of speaking. His School became very famous, he grew rich, and lived in great Reputation. He wrote several Tragedies and Comedies for the Use of his Scholars; the Names of some of them are as follows.

*Dives* and *Lazarus*.

*Patient Grizzel*.

*Friendship of Titus and Gisippus*.

*Chaucer's Melibie*.

*Job's Afflictions*.

*Delivery of Susannah from the Elders*.

*Burning of Sodom*.

} Comedies.

} Tragedies.

### Mr. JOHN HEYWOOD.

This Poet was educated at *Oxford*, and lived chiefly at *North-Mims* in *Hertfordshire*. He was an Intimate of the great Sir *Thomas More*, and much favoured by *Henry VIII.* and his Daughter *Queen Mary*; but when *Queen Elizabeth* came to the Crown, for the sake of his Religion, he retired to *Mecblin* in *Brabant*, where he died in 1565.

Besides his Plays, he published a Book of 500 Epigrams, which are printed in a black Letter, 4to. with the Author's Picture at length, in 1573. Also a Poem called the Spider and the Fly. His Dramatic Pieces are,

I. A Play of Love.

II. A Play of Gentleness and Nobilitie, Parte the firste.

III. Ditto, Parte the seconde.

IV. A Play betweene *John* the Husband and *Tib* his Wyfe.

V. A Play betweene the Pardoner, the Fryar, and Neighbour *Pratt*.

VI. The Four P——'s, an Interlude: *i. e.* A Palmer, a Pardoner, a Poticary, a Pedler.

VII. A Play of the Weathere; called a newe and merrie Interlude of all manner of Weathers.

VIII. The Pinder of *Wakefield*, is given to him by *Anthony Wood*. And,

IX. *Philotas Scotch*. A Comedy.

### QUEEN ELIZABETH,

Is said by Sir *Robert Naunton* and others to have translated for her own Amusement, one of the Tragedies of *Euripides*; but they have not told us which it was.

Mr.

Mr. THOMAS PRESTON.

This ancient Poet wrote one Play in the old Metre, called

A lamentable Tragedie, myxte full of pleasaunte Myrthe ; containing the Lyfe of *Gambyses*, from the Begynnyng of his Reygne unto hys Deathe ; hys one good Deede of Executione, after the manye wicked Deedes and tyrannouse Murders commytted by and throughe him : And lasse of all his odiouse Deathe, by God his Justyce appointed, 1561.

Mr. ROBERT WAVER.

The Author of one Dramatic Piece, called *Lusty Juventus*, an Interlude, 1561.

Mr. RICHARD EDWARDS,

Was born in 1523, and bred at *Oxford*. He was one of the Gentlemen of the Chapel, and Teacher of Musick to the Children of the Choir in the Reign of Queen *Elizabeth* ; he was esteemed an excellent Musician and Poet. He wrote three Dramatic Pieces :

I. *Damon and Pythias*, a Comedie, 1562 : And reprinted in *Dodsley's* Collection.

II. *Palemon and Arcyte*, a Comedie.

III. *Palemon and Arcyte*, Parte 2d. From *Chaucer*.

These two last are printed, with his Songs and Poems, in 1585. Mr. *Edwards* had a Licence granted by Queen *Elizabeth*, to superintend the Children of the *Chapel*, as her Majesty's Company of Comedians.

EDWARD VERE, Earl of OXFORD,

Is said to have been the best Writer of Comedy of his Time. Some of his Poems may be found in a miscelleneous Collection printed in 1578, intituled the *Paradise of dainty Devices*. He died a very old Man in 1604, and the Names of all his Comedies died with him.

Mr. NICHOLAS BRETON,

Is the Author of an Interlude, called *The olde Man his Lesson, or the young Man his Love*, 1563.

## 176 A LIST OF DRAMATIC AUTHORS,

Mr. EDWARD FERRYS, or FERRERS,

An Author of great Repute in the beginning of Queen Elizabeth's Reign, as *Puttenham* informs us in his Art of Poetry, and who wrote several Tragedies, Comedies, or Interludes. But the Names of all of them are lost. He died in 1564.

THOMAS SACKVILLE, Lord BUCKHURST.

This noble Author wrote one Play, called *Ferrex* and *Porrex*, a Tragedie, 1565. He was assisted in writing it by *Thomas Norton*, Esq; who was supposed to write the first three Acts; it was first published incorrectly without the Consent, or Knowledge of the Authors, and afterwards altered under the Title of *Gorboduc*, a Tragedie, 1570.

This Play had the Chorus after the Manner of the Ancients, and Dumb Shews between every Act.

Mr. ROBERT WILSON,

Wrote one Play, called  
The Cobler hys Prophecie, a Comedie, 1565.

GEORGE GASCOIGN, Esq;

This Gentleman was a Member of the Society of *Gray's Inn*, and wrote the following Dramatic Pieces:

I. *Jocasta*, a Tragedie, 1566. Translated from the *Greek* of *Euripides*.

II. *The Supposes*, a Comedie, 1566. Translated from the *Italian* of *Ariosto*.

III. *The Glasse of Governmente*. a Tragi-Comedie, 1575.

IV. *Pleasure at Kenelworth Castle*, a Masque.

These Plays are printed in Quarto on a Black Letter, in one Volume with his other Poems, 1587.

Mr. LEWIS WAGER.

This Author wrote one Interlude, called  
*Mary Magdalene*, her Lyfe and Repentaunce, 1567.

Mr. WILLIAM WAYER,

Author of one Play, called  
The longer thou liveste, the more Foole thou arte, a  
Comedie, 1570.

Mr.

## Mr. THOMAS INGELAND,

Was a Student in the University of *Cambridge*, and wrote one Play, called

The *Disobediente Child*, a merrie Interlude, 1571.

## Sir PHILIP SIDNEY.

This illustrious Author was born at *Penshurst* in *Kent* in 1554, and educated at *Oxford*; he was killed at the Battle of *Zutphen* in 1586, while he was mounting his third Horse, having had two killed under him before.

He wrote one Dramatic Piece, which is printed with his Poems at the latter end of his *Arcadia*, and called

The *Lady of May*, a Masque, presented to Queen *Elizabeth* in the Gardens of *Wanstead* in *Essex*.

## The Rev. Mr. NATHANIEL WOOD.

This Gentleman was a Clergyman of the City of *Norwich*; he wrote one Dramatic Piece, called

The *Conflycte of Conscience*, a Pastoral, 1581.

## Mr. ALEXANDER NEVIL.

This Author, at the Age of Sixteen, translated from *Seneca*,

*Oedipus*, a Tragedie, 1581.

## Mr. THOMAS NUCE.

This Gentleman was bred at *Oxford*; but we cannot find any thing more of him, than that he joined with *Jasper Heywood* and others, in a Translation of *Seneca's* Tragedies. The Play that he translated was *Octavia*, 1584.

## Mr. JASPER HEYWOOD.

This was the Son of the afore-mentioned Mr. *John Heywood*. He was first a Student at *Merton College, Oxon*, from whence he removed to *All-Souls* in the same University, and afterwards went to *St. Omers*, where he became a Jesuit. He translated three of *Seneca's* Tragedies.

I. *Hercules Furens*.

II. *Troas*.

III. *Thyestes*.

I 5

M:

## 178 A LIST OF DRAMATIC AUTHORS,

### Mr. THOMAS NEWTON.

This Author joined with *Jasper Heywood* and others, in translating *Seneca's* Tragedies ; that which he did himself, was

*The Thebais*, 1585.

### Mr. JOHN STUDELY.

This Gentleman was educated at *Oxford*, and joined with *Jasper Heywood* and others, in a Translation of *Seneca's* Tragedies, those that *Studely* turned into *English*, were

I. *Agamemnon*.

II. *Hercules Oetus*.

He was killed in *Flanders* at the Siege of *Breda*, having a Command under Prince *Maurice*, in 1587.

### Mr. ULPIAN FULWELL.

This Author wrote one Play in Rhime, called *Like wille to Like*, quoth the *Deville to the Colliere*, an Interlude, 1587.

### Mr. CHRISTOPHER MARLOW.

This Author was both a Poet and a Player ; but in the Opinion of some Cotemporary Writers, a Man of bad Morals.

Having an Intrigue with a loose Woman he came unexpectedly into her Chamber, and caught her in the Embraces of another Gallant. This so much enraged him that he drew his Dagger, and attempted to stab him ; but, in the Struggle, the Paramour seized *Marlow*, turned the Point into his Head, and killed him on the Spot, in 1592. His Plays are,

I. *Edward II.* a Tragedie, 1590.

II. *Tamberlane the Greate*, or the *Scythian* Shepherde, a Tragedie, in two Parts, 1593.

III. *The fewe of Malta*, a Tragi-Comedie, 1603.

IV. *Luft his Dominione*, or the *Lascivious Queene*, a Tragedie, 1604.

V. *The Massacre of Paris*, with the Death of the Duke of *Guise*, a Tragedie. This Play has no Date.

VI. *Dr. Faustus* his Tragical Historie, not acted but printed, 1635.

Mr.

## Mr. ABRAHAM FRANCE.

Wrote one Piece, called  
*Amyntas*, a dramatic Pastoral, translated from the *Italian*  
of *Tasso*, and printed with a Collection of Poems, called  
*The Countess of Pembroke her Ivy Church*, 1591.

## Mr. WILLIAM SHAKESPEAR.

This immortal Author was the Son of Mr. *John Shakespear*, an eminent Dealer in Wool, and born at *Stratford upon Avon*, in *April*, 1564. His Plays are

I. *The troublesome Reygne of Johnne Kynge of Englande*, 1591.

II. *The Seconde Parte of the troublesome Reygne of Johnne Kinge of Englande*, wythe hys Deathe, 1591.

III. *The Hystorie of Henrie the Fourthe*, wythe the Battayle of *Shrewsburie*, betweene the Kynge and Lorde *Henrie Hotspur*, of the Northe, wythe the merrie conceyted Veyne of Syr *Johnne Falstaffe*, 1592, 1599, 1602, 1622.

IV. An excellent conceyted Tragedie of *Romeo and Juliette*, wythe the Wranglynge of the two famouse Houses of *Montague* and *Capulette*, 1593, 1597, 1599.

V. The whole Contentione betweene the two famouse Houses of *Lancastre* and *Yorke*, wythe the Tragycal End of the good Duke *Humphrey*, *Richarde Duke of Yorke* and *Henrie the 6th.* in two Partes.

These two Plays are printed without a Date, but we are assured they must be acted about this Time; for at the End of *Romeo and Juliet*, printed for *Andrew Wise* in 1597, is the following Advertisement. At the Shoppe of *Andrew Wyse*, Mr. *William Shakespeare* his *Henrie the 6th.* in two Parts, may be boughte. The 3d Part is printed in 1600, but we make no Doubt that it was printed before that Date, tho' the Edition is not in our Possession.

VI. The most lamentable Tragedie of *Titus Andronicus*, wythe the Deathe of wicked *Aaron the Black Moore*, 1595, 1603, 1611.

VII. *The Tempeste*, wythe the Enchantments of the Bannished Lorde *Prospero*, 1595, 1597, 1600, 1609.

VIII. The Seconde Parte of Kynge *Henrie the Fourthe* contaynyng unto his Deathe, and Coronation of *Henrie the 5th.* wythe the Humours of Syr *Johnne Falstaffe* and *Swaggering Pistol*, 1595, 1597, 1600, 1609. This last Edition has some Alterations.

IX. A

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IX. A moste pleasaunte Comedie, called a *Midsummer Night's Dream*, wythe the Freakes of the Fayries, 1595, 1600, 1610.

X. Muche adoe about Nothing, a pleasaunte and wittie Comedie, wythe the Conceyted Fancies of Lorde *Benedict* and Ladie *Beatrice*, 1596, 1600, 1609. The Contrivance of *Borachio*, in behalf of *John* the Bastard to make *Claudio* jealous of *Hero*, by the Assistance of her Waiting-woman *Margaret*, is borrowed from *Ariosto's Orlando Furioso*: see Book the fifth in the Story of *Lurcanio*, and *Geneza*: the like Story is in *Spenser's Fairy Queen*, Book 2. Canto 4.

XI. A most pleasaunte, excellent conceyted Comedie of Syr *John Falstaffe*, the Fat Knighte, wythe the quaint Conceits of the Merrie Wives of *Windsor*, intermixed with sundrie Humours of Syr *Hughe* the Welsh Parson, Justice *Shallow*, and his wife Cousin Mr. *Abraham Slender*, wythe the Swaggering Vaine of antient *Pistol*, and Corporal *Nym*, wythe Dr. *Caius* his French Figaries, 1596, 1598, (with great Additions,) 1602, 1611, 1613.

XII. A pleasaunte conceyted Comedie, called *Love his Labour loste*, as it was presented before her Highness (Queen *Elizabeth*) this last Christmas, newly corrected and augmented, 1597, 1598.

XIII. The excellent and true Historie of the Merchaunt of *Venice*, wyth the extreme Crueltie of *Shylocke* the Jew towards the Merchaunt *Antonio*, and the obtayninge of *Portia* the ryche Heyre by the Choyce of three Casketes, 1597, 1598, 1600, 1603. Story from an old Ballad.

XIV. The Tragedie of Kynge *Richard* the 3d. containyng his treacherous Plottes against his Brother *Clarence*, and the Murther of his innocente Nephewes in the Tower, wythe the whole Course of his detestede Lyfe, and his most deserved Deathe, slaine by *Henrie* Earl of *Richmonde* in the bloudie Bataille of *Bosworth the Felde* in *Lestershire*, 1597, 1598, (with Alterations) 1602, 1609.

XV. The true Chronicle of Kynge *Henrie* the 8th. wythe the costlie Coronation of Queene *Anne Bulleyne*, after his Divorce from Queene *Catharine*; the Cunnynge of Cardinal *Woolsey*, wythe his Disgrace and Deathe, wythe the Byrthe and Chrystianing of our gracious Princess *Elizabeth*, 1597, 1598, (with Alterations) 1605.

XVI. The true and wonderful Chronicle Historie of *Leare* Kynge of *Englande*, wythe his Lyfe and Deathe, wythe the unfortunate Lyfe of *Edgar*, Heire to the Earle of *Gloster*, and



and his Sullen and Assumed Humoure of *Tom a Bedlam*, 1598, 1601, 1608. This Play is founded on History; see such Authors as have written concerning *Brute's* History, as *Leland, Gloucester, Huntingdon, Monmouth, &c.* But the Subject of this Story may be read succinctly in *Milton's* History of *England*, 4to. Book 1. p. 17, &c.

XVII. A wittie and pleasaunte Comedie, called the *Taminge of the Shrewe*, 1598, 1601, 1607, 1608. There are great Alterations in the two last Editions.

XVIII. The Tragedie of *Kynge Richard* the 2d. 1598, 1603, 1608, 1615. These two last have many Amendments, with the Addition of the Parliament Scene.

XIX. *Hamlet* Prince of *Denmarke* his Tragedie, wythe his just Revenge on the adulterous *Kynge Claudius*, and the Poysoning of the Queen *Gertrude*, 1599, 1605, 1609.

XX. The true Chronicle Historie of *Henrie* the 5th. with the famous and memorable Battle of *Agencourte*, his Espousals wythe the Princess of *France*, wythe the valiante Humours and Conceits of the *Welch* Captain *Fluellyn*, 1599, 1600, 1607, 1611.

XXI. The famous and excellent Historie of *Troilus* and *Cressida*, expressing their Loves beginninge, wythe the conceited Wooinge of *Pandarus* Prince of *Lycia*, the reckles Wars and Sackings of *Troy*, 1600, 1604, 1607, 1611.

XXII. The twoe Gentlemen of *Verona*, a Pleasaunte Comedie, 1600, 1613, 1614.

XXIII. *Measure for Measure*. This Play is without a Date, but by an Advertisement at the End, viz. *Where may be boughte at his Shopp printed last Yeare, (1600) the twoe Gentlemen of Verona, by W. Shakespeare Gentleman*; we may venture to date this Play 1601. Founded on a Novel in *Cynthio Giraldi*: viz. *Deca Ottava, Novella 5.*

XXIV. The true Tragedie of *Timon* of *Athens*, wythie the Dogged Veine of *Apemantus*, 1604.

XXV. *Anthonie* and *Cleopatra* the fair *Egyptian* Queen, their Loves and lamentable Deathes, 1604. The Ground of this Play is founded on History: see *Plutarch's* Life of *Anthony*; *Appian, Dion Cassius, Diodorus, Floru, &c.*

XXVI. The Tragedie of *Macbethe*, shewing how by Treacherie and manyfold Murders, he obtained the Crown of *Scotland*, wythe his well deserved Deathe, 1605. The Reader may consult these Writers for the Story: viz. *Hector Boetius, Buchanan, Duchesne, Hollingshead, &c.* The same Story is succinctly related in Verse, in *Heywood's* Hierarchy

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rarchy of Angels, B. 1. p. 508. and in Prose in *Heylin's* Cosmography, Book 1. in the Hist. of *Brittain*, where he may read the Story at large.

XXVII. The excellent Tragedie of *Cymbeline*, wythe the Warres of the *Romans* wythe the *Brittaines*, 1605. This Play, tho' the Title bears the name of a King of *Brute's* Linage; yet owes little to the Chronicles of those Times. But the Subject is rather built upon a Novel in *Boccace*, viz. Day 2. Nov. 9.

XXVIII. *Othello* the Moore of *Venice*, wythe hys Deathe, and strangling the Fair *Desdemona*, 1606, 1611, 1613. Our Author borrowed the Story from *Cynthio's* Novels, Dec. 3. Nov. 7.

XXIX. A Winter Nighte Tale, an excellent Comedie, 1606.

XXX. *Caius Martius Coriolanus* his lamentable Tragedie, 1606. This is founded on History: see *Livy*, *Dionysius Hallicarnassæus*; *Plutarch's* Life of *Coriolanus*, &c.

The five following Plays are in our Possession, but have no Dates; neither can we gather for any certainty in what Year they were exhibited; but as they were assuredly acted during the Author's Life, we will venture to place them in the following Order.

XXXI. A pleasaunte Comedie, called As you like it, wythe the various Humours of the banished Duke *Frederick* and his Followers in the Forest of *Arden*.

XXXII. All is well that endeth well, a merrie conceited Comedie. This Play is founded on a Novel written by *Jean Boccaccio*; see his Nov. Day the 3. Nov. the 9. concerning *Juliet* of *Narbona*, and *Bertrand* Count of *Rossilion*.

XXXIII. *Julius Caesar* his Tragical Deathe in the Capitol of *Rome*, wythe the Deathes of *Brutus* and *Cassius*, and manie of the other Conspirators.

XXXIV. A Comedie of Errors. This Play is founded on *Plautus* his *Mænechmi*.

XXXV. Twelfth Nighte, or what you wille, an excellent Comedie.

All these Plays were printed in small Quarto, during the Life of the Author; after his Death, they were collected in one small Vol. Folio, 1623, 1632. In 1634 they were published in one large Vol. Folio, with the following additional Plays, though we make a Doubt if any of these last were written by our Author.

I. *Pericles* Prince of *Tyre*, an historical Play.

II. The

- II. The *London Prodigal*, a Comedie.
- III. The Life and Death of *Thomas Lord Cromwell*, an historical Play.
- IV. The History of Syr *John Old-Castle*, the good Lord *Cobhame*, a Tragi-Comedie.
- V. The Puritan, or the Widowe of *Watling-streete*, a Comedie.
- VI. The *Yorkshire Tragedie*, a Piece of one Act.
- VII. The Tragedie of *Lochrine*, the eldest Son of Kyng *Brutus*.

This celebrated Author likewise wrote a large Collection of Poems, which are now printed in one Volume.

Mr. ROBERT YARRINGTON,

Wrote a Play, called  
Two Tragedies in one, printed not till many Years after it was wrote, 1592.

Mr. ROBERT WILMOT,

A Gentleman of the Temple, who published one Dramatic Piece, called  
*Tancred and Gismund*, 1592.

This Play was not wholly wrote by *Wilmot*, but many Years before the Publication, by a set of Templers.

Mr. GEORGE PEEL.

This Author was educated at *Christ-Church* College, in *Oxford*, where he took the Degree of Master of Arts, and wrote two Plays.

- I. *Edward* the Firste, an historical Play, 1593.
- II. *David* and *Bersheba*, their Loves, wythe the Tragedie of *Absalom*, 1599.

Mr. THOMAS LODGE.

This Gentleman was a Physician, bred at *Cambridge*, and during his Residence there, wrote, among other Pieces of Poetry, two Plays.

- I. The Wounds of Civile Wars, or the Tragedies of *Marius* and *Scylla*, 1594.
- II. A Looking-Glasse for *London* and *Englande*, a Tragi-Comedie, 1598.

He was a Person of great Learning, and translated *Josephus* and other Authors into *English*.

Mr:

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Mr THOMAS KID,

Translated a Play from the *French* of *Garnier*, called *Pompey the Greate*, his fair *Cornelia* her Tragedie, 1595.

MARY Countess of PEMBROKE.

This Lady was Sister to the illustrious Sir *Philip Sidney*. She translated one Play from the *French*, called *Antonius*, or the Tragedie of *Marc-Anthony*, 1595.

Mr. RICHARD BERNARD.

This Gentleman lived in *Lincolnshire*, and gave us the first entire Translation of *Terence's Comedies*, 1596.

- I. *Andrea*.
- II. *Adelphi*.
- III. *Eunuchus*.
- IV. *Heautontimoroumenos*.
- V. *Hecyra*.
- VI. *Phormio*.

Mr. SAMUEL BRANDON,

Wrote one Play, called *The Virtuouse Octavia*; a Tragi-Comedie, 1598.

Mr ROBERT GREEN.

This Gentleman was educated at the University of *Cambridge*, where he took the Degree of Master of Arts, and wrote one Play, called *The Historie of Fryar Bacon, and Fryar Bungey*, a Comedie, 1599, 1633.

Mr. HENRY PORTER,

An Author who wrote one Play, called *The two angry Women of Abington*, a Comedie, 1599.

The Right Hon. WILLIAM ALEXANDER, Earl of STERLING,

Was born at *Edinburgh*, in 1578. He wrote four Plays, which he called *Monarchic Tragedies*.

I. *The Alexandrian Tragedie*. This Play is built upon the Differences about the Succession, that arose between *Alexander's Captains* after his Decease.

II. *Cræsus*, a Tragedie. *Cræsus* is chiefly borrowed from *Herodotus*, see lib. 1. *scæ (li)*.

III. *Darius*,

III. *Darius*, a Tragedie

IV. *Julius Cæsar*, a Tragedie.

These Plays are printed in Fol. 1599, 1629, and are rather Historical Dialogues than Dramatic Performances, in alternate Verse.

Mr. ROBERT ARMIN.

This Author was an eminent Comedian, in the Reign of Queen *Elizabeth*, and King *James I.* He wrote one Comedie, called

The two Maids of *Mortelack*, 1599.

Mr. JOHN COOK,

Wrote one Play, called

*Green* his *Tu Quoque*, or the City Gallant, a Comedie.

This Piece was first performed with the latter Title only; but the inimitable acting of the Part of *Bubble* the City Gallant, by Mr. *Green*, a celebrated Comedian of that Time, who frequently upon every Occasion, came out with the Words *Tu Quoque*, gave it the first Title. The first Edition of this Play, was printed in Quarto 1599, with a Figure of *Green*, and a Label out of his Mouth, *Tu Quoque, to you Sir!*

P L A Y S

WROTE by Anonymous AUTHORS in the 16th CENTURY.

I. **A** Ryghte pythie, pleasaunte and merrie Comedie, intituled, *Gammer Gurton* her Needle. Written by M. S. Maister of Artes, 1551, 1559.

II. *Jacob* and *Esau*, an Interlude, ryghte pleasaunte, pythie and witty, 1559.

III. *London* Chantecleeres, an Interlude, 1559.

IV. Liberalitie and Prodigalitie, a Masque of much Moralitye, 1559.

V. The Ladie Alimonie, or the Alimonie Ladie, 1560.

VI. *Abrahame* hys Sacrafyce, or the Tryal of the Hearte, 1560.

VII. Manhoode and Wyfdome, a Masque of much Instructione, 1563.

VIII. *Darius*, an Interlude; taken out of *Esdras*, 1565.

IX. The Interlude of Youthe, 1565.

X. *Johnne*

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- X. *Jobne* the Evangeliste, an Interlude, 1566.  
 XI. *Jofephe* hys Affectiones, 1567.  
 XII. A new Enterlude, no lesse wyttie than pleasaunte,  
 entituled *Neuwe Customes*, 1573.  
 XIII. *Apius* and *Virginia*, a Tragic-Comedie, 1575.  
 XIV. *Alarme* for *London*, or the Siege of *Antwerpe*, in  
 1576, wythe the venterouse and valyante Deedes of the lame  
*Soldiere*, 1577.  
 XV. *Bande Ruffe* and *Cuffee*, an Interlude, 1581.  
 XVI. A Combate of *Cappes*, a Masque, 1582.  
 XVII. A merrie Interlude of *Jacke Jugglere*, 1587.  
 XVIII. *Dicke Scorne*, a Comedie fulle of pleasaunte  
*Myrthe*, 1587.  
 XIX. *Gentle Crafte*, or the Shoemakers their Holy-  
 daye, 1587.  
 XX. *The Lawes of Nature*, an Interlude, 1587.  
 XXI. A *Knacke* to knowe a *Knave*, 1589.  
 XXII. A *Knacke* to knowe an *Honeste-Man*, 1589.  
 XXIII. *Impatiente Povertie*, 1590.  
 XXIV. *Sapbo* and *Phao*, an Interlude, play'd before the  
*Queenes Majestie*, 1591. supposed to be wrote by *Richard*  
*Edwards*.  
 XXV. *Albion*, an Interlude, 1593.  
 XXVI. *Jacke Strawe* hys *Lyfe* and *Deathe*, 1596.  
 XXVII. *Orlando Furioso*, one of the twelve *Peers* of  
*France*, 1597.  
 XXVIII. *Neroe* his Tragedie, 1589.  
 XXIX. *Nobodie* and *Somebodie*, wythe the *Historie* of  
*Elydure*, who was three times crowned *Kynge* of *Englande*,  
 1598.  
 XXX. *Tome Tylere* and his *Wyfe*, a passing merrie Inter-  
 lude, 1598.  
 XXXI. *The Battle of Alcazare*, wythe the *Deathe* of *Se-*  
*bastiane* *Kynge* of *Portingale*, wythe the valiante *Deedes*  
 of the *Englyshe* *Captain Stukely*, 1598.  
 XXXII. A *Joviale Crewe*, or the *Devil* turned *Ranter*,  
 an Interlude full of pleasaunte *Myrthe*, 1598.  
 XXXIII. *The Arraignement* of *Paris*, 1598.  
 XXXIV. *The Coronation* of the *Highe* and *Mightie*  
*Princesse Elizabeth*, the *Restoration* of the true *Protes-*  
*tante Religion*, and the *Downfalle* of the *Pope*, 1598.  
 XXXV. *Syr Clymonte* *Knyghte* of the *Goldene Sheilde*,  
 and *Glanmydes* the *whyte Knyghte*, 1598. XXXVI. *The*

- XXXVI. The merrie Devile of *Edmontonne*, a Comedie full of wittie Conceites, 1598.  
 XXXVII. An old Wyfe her Tale, 1598.  
 XXXVIII. *Tiberius Claudius Neroe*, his true Tragedie, 1598.  
 XXXIX. A Tryale of Treasure, an Interlude, 1598.  
 XL. The three Ladies of *London*, a Comedie full of Myrthe and wyttie Conceites.  
 XLI. *Thersytes* his Humours and Conceits, 1598.  
 XLII. A Tryale of Chivalrie, 1599.  
 XLIII. A Warnyng for faire Womene, 1599.  
 XLIV. Wine, Beere, Ale, and Tobacco, contendinge for Superioritie, 1599.  
 XLV. *Alphonfus* Kynge of *Arragone*, a true Historie, 1599.  
 XLVI. Tyrannicall Governmente, no Date.  
 XLVII. *Grim* the Collier of *Croydon*, with the Devil and his Dame, and *St. Dunstane*, 1599.  
 XLVIII. Manhoode and Wildome, an Interlude, 1599.  
 XLIX. *Solmion* and *Perfeda*, 1599.

## Dramatic AUTHORS in the 17th Century to the Restoration.

Lady ELIZABETH CAREW,

Wrote the following Play,  
*Mariame*, the faire Queene of *Jewry*, a Tragedie, 1600.

Mr. THOMAS DECKER.

This Poet was Cotemporary with *Shakespear* and *Johnson*. He wrote twelve Plays, and joined with *Webster*, *Rowley*, and *Ford*, in four others. His Plays are,

- I. *Fortunatus*, a Comedie, 1600.
- II. *Satyromastix*, or the untruffing a Humorous Poet, a Comedie, 1602.
- III. Northward Hoe, a Comedie, 1607.
- IV. Westward Hoe, a Comedie, 1607.
- V. The Whore of *Babylon*, an Historical Play, 1607.
- VI. The Honeste Whore, with the Humours of the Patient Man, and the longinge Wife, a Comedie, 1630.
- VII. *Matche me in London*, a Comedie, 1631.

VIII. The

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VIII. The Honeste Whore, Parte the Seconde, with the Humours of the Patiente Man and the Impatiente Wife; also the comical Passage of an *Italian* Bridewell, a Comedie, 1635.

IX. The Wonder of a Kingdom, a Comedie, 1636.

X. The Witch of *Edmonton*, a Tragedie, 1638.

XI. If this be not a good Play, the Devil is in it, a Comedie.

XII. *Wyat* his History, a Play, wrote by him and *Webster*.

JOHN LILY, M. A.

This Author was born in *Kent*, and educated at *Magdalene* College in *Oxford*, where, in the Year 1575, he took his Degree of Master of Arts. He was looked upon as one of the first Refiners of the *English* Language, and wrote nine Plays.

I. The Maid her Metamorphosis, 1600.

II. Love his Metamorphosis, a Dramatic Pastoral, 1601.

III. *Endimion*, a Comedie.

IV. *Galatea*, a Comedie.

V. *Alexander* and *Campaspe*, a Tragi-Comedie.

VI. *Mydas* a Comedie.

VII. *Sappho* and *Phaon*, a Comedie.

VIII. *Mother Bombie*, a pleasaunte Comedie.

IX. The Woman in the Moon, a Comedie.

Mr. BEN JOHNSON.

This great Poet was born in the City of *Westminster*, in 1574. He received the first Rudiments of his Education at *Westminster* School under Mr. *Cambden*, from whence he removed to *St. John's* College, *Cambridge*, and afterwards to *Christ Church* College, in *Oxford*.

He succeeded *Michael Drayton* as Poet Laureat to King *Charles I.* and died in 1637, in the 63d Year of his Age. He was buried in *Westminster* Abbey, on the West Side, near the Belfry, having at first a flat Stone over his Grave, with this Inscription,

O RARE BEN JOHNSON!

But near ninety Years after his Death, a Marble Busto of him has been set up among the other celebrated Poets, in *Westminster* Abbey.

His Dramatic Pieces are fifty-three in Number.

I. Every Man in his Humour, a Comedie, 1598.

II. Every



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- II. Every Man out of his Humour, a Comical Satyr, 1599.
- III. *Cynthia's Revels*, or the Fountain of Self-Love, a Comical Satyr, 1600.
- IV. *Poetaster*, or his Arraignment, a comical Satyr, 1601.
- V. *Sejanus his Fall*, a Tragedie, 1603.
- VI. Entertainment of the Queen and Prince, at Lord *Spenser's* at *Althrope*, 1603.
- VII. A private Entertainment for the King and Queen, 1604.
- VIII. *Volpone*, or the Fox, 1605.
- IX. Queen's Masque of Blackness, 1605.
- X. Queen's Masque of Beauty, 1606.
- XI. An Entertainment of the two Kings of *Great-Britain* and *Denmark*, 1606.
- XII. Entertainment of King *James* and Queen *Anne*, 1607.
- XIII. A Masque at Lord *Haddington's* Marriage, 1608.
- XIV. *Epicene*, or the Silent Woman, a Comedie, 1609.
- XV. Masque of Queens, 1609.
- XVI. The Cafe is altered, a Comedie, 1609.
- XVII. The Alchymist, a Comedie, 1610.
- XVIII. *Catiine* his Conspiracy, a Tragedie, 1611.
- XIX. *Bartholomew* Fair, 1614.
- XX. The Golden Age restored, a Masque, 1615.
- XXI. The Devil is an Ass, a Comedie, 1616.
- Tho' our Author seldom borrows any Part of his Plot; yet in this Play, if I mistake not, *Wittipol's* giving his Cloak to *Fitz-dotterel*, to court his Wife one Quarter of an Hour, is founded on a Novel in *Boccace*, Day 3. Nov. 5.
- XXII. Christmas his Masque, 1616.
- XXIII. A Masque at the Lord *Haye's* House, presented by several Noblemen for the Entertainment of Mons. *le Baron de Tour*, Embassador from the *French* King, 1617.
- XXIV. The Vision of Delight, a Masque, 1617.
- XXV. Pleasure reconciled to Vertue, a Masque, 1619.
- XXVI. News from the new World discovered in the Moon, a Masque, 1620.
- XXVII. The Metamorphosed Gipsies, a Masque, 1621.
- XXVIII. A Masque of Augurs, 1622.
- XXIX. Time vindicated to himself and his Honours, a Masque, 1623.

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XXX. *Neptune* his Triumph for the Return of *Albion*; a Masque, 1624.

XXXI. *Pan* his Anniverfary, or the Shepherds Holiday, a Masque, 1625.

XXXII. The Staple of News, a Comedie, 1625.

XXXIII. The Masque of Owles at *Kenelworth*, 1626.

XXXIV. The Fortunate Isles, a Masque, 1626.

XXXV. The New Inn, or the Light Heart, a Comedie, 1629.

XXXVI. Love his Triumph through *Callipolis*, a Masque, 1630.

XXXVII. *Chloridia*. Rites to *Chloris* and her Nymphs, a Masque, 1630.

XXXVIII. The King his Entertainment at *Welbeck* in *Nottinghamshire*, the Seat of the then Earl of *Newcastle*, on his Majesty's going into *Scotland*, 1633.

XXXIX. Love his Welcome, an Entertainment for the King and Queen at the Earl of *Newcastle* his House at *Bolsover*, 1634.

XL. The Magnetic Lady, or Humours reconciled, a Comedie, 1634.

XLI. The Widow, a Comedie, 1652. *Fletcher* and *Middleton* joined in this Play.

XLII. *Mortimer* his Fall, a Tragedie, left unfinished by the Author.

XLIII. Entertainment at King *James* the Ist's Coronation.

XLIV. A Challenge at Tilt, a Masque.

XLV. Love freed from Ignorance and Folly, a Masque.

XLVI. Love restored, a Masque.

XLVII. A Tale of a Tub, a Comedie.

XLVIII. The Sad Shepherd, or a Tale of *Robin Hood*, a Dramatic Pastoral.

XLIX. *Mercury* vindicated from the Alchymists at Court, a Masque.

L. The *Irish* Masque at Court.

LI. *Hymenæi*, or the Solemnities of a Masque and Barriers at a Marriage.

LII. *Oberon*, the Fairy Prince, a Masque.

LIII. Speeches at Prince *Henry* his Barriers.

There are no Dates to these last Pieces.

All *Ben Johnson's* Works were printed in two Volumes Folio, in the Year 1640, afterwards in the Year 1692; and in the Year 1716, were reprinted in six Volumes Octavo.

*two.* A new Edition of them is now in the Press, under the Care of Mr. *Whalley*.

Mr. FRANCIS BEAUMONT,

Was descended from an ancient Family, seated at *Grace Dieu* in *Leicestershire*; and was born in the Year 1585. His Grandfather *John Beaumont* was Master of the Rolls, and his Father *Francis Beaumont* one of the Judges of the Court of Common Pleas. His Mother was *Anne* Daughter of *George Pierrepoint*, Esq; of *Home-Pierrepointe* in *Nottinghamshire*, of the Family of the present Duke of *Kingston*.

He was educated in the University of *Cambridge*, and was afterwards a Student of the *Inner-Temple*.

He died in *March* 1615, and was buried in the Entrance of *St. Benedict's Chapel*, within *St. Peter's, Westminster*.

Besides his Plays, which he was jointly concerned in with Mr. *Fletcher*, he wrote a Dramatic Piece, intituled, *A Masque of Gray's-Ian Gentlemen*, and the *Inner-Temple*; and a Volume of Poems printed in 1613, and 1653.

Mr. JOHN FLETCHER.

This Gentleman was the Son of the Reverend Dr. *Fletcher*, created Bishop of *Bristol* by Queen *Elizabeth*; and by her translated to the Bishoprick of *London*, in the Year 1593. He had his Education at *Cambridge*, and was accounted a good Scholar.

As *Beaumont* was esteemed for his Judgment, so *Fletcher* was admired for his Wit and Humour.

The Dramatic Works of these Authors were first published in Quarto, many without Dates, and 36 Plays collected in Folio, 1633, the whole Number in 1669, and 1679, and are as follow.

I. *The Beggar's Bush*, a Comedie.

II. *Bonduca*, a Tragedie.

The Plot of this Play is borrowed from *Tacitus's Annals* lib. 14. See *Milton's History of England*, Book 2. *Ubalino de Vita delle Donne Illustri del Regno d'Inghelterra*, & *Scotia*, pag. 7, &c.

III. *The Bloody Brother*, or *Rollo Duke of Normandy*, a Tragedie.

The Design of this Play is from History: See *Herodian*. lib. 4. *Xiphilini Epit. Dion. in Vit. Ant. Caracalle*. Part of the Language is copied from *Seneca's Thebais*.

IV. *The Captain*, a Comedie.

V. The

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V. The Chances, a Comedie.

This Play is built on a Novel written by the famous Spaniard *Miguel de Cervantes*, called the *Lady Cornelia*; which the Reader may read at large in a Vol. called, *Six exemplary Novels*.

VI. The Coronation, a Tragi-Comedie.

VII. The Coxcomb, a Comedie.

VIII. Cupid's Revenge, a Tragedie.

IX. The Custom of the Country, a Tragi-Comedie.

The Plot of *Rutilio*, *Duarte*, and *Guyomar*, is founded on one of *Malespini's* Novels, Deca. 6. Nov. 6.

X. The Double Marriage, a Tragedie.

XI. The Elder Brother, a Comedie.

XII. The Faithful Shepherdes, a Dramatic Pastoral.

XIII. The Fair Maid of the Inn, a Comedie.

*Mariana's* disowning *Casario* for her Son, and the Duke's Injunction to marry him, is related by *Causin* in his Holy Court, and is transcribed by *Wanley* in his History of Man, Fol. Book 3. Chap. 26.

XIV. The False One, a Tragedie.

This Play is founded on the Adventures of *Julius Cæsar* in *Ægypt*, and his Amours with *Cleopatra*.

XV. Four Plays in One, or Moral Representations, containing the Triumph of Honour, the Triumph of Love, the Triumph of Death, and the Triumph of Time.

XVI. The Honest Man his Fortune, a Tragi-Comedie.

XVII. The Humorous Lieutenant, a Tragi-Comedie.

XVIII. The Island Princess, a Tragi-Comedie.

XIX. A King and no King, a Tragi-Comedie.

XX. The Knight of the Burning Pestle, a Comedie.

XXI. The Knight of *Malta*, a Tragi-Comedie.

XXII. The Laws of *Candy*, a Tragi-Comedie.

XXIII. The Little *French* Lawyer, a Comedie.

XXIV. Love's Cure, or the Martial Maid, a Comedie.

XXV. The Lover's Pilgrimage, a Comedie.

The Foundation of it is built on a Novel of *Miguel de Cervantes* called The Two Damsels.

XXVI. The Lover's Progress, a Tragi-Comedie.

This Play is built on a *French* Romance written by *M. Daudiguier*, called *Lysander* and *Calista*.

XXVII. The Loyal Subject, a Comedie.

XXVIII. The Mad Lover, a Tragi-Comedie.

The Design of *Cleanthe's* suborning the Priestests to give a false Oracle in favour of her Brother *Syphax*, is borrowed

borrowed from the Story of *Mundus* and *Paulina*, described at large by *Josephus*, lib. 18. cap. 4.

XXIX. The Maid in the Mill, a Comedie.

This Play amongst others has likewise been revived by the Duke's House. The Plot of *Antonio*, *Ismenia*, and *A-minta*, is borrowed from *Gerardo*, a Romance translated from the *Spanish* of *Don Gonzalo de Cespedes*, and *Moneces*; see the Story of *Don Jamye*, pag. 350. As to the Plot of *Otrante's* seizing *Florimel* the Miller's supposed Daughter, and attempting her Chastity, it is borrowed from an *Italian* Novel wrote by *Bandello*; a Translation of which into *French*, the Reader may find in *Les Histoires Tragiques par M. Belliforest*, Tom. 1. Hist. 12. The same Story is related by *M. Goulart*; see *Les Histoires admirables de notre temps*, 8vo. Tom. 1. p. 212.

XXX. The Maid's Tragedie.

XXXI. A Masque of *Gray's-Inn* Gentlemen, presented at the Marriage of the Princess *Elizabeth* and the Prince *Palatine* of the *Rhine*, in the Banqueting House at *Whitehall*.

XXXII. *Monsieur Thomas*, a Comedie.

XXXIII. *Nice Valour*, or the passionate Mad-man, a Comedie.

XXXIV. *The Night-walker*, or the Little Thief, a Comedie.

XXXV. *The Noble Gentleman*, a Comedie.

XXXVI. *Philaster*, or Love lies a bleeding, a Tragi-Comedie.

XXXVII. *The Pilgrim*, a Comedie.

XXXVIII. *The Prophetess*, a Tragi-Comedie.

XXXIX. *The Queen of Corinth*, a Tragi-Comedie.

XL. *Rule a Wife and have a Wife*, a Comedie.

XLI. *The Scornful Lady*, a Comedie.

XLII. *The Sea Voyage*, a Comedie.

XLIII. *The Spanish Curate*, a Comedie.

The Plot of *Don Henrique*, *Ascanio*, *Violante*, and *Jacintha*, is borrowed from *Gerardo's* History of *Don John*, pag. 202. and that of *Leandro*, *Bartolus*, *Amarantha* and *Lopez*, from the *Spanish Curate* of the same Author, pag. 214, &c.

XLIV. *Thiery* and *Theodoret*, a Tragi-Comedie.

XLV. *The two noble Kinsmen*, a Tragi-Comedie.

XLVI. *Valentinian*, a Tragedie.

For the Plot see the Writers of those Times; as *Cassiodori*

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*dori Chron. Amm. Marcell. Hist. Evagrius lib. 2. Procopius, &c.*

XLVII. A Wife for a Month, a Tragi-Comedie.

XLVIII. The Wild Goose Chase, a Comedie.

XLIX. Wit at several Weapons, a Comedie.

L. Wit without Money, a Comedie.

LI. The Woman Hater, a Comedie.

LII. Women Pleas'd, a Comedie.

LIII. Woman's Prize, or the Tamer tamed, a Comedie.

Mr. *Fletcher* died in *London* of the Plague, in the Year 1625, in the 49th Year of his Age, and was buried in *St. Mary Overy's Church*, in *Southwark*, ten Years after his Colleague *Beaumont*.

### Mr. THOMAS HEYWOOD.

This Author was an Actor as well as a Poet, and lived in the Reign of Queen *Elizabeth* and King *James I.*

He was a very voluminous Writer; but out of two hundred and twenty Dramatic Pieces he says himself he had been concerned in, there are but twenty-five entire Plays remaining.

I. *Robert Earl of Huntingdon*, his Downfall; an Historical Play, 1601.

II. *Robert Earl of Huntingdon's Death*, or *Robin Hood* in merry *Sherwood*, with the Tragedy of chaste *Matilda*, 1601.

III. The Golden Age, or the Lives of *Jupiter* and *Saturn*, an Historical Play, 1611.

IV. The Silver Age, an Historical Play, 1613.

V. The Brazen Age, an Historical Play, 1613.

VI. A Woman killed with Kindness, a Tragedy, 1617.

VII. If you know not me you know no Body, or the Troubles of Queen *Elizabeth*, in two Parts, 1623.

VIII. The Royal King, and Loyal Subject, a Tragi-Comedie, 1627.

IX. The Fair Maid of the West, or a Girl worth Gold, a Tragi-Comedie, 1631.

X. The Fair Maid of the West, or a Girl worth Gold, Part II. 1631.

XI. The Dutchess of *Suffolk*, an Historical Play, 1631.

XII. The Iron Age, an Historical Play, 1632.

XIII. The Iron Age, Part II. 1632.

XXIV. The *English Traveller*, a Tragi-Comedie, 1633.

- XV. A Maidenhead well lost, a Comedie, 1634.  
 XVI. The four *London* Apprentices, with the Conquest of *Jerusalem*, an Historical Play, 1635.  
 XVII. A Challenge for Beauty, a Tragi-Comedie, 1636.  
 XVIII. The Fair Maid of the Exchange, with the merry Humours of the Cripple of *Fenchurch*, a Comedie, 1637.  
 XIX. The Wise Woman of *Hogfden*, a Comedie, 1638.  
 XX. The Rape of *Lucrece*, a *Roman* Tragedie, 1638.  
 XXI. Love's Mistres, or the Queen's Masque, 1640.  
 XXII. Fortune by Land and Sea, a Comedie, 1645.  
 XXIII. The *Lancashire* Witches, a Comedie, 1646.  
 Mr. *Brome* joined with *Heywood* in this Comedie.  
 XXIV. *Edward VI.* an Historical Play, Part I.  
 XXV. *Edward VI.* Part II.

This Author wrote several other Pieces. An Apology for Actors, the Life of *Merlin*, the *Hierarchy* of Angels, the Life of Queen *Elizabeth*, the Lives of the Nine Worthies, the Lives of the Nine Women Worthies, and a general History of Women.

#### Mr. THOMAS MIDDLETON.

This Poet was born in the Reign of Queen *Elizabeth*, and lived to a very great Age, cotemporary with *Shakespeare*, *Beaumont*, *Fletcher*, *Maffenger*, and many other Dramatic Authors. We may easily judge of his Longævity, when his first Play called the Five Gallants was acted in 1601, and his last (*A mad World, my Masters*) in 1665. Besides twenty-two Dramatic Pieces published in his own Name, he joined in several others with the Authors of his Time. His Plays are :

- I. The Five Gallants, a Comedie, 1601.  
 II. *Blurt*, Mr. Constable, or the *Spaniard* his Night-walk, a Comedie, 1602.  
 III. The Phenix, a Tragedie, 1607.  
 IV. The Family of Love, a Comedie, 1608.  
 V. The Roaring Girl, or Moll Cut-purse, 1611.  
 VI. A Trick to catch the Old one, a Comedie, 1616.  
 VII. The Triumphs of Love and Antiquity, a Masque, 1619.  
 VIII. The Chaste Maid of *Cheapside*, a pleasaunte Comedie, 1620.  
 IX. The World tofs'd at Tennis, a Masque, 1620.  
 X. The Fair Quarrel, a Comedie, 1622.

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XI. A Game

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- XI. A Game at Chesse, a Comedie, 1632.
- XII. *Corona Minervæ*, a Masque, 1634.
- XIII. The *Inner-Temple* Masque, or Masque of Heroes, 1640.
- XIV. The Changeling, a Tragedy, 1655.
- XV. The Old Law, or a New Way to please ye, a Comedy, 1656.
- XVI. No Wit, no Help, like a Woman's, a Comedy, 1657.
- XVII. Women, beware Women, a Tragedy, 1657.
- XVIII. More Dissemblers besides Women, a Tragedy, 1657.
- XIX. The *Spanish* Gypsies, a Comedy, 1661.
- XX. The Mayor of *Queenborough*, a Comedy, 1662.
- XXI. Any thing for a quiet Life, 1663.
- XXII. The Michaelmas Term, a Comedy, 1663.
- XXIII. A Mad World, my Masters, a Comedy, 1665.

Mr. JOHN MARSTON.

This Author wrote a Satire in three Parts called the Scourge of Villainy, that gained him more Reputation than his Dramatic Works, which are :

- I. *Antonio* and *Melida*, an Historical Play.
- II. *Antonio's* Revenge, or the second Part of *Antonio* and *Melida*, a Tragedie, 1602.
- III. The insatiate Countess, a Tragedie, 1603.
- IV. The *Malecontent*, a Tragi-Comedie, 1604.
- V. The *Dutch* Courtisan, a Comedie, 1605.
- VI. Parasitaster, or the Fawn, a Comedie, 1606.
- VII. *Sophonisba*, or the Wonder of Women, a Tragedie.
- VIII. What you will, a Comedie, 1609.

Mr. GEORGE CHAPMAN.

This Author was well esteemed by his cotemporary Poets. He was born in 1557, died in 1634, and was buried in St. *Giles's* Church, where a Monument was erected to his Memory by that great Architect *Inigo Jones*.

He wrote seventeen Dramatic Pieces.

- I. The Blind Beggar of *Alexandria*, a Comedie, 1599.
- II. All Fools, a Comedie, 1605. It seems to be built upon the same Fabrick with *Terence's Heautontimorumenos*.
- III. Eastward Hoe, a Comedie, 1605. *Ben Jonson* and *Marston* joined with Mr. *Chapman* in writing this Play.
- IV. The Gentleman Usher, a Comedie, 1606.
- V. Monsieur *d'Olive*, a Comedie, 1606.

VI. The



VI. The Conspiracie and Tragedie of *Charles Duke of Biron*, Marshal of *France*, 1608.

VII. The Conspiracie and Tragedie of *Charles Duke of Biron*, Part II. 1609.

VIII. *May Day*, a Comedie, 1611.

IX. *The Widow's Tears*, a Comedie, 1612. The Plot of *Lysander* and *Cynthia* is borrow'd from *Petronius Arbiters Satyricon*, being the Story of the Matron of *Ephejus* related by *Eumolpus*.

X. *Buffy d Ambois*, a Tragedie, 1613.

XI. *The Temple*, a Masque, 1614. Presented at Court before the King, at the Celebration of the Nuptials of the Count *Palatine* of the *Rhine* and Princess *Elizabeth*; Mr. *Inigo Jones* ordered the Scenes and Machines.

XII. *Two wise Men*, and all the rest Fools, a Comedie, in seven Acts, 1619.

XIII. *Cæsar* and *Pompey*, a Tragedie, 1631.

XIV. *Revenge for Honour*, a Tragedie, 1634.

XV. *Alphonfus*, Emperor of *Germany*, a Tragedie, 1634.

XVI. *Humourous Day's Mirth*, a Comedie, 1635.

XVII. *Buffy d Ambois*, his *Revenge*, a Tragedie, 1635. Mr. *Chapman* translated *Homer*, *Hesiod*, and *Musæus*.

#### FULK GREVILLE Lord BROOK,

Was born in 1574, had his Education first at *Oxford*, and after at *Cambridge*. At his Return from his Travels, King *James I.* created him Baron *Brook*, Privy Counsellor and Lord of the Bed-Chamber. *Heywood*, one of his old Servants, having long expected some Office from his Lord to no Purpose, took the Opportunity of stabbing him in the Back, as my Lord turn'd from him, enraged at his extravagant Importunity; and afterwards returning to his Chamber stabb'd himself, and died on the Spot.

The Author of the *Lives of illustrious Men* does not say my Lord died of the Wound.

The Epitaph on his Tomb in the Church of *Warwick*, is as follows:

FULK GREVILLE, SERVANT TO QUEEN ELIZABETH, COUNSELLOR TO KING JAMES, AND FRIEND TO SIR PHILLIP SIDNEY.

He wrote two Plays,

I. *Alabam*, a Tragedie, 1605.

II. *Mustapha*, a Tragedie, 1605. These are printed in small Folio with a Treatise of *Human Learnings* and In-

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quisition upon Fame and Honour. Both Plays have the Chorus after the Manner of the Ancients.

### Mr. SAMUEL DANIEL.

This Author was the Son of Mr. *Samuel Daniel*, an eminent Composer of Music. He was born at *Faunton* in *Somersetshire* in 1571, and educated at *Salisbury*, his Father being one of the Choiristers of that Church.

Besides his *History of England*, he wrote many Poetical Pieces, which are printed with his Plays, in 4to. His Dramatic Works are,

I. *Hymen's Triumph*, a Pastoral Tragi-Comedie, presented at the Queen's Court in the *Strand*, at her Majesty's magnificent Entertainment of the King's most excellent Majesty, being the Nuptials of the Lord *Roxborough*, 1605.

II. *The Queenes Arcadia*, a Pastoral Tragi-Comedie, presented to her Majesty and her Ladies, by the Univerfity of *Oxford*, in *Christ-Church* College, 1605.

III. *The Vision of the Twelve Goddeffes*, presented in a Masque the 8th of *January* at *Hampton Court*, by the Queenes most excellent Majesty and her Ladies, 1606.

IV. *The Tragedie of Cleopatra*.

V. *The Tragedie of Philotas*.

There are no Dates to these two last Plays, which both have the Chorus after the Manner of the Ancients.

### Mr. BARNABY BARNES,

Wrote one Play, call'd

*The Devil his Charter*; a Tragedie, 1606. Containing the Life and Death of *Pope Alexander VI*.

### Mr. JOHN DAY.

This Author was a Student of *Caius-College* in the Univerfity of *Cambridge*, and wrote the fix following Dramatic Pieces :

I. *The Travels of the three English Brothers*, *Sir Thomas*, *Sir Anthony*, and *Mr. Thomas Shirley*, an Historical Play, 1607.

II. *A Parliament of Bees*, a Masque, 1607.

III. *Humour out of Breath*, a Comedie, 1607.

IV. *Law-Tricks*, or who would have thought it? a Comedie, 1608.

V. *The Isle of Gulls*, a Comedie, 1633.

VI. *The blind Beggar of Bednal-Green*, with the merry Humour of *Tom Stroud*, the *Norfolk Yeoman*, 1639.

Mr.

Mr. JOHN MASON.

This Author wrote one Play, called  
*Muleasses the Turk*, a worthy Tragedie, 1610.

Mr. GEORGE WAPUL,  
Wrote one Play, called  
*Tide tarrieth for no Man*, a Comedie, 1611.

The Rev. Mr. THOMAS GOFF.

This Gentleman was born in *Essex*, in the Year 1592, and received his Learning at *Westminster* School, from whence he removed to *Christ-Church* College, *Oxon*. In the Year 1623, he was preferred to the Living of *East-Clandon*, in the County of *Surry*.

He died in the Year 1627, and was buried in his own Parish Church. He wrote five Dramatic Pieces.

- I. *Selimus* Emperor of the *Turks*, a Tragedie.
- II. *The Careless Shepherdes*, a Tragedie.
- III. *Orestes*, a Tragedie.
- IV. *The Courageous Turks*, or *Amurath I.* a Tragedie.
- V. *The Raging Turk*, or *Bajazet II.* a Tragedie.

Mr. ROBERT TAYLOR,  
Wrote one Play, called  
*The Hog has lost his Pearl*, a Comedie, 1611.

Mr. LODOWICK BARRY.  
A Gentleman of an Ancient Family in *Ireland*, who wrote one Dramatic Piece, called  
*Ram-Alley*, or *Merry Tricks*, a Comedie, 1611.

Mr. NATHANIEL FIELD.  
This Poet wrote two Plays.  
I. *Woman is a Weather-cock*, a Comedie, 1612.  
II. *Amends for Ladies*; with the merry Pranks of *Moll Cut-Purse*, or the Humour of Roaring, a Comedy, 1639.

Mr. JOHN WEBSTER.  
This Author was accounted a good Poet, and well esteem'd by his cotemporary Authors, since he joined with *Decker*, *Marston* and *Rowley*. The Plays he wrote are,  
I. *The White Devil*, or the Tragedie of *P. Gordiano Urfini*, Duke of *Brachiano*, wythe the Lyfe and Deathe of *Vittoria Corombona*, the famousse *Venetian* Courtezan, 1612.  
II. *The Devil's Law-Cafe*, or when Women go to Law, the Devile is fulle of Businesse, a Tragi-Comedie, 1623.

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III. The

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III. The Dutchess of *Malfey*, a Tragedie, 1623. Received with some Alterations, 1709.

IV. *Appius and Virginia*, a Tragedie, 1659.

V. The *Thracian Wonder*, a Comic-Historical Play.

VI. A Cure for a Cuckold, a Comedie.

Mr. JOHN STEPHENS,

Wrote one Play, called

*Cynthia her Revenge*, a Tragedie, 1613.

Mr. ROBERT DAUBORNE.

This Gentleman wrote two Plays :

I. The Christian turned Turk, a Tragedie, 1613.

II. The Poor Man his Comfort, a Tragi-Comedie, 1615.

Mr. RICHARD CARPENTER.

This Author was supposed to be a Divine, and wrote one Play, called

The Pragmatical Jesuit new leavened, 1614.

Mr. EDWARD SHARPMAN.

This Author was a Member of the *Middle-Temple* ; he wrote one Play, called

The Fleece, a Comedie, 1615.

GEORGE SANDYS, Esq;

He was the Son of *Edwin* Archbishop of *York*, and born at *Bishop's-Thorp* in the County of *York*, in the Year 1577. He was sent to the University of *Oxford*, and entered in *St. Mary's Hall*, at Eleven Years of Age.

In the Year 1610 he made the Tour of *France, Italy, Turkey, Jerusalem, &c.* and on his Return, published an Account of his TRAVELS, and one Play, called

*Christe, his Passion*, a Tragedie, with Notes, 1615, translated from the *Latin* of *Hugo Grotius*.

He also translated *Ovid's Metamorphosis*, the whole fifteen Books. The first Book of *Virgil's Æneis*, and new wrote the singing Psalms.

He died at *Boxley-Abbey* in *Kent*, in 1643, and was buried in the Chancel of that Church.

Mr. WILLIAM SMITH,

Wrote one Play, called

The Hector of *Germany*, or the *Palsgrave* Prime Elector, a new Play, an Honourable History, 1615, Mr.

## Mr. CYRIL TURNER.

He wrote two Plays :

- I. The Athiest his Tragedie, 1617.
- II. The Revenger his Tragedie, 1619.

## Mr. DRAWBRIDGE-COURT BELCHIER.

This Gentleman was born at *Goldsbrough*, in *Northamptonshire*, educated at *Christ-Church College Oxford*, and afterwards travelled. While he was at *Utrecht* in the *United Provinces*, he wrote one Play, called

*Hans Beer-Pot*, his invisible Comedie of see me, and see me not, 1618.

He died in the *Low-Countries*, 1621.

## THOMAS MAY, Esq;

This Gentleman was Son of Sir *Thomas May* of the County of *Suffex*, and born in 1595. He wrote five Plays.

- I. The Heir, a Comedie, 1620.
- II. *Cleopatra*, Queen of *Egypt*, a Tragedie, 1626.
- III. *Antigone*, the *Theban* Princess, a Tragedie, 1631.
- IV. The old Couple, a Comedy, 1651.
- V. *Agrippina*, Empress of *Rome*, a Tragedy.

Mr. *May* likewise published a Translation of *Lucan's Pharsalia*, with a Latin Supplement, or Continuation to the Death of *Cæsar*; also a Translation of *Virgil's Georgicks*, and the History of *English Parliaments*, &c. He died suddenly in the Year 1652, in the 55th of his Age, and was buried in *Westminster Abbey*.

## JAMES HOWELL, Esq;

Mr. *Howell* was born in the County of *Caermarthen* in *South Wales*, in the Year 1594. He received the first Rudiments of Learning at the School of *Hereford*, and was removed from thence to *Jesus College, Oxon*.

He wrote one Dramatic Piece, called

The Nuptials of *Peleus* and *Thetis*, a Masque and Comedie, acted at *Paris*, by the *French King*, the *Duke of York*, *Duke of Anjou*, *Henrietta Maria* the Princess Royal, the Princess of *Conti*, &c. 1620.

This Gentleman was the Author of a great Number of Books, among which his *Dodona's Grove*, or the Vocal Forest, was much admired; as was a Collection of his Familiar Letters, printed in one Volume in Octavo.

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Mr.

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Mr. *James Howell* was the first that brought from *Venice* the Art of making Glafs into *England*.

He died in the Year 1666, and lies buried on the North Side of the *Temple Church*,

### Mr. GERVASE MARKHAM,

Was Son of *Robert Markham* of *Cotham* in the County of *Nottingham*, Esq; He bore a Captain's Commission under King *Charles I.* in the Civil Wars, and was accounted a good Soldier, as well as a good Scholar.

He wrote one Play, called

*Herod and Antipater*, a Tragedie, 1622.

### J. RUGGEL,

Wrote a Play in Latin, called

*Ignoramus*.

Which was translated into *English*, 1631, by *R. C.*

### Mr. PHILIP MASSENGER.

This Author was born at *Salisbury*, in 1578, and was Son of Mr. *Philip Massenger*, a Gentleman belonging to the Family of the Earl of *Montgomery*. He was sent to *St. Alban Hall*, in the University of *Oxford*, in the Year 1602, at the Age of Twenty-four; and there remained a Student three or four Years. He was esteemed one of the best Poets of the Age he lived in, and wrote sixteen Plays.

I. *The Roman Actor*, a Tragedie, 1692, Revived in 1721.

II. *The Renegado*, a Comedie, 1630.

III. *The Maid of Honour*, a Tragi-Comedie, 1632.

IV. *The Emperor of the East*, a Tragi-Comedie, 1632.

V. *The Fatal Dowry*, a Tragedie, 1632.

VI. *A new Way to pay old Debts*, a Comedie, 1633.

Revived in 1748.

VII. *The Picture*, a Comedie, 1636.

VIII. *The Great Duke of Florence*, a Comedie, 1636.

IX. *The Duke of Milan*, a Tragedie, 1638.

X. *The Bondman*, a Comedie, 1638. Revived with the additional Title of *Love and Liberty*, 1721.

XI. *The unnatural Combat*, a Tragedie, 1639.

XII. *The Guardian*, a Comedy, 1655.

XIII. *The Bashful Lover*, a Comedy, 1655.

XIV. *A very Woman, or the Prince of Tarent*, a Tragi-Comedy, 1655.

XV. *The City Madam*, a Comedy, 1659.

XVI. The

## XVI. The Virgin Martyr, a Tragedy.

Mr. *Massenger*, I believe, was Author of several other Dramatic Pieces; one I have seen in Manuscript, which I am assured was acted, by the proper Quotations, &c. The Title runs thus,

Believe as you List. Written by Mr. *Massenger*, with the following Licence,

This Play, called Believe as you List, may be acted this 6th of May, 1631. *Henry Herbert.*

This was my Lord *Herbert*, in the Reign of *Charles I.*

He died in the Year 1659, in the 81st Year of his Age, and was buried in St. *Mary Overy's* Church in *Southwark*.

## Mr. ANTHONY BREWER,

Wrote three Plays.

I. *Lingua*, or the Combat of the Tongue and the five Senses for Superiority, a Comedie, acted at *Cambridge*. A Report is handed down to us, that *Oliver Cromwell* played the Part of *Tactus*.

II. The Country Girl, a Comedie, 1629.

III. The Love-sick King, an *English* Tragical History; with the Life and Death of *Cartesmunda*, the fair Nun of *Winchester*, 1629.

## The Rev. Mr. BARTON HOLLIDAY.

He was born at *Oxford*, and entered young a Student of *Christ-Church* College, and having taken his Degrees of Bachelor and Master of Arts, was made Archdeacon of *Oxford*.

He wrote one Play called

TEKNOGAMIA, or the Marriage of the Arts, a Comedie, 1630.

He translated *Juvenal*, which he published in Folio with Cuts and large Notes.

## Mr. RICHARD BROOME,

Was Amanuensis to *Ben Johnson*, who gave him a yearly Salary; in Imitation of his Master he studied Men and Books. He had his Education at *Eton*, and

The Plays he wrote were,

I. *Novella*, a Comedie, 1631.

II. The Court Beggar, a Comedie, 1632.

III. *Antipodes*, a Comedie, 1638.

IV. *Asparagus*

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IV. *Asparagus Garden*, a Comedie, 1640.

V. *The City Wit, or the Woman wears the Breeches*, a Comedie, 1652.

VI. *The Damoiselle, or the New Ordinary*, a Comedie, 1653.

VII. *The mad Couple well matched*, a Comedie, 1653. This Play was revived by the Duke of York's Company, under the Title of the Debauchee, or the Credulous Cuckold.

VIII. *The jovial Crew, or the merry Beggars*, a Comedy, 1654.

IX. *The Love-sick Court, or the ambitious Politick*, a Comedie, 1657.

X. *The new Academy, or the new Exchange*, a Comedy, 1658,

XI. *Covent-Garden weeded, or the Middlesex Justice*, a Comedy, 1658.

XII. *The Queen's Exchange*, a Comedy, 1660.

XIII. *Queen and Concubine*, a Comedy, 1661.

XIV. *The English Moor, or the Mock-Marriage*, a Comedy, 1662.

XV. *The Northern Lads, or the Nest of Fools*, a Comedy, 1663.

He survived his Master *Ben* many Years, and died in 1663.

Mr. THOMAS RANDOLPH.

This Author was born at *Houghton* in *Northamptonshire* in 1605. He was educated at *Westminster School*, and from thence removed to *Trinity College Cambridge*, where he became a Fellow.

He had the Misfortune to lose one of his Fingers, by a Cut which he received in endeavouring to part two of his Companions. But to shew that no Accident could ruffle his Temper, he immediately repeated, with his usual good Humour, the following extempore Lines,

A Finger's Loss, I speak it not in Sport,  
Will make a Verse, a Foot at least too short.

With a pregnant Wit and the greatest good Humour, an Instance of which we have already given, he was esteemed a facetious Companion; and so much admired by *Ben Johnson*, that he adopted him one of his Sons.

He died young, and has left us the following Dramatic Pieces.

I. *The jealous Lovers*, a Comedy.

II. *The*



II. *The Muses Looking-Glass*, a Comedy.

III. *Aristippus*, or the jovial Philosopher, a Tragi-Comedy: to which is added, *The conceited Pedlar*, a Farce.

IV. *Amyntas*, or the impossible Dowry, a Pastoral.

V. *Hey for Honesty*, down with Knavery, a Comedy.

The first four, with a Collection of Poems, have been printed several Times in 12mo. The last not published till after his Death in 4to. 1641, and 1651.

Mr. RALPH KNEVET,

Wrote one Piece, called

*Rhodon* and *Iris*, a Pastoral, 1631.

Mr. THOMAS NASH,

Wrote two Plays,

I. *Dido*, Queen of *Carthage*, a Tragedie.

II. *Summer's last Will and Testament*, a Comedie, 1631.

Mr. THOMAS NABBS.

This Author had the Reputation of having never borrowed from others. He published eight Dramatic Pieces.

I. *Covent-Garden*, a Comedie, 1632.

II. *Hannibal* and *Scipio*, an Historical Tragedie, 1635.

III. *Microcosmus*, a Masque, 1637.

IV. *Spring's Glory*, vindicating Love by Temperance, a Masque, 1638.

V. *Tottenham Court*, a Comedie, 1638.

VI. *The Bride*, a Comedie, 1640.

VII. *The Unfortunate Mother*, a Tragedie, 1640.

VIII. *An Entertainment on the Prince's Birth-day*.

Mr. WILLIAM SAMPSON.

This Author was retained in the Family of Sir *Henry Willoughby* of *Richely* in *Derbyshire*. He wrote one Play, called

*The Vow-Breaker*, or the Fair Maid of *Clifton* in *Nottinghamshire*, a Tragedie, 1632.

Mr. JAMES SHIRLEY.

This Poet was born in *London* in 1594, and educated at *St. John's College, Oxford*. His Friends intended him for the Pulpit, but he was refused Holy Orders by Archbishop *Laud*, for

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for no other Reason, than having a Mole on his Left Cheek *Cavendish*, Duke of *Newcastle*, much esteemed our Author, and procured him a Commission in the Army. In the dreadful Fire in *London* in 1666, he and his second Wife were drove from their Habitation in the City to *St. Giles's* in the Fields, where the Fright and Loss preyed so strongly upon their Spirits, that they both expired in one Day, and were buried in the same Grave at *St. Giles's* in the 72d Year of his Age. His Dramatic Pieces are,

- I. *The Changes, or Love in a Maze*, a Comedie, 1632.
- II. *Contention for Honour and Riches*, a Masque, 1633.
- III. *Honoriam* and *Mammon*, a Comedie.
- IV. *The Witty Fair-One*, a Comedie, 1633.
- V. *The Triumphs of Peace*, a Masque, 1633.
- VI. *The Traytor*, a Tragedie, 1635.
- VII. *The Young Admiral*, a Tragi-Comedie, 1637.
- VIII. *The Example*, a Tragi-Comedie, 1637.
- IX. *Hyde-Park*, a Comedie, 1637.
- X. *The Gamester*, a Comedie, 1637.
- XI. *The Royal Master*, a Tragi-Comedie, 1638.
- XII. *The Duke's Mistress*, a Tragi-Comedie, 1638.
- XIII. *The Lady of Pleasure*, a Comedie, 1638.
- XIV. *The Maid's Revenge*, a Tragedie, 1638.
- XV. *Chabot Admiral of France*, a Tragedie, 1639.
- XVI. *The Ball*, a Comedie, 1639.
- XVII. *Arcadia*, a Dramatic Pastoral, 1640.
- XVIII. *The Humorous Courtier*, a Comedie, 1640.
- XIX. *St. Patrick for Ireland*, an Historical Play, 1640.
- XX. *Love's Cruelty*, a Tragedie, 1640.
- XXI. *The Triumph of Beauty*, a Masque, 1646.
- XXII. *The Sisters*, a Comedy, 1652.
- XXIII. *The Brothers*, a Comedy, 1652.
- XXIV. *The Doubtful Heir*, a Tragi-Comedy, 1652.
- XXV. *The Court-Secret*, a Tragi-Comedy, 1653.
- XXVI. *The Impostor*, a Tragi-Comedy, 1653.
- XXVII. *The Politician*, a Tragedy, 1655.
- XXVIII. *The Grateful Servant*, a Tragi-Comedy, 1655.
- XXIX. *The Gentleman of Venice*, a Tragi-Comedy, 1655.
- XXX. *The Contention of Ajax and Ulysses, for Achilles's Armour*, a Masque, 1658.
- XXXI. *Cupid and Death*, a Masque, 1658.
- XXXII. *Love*

XXXII. *Love-Tricks, or the School of Compliments*, a Comedy, 1658.

XXXIII. *The Constant Maid, or Love will find out the Way*, a Comedy.

XXXIV. *The Opportunity*, a Comedy.

XXXV. *The Wedding*, a Comedy.

XXXVI. *A Bird in a Cage*, a Comedy.

XXXVII. *The Coronation*, a Comedy.

XXXVIII. *The Cardinal*, a Tragedy.

XXXIX. *Andromana, or the Merchant's Wife*, a Tragedy, 1660.

All the Editors of the Lives of the Dramatic Authors have been doubtful concerning the Author of this Play, but the two following Lines in a Prologue at the Revival of it in 1671 have determined us.

'Twas *Shirley's* Muse that laboured for it's Birth,  
Tho' now the Sire refts in the silent Earth.

#### Mr. PETER HAUSTEAD.

This Author was born at *Oundle* in *Northamptonshire*, and wrote one Play, called

*The Rival Friends*, a Comedie, 1632.

#### Mr. WILLIAM ROWLEY.

This Gentleman was a Student of *Pembroke-Hall, Cambridge*. He wrote six Plays.

I. *A New Wonder, a Woman never vext*, a Comedy, 1632.

II. *A Match at Midnight*, a Comedie, 1633.

III. *All is lost by Lust*, a Tragedie, 1633.

IV. *A Shoemaker is a Gentleman*, a Comedie, 1636.

V. *The Witch of Edmonton*, a Tragi-Comedie, 1638.

VI. *The Birth of Merlin, or the Child has lost a Father*, a Tragi-Comedie, 1639. *Shakespear's* Name is joined with *Rowley* in the Title.

#### Mr. SAMUEL ROWLEY.

This Author wrote two Plays.

I. *When you see me you know me*, an Historical Play, of *Henry VIII.* with the Birth and virtuous Life of *Edward Prince of Wales*, 1632.

II. The

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II. The Noble *Spanish* Soldier, or a Contract broken justly revenged, a Tragedie, 1634.

The Rev. Mr. ROBERT GOMERSAL.

This Gentleman was Student of *Christ-Church* College in *Oxford*, where he took the Degrees of Batchelor and Master of Arts, and in 1627, proceeded Batchelor of Divinity, and had a Living given him in *Northamptonshire*, where he died in 1646. He wrote one Play, called

*Lodovick Sforza* Duke of *Milan*, a Tragedie, 1632.

SHAKERLY MARMION, Esq;

This Gentleman was born in 1602, and descended from an Ancient Family in *Northamptonshire*, where his Father was Lord of the Manor. He was a Gentleman Commoner of *Wadham* College, *Oxford*, and wrote three Plays.

I. *Holland's* Leaguer, a Comedie, 1632.

II. The Fine Companion, a Comedie, 1633.

III. The Antiquary, a Comedie, 1635.

Mr. THOMAS CAREW.

This Gentleman was Groom of the Bedchamber to King *Charles I.* and a Favourite of that Prince. He wrote a Masque called

*Cælum Britannicum*, performed by the King, the Duke of *Lenox*, the Earls of *Devonshire*, *Holland*, and others of the Nobility, in the Banqueting House at *Whitehall*, 1633.

This Masque, and a small Collection of Poems, are printed together in duodecimo, 1634.

Mr. JOHN FORD.

This Gentleman was of the *Middle-Temple*, and wrote the eight following Plays.

I. Lover's Melancholy, a Tragi-Comedie.

II. The Broken Heart, a Tragedie, 1633.

III. Love's Sacrifice, a Tragedie, 1633.

IV. 'Tis Pity she's a Whore, a Tragedie, 1633.

V. *Perkin Warbeck*, an Historical Play, 1634.

VI. *Francies Chaffe* and Noble, a Tragi-Comedie, 1638.

VII. The Ladies Tryal, a Tragi-Comedie, 1639.

VIII. The Sun's Darling, a Masque, 1657.

Mr.

## Mr. ABRAHAM COWLEY.

This celebrated Poet was born in *London*, in the Year 1618, had his Education at *Westminster* School, and *Trinity* College, *Cambridge*. He died at *Chertsey* in *Surry* in 1667, in the 49th Year of his Age, and was buried in *Westminster* Abbey, where the Duke of *Buckingham* erected a fine Monument to his Memory. He wrote four Plays,

I. *Love's Riddle*, a Pastoral Comedie, 1633. This Play was written by the Author whilst he was a King's Scholar at *Westminster*; and was first printed with his Poetical Blossoms.

II. *Naufragium Jocularis*; (the Merry Shipwreck) a Latin Comedie, 1638.

III. *The Guardian*, a Comedy, printed in 1650. This Play was acted several times privately in *London*, during the Prohibition of Stage Performances; as also at *Cambridge*, before Prince *Charles*.

IV. *The Cutter of Coleman-street*. This was the Play called the *Guardian*, new writ.

He likewise wrote many other Pieces in Verse and Prose: Of the former his *Love Verses* called the *Mistress*; and his  *Davideis*, a sacred Poem on the Troubles of *David*, gained him great Reputation.

## Mr. LEWIS MACHIN.

This Author wrote one Play, called  
*The Dumb Knight*, a Comedie, 1633.

## Mr. JOHN MILTON.

This Sublime Author, who has rendered his Name immortal, by his *Paradise lost* and other Poetical Works, was born in *London* in 1608: He was the Son of Mr. *John Milton*, of *Milton* in *Oxfordshire*. He died of the Gout in the Year 1674, and the 66th of his Age. His Dramatic Pieces are,

I. A Masque, called *Comus*, 1634.

II. *Samson Agonistes*, a Tragedie.

## Mr. JOHN JONES.

This Author wrote one Play, called  
*Adrafta*, or *Woman's Spleen and Love's Conquest*, a Tragi-Comedie, 1635.

## Mr. JOSEPH RUTTER.

This Author lived with the Earl of *Dorset* as Tutor to his Son, and wrote and translated three Plays. I. The

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I. The Shepherd's Holiday, a Tragi-Comi-Pastoral, 1635.

II. The *Cid*, a Tragi-Comedie, 1637.

III. The *Cid*, Part II. a Tragi-Comedie, 1640.

Sir JOHN SUCKLING, Bart.

This Gentleman was the Son of Sir *John Suckling*, Comptroller of the Household to King *Charles I.* and born at *Witbam* in the County of *Middlesex*, in 1613. He died at twenty-eight Years of Age. He wrote four Plays:

I. *Aglaura*, a Tragi-Comedie. The last Act was so contrived, that it might be altered to make it either a Tragedy, or Comedy.

II. The Goblins, a Tragi-Comedie.

III. *Brennoralt*, or the Discontented Colonel, a Tragedie.

IV. The Sad One, a Tragedy. This Play was left unfinished.

His Poems, Plays, Speeches, Tracts and Letters are all collected into one Volume.

Mr. ROBERT NEVILE.

This Author, who was a Fellow of *King's College, Cambridge*, wrote one Play, called

The Poor Scholar, a Comedy, 1636.

Mr. GEORGE WILKINS.

This Author wrote one Play, called

The Miseries of enforced Marriage, a Tragi-Comedy, 1637.

Mr. HENRY SHIRLEY,

Wrote one Play, called

The Martyred Soldier, a Tragedie, 1638.

Mr. HENRY KILLIGREW.

This Gentleman at the Age of seventeen wrote one Play, called

The Conspiracy, a Tragedie, 1638. It was printed under the Title of *Pallantus* and *Eudora*, in the Year 1653.

Mr. JOHN KIRK,

Wrote one Play, called,

The Seven Champions of Christendom, 1638.

## Sir WILLIAM LOWER.

This Gentleman was a famous Cavalier, in the Reign of King *Charles I.* During the Civil War, he took Sanctuary in *Holland*, and there diverted himself with Poetry; he wrote and translated six Plays.

- I. *The Phoenix in her Flames*, a Tragedie, 1639.
- II. *The Martyr, or Polyuctes*, a Tragedy, 1655.
- III. *Horatius*, a Tragedy, 1656. Translated from *Corneille*.
- IV. *Noble Ingratitude*, a Pastoral Tragi-Comedy.
- V. *The Enchanted Lovers*, a Dramatic Pastoral.
- VI. *The Amourous Phantasm*, a Tragi-Comedy, translated from *Quinault*.

## Mr. HENRY GLAPTHORN,

Wrote five Plays :

- I. *Argalus and Parthenia*, a Tragi-Comedie, 1639.
- II. *The Ladies Privilege*, a Comedie, 1640.
- III. *Albertus Wallenstein*, a Tragedie, 1640.
- IV. *The Highlander*, a Comedie, 1641.
- V. *Wit in a Constable*, a Comedie, 1642.

## Sir WILLIAM BARCLAY.

This Gentleman wrote one Play, called  
*The loft Lady*, a Tragi-Comedie, 1639.

## The Rev. Dr. WILLIAM STRODE.

This Author was born in *Devonshire*, and at nineteen Years of Age admitted a Student of *Christ-Church College* in *Oxford*; was chosen University Orator, Canon of *Christ-Church*, and Doctor of Divinity. He wrote one Play, called  
*The Floating Island*, a Comedie, 1639.

He died in 1644, and lies buried in the Chapel of *Christ-Church College*.

## LODOWICK CARLELL, Esq;

This Gentleman was Groom of the Privy Chamber to King *Charles I.* and King *Charles II.* and wrote the following Plays.

- I. *Arviragus and Philicia*, a Tragi-Comedie, 1639.
- II. *Arviragus and Philicia*, Part II.
- III. The

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- III. *The Passionate Lover*, a Tragi-Comedie, 1641.
- IV. *Passionate Lover*, Part II.
- V. *The Fool would be a Favourite, or the Discreet Lover*, 1642.
- VI. *Osmond the Great Turk, or the Noble Servant*, a Tragedie, 1647.
- VII. *The Deserving Favourite*, a Tragi-Comedie, 1649.
- VIII. *Heraclius*, Emperor of the East, a Tragedy, 1661.
- IX. *Sir Solomon Single, or the Cautious Coxcomb*, a Comedy, 1661.

### Sir ASTON COCKAIN.

A Gentleman of an ancient Family at *Ashbourn* in *Derbyshire*, who (besides a Collection of Poems) wrote three Plays and a Masque.

- I. A Masque, 1639.
- II. *The Obstinate Lady*, a Comedy, 1658.
- III. *Trappolin supposed a Prince*, a Tragi-Comedy, 1658. From the *Italian*.
- IV. *Ovid's Tragedy*, 1669.

### FRANCIS GOLDSMITH, Esq;

This Gentleman translated from the Latin of *Hugo Grotius* one Dramatic Piece, called

*Scphompaneas*, or the History of *Joseph*, a Tragedy, with Annotations, 1640. He also published a Collection of Poems.

### WILLIAM HABINGTON, Esq;

Was born at *Hendip* in *Woreestershire*, of an ancient Family in that County. He wrote the History of *Henry IV.* which was first begun by Sir *John Hayward*, in 1599, but not finished. He published a small Collection of Poems, called *Castara*, Observations on History, &c. and one Play, called

*The Queen of Arragon*, a Tragi-Comedie, printed in Folio, 1640.

### Mr. THOMAS RAWLINS.

He was the Principal Engraver of the Mint, in the Reigns of King *Charles I.* and *II.* and wrote two Plays.

- I. *The Rebellion*, a Tragedie, 1640.
  - II. *Tom Effence*, or the Modish Wife, a Comedy, 1669.
- Mr.



Mr. NATHANIEL RICHARDS.

This Gentleman wrote one Play, called  
*Messalina the Roman Empress*, a Tragedie, 1640.

Mr. LEWIS SHARP,

Wrote one Play, called  
*The Noble Stranger*, a Comedie, 1640.

Mr. ROBERT CHAMBERLAIN,

Was the Son of *Richard Chamberlain of Standish in Lancashire*, Esq; He wrote one Play, called  
*The Swaggering Damsel*, a Comedie, 1640.

HENRY BURNEL, Esq;

An *Irish* Gentleman of Birth. He wrote one Play, called  
*Landgartha*, a Tragi-Comedie, 1641.

Mr. WILLIAM CARTWRIGHT,

Was born at *Northway* near *Tewksbury* in *Gloucestershire*, in 1611. He was educated at *Westminster*, from thence removed to *Christ-Church, Oxford*, where he took his Degree of Master of Arts in 1635, and the same Year entered into Orders, and was highly esteemed for his Eloquence. He died in 1643, but his Plays were not published till 1651, and are as follow :

- I. *The Siege, or Love's Convert*, a Tragi-Comedie, 1641.
- II. *The Royal Slave*, a Tragi-Comedy, 1651.
- III. *The Ordinary*, a Comedy, 1657.
- IV. *The Lady-Errant*, a Tragi-Comedy, 1657.

Mr. EDMUND PRESTWICK.

This Author wrote two Plays, called

- I. *Hippolitus*, a Tragedie, 1641.
- II. *The Hectors*, a Tragedie, 1651.

Sir WILLIAM DAVENANT,

Was the Son of a Vintner in *Oxford*, where he was born in the Year 1605, and admitted a Member of *Lincoln College* in the Year 1621. He is said to have been much encouraged in his Poetic Genius by the immortal *Shakespeare*, and in some Accounts of that Author's Life he is supposed

to

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to be his natural Son. In the Year 1637, he succeeded *Ben Johnson*, as Poet Laureat, which Place he enjoyed in the Reigns of King *Charles I.* and *II.*

After the *Restoration*, he obtained a Patent from King *Charles II.* to set up a new Company of Actors, with which he first opened a House in *Dorset-Gardens*, in 1662.

Sir *William* was the first who brought painted Scenes upon the *English* Stage, which before were Tapestry.

His Dramatic Pieces are,

- I. The Cruel Brother, a Tragedy.
- II. *Albovin* King of the *Lombards*, a Tragedy.
- III. The Fair Favourite, A Tragi-Comedy.
- IV. The Just *Italian*, a Tragi-Comedy.
- V. The Law against Lovers, a Tragi-Comedy. This Play is taken from *Shakespear's* Measure for Measure.
- VI. Love and Honour, a Tragi-Comedy.
- VII. The Wits, a Comedy.
- VIII. The Platonic Lovers, a Tragi-Comedy.
- IX. The Man's the Master, a Comedy.
- X. News from *Plymouth*, a Comedy.
- XI. The Play-house to be let.
- XII. The Siege, a Tragi-Comedy.
- XIII. The Siege of *Rhodes*, the first Part.
- XIV. The Siege of *Rhodes*, the second Part.
- XV. The Unfortunate Lovers, a Tragedy.
- XVI. The Distresses, a Tragi-Comedy.
- XVII. An Entertainment at *Rutland* House, presented by Way of Declamation and Music, after the Manner of the Ancients.

XVIII. *Britannia Triumphans*, a Masque.

XIX. The Triumphs of the Prince *d'Amour*, a Masque.

XX. The Temple of Love, a Masque.

Sir *William* joined with Mr. *Dryden* in altering *Shakespear's* *Tempest*; and is supposed to be the Author of the *Rivals*, a Tragi-Comedy, 1668.

He also wrote an Heroic Poem, called *Gondibert*.

He died in the Year 1668, aged 63, and was buried in *Westminster* Abbey.

Mr. THOMAS FORD.

This Author wrought one Play, called *Love's Labyrinth*, or the *Royal Shepherdes*, a Tragi-Comedie, 1641.

Mr.

## Mr. JASPER MAINE.

This Author was born at *Hatherlagh* in *Devonshire*, in 1604; and in 1623 was entered in *Christ-Church, Oxford*, as a Serviteur. He afterwards took Orders, was made Vicar of *Cassington* and *Pyrton* in *Oxfordshire*, and in 1646 commenced Doctor of Divinity. He wrote two Plays,

- I. *The City Match*, a Comedie, 1642.
- II. *The amorous War*, a Tragi-Comedie, 1642.

## WALTER MONTAGUE, Esq;

This Gentleman was a Courtier in the Reign of King *Charles I.* He writ a Pastoral, called

*The Shepherd's Paradise*, presented before the King, by the Queen and her Ladies of Honour, 1642.

## Mr. WILLIAM HEMMINGS.

This Author was educated at *Oxford*, where he took the Degree of Master of Arts, and wrote three Tragedies.

- I. *The Eunuch*, a Tragedie, 1644.
- II. *The fatal Contract*, 1653.
- III. *The Jews Tragedy*, with their Overthrow by *Vespasian* and *Titus* his Son, 1654.

## FRANCIS QUARLES, Esq;

This Author was born in 1592, at *Stewards*, near *Rumford* in *Essex*, the Seat of his Father *James Quarles*, Esq; Clerk of the Green-Cloth, and Purveyor to Queen *Elizabeth*. He was bred in the University of *Cambridge*, and afterwards became a Member of *Lincoln's-Inn*. He was then made Cup-Bearer to the Queen of *Bohemia*, and Secretary to Archbishop *Usher*. He died in 1644, in the 52d Year of his Age; and was buried in the Parish Church of *St. Vedast, Foster-lane, London*. He wrote one Play, called

*The Virgin Widow*, a Comedie, not printed till the Year 1649, five Years after his Death.

## Mr. HENRY BURKHEAD.

This Author was a Merchant of *Bristol*. He wrote one Play, called

*Cola's Fury*, or *Lyrenda's Misery*, a Tragedie, printed in 1645, but never acted. The Subject of this Play is the *Irish* Rebellion, which broke out in the Year 1641.

Sir

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### Sir RICHARD FANSHAW.

This Gentleman was Brother to *Thomas Lord Fanshaw*; and had his Education at the University of *Cambridge*, from whence he removed to Court, where he did not long continue without Preferment, being made Secretary to King *Charles I.* in *Holland, France* and *Scotland*.

He was a polite Scholar, and perfect Master of the *Italian, French, Spanish* and *Portuguese* Languages.

After the Restoration of King *Charles II.* he was sent Ambassador, to treat of the Match between that Prince and *Catharine* the Infanta of *Portugal*.

He was sent to the Court of *Madrid* in the Year 1664, to negotiate the Treaty of Commerce, and died there, very much lamented, in the Year 1666. He translated the two following Dramatic Pieces, one from the *Italian*, and the other from the *Spanish*.

I. *Il Pastor Fido*, or the Faithful Shepherd, a Pastoral, 1646, from the *Italian* of *Guarini*.

II. *Querer per solo querer*, To love only for Love Sake, a Play of three Acts, from the *Spanish* of *Mendoza*.

### ROBERT BARON, Esq;

This Gentleman studied in *St. John's College, Cambridge*, and afterwards became a Member of *Gray's-Inn*: but was more addicted to Poetry than Law.

Sir *Philip Sidney*, having left his Countess of *Pembroke's Arcadia* unfinished; Mr. *Baron* added a sixth Part, which completed the Work, and established his Reputation more than all his other Productions. He wrote this 6th Book, and republished the *Arcadia* in 1633.

In his *Cyprian Academy*, a Pastoral Romance, which he published at seventeen Years of Age, we find three Dramatic Pieces.

I. *Gripus* and *Hegio*, or the Passionate Lovers; a Pastoral, acted by the Lady *Julia's* Servants, for the Entertainment of *Flaminius*. This Play consists but of three Acts, and is borrowed very much from Mr. *Waller's* Poems, and *Webster's* Dutchess of *Malfy*.

II. *Deorum Dona*, a Masque, presented before *Flaminius* and *Clorinda*, King and Queen of *Cyprus*, at their Regal Palace of *Nicosia*. *Flaminius* and *Clorinda* are two Characters which the Author drew for King *Charles I.* and his Queen. Part of this Piece is borrowed from Mr. *Waller's* Poem to the King on his Navy.

III. *Mirza*,

III. *Mirza*, a Tragedy. This Play is founded on the same Story as Sir *John Denham's Sophy*. We cannot imagine, by its great Length and numerous Notes, it was ever intended for the Stage.

Mr. S. SHEPHEARD.

This Author was a Citizen of *London*, and during the Prohibition of the Stage, wrought two Dramatic Pieces, called

- I. The Committee-Man Curried, a Comedie, 1647.
- II. The Committee-Man Curried, Part the II. 1647.

Mr. WILLIAM PEAPS.

This young Gentleman was an *Eton* Scholar, who at the Age of seventeen, wrote a Pastoral, called  
Love in it's Extasy, 1649.

Mr. COSMO MANUCHI.

This Gentleman was an *Italian* by Birth, but a Major in the King's Army in the Civil Wars. He wrote two Plays,

- I. The Just General, a Tragedy, 1650.
- II. The Loyal Lovers, a Tragi-Comedy, 1652.

Mr. ROBERT DAVENPORT.

This Author wrote two Plays,

- I. The City Night-Cap, a Tragi-Comedy, 1651.
- II. King *John* and *Matilda*, a Tragedy, 1655.

Mr. ROBERT MEAD.

This Author wrote one Play, called

The Combat of Love and Friendship, a Comedy, 1651.

Mr. JOHN TATEHAM,

City-Poet in the Reign of King *Charles I.* He wrote four Plays,

- I. The Distracted State, a Tragedy, 1651.
- II. *Scots Vagaries*, or a Knot of Knaves, a Comedy, 1652.
- III. Love crowns the End, a Tragi-Comedy, 1657.
- IV. The Rump, or the Mirror of the late Times, a Comedy, 1661.

The three first were never played.

Mr. LEONARD WILLAN.

This Gentleman wrote a Pastoral, called  
*Astraea*, or True Love's Mirrour, 1651.

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Mr.

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Mr. ALEXANDER BROME.

This Author published a Volume of Poems and a Translation of *Horace* in his own Name, tho' not wholly done by himself. He published one Dramatic Piece, called

The Cunning Lovers, a Comedy, 1654. Part of the Plot is borrow'd; as the Duke of *Mantua's* shutting up his Daughter in the Tower, and his being deceiv'd by her, and Prince *Prospero*, is taken from a Story in the Old Book of the Seven Wise Masters; but which the Reader may find better related in the Fortunate Deceiv'd, and Unfortunate Lovers, in the Fifth Novel of the Deceiv'd Lovers.

Mr. RICHARD FLECKNOE.

This Author is rendered more famous by Mr. *Dryden's* Satire call'd *Mack-Flecknoe*, than by any Writings of his own. He wrote several Plays, but could never get one of them acted,

- I. Love's Dominion, a Dramatic Pastoral, 1654.
- II. Love's Kingdom, a Pastoral Comedy, 1665.
- III. *Erminia*, or the Chaste Lady, a Tragi-Comedy, 1666.
- IV. *Damoiselle A-la-mode*, a Comedy, 1667.
- V. The Marriage of *Oceanus* and *Britannia*, a Masque, 1668.

WILLIAM RIDER, M. A.

This Author wrote one Play, called  
The Twins, a Comedy, 1655.

Sir RALPH FREEMAN.

This Gentleman wrote one Play, called  
*Imperiale*, a Tragedy, 1655.

Mr. ROBERT COX,

Was a Comedian in the Reign of King *Charles I.* During the Usurpation he compos'd several Drolls, which were acted by stealth, and published one Interlude. The Title runs thus :

*AÆdon* and *Diana*, with a Pastoral Story of the Nymph *Oenone*, followed by several conceited Humours of *Bumpkin*  
the

the Huntsman, *Hobinal* the Shepherd, Singing *Simkpin*, and *John Swabber* the Seaman, 1656.

Mr. THOMAS JORDAN.

This Author was an Actor, and wrote three Plays,

- I. The Walks of *Islington* and *Hogsdon*, with the Humours of *Woodstreet* Compter, a Comedy, 1657.
- II. Money's an Afs, a Comedy, 1659.
- III. *Fancies* Festivals, a Masque.

Mr. WILLIAM CHAMBERLAIN.

This Author was an old Cavalier, and a Doctor of Physic by Profession, at *Shaftsbury* in *Dorsetshire*. He wrote two Plays,

- I. Love's Victory, a Tragi-Comedy, in 1658.
- II. The Wits led by the Nose, or a Poet's Revenge, a Comedy.

GILBERT SWINHOE, Esq;

This Gentleman was born in the County of *Northumberland*, and wrote one Play, called  
The unhappy Fair *Irene*, a Tragedy, 1658.

P L A Y S

WROTE by Anonymous AUTHORS in the 17th CENTURY,  
to the RESTORATION.

- I. LOOK about you, a Comédie, 1600.
- II. *Fuimus Troes*, the true *Trojans*, being a Storie of the *Britaines* Valoure at the *Romans* first Invasion, 1600, 1633.
- III. *Marcus Tullius Cicero*, his Tragedie, 1600.
- IV. Wealth and Health, an Interlude, 1602.
- V. The Wit of a Woman, a Comedie, 1604.
- V. *Albumazar*, a Comedie. The Date of this Play is conjectural; but as *Dryden* and several other Authors agree that *Ben Johnson*, from this Foundation, erected his Comedy called the *Alchymist*, which was first acted in 1606, we have placed *Albumazar* in 1604, tho' we have never seen any printed Copy before 1634, when it was acted before King *Charles I.*, at *Cambridge* by the Students of that University.

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VII. *Cæsar*

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- VI. *Cæsar his Revenge*, a Tragedie, 1604, 1644.
- VII. *Feronymo*, or the *Spanishe Tragedie*, with the Wars of *Portingale*, and the Death of *Don Andrea*. This Play was published by two different Printers in the same Year, 1605.
- VIII. *The Fair Maide of Bristol*, a Comedie, 1605.
- IX. *The Returne from Parnassus*, or a Scourge for *Simonie*, a Comedie, 1606.
- X. *The Marriage of Witte and Sciences*, an Interlude, 1606.
- XI. *Every Woman in her Humoure*, a Comedie, 1609.
- XII. *The Honeste Lawyer*, a Comedie, 1610, 1631.
- XIII. *Histrionastix*, or the Players Whipped, a Comedie, 1610.
- XIV. *Jacke Drume his Entertainente*, or the Comedie of *Pasquil and Catharina*, 1611, 1616.
- XV. *Thorny Abbey*, or the *London Maide*, a Tragi-Comedie, 1613.
- XVI. *Wiley Beguiled*, a wittie Comedie, 1613.
- XVII. *Feronymo is mad again*, or the *Spanishe Tragedie*, containge the lamentable Ende of *Don Horatio* and *Bellimperia*, with the Death of *Feronymo*, 1615, 1623. We place these together, as the Story and chief Characters are the same; and no Doubt by the Style, were wrote by the same Author.
- XVIII. *Philotus*, a Comedie, 1616.
- XIX. *Cupid his Whirligig*, a Comedie, 1616.
- XX. *The Weakest goeth to the Wall*, a Comedie, 1618.
- XXI. *The Honour of Wales*, a Masque, 1619.
- XXII. *James the 5th King of Scotlande*, an Historical Tragedie, 1620.
- XXIII. *Enoughe is as good as a Feaste*, a pleasaunt Comedie, 1620.
- XXIV. *Svetram the Woman Hater* arraigned by Women, 1620.
- XXV. *Two merrie Milk-Maides*, or the best Words wear the Garland, a Comedie, 1620.
- XXVI. *Death of Dido*, a Masque, by R. C. 1621.
- XXVII. *Robin Conscience*, an Interlude, 1624.
- XXVIII. *Robin Hood*, his Pastoral May-Games, 1624.
- XXIX. *Apollo Shroveinge*, an Interlude, 1626.
- XXX. *Robin Hood*, and his Crew of Soldiers, 1627.
- XXXI. *Aminta*, a Pastorale (from *Taffo*), 1628.
- XXXII. *Pathomachia*, or the Battle of Affections, a Comedie, 1630.
- XXXIII. *Sicelides*,



XXXIII. *Sicelides*, a Piscatory Drama, or Pastoral, 1630.

XXXIV. The tragical and true History of *Arden of Feversham*, and his lamentable Death, by the Treacherie of his Wife, and *Blackwill* and *Shagbats*, 1630, 1633.

XXXV. *Albion* his Triumphe, a Masque, presented by the King and Queen, and many of the Nobility, 1631.

This Masque (sayeth an Author that wrote in 1649,) being set forth on the Holy Sabbath, caused great Heart-burnings among the Sober-thinking People of this Nation; and help'd, together with the Act of Sports, to produce those Seeds that grew up to Rebellion.

XXXVI. The Royal Masque, at *Hampton-Court*, personated by the Queenes Majestie, and Ladies, 1631.

XXXVII. *Fair Em*, the Miller his Daughter of *Manchester*, with the Love of *William* the Conqueror, 1631.

XXXVIII. *Tempe* restored, a Masque, presented at *Whitehall*, by the Queen and her Ladies of Honour, on *Shrove Tuesday* 1631.

XXXIX. *Hoffman* his Tragedie, or Revenge for a Father, 1631.

XL. *Massaniello*, or the Rebellion of *Naples*, a Tragi-Comedie, 1631.

XLI. A Masque of Flowers, 1632.

XLII. How to chuse a Good Wife from a Bad, a Comedie, 1632, 1634.

XLIII. *Promius* and *Cassandra*, in two Parts, 1633.

XLIV. The costely Whore, a Comical Historycal Play, 1633.

XLV. *Sir Giles Goose-Cap*, a wittie Comedie, 1635, 1636.

XLVI. *The Nice Wanton*, a pleasaunt Comedie, 1634.

XLVII. *The Entertainment at Richmond*, a Masque, presented by the most Illustrious Prince *Charles* to their Majesties, 1634.

XLVIII. *Love* his Loadstone, a Comedie, 1635.

About this Time the Orthography began to lose its old Manner, and to be reduced to our modern Way, which was greatly helped by the Dramatic Authors that followed.

XLIX. *A New Trick* to cheat the Devil, a Comedie, R. D. 1636.

L. *Luminalia*, or the Festival of Light, a Masque, 1637.

LI. *The Valiant Scot*, a Tragi-Comedie, 1637.

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- LII. *Salmacida Spolia*, a Masque, presented by King Charles, his Queen, and the Nobility, 1637.
- LIII. The Sophister, a Comedie, 1638.
- LIV. The Knave in Grain new vamp'd, a Comedie, 1640.
- LV. The Ghost, or the Woman wears the Breeches, a Comedie, 1640.
- LVI. *Masquerade Du Ciel* a Masque, by J. S. supposed to be *James Shirley*, Esq; 1640.
- LVII. *Mercurius Britannicus*, or the *English* Intelligencer, a Tragi-Comedie. This Piece is a Satire on the Times, no wayes Theatrical, 1640.
- LVIII. A Masque of the Middle Templers, 1640.
- LIX. *Sicily and Naples*, or the Fatal Union, a Tragedy, 1640.
- LX. The Strange Discovery, a Tragi-Comedie, 1640.
- LXI. *Troas*, a Tragedy, (from *Seneca*) by S. T. 1640.
- LXII. The *Scotish* Politick Presbyter slain by an *English* Independant; or the Independants Victory over the Presbyterian Party, a Tragi-Comedie, 1647. This Piece was never intended for the Stage.
- LXIII. The Tragedy of *Charles I. King of England*, 1649, 1690.
- LXIV. *Electra*, a Tragedie from the Greek of *Sophocles*, 1649.
- LXV. *New-Market Fair*, or Mrs. *Parliament's* new Vagaries, a Tragi-Comedie, in two Parts, 1649.
- LXVI. The Word's Idol, or *Plutus* the God of Wealth, a Comedy, from the Greek of *Aristophanes*, by H. B. 1650.
- LXVII. The Bastard, a Tragedy, 1652.
- LXVIII. The Queen, or the Excellence of her Sex, a Tragi-Comedy, 1653.
- LXIX. The Extravagant Shepherd, a Pastoral Comedy, 1654.
- LXX. *Phyllis* of *Scyros*, a Dramatic Pastoral Comedy, 1655.
- LXXI. *Guy Earl of Warwick*, a Tragi-Comedy, 1655.
- LXXII. *Englishmen* for Money, or Woman will have her Will, a Comedy, 1656.
- LXXIII. The Hector, or the False Challenge, a Comedy, 1656.
- LXXIV. The False Favourite disgraced, and the Reward of Loyalty, a Tragi-Comedy, 1657.

LXXV. Or-

LXXV. *Orgula*, or the Fatal Error, a Tragedy, 1658.

LXXVI. The Prince of Priggs Revels, a Comedy, 1658.  
*Hinde* the Robber is the Heroe of this Piece.

LXXVII. The Cruelty of the *Spaniards* in *Peru*, expressed by Vocal and Instrumental Music, and by Art of Perspective in Scenes, 1658, &c. We are told that *Cromwell* not only allowed this Piece to be performed, but actually read and approved of it, and the Reason given was, that it reflected on the *Spaniards*, against whom he was supposed to have formed great Designs.

LXXVIII. *Venus* and *Adonis*.

LXXIX. The Black-Man.

LXXX. *Philetus* and *Constantia*.

LXXXI. King *Abasuerus* and Queen *Esther*.

LXXXII. King *Solomon's* Wisdom.

LXXXIII. *Diphilo* and *Granida*.

These last Six Pieces are supposed to be wrote by Mr. *Robert Cox*, Comedian, and are printed in the 2d Part of *Sport upon Sport*, 1659, 1672.

Dramatic AUTHORS, from the RESTORATION, to the End of the 17th CENTURY.

Mr. JOHN DANCER.

**A**N Author born in *Ireland*. He translated three Dramatic Pieces from the *Italian* and *French*.

I. *Amynta*, a Pastoral, 1660. Translated from the *Italian* of *Torquato Tasso*.

II. *Nicomede*, a Tragi-Comedy, 1671.

III. *Agrippa*, King of *Alba*, or the False *Tiberinus*, a Tragi-Comedy, 1675.

ROGER BOYLE Earl of ORRERY.

A Nobleman of the Kingdom of *Ireland*, eminent both in Arts and Arms; he died in *October* 1679, and wrote seven Plays.

I. The Black Prince, a Tragedy, 1660.

II. *Tryphon*, a Tragedy. Of this Usurper you have an Account in *Maccabees*, lib. 1. See besides *Josephus*, lib. 13. *Appian de Bellis Syriacis*, &c.

III. *Henry V.* a Tragedy.

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IV. *Mus-*

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IV. *Muſtaſpa*, a Tragedy. The firſt Four printed in 1660, in Folio.

V. *Maſter Anthony*, a Comedy, 1671.

VI. *Guzman*, a Comedy, 1693.

VII. *Herod the Great*, a Tragedy, 1694.

Theſe Plays are all printed together in Folio, 1695; and again in 1735 with a Life of the Author, by the preſent Earl of *Corke*, his Grandſon.

Mrs. CATHARINE PHILLIPS.

This Lady was born in *Brecknockſhire* in *Wales*, and was cotemporary with *Cowley*, by whom ſhe was greatly admired and commended, as well as by the Earls of *Orrery*, *Rofcommon*, *Flatman*, and other eminent Poets. She was commonly called the Matchleſs *Orinda*, on account of an Epitolar Correspondence carried on between her and Sir *Charles Cotterel*, under the feigned Names of *Orinda* and *Polyarchus*; their Letters are printed in one Volume.

She died of the Small Pox in the 31ſt Year of her Age, in the Year 1664; and publiſhed two Plays, chiefly tranſlated from *Corneille*.

I. *Horace*, a Tragedy, 1678. Sir *John Denham* added a fifth Act to this Play.

II. *Pompey*, a Tragedy, 1678.

Mr. JOHN FOUNTAIN.

This Gentleman wrote one Play, called *The Reward of Virtue*; a Comedy, 1661.

Mr. GEORGE CARTWRIGHT.

This Gentleman lived at *Fulham*, and gave the Public one Play, called

*Heroic Love, or the Infanta of Spain*, a Tragedy, 1661.

Mr. FYFE.

The Author of one Play, called *The Royal Martyr, or King Charles I.* 1661.

Mr. THOMAS MERITON.

This Author has publiſhed two Plays.

I. *Love and War*, a Tragedy, 1661.

II. *The Wandering Lover*, a Tragi-Comedy.

Sir JOHN DENHAM, Knight of the Bath.

This Gentleman was the Son of Sir *John Denham* of *Horſey* in the County of *Effex*, but was born in *Ireland*; his Father being at the Time of his Birth, a Judge and Lord Chief

Chief Baron of the Exchequer in that Kingdom. He was brought over from thence very young, upon his Father's Promotion to the Exchequer in *England*; and in the Year 1631, he was sent to *Trinity College, Oxon.* He wrote one Play, called

The Sophy; a Tragedy, 1661. For the Plot of this Play, it is the same with that of *Baron's Mirza*, (which Story you may find in *Herbert's Travels*) tho' differently handled by each Poet.

Sir *John* died at *Whitehall*, in the Year 1668, and was buried in *Westminster Abbey*.

**WILLIAM Duke of NEWCASTLE.**

This Nobleman was of the antient and illustrious Family of *Cavendish*; and not only a Poet himself, but a great Encourager of Poetry in others, and accounted the *Mecænas* of the Age he lived in. He was a Man of Bravery, a great Statesman, and so zealous an Assertor of the Royal Cause, that he continued in Exile with King *Charles II.* till his happy Restoration.

He wrote five Plays.

- I. The Country Captain; a Comedy.
- II. The Exile; a Comedy.
- III. The Triumphant Widow, a Comedy, 1677.
- IV. The Humorous Lovers; a Comedy, 1679.
- V. The Variety; a Comedy.

**MARGARET Dutchess of NEWCASTLE.**

The Consort of the above-mentioned noble Duke, wrote the following Dramatic Pieces.

- I. The Female Academy; a Comedy, 1662.
- II. Love's Adventures; a Comedy, Part I.
- III. The second Part.
- IV. Nature's three Daughters, Beauty, Love, and Wit; a Comedy.
- V. Second Part of ditto.
- VI. The Apochryphal Ladies; a Comedy.
- VII. Public Wooing; a Comedy.
- VIII. Matrimonial Troubles, First Part, a Comedy.
- IX. Second Part, a Tragedy.
- X. The Unnatural Tragedy.
- XI. Bell in Campo; a Tragedy.
- XII. Ditto second Part.

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- XIII. The Comical Hash ; a Comedy.  
 XIV. The Lady's Contemplation ; a Comedy.  
 XV. Second Part.  
 XVI. Youth's Glory, and Death's Banquet ; a Tragedy.  
 XVII. Second Part.  
 XVIII. Wit's Cabal ; a Comedy.  
 XIX. Second Part.  
 XX. Several Wits ; a Comedy.  
 XXI. Religions ; a Comedy.  
 XXII. The Convent of Pleasure ; a Comedy.  
 XXIII. The Sociable Companions, or Female Wits ; a  
 Comedy.  
 XXIV. The Prefence ; a Comedy.  
 XXV. The Bridals ; a Comedy.  
 XXVI. The Blazing World ; a Comedy.  
 XXVII. Ditto Second Part.

Most of these Pieces are only short Scenes, and never in-  
 tended for the Stage.

Her Grace published two Volumes in Folio, containing  
 her Poems, her own Life, and the Life of the Duke her  
 Husband, in *English* and *Latin*, printed in the Year 1668.

Sir SAMUEL TUKE.

This Gentleman was of the County of *Essex*, and a Colo-  
 nel in the Army. He wrote one Play, taken from the *Spa-  
 nish* of Don *Pedro Calderon*, called  
 The Adventures of five Hours ; a Tragi-Comedy, 1662.

Mr. JOHN WILSON.

This Gentleman, who lived in *Ireland*, in the Reign of  
 King *Charles II.* and was Recorder of *Londonderry*, was the  
 Author of four Plays.

- I. *Andronicus Commenius* ; a Tragedy, 1663.  
 II. The Projectors ; a Comedy, 1665.  
 III. The Cheats ; a Comedy, 1671.  
 IV. *Belphegor*, or the Marriage of the Devil ; a Co-  
 medy, 1690.

Mr. RICHARD HEAD.

This Author was the Son of a Clergyman in *Ireland*,  
 who was murdered in the Massacre there in the Year 1641.

He was Author of the first Part of the *English* Rogue,  
 and some other Pieces, and of one Play, called

*Hic & ubique*, or the Humours of *Dublin* ; a Comedy,  
 1663. Mr.

Mr. ALEXANDER GREEN.

An Author who wrote one Play, called  
The Politician cheated; a Comedy, 1663.

Sir ROBERT STAPLETON.

This Author was one of the Gentlemen Ushers to King  
*Charles II.* and much in Favour with that Prince. He translated  
*Juvenal* and *Musæus*; and wrote the following Plays.

I. The slighted Maid; a Comedy, 1663.

II. *Hero* and *Leander*; a Tragedy, 1669.

Mr. JAMES GREBER.

The Author of one Piece, called  
The Loves of *Ergasto*, a Dramatic Pastoral, 1664.

Right Honourable HENRY, Lord Viscount FAULK-  
LAND.

This Nobleman (Son of the great Lord *Faulkland*;) was  
eminent for his Parts and Spirit. He died in 1643.

King *Charles I.* appointed him Lord Lieutenant of *Ox-*  
*fordshire*; and he is celebrated by the Muse of *Cowley*.

He wrote one Play, called  
The Marriage Night; a Tragedy, 1664.

THOMAS KILLEGREW, Esq;

This Gentleman was Groom of the Bed Chamber to King  
*Charles II.* He attended his Majesty in his Exile, during  
which Time he made the Tour of *France*, *Italy* and *Spain*.

He was sent Resident to the State of *Venice* in the Year  
1651, and was accounted a Man of great Wit.

He wrote the eleven following Plays, nine of which were  
composed in his Travels.

I. The Parson's Wedding; a Comedy, 1664.

II. *Bellamira* her Dream, or Love of Shadows; a Tragi-  
Comedy.

III. *Bellamira* her Dream, Part Second.

IV. *Cicilia* and *Clorinda*, or Love in Arms; a Tragi-  
Comedy.

V. *Cicilia* and *Clorinda*, Part II.

VI. *Claraxilla*, a Tragi-Comedy.

VII. The Prisoners; a Comedy.

VIII. The

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VIII. *The Princess, or Love at first Sight*, a Tragi-Comedy.

IX. *The Pilgrim*, a Tragedy.

X. *Thomaso, or the Wanderer*, a Comedy.

XI. *Thomaso, or the Wanderer*, Part II.

These Plays are all collected in one Volume Folio, printed in 1664.

### THOMAS PORTER, Esq;

Wrote two Plays.

I. *The Carnival*; a Comedy, 1664.

II. *The Villain*; a Tragi-Comedy, 1670.

### EDMUND WALLER, Esq;

This Gentleman was the Son of *Robert Waller of Agmondesham*, in the County of *Buckingham*, Esq; and is looked upon as one of the first Refiners of the *English* Versification. Besides several fine Poems, he assisted in two Dramatic Pieces, and died at *London* in the Year 1688; but was buried in *Beaconsfield* Church-yard in *Buckinghamshire*, near the Vault of his Family, where a Monument is erected over him. The Plays he was concerned in were

I. *Pompey the Great*; a Tragedy, 1664.

He altered the last Act of *Fletcher's Maid's Tragedy*, to make it end as a Comedy.

### The Hon. Sir ROBERT HOWARD.

This Gentleman was Brother to the Earl of *Berkshire*. He wrote six Plays,

I. *The Committee, or the Faithful Irishman*; a Comedy, 1665.

II. *The Indian Queen*, a Tragedy, 1665.

III. *The Surprizal*; a Tragi-Comedy, 1665.

IV. *The Great Favourite, or the Duke of Lerma*; a Tragi-Comedy, 1688.

V. *The Blind Lady*; a Comedy, 1696.

VI. *The Vestal Virgin, or the Roman Ladies*; a Tragedy, 1697.

### Sir WILLIAM KILLEGREW.

This Author was Vice-Chamberlain to *Katharine, Queen Dowager*, and wrote five Plays.

I. *Pan-*



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- I. *Pandora*, or the Converts ; a Tragi-Comedy, 1666.
- II. *Ormasdes* ; a Tragi-Comedy, 1666.
- III. *Selindra* ; a Tragi-Comedy, 1666.
- IV. The Siege of *Urbis* ; a Tragi-Comedy, 1666.
- V. The Imperial Tragedy, 1669.

Mr. ABRAHAM BAILEY.

This Gentleman was a Member of the Society of *Lincoln's Inn*, and wrote one Play, called  
The Spightful Sister, a Comedy, 1667.

Mr. THOMAS LUPTON.

This Author wrote one Play, called  
All for Money ; a Tragedy, 1667.

JOHN WESTON, Esq;

This Author wrote one Play, called  
The *Amazonian Queen*, or the Amours of *Thalestris* and  
*Alexander the Great* ; a Tragi-Comedy, 1667.

EDWARD HOWARD, Esq;

An Author of the noble Family of the Earl of *Berkshire*,  
who wrote four Plays :

- I. The Usurper ; a Tragedy, 1668.
- II. Six Days Adventure, or the New *Utopia* ; a Comedy,  
1671.
- III. A Woman's Conquest ; a Tragi-Comedy, 1677.
- IV. The Man of *New-Market* ; a Comedy, 1678.

Sir CHARLES SEDLEY, Bart.

This accomplished Gentleman was descended from an  
ancient Family in the County of Kent. Besides a Volume  
of Poems, he wrote the following Plays.

- I. The Mulberry Garden ; a Comedy, 1668.
  - II. *Anthony and Cleopatra* ; a Tragedy, 1677.
  - III. *Bellamira*, or the Mistress ; a Comedy, 1687.
  - IV. Beauty the Conqueror, or the Death of *Mark An-*  
*thony*, a Tragedy ; in imitation of the *Roman Way of*  
*Writing*, 1702.
  - V. The Grumbler, a Comedy of three Acts, from the  
*French*.
  - VI. The Tyrant King of *Crete*, a Tragedy.
- These two last were not printed till after his Death.

Sir

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Sir THOMAS St. SERFE.

This Gentleman was of *North-Britain*, and wrote one Play, called  
*Tarugo's Wiles, or the Coffee-House*; a Comedy, 1668.

Mr. THOMAS THOMPSON.

This Author published two Plays.

I. *The English Rogue*; a Comedy, 1668.

II. *Mother Shipton, her Life*; a Comedy.

Sir GEORGE ETHERIDGE.

He wrote three Dramatic Pieces.

I. *The Comical Revenge, or Love in a Tub*, a Comedy, 1669.

II. *She would if she could*; a Comedy, 1671.

III. *The Man of Mode, or Sir Fopling Flutter*; a Comedy, 1676.

His Plays and Poems are printed in one Volume.

THOMAS SHADWELL, Esq;

He was a Gentleman of a good Family in the County of *Stafford*, and was much esteemed for his Talent in Comedy.

Mr. *Shadwell* succeeded *Dryden* as Poet Laureat, when *Dryden* embraced the *Roman Persuasion*; but at the Death of *Shadwell*, in 1692, by becoming Protestant again, he was reinvested with the Laurel. His Dramatic Pieces are,

I. *The Royal Shepherdess*; a Tragi-Comedy, 1669.

II. *The Sullen Lovers, or the Impertinents*; a Comedy, 1670.

III. *The Humourists*; a Comedy, 1671.

IV. *The Miser*; a Comedy, 1672.

V. *Psyche*; an Opera, 1675.

VI. *Épsom Wells*; a Comedy, 1676.

VII. *The Libertine*; a Tragedy, 1676.

VIII. *Virtuoso*; a Comedy, 1678.

IX. *Timon of Athens, or the Man-Hater*, altered from *Shakespear*, a Tragedy, 1678.

X. *The true Widow*; a Comedy, 1679.

XI. *The Woman Captain*; a Comedy, 1680.

XII. *The Lancashire Witches*, a Comedy, 1682.

XIII. *The Amorous Bigot, or Teague O Divelly, the Irish Priest*, a Comedy, 1683.

XIV. The

- XIV. The *Squire of Asfatia* ; a Comedy, 1688.  
 XV. *Bury-Fair* ; a Comedy, 1689.  
 XVI. The Scowrers ; a Comedy, 1691.  
 XVII. The Volunteers, or the Stock Jobbers ; a Comedy,  
 1693.

## JOHN DRYDEN, Esq;

Poet Laureat to King *Charles II.* and King *James II.* was descended from an ancient Family in *Northamptonshire*, Son of *Erasmus Dryden*, of *Tichmarch*, Esq; He had his first Education, as a King's Scholar in *Westminster-School*, under the Learned Dr. *Busby*, and in the Year 1650, was elected from thence to *Trinity-College, Cambridge*.

He died in *London*, in the Year 1700, in the 67th Year of his Age, and was buried with great Funeral Pomp, in *Westminster-Abbey*, at the Expence of the Lord *Jefferies*. Above twenty Years after, his Grace *John Sheffield Duke of Buckinghamshire* erected a Monument to his Memory, with his Bulto on it, near those of *Cowley, Chaucer, &c.* on which he ordered no other Inscription than

## JOHN DRYDEN.

Mr. *Dryden's* Dramatic Pieces are,

- I. The *Wild Gallant*, a Comedy, 1669.
- II. The *Indian Emperor*, or the Conquest of *Mexico* by the *Spaniards*, a Tragedy, being the Sequel of the *Indian Queen*, 1670.
- III. An Evening's Love, or the Mock Astrologer, a Comedy, 1671.
- IV. *Marriage A-la-mode*, a Comedy, 1673.
- V. *Amboyna*, a Tragedy, 1673. The Plot of this Play is founded chiefly on History, being an Account of the Cruelty of the *Dutch* to our Countrymen in *Amboyna*. An. Dom. 1618.
- VI. The *Mistaken Husband*, a Comedy, 1675.
- VII. *Aureng-zebe*, or the Great Mogul, a Tragedy, 1676. The Plot of this Play is related at large in *Tavernier's Voyages into the Indies*, Vol. I. Part 2. Chap. 2.
- VIII. The *Tempest*, or the *Inchanted Island*, a Comedy, 1676. This is altered from *Shakespear* by Mr. *Dryden* and Sir *William Davenant*.
- IX. *Sir Martin Mar-all*, or *Feigned Innocence*, a Comedy, 1678. The Foundation of it is built upon *M. Quinault's L'Amant Indiscret*, and *Molliere's L'Etourdy, ou le contre temps*.
- X. The

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X. *The Affignation, or Love in a Nunnery, a Comedy,* 1678.

XI. *The State of Innocence, or the Fall of Man, an Opera, never intended for the Stage,* 1678.

XII. *The Conquest of Granada by the Spaniards, in two Parts,* 1678.

XIII. *All for Love, or the World well lost, a Tragedy,* 1678.

XIV. *Tyrannic Love, or the Royal Martyr, a Tragedy,* 1679.

XV. *Troilus and Cressida, or Truth found too late, a Tragedy,* 1679. This Play was first written by *Shakspear*.

XVI. *Oedipus, King of Thebes, a Tragedie,* 1679. Mr. *Dryden* and Mr. *Lee* wrote this Play jointly.

XVII. *Secret Love, or the Maiden Queen, a Tragi-Comedy,* 1679.

XVIII. *The Rival Ladies, a Tragi-Comedy,* 1679.

XIX. *Limberham; or the Kind Keeper, a Comedy,* 1680.

XX. *The Spanish Fryar, or the Double Discovery, a Tragi-Comedy,* 1681. The Comical Parts of the *Spanish Fryar, Lorenzo, and Elvirae,* are founded on Monsieur *S. Bremond's* Novel call'd the *Pilgrim*.

XXI. *The Duke of Guise, a Tragedy,* 1683.

XXII. *Albion and Albanus, an Opera,* 1685.

XXIII. *Don Sebastian King of Portugal, a Tragedy,* 1690. The Foundation of it is built upon a *French* Novel call'd *Don Sebastian*.

XXIV. *King Arthur, or the British Worthy, a Tragedy,* 1691.

XXV. *Amphitryon, or the Two Socia's, a Comedy,* 1691.

XXVI. *Cleomenes the Spartan Hero, a Tragedy,* 1692.

XXVII. *Love Triumphant, or Nature will prevail; a Tragi-Comedy,* 1694.

Mr. MATTHEW MEDBOURN.

This Author was an Actor, and being a *Roman Catholic,* and concerned in the *Popish Plot,* was committed to *Newgate* where he died. He brought the following Piece on the Stage. *Tartuffe, or the French Puritan, a Comedy,* 1670.

JOHN WILMOT Earl of ROCHESTER.

This witty Nobleman was born at *Ditchly* in *Oxfordshire* in 1648, and was the Son of *Henry* Lord *Wilmot,* who thro' almost insuperable Difficulties, carried off *King Charles II.*  
after

after the Battle of *Worcester*. He altered one Play from *Beaumont and Fletcher*, viz.

*Valentinian*, a Tragedy, 1670.

Mrs. FRANCES BOOTHBY.

This Lady wrote one Play, called

*Marcellia*, or the Treacherous Friend, a Tragi-Comedy, 1670.

CHARLES COTTON, Esq;

This Gentleman was of a very good Family in *Staffordshire*. He translated one of *Corneille's* Plays, called

*Horace*, a Tragedy, 1671.

He also published a Volume of Poems, on several Occasions, the Wonders of the Peak in *Derbyshire*, and *Virgil Travestie*.

Mrs. APHRA BEHN,

Was descended from a good Family in the City of *Canterbury*, and was born some time in the Reign of King *Charles I.* She published, besides seventeen Plays, three Volumes of Miscellany Poems, two Volumes of Histories and Novels. She likewise translated Mr. *Fontenelle's* History of Oracles, and Plurality of Worlds, to which she annexed, an Essay on Translation, and translated the Prose. The Paraphrase of *Oenone's* Epistle to *Paris*, in the *English* Translation of *Ovid's* Epistles, Love Letters between a Nobleman and his Sister, and a Volume of Love Letters with Poems, called *Lycidas*, or the Lover in Fashion.

Her Dramatic Pieces are,

I. *Abdelazer*, or the Moor's Revenge, a Tragedy, 1671. This is only an Improvement of *Marlow's* *Lust's Dominion*. or the Lascivious Queen.

II. The Amorous Prince, or the Curious Husband, a Comedy, 1671. The Plot of *Antonio*, the curious Husband's trying his Wife's Chastity by his Friend *Alberto's* means, is founded on a Novel in the Romance of *Don Quixote*, called the Curious Impertinent. See Part 4. Ch. 6, 7, 8. The City Night-Cap is founded on the same Story.

III. Forced Marriage, or the Jealous Bridegroom, a Tragedy, 1671.

IV. The Dutch Lover, a Comedy, 1673.

V. The Town Fop, or Sir *Timothy Tawdry*, a Comedy, 1677. VI. The

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VI. *The Rover, or the Banished Cavaliers*, a Comedy, 1st Part, 1677.

VII. *The feigned Courtezans, a Night's Intrigue*, a Comedy 1679.

VIII. *The Rover, or the banished Chevaliers*, a Comedy, 2d Part, 1681. The two Plays of the Rover, are founded on *Don Thomafo*. or the Wanderer, of *Killegrew*.

IX. *Sir Patient Fancy*, a Comedy, 1678. The Hint of *Sir Patient Fancy*, is borrowed from a *French* Play called *Le Malade imaginaire*, and the Characters of *Sir Credulous Easy*, and his Groom *Curry*, are stolen from *Sir Amphilus the Cornish Knight*, and his Man *Trebusco* in *Brome's* Play called the *Damoiselle*.

X. *The Round Heads, or the Good Old Cause*, a Comedy, 1682.

XI. *The False Count, or a New Way to play an old Game*, a Comedy, 1682. The Hint of *Isabella* being deceived by *Guillaume* the Chimney-sweeper, is borrow'd from *Molliere's Les Precieuses Ridicules*.

XII. *The City Heirefs, or Sir Timothy Treat-all*, a Comedy, 1682.

XIII. *The young King, or the Mistake*, a Tragi-Comedy, 1683.

XIV. *The Lucky Chance, or the Alderman's Bargain*, a Comedy, 1687.

XV. *The Emperor of the Moon*, a Farce, 1687. This Farce was originally *Italian*, and acted in *France* eighty odd times without Intermission, under the Title of *Harlequin l'Empereur dans le Monde de la Lune*.

XVI. *The Widow Ranter, or the History of Bacon in Virginia*, a Tragi-Comedy, 1690, after the Author's Death.

VII. *The Younger Brother, or the Amorous Jilt*, a Comedy, published also after her Death.

### Mr. EDWARD REVET.

The Author of one Play, called

*The Town-Shifts, or the Suburb-Justice*, a Comedy, 1671.

### GEORGE VILLIERS Duke of BUCKINGHAM.

This Nobleman was Son of *Villiers* Duke of *Buckingham* stabbed by *Feltons* His Dramatic Pieces are,

I. *The Rehearsal*, a Comedy, 1671.

II. *The Chances*, a Comedy, altered from *Fletcher*.

III. *The Restoration*, a Tragi-Comedy.

Mr.

## Mr. WILLIAM JOYNER.

This Gentleman was born in *Oxfordshire*, and Fellow of *Magdalen-College*, till he changed his Religion, when he voluntarily resigned.

He was replaced in the same College again in the Reign of King *James II.* on the new modelling the University by the Ecclesiastical Commissioners; but at the Revolution, all the Fellows were again removed, and the Protestant Members replaced. He wrote one Play, called

*The Roman Empress*, a Tragedy, 1671.

## JAMES HOWARD, Esq;

A Gentleman of the noble Family of *Howard* Earl of *Berkshire*, who wrote two Plays.

I. *All Mistaken*, or the Mad Couple; a Comedy, 1672.

II. *The English Monsieur*; a Comedy, 1674.

## Mr. JOHN LACY.

This Author was born at *Doncaster* in *Yorkshire*, was first bred a Dancing-Master, then went into the Army, being a Lieutenant and a Quarter-master; and afterwards turned Player, in which Profession he was so excellent, that King *Charles* the Second had his Picture painted, which is now at *Windsor*, in three several Characters; *Teague* in the Committee, *Scruple* in the Cheats, and *Gallyard* in the Variety. He wrote four Dramatic Pieces.

I. *The Dumb Lady*, or the Farrier made a Physician; a Comedy, 1672.

II. *Old Troop*, or *Monsieur Ragou*; a Comedy, 1673.

III. *Sauny the Scot*, or the Taming of the Shrew; a Comedy, altered from *Shakespeare*, 1677.

IV. *Sir Hercules Buffoon*, or the Poetical Squire; a Comedy, 1684.

## Mr. RICHARD TUKE.

The Author of one Religious Play, called *The Divine Comedian*, or the Right Use of Plays, a Sacred Tragi-Comedy, 1672.

## Mr. JOHN COREY.

A Gentleman who wrote one Play, called *The Generous Enemies*, or the Ridiculous Lovers, a Comedy, 1672.

WILLIAM

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### WILLIAM WICHERLY, Esq;

This Gentleman was born in *Wem* in *Shropshire*. He was sent to the University young, and afterwards entered of the Middle-Temple. He was in the 20th Year of his Age married to the Countess of *Drogheda*, who settled her whole Fortune upon him: but his Title being disputed after her Death, his expensive Law-Suits, and some other Demands upon him, put it out of his Power to satisfy the Impatience of his Creditors, who flung him into a Prison, where he languished for near three Years, and might have remained much longer, if his good Fortune had not sent King *James II.* to the Theatre to see his *Plain Dealer*, where he was so charm'd with that Comedy, that he gave an Order for the immediate Payment of his Debts, which was not done compleatly, he not delivering in a full Account of them. He dy'd in the Year 1715, in the 80th Year of his Age, and lies buried in the Vault of *Covent-Garden Church*.

His Dramatic Pieces are,

I. *Love in a Wood*, or *St. James's Park*, a Comedy, 1672.

II. *The Gentleman Dancing-Master*, a Comedy, 1673.

III. *The Plain Dealer*, a Comedy, 1678.

IV. *The Country Wife*, a Comedy, 1683.

Besides his Plays, he has wrote and published a large Volume of Poems in Folio.

### Mr. SAMUEL PORDAGE.

A Gentleman of *Lincoln's-Inn*, who wrote two Plays.

I. *Herod and Mariamne*; a Tragedy, 1673.

II. *The Siege of Babylon*, a Tragi-Comedy, 1678.

### Mr. EDWARD RAVENSCROFT.

This Gentleman was of a good Family, and entered of the Middle-Temple. He wrote eleven Dramatic Pieces.

I. *The Careless Lovers*, or the Conceited Travellers; a Comedy, 1673.

II. *Mamamouchi*, or the Citizen turned Gentleman; a Comedy, 1675.

III. *Scaramouch* a Philosopher, *Harlequin* a School-Boy, *Bravo* a Merchant and Magician; a Comedy, 1677.

IV. *The Wrangling Lovers*, or the Insensible Mistress; a Comedy, 1677.

V. *King*



- V. King *Edgar and Alfreda*; a Tragedy, 1677.  
 VI. The *English Lawyer*, a Comedy, 1678. This is a Translation of a *Latin Play* called *Ignoramus*.  
 VII. The *London Cuckolds*; a Comedy, 1683.  
 VIII. *Dame Dobson*, or the Cunning Woman; a Comedy, 1684.  
 IX. The *Canterbury Guests*, or a Bargain Broken; a Comedy, 1695.  
 X. The Anatomist, or the Sham Doctor; a Farce, 1697.  
 XI. The *Italian Husband*; a Tragedy, 1697.

## Mr. FISHBOURN.

A Member of *Gray's-Inn*, the Author of an Obscene Piece, not fit to be read, called  
*Sodom*, falsely ascribed to the Lord *Rocheſter*.

## Mr. ELKANAH SETTLE.

Formerly City Poet, and the last in that Office. The Business of these Bards was to prepare the Pageants yearly for the Lord Mayor's Show; and when those Pageants were dropt, the Office dropt of Course. Mr. *Settle* was formerly of *Trinity-College, Oxford*, and in his pursuit of the Muses, spent a small Patrimony. In the Reign of King *Charles II.* the Wits of the Time set him up to oppose *Dryden*; it is very certain *Settle* did not want Learning, and often seemed to get the better of his Antagonist. Whatever was the Success of his Poetry, he was certainly the best Contriver of *Machinery* in *England*, and for many Years of the latter part of his Life received an Annual Salary from Mrs. *Minns* and her Daughter Mrs. *Leigh*, for writing Drolls for *Bartholomew* and *Southwark Fairs*, with proper Decorations, which were generally so well contrived, that they bore the Bell from their Opponents in the same Calling.

He died in the *Chartreuse* (commonly called the *Charter-House*.) 1724. His Dramatic Pieces are,

- I. The Empress of *Morocco*; a Tragedy, printed in Quarto, with the Capital Scenes engraved on Copper, 1673.  
 II. *Love and Revenge*; a Tragedy, 1675.  
 III. *Cambyſes King of Persia*; a Tragedy, 1675.  
 IV. The Conquest of *China* by the *Tartars*; a Tragedy, 1676.

V. *Ibrahim*,

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V. *Ibrahim*, the Illustrious Bassa ; a Tragedy, 1677.

VI. *Pastor Fido*, or the Faithful Shepherd ; a Dramatic Pastoral, 1677.

VII. *Fatal Love*, or the Forc'd Inconstancy ; a Tragedy, 1680.

VIII. *The Female Prelate*, or the History of the Life and Death of Pope *Joan* ; a Tragedy, 1680.

IX. *The Heir of Morocco*, with the Death of *Gayland*, a Tragedy, 1682.

X. *Distressed Innocence*, or the Princess of *Persia* ; a Tragedy, 1682.

XI. *The Ambitious Slave*, or the Generous Revenge ; a Tragedy, 1694.

XII. *The World in the Moon* ; a Dramatic-Comic-Opera, 1698.

XIII. *The Virgin Prophetess*, or the Fate of *Troy* ; an Opera, 1690.

XIV. *The City Ramble*, or the Play-House Wedding ; a Comedy, 1712.

XV. *The Ladies Triumph* ; a Comic Opera, 1718.

*Settle* brought a Play to the Managers of the Theatre-Royal in *Drury-Lane* 1724, but his Death prevented it's being acted. It was called *The Expulsion of the Danes from Britain*.

### Mr. JOHN WRIGHT.

This Gentleman, who was of the Middle-Temple, wrote two Dramatic Pieces.

I. *Thyestes*, a Tragedy, 1674.

II. *Mock Thyestes*, a Farce, wrote in burlesque Verse, 1674.

### Mr THOMAS DUFFET.

This Author was a Milliner in the New Exchange ; he wrote five Dramatic Pieces.

I. *The Spanish Rogue*, a Comedy, 1674.

II. *The Empress of Morocco*, a Farce, wrote to ridicule *Settle's* Play of that Name, 1674.

III. *The Mock Tempest*, or the *Inchanted Castle*, a Farce, 1676.

IV. *Beauty's Triumph*, a Masque.

V. *Psyche Debauched*, a Mock Opera, 1678.

### Mr. NATHANIEL LEE.

This Poet was the Son of a Clergyman, and educated at *Westminster* School under *Dr. Busby*, from whence he went to *Trinity-*

*Trinity-College* in the Univerfity of *Cambridge*, and afterwards coming to *London*, was for fome ſhort Time upon the Stage as an Actor, but quitted it, as he found he was never likely to make any confiderable Figure there.

He had a great Genius for Tragedy, but his Sublime Diction was ſometimes ſwelled to Bombaſt, and that to a ridiculous Degree, which ſomewhat bordered upon that Madneſs which afterwards poſſeſſed the Author: For he had the Misfortune to be confined for ſome Years in Bedlam, and after he was enlarged died in one of his Night-Rambles in the Street. His Dramatic Pieces are,

I. *Nero Emperor of Rome*; a Tragi-Comedy, 1675. For the Plot, conſult *Suetonius* in his Life; *Aurelius Victor*; *Tacitus Ann.* lib. 13, 14, &c. *Sulpicius Severus*, &c.

II. *Sophonisba*, or *Hannibal's overthrow*, a Tragedy, 1676.

III. *Gloriana*, the Court of *Augustus Cæſar*, a Tragedy, 1676.

IV. The Rival Queens, or the Death of *Alexander the Great*, a Tragedy, 1677. For the Plot, as far as the Author has followed Hiſtory, conſult *Arrian*; *Q. Curtius*; *Plutarch's Life of Alexander*; *Juſtin*, lib. 11, 12. *Diodorus Siculus*, lib. 17 & 18. *Joſephus*, lib. 11. cap. 8.

V. *Mithridates King of Pontus*, a Tragedy, 1678. It is founded on Hiſtory: See *Appian de Bell. Mithrid.* Florus, l. 3. c. 5. *Vell. Paterculus*, l. 2. *Plutarch* in the Lives of *Sylla*, *Lucullus* and *Pompey*, &c.

VI. *Theodoſius*, or the Force of Love, a Tragedy, 1678. This Play is founded on a Romance called *Pharamond*, translated from the French of Mr. *Calpranedé*. See the Hiſtory of *Varannes*, Part 3. Book 3. p. 282. Of *Martian*. Part 7. Book 1. p. 207. Of *Theodoſius*, Part 7. Book 3. p. 256.

VII. *Cæſar Borgia*, a Tragedy, 1680.

VIII. *Lucius Junius Brutus*, Father of his Country, a Tragedy, 1681.

IX. *Conſtantine the Great*, a Tragedy, 1684.

X. The Princeſs of *Cleve*, a Tragi-Comedy, 1689. This Play is founded on a Romance called the Princeſs of *Cleves*.

XI. The Maſſacre of *Paris*, a Tragedy, 1690.

Mr. *Lee* joined with Mr. *Dryden* in two Plays, viz. the Duke of *Guiſe*, and *Oedipus*; and made ſome Alterations in *Shakeſpear's King Lear*, which was revived, acted, and printed in 1681.

Sir

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Sir FRANCIS FANE, Knight of the Bath.

This Gentleman, who was Grandson to the Earl of *Westmoreland*, wrote two Plays.

I. *Love in the Dark, or the Man of Business*, a Comedy, 1675.

II. *The Sacrifice*, a Tragedy, 1686.

III. A Masque, wrote at the Request of the Earl of *Rochester*, for his Alteration of *Valentinian*, a Tragedy.

✓ Mr. THOMAS OTWAY.

This celebrated Poet was born at *Trotton* in the County of *Suffex*, being the Son of a Clergyman there, and received his first Education at *Winchester*, from whence he went to *Christ-Church* College, *Oxford*, and afterwards to *St. John's* College, *Cambridge*, but took no Degree in either. He next obtained a Cornecy in a Troop of Horse, which he sold the first Year he obtained it.

He attempted to play some small Parts on the Stage, but not succeeding, he gave it over. He died at a dirty Ale-house on *Tower-hill*, on the Fourteenth of *April* 1685, and in the Thirty-fourth Year of his Age. His Dramatic Pieces are,

I. *Alcibiades*, a Tragedy, 1675.

II. *Titus and Berenice*, a Tragedy, 1677. This Play is translated from the *French* of Monsieur *Racine*.

III. *Friendship in Fashion*, a Comedy, 1678.

IV. *Don Carlos*, Prince of *Spain*, a Tragedy, 1679. Our Author chiefly followed the Novel of *Don Carlos*, translated from the *French*, and printed 8vo. *Lond.* 1674.

V. *The Orphan, or the Unhappy Marriage*, a Tragedy, 1680. This Tragedy is founded on a Novel, called *English Adventures*: See the *History of Brandon*, p. 17.

VI. *The History and Fall of Caius Marius*, a Tragedy, 1680. This Play is chiefly borrowed from *Shakespeare's Romeo and Juliet*.

VII. *The Soldier's Fortune*, a Comedy, 1681.

VIII. *The Atheist, or the second Part of the Soldier's Fortune*, a Comedy, 1684. The Plot between *Beaugard* and *Portia* is founded on *Scarron's* Novel of the *Invisible Mistress*.

IX. *Venice preserved, or a Plot discovered*, a Tragedy, 1685.

X. The

X. The Cheats of *Scapin*, a Farce, translated from the *French of Moliere*.

His Plays, Poems, and Letters are published in two Volumes in 12mo. Mr. *Otway* made a Translation from the *French*, of a Book called, the History of the *Triumvirate*.

Mr. JOHN CROWN.

This Gentleman was the Son of a Dissenting Minister, and educated under his Father, in *Nova-Scotia*. He wrote eighteen Plays, viz.

I. *Juliana*, or the Princess of *Poland*, a Tragi-Comedy, 1675.

II. *Andromache*, a Tragedy, from *Racine*, 1675.

III. *Calista*, or the Chaste Nymph, a Masque, written by the Queen's Command, 1675.

IV. The Country Wit, or *Sir Mannerly Shallow*, a Comedy, 1675.

V. The Destruction of *Jerusalem*, by *Titus Vespasian*, in two Parts, 1677.

VI. The Ambitious Statesman, or the Royal Favourite, a Tragedy, 1679.

VII. *Charles* the Eighth of *France*, or the Invasion of *Naples* by the *French*, an Historical Tragedy, 1680.

VIII. *Henry* the Sixth, with the Death of the Duke of *Gloucester*, a Tragedy, 1681. It is altered from *Shakespeare's Henry VI*.

IX. *Henry* the Sixth, the second Part, or the Miseries of Civil War, a Tragedy, 1681.

X. *Thyestes*, a Tragedy, 1681.

XI. The City Politics a Comedy, 1683.

XII. *Sir Courtly Nice*, or It cannot be, a Comedy. This Comedy, or at least the Plot, as far as relates to the *Spanish Plot*, has formerly appeared on the Stage, under the Title of *Tarugo's Wiles*. *Sir Courtly's* Song of Stop Thief, is a Paraphrase of *Mascarille's Au Voleur* in *Molliere's Les precieuses Ridicules*. King *Charles II*. wrote two Acts of this Play.

XIII. *Darius* King of *Persia*, a Tragedy, 1688.

XIV. The *English* Fryar, or the Town Sparks, a Comedy, 1690.

XV. *Regulus*, a Tragedy 1694.

XVI. The married Beau, or the Curious Impertinent, a Comedy 1694.

XVII. *Titus Andronicus*, or the Rape of *Lavinia*, a Tragedy, altered from *Shakespeare*, 1696.

XVIII. *Caligula*, Emperor of *Rome*, 1698.

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M

Mr.

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Mr. THOMAS DURFEY,

Was born at *Exeter*, but descended from an ancient Family in *France*, and claimed Kindred to the great Count *D'urfe*, Author of that Romance called *Astrea*. He published thirty-one Dramatic Pieces, viz.

I. The Siege of *Memphis*, or the Ambitious Queen, a Tragedy, 1676.

II. *Madam Fickle*, or the Wittie False one, a Comedy, 1677.

III. Trick for Trick, or the Debauched Hypocrite, a Comedy, 1677.

IV. The Fool turned Critic, a Comedy, 1678.

V. The Fond Husband, or the Plotting Sisters, a Comedy, 1678.

VI. *Squire Old-sap*, or the Night Adventures, a Comedy, 1679.

VII. The Virtuous Wife, or Good Luck at last, a Comedy, 1680.

VIII. *Sir Barnaby Whig*, or No Wit like a Woman's, a Comedy, 1681.

IX. The Royalist, a Comedy, 1682.

X. The Injured Princess, or the Fatal Wager, a Tragi-Comedy, 1682. This is altered from *Shakespeare's Cymbeline*.

XI. A Commonwealth of Women, a Tragi-Comedy, 1686. This is an Alteration of *Fletcher's Sea Voyage*.

XII. The Banditti, or a Lady's Distress, a Comedy, 1686.

XIII. A Fool's Preferment, or the three Dukes of *Dunstable*, 1688.

XIV. *Buffy D'Ambois*, or the Husband's Revenge, a Tragedy, 1691.

XV. Love for Money, or the Boarding-School, a Comedy, 1691.

XVI. The *Richmond* Heirefs, or a Woman once in the Right, a Comedy, 1693.

XVII. The Marriage Hater Matched, a Comedy, 1693.

XXIII. The Comical History of *Don Quixote*, a Comedy, Part I. 1694.

XIX. The Comical History of *Don Quixote*. Part II. 1694.

XX. *Don Quixote*, Part III. with the Marriage of *Mary the Buxom*, 1696.

XXI. The Intrigues of *Versailles*, or a Jilt in all Humours, a Comedy. 1697.

XXII. *Cynthia and Endymion*, or the Loves of the Deities a Dramatic Opera, 1697.

XXIII.

XXIII. *Bath*, or the *Western Lads*, a Comedy, 1697.

XXIV. The *Compaigners*, or *Pleasant Adventures at Brussels*; with a familiar Preface upon a late Reformer of the Stage; ending with a Satirical Fable of the Dog and the Otter, 1698.

XXV. *Massianello*, or a *Fisherman a Prince*, a Comedy, in two Parts, 1700.

XXVI. The *Modern Prophets*, or *New Wit for a Husband*, a Comedy, 1708.

XXVII. The *Old Mode and the New*, or *Country Miss with her Furbeloe*, a Comedy, 1709.

XXVIII. *Wonders in the Sun*, or the *Kingdom of Birds*, a *Comic Opera*, 1710.

XXIX. The *Queenes of Brentford*, or *Bays no Poetafter*. This is a *Ballad Opera* of five Acts.

XXX. The *Grecian Heroine*, or the *Fate of Tyranny*.

XXXI. *Ariadne*, or the *Triumphs of Bacchus*.

These three last were published with a *Collection of Poems*, 1721.

In 1699, he published a *Volume of Tales*, *Serious and Comic*; and in 1718, *Pills to purge Melancholy*, a *Collection of Songs* in four *Volumes*, the major Part of his own *Composing*. There are two *Volumes* more added since his *Death*. He died *February 26*, 1723, and was buried in *St. James's Church-Yard*, *German-street*, *Westminster*.

#### Dr. CHARLES D'AVENANT.

This Gentleman was the eldest Son of Sir *William D'Avenant*, the *Poet Laureat*. He was a *Doctor of Laws*, and had also a considerable *Post* in the *Custom-house*, viz. *Inspector General of the Port Accounts*, which he enjoyed to the time of his *Death*, about 1700.

He wrote one *Play*, called

*Circe*, a *Dramatic Opera*, 1677.

#### Mr. JOHN LEONARD,

Set forth two *Plays*,

I. *Country Innocence*, or the *Chambermaid turned Quaker*, a *Comedy*, 1677.

II. *The Rambling Justice*, or the *Jealous Husband*, a *Comedy*, 1680.

#### Mr. JOHN SMITH.

This Author was born in *York*, bred at the *University of Oxford*,

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*Oxford*, and was several Years Under Master of *Magdalen-School* in *Oxford*. He wrote one Play, called *Cytherea*, or the Enamoured Girdle, a Comedy, 1677.

### THOMAS SHIPMAN, Esq;

This Author was a Gentleman of good Family, and wrote one Play, called

*Henry* the III. of *France* stabbed by a Fryar, with the Fall of the *Guifes*, a Tragedy, 1678.

### EDWARD COOKE, Esq;

Wrote one Play, called

*Love's Triumph*, or the Royal Union, a Tragi-Comedy, 1678.

### NAHUM TATE, Esq;

This Gentleman was born in the Kingdom of *Ireland*, and there educated. He succeeded Mr. *Dryden* as Poet Laureat; and gave a new Version of *David's Psalms* in conjunction with Dr. *Brady*. He died in the Year 1716, and was interred in St. *George's Church Southwark*.

His Dramatic Pieces are,

I. *Brutus* of *Alba*, an Opera, 1678.

II. *The Loyal General*, a Tragedy, 1680.

III. *Richard* the III. or the *Sicilian Usurper*, an Historical Play, 1681.

IV. *The Ingratitude of a Commonwealth*, or the Fall of *Caius Martius Coriolanus*, 1682.

V. *Cuckold's Haven*, or an Alderman no Conjurer, a Farce, 1685.

VI. *A Duke and no Duke*, a Farce, 1685. This is taken from *Cockain's Trappolin*, supposed a Prince.

VII. *The Island Princess*, a Tragi-Comedy, 1687.

VIII. *King Lear*, an Historical Play, 1687. This is an Alteration of *Shakespeare's Lear*.

IX. *Injured Love*, or the cruel Husband, a Tragedy.

### THOMAS RYMER, Esq;

This Gentleman was a Member of the Society of *Gray's-Inn*, and succeeded Mr. *Shadwell* as Historiographer to King *William* III. His Collection called the *Foedera*, is a very valuable Work, and indeed he seems to be a better Historian than Critic or Poet. He wrote one Play, called

*Edgar*, or the *English Monarch*, a Tragedy, 1678.

Mr.



## Mr. JOHN BANCROFT.

This Author, by Profession, was a Surgeon, and wrote two Plays.

I. *Sertorius*, a Tragedy, 1679. Those who would read the Foundation of this Play, may consult *Plutarch's* Life of *Sertorius* : *Velleius Paterculus*, lib. 2. *Florus* lib. 2. c. 22. &c.

II. *Henry the Second*, with the Death of *Rosamond*, a Tragedy, 1693.

## Mr. EDWARD ECCLESTON.

A Gentleman who wrote one Dramatic Piece, called *Noah's Flood*, or the Destruction of the World, an Opera, 1679. It afterwards appeared under two different Titles, viz. *Cataplasm*, or General Deluge of the World. *The Deluge*, or the Destruction of the World.

## Mr. JOHN BANKS.

This Gentleman was bred an Attorney at Law, of the Society of *New-Inn* ; he published seven Tragedies.

I. *The Rival Kings*, or the Loves of *Oroondates* and *Stattira*, a Tragedy, 1679. The Play is founded chiefly on *Cassandra*, a famed Romance.

II. *The Destruction of Troy*, a Tragedy, 1679.

III. *Virtue betrayed*, or *Anna Bullen*, a Tragedy, 1682. The Author has followed a little Novel translated from the *French*, and called the Novels of *Elizabeth* Queen of *England*, containing the History of Queen *Ann Bullen*.

IV. *The Unhappy Favourite*, or the Earl of *Effex*, a Tragedy, 1682. The Play is founded on a Novel, called the Secret History of the most Renowned Queen *Elizabeth* and the Earl of *Effex*, printed in 12mo. *Lond.* 1680. For the true Story, see *Cambden's Elizabeth*, *Speed*, *Duchesne*, *Stow*, *Baker*, &c.

V. *The Island Queens*, or the Death of *Mary* Queen of *Scotland*, a Tragedy, 1684.

VI. *The Innocent Usurper*, or the Death of the Lady *Jane Gray*, a Tragedy, 1694.

VII. *Cyrus the Great*, a Tragedy, 1696.

## Capt. WILLIAM BEDLOE.

A famous Evidence in the Popish Plot. He wrote one Play, called

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The

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The Excommunicated Prince, or the False Relick, a Tragedy, 1679. Some ascribe this Play, at least the greatest Part of it, to *Thomas Walter*, an Oxford Scholar of *Jesus College*.

### Mr. JOHN MAIDWELL.

A private School-master in *London*, who wrote one Play, called

The Loving Enemies, a Comedy, 1680.

### Mr. WILLIAM WHITAKER.

A Gentleman who published one Play, called  
The Conspiracy, or Change of Government, a Tragedy, 1680.

### Mr. THOMAS BETTERTON.

This *English Roscius* was born in 1638, in *Tuttle-street, Westminster*, his Father being Under-Cook to King *Charles I.* He was put Apprentice to Mr. *Rhodes*, Bookseller, near *Charing-Cross*, who having been Wardrobe-Keeper to the King's Company of Comedians in the *Black-Fryars*, obtained a Licence to set up a Company of Players at the *Cock-Pit* in *Drury-Lane*.

Mr. *Berterton* was entered in this Company before he was twenty Years of Age, and soon acquired the Reputation of a promising Genius. While he was rising to Perfection under Mr. *Rhodes*, *Charles II.* granted a Patent to Sir *William D'avenant* for erecting a Company, under the Name of the Duke of *York's* Servants, who took Mr. *Berterton*, and all who acted under Mr. *Rhodes*, into his Company, in the Year 1662.

This great Actor brought five Plays upon the Stage.

I. The Revenge, or a Match in *Newgate*, a Comedy, 1682. This is built on *Marston's Dutch Courtezan*.

II. The Woman made a Justice, a Comedy. This Play was never printed.

III. The Unjust Judge, or *Appius and Virginia*, a Tragedy, written originally by Mr. *Webster*, but revived and very much altered by Mr. *Berterton*, 1694.

IV. *Dioclesian*, or the Prophets, a Dramatic Opera, 1707.

V. The Amorous Widow, or the Wanton Wife, a Comedy.

Mr.

## Mr. CHARLES SAUNDERS.

This Gentleman, while he was a King's Scholar at *Westminster* School, wrote one Play, called *Tamerlane the Great*, a Tragedy, 1681.

## Mr. THOMAS SOUTHERN.

This Gentleman was born in *Ireland*, in the City of *Dublin*, and received his first Education in the University there; but afterwards, in the Year 1678, when about eighteen Years of Age, he went for *England*, and entered himself in the *Middle-Temple*. At the Time of *Monmouth's* Rebellion, he was of the Soldiery, and had a Captain's Commission under King *James II.* He wrote several Plays with different Success, and having acquired a handsome Fortune, spent the latter part of his Days in quiet. He died on the 26th of *May*, in the Year 1746, in the Eighty-sixth Year of his Age. His Dramatic Pieces are,

I. *The Loyal Brother, or the Persian Prince*, a Tragedy, 1682.

II. *The Disappointment, or the Mother in Fashion*, a Comedy, 1684.

III. *Sir Anthony Love, or the Rambling Lady*, a Comedy, 1690.

IV. *The Wives Excuse, or Cuckolds make themselves*, a Comedy, 1692.

V. *The Maid's Last Prayer, or Any thing rather than fail*, a Comedy, 1693.

VI. *The Fatal Marriage, or the Innocent Adultery*, a Play, 1694.

VII. *Oroonoko*, a Tragedy, 1696.

VIII. *The Fate of Capua*, a Tragedy, 1700.

IX. *The Spartan Dame*, a Tragedy, 1722.

This Play was written before the *Revolution*, but never permitted to be acted before, tho' the Author had often solicited for Leave.

X. *Money's the Mistress*, a Comedy, 1725.

## Mr. HENRY SMITH.

A Gentleman of *Clifford's-Inn*, who wrote one Play, called *The Princess of Parma*, 1683.

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Mr.

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### Mr. JAMES CARLILE.

This Author was a Player, but quitted the Stage in his Youth, and served in the *Irish* Wars under King *William* III. where he lost his Life at the Battle of *Agbrim*. He wrote one Play, called

The Fortune-Hunters, or two Fools well met, a Comedy, 1685.

### Mr. JOHN TUTCHIN.

He was the Author of a weekly Paper, called the *Observer*; for which he was sentenced to be whipped thro' several Market Towns in the West of *England*; to avoid the Severity of which, he petitioned the King to be hanged; nevertheless he did not die till the Reign of the late Queen *Anne*.

He wrote one Dramatic Piece, called

The Unfortunate Shepherd, a Pastoral, printed with a Collection of Poems, 1685.

### Mr. THOMAS JEVON,

An excellent Comedian, who wrote one Piece, called

The Comical Transformation, or the Devil of a Wife, a Farce, 1686.

### Mr. BEVIL HIGGONS.

A Gentleman, who followed the Fortune of King *James* II. and died in Exile at the Court of *St. Germain's* in *France*. He wrote one Play, called

The Generous Conqueror, a Tragedy, 1687.

### Mr. WILLIAM MOUNTFORT.

He was an eminent Actor, of a genteel Person, with an agreeable Aspect, a clear and melodious Voice, and gave great Satisfaction as an Actor.

He was unfortunately murdered in *Norfolk-street*, in the *Strand*, on Account of Mrs. *Bracegirdle* then a young Actress under his Care. He wrote five Plays.

I. The Injured Lovers, or the Ambitious Father, a Tragedy, 1688.

II. *Edward* III. with the Fall of *Mortimer* Earl of *March*, 1690.

III. The Successful Strangers, a Comedy, 1690.

IV. *Greenwich* Park, a Comedy, 1691.

V. The

V. The Life and Death of Doctor *Faustus*, with the Humours of *Harlequin* and *Scaramouch*, a Farce, 1692.

Mr. MANNING.

This Gentleman was a Person of eminent Learning, and translated *Dion Cassius* from the Original. He was Author of one Play, called

All for the Better, or the Infallible Cure, a Comedy, 1689.

Mr. ROBERT WILD.

This Author was a dissenting Teacher, and the Author of *Iter Boreale*, and some other Poems, and of one Play, called

The Benefice, a Comedy, 1689.

Mr. GEORGE POWEL.

An excellent Actor in the Meridian of his Life, but in its decline *Bacchus* had too strong an Influence over him to support his former Esteem. He wrote and altered the following Plays.

I. *Brutus of Alba*, or *Augustus's* Triumph, a Dramatic Opera, 1690.

II. The Treacherous Brother, a Tragedy, 1690.

III. *Alphonso* King of *Naples*, a Tragedy, 1691.

IV. A very good Wife, a Comedy, 1695.

V. *Bonduca*, or the *British* Heroine (altered from *Fletcher's* Play of the same Title) 1696. He died of a Fever, 1714.

Mr. BARKER.

This Author has wrote two Plays, both without a Date, neither do the Titles mention their having been acted.

I. The Beau defeated, or the lucky younger Brother, a Comedy.

II. *Fidelia* and *Fortunatus*, about 1690.

WILLIAM CONGREVE, Esq;

This Gentleman was descended from the ancient Family of the *Congreves* of *Congreve* in the County of *Stafford*. He turned his Thoughts very early to the Muses, and wrote his first Play when he was very young. His Comedy called *Love for Love*, with which the new House in *Lincoln's Inn Fields* opened in 1693, had so great Success, that Mr. *Betterton* and

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the other Managers of that Theatre offered him a whole Share with them in their Profits, which he accepted, and obliged himself, if his Health permitted, to give them one new Play every Year.

In 1697, Mr. *Jeremy Collier*, a Nonjuring Clergyman, wrote his Treatise against the Profaneness and Immorality of the Stage, in which he fell more severely upon Mr. *Congreve* and Sir *John Vanbrugh* than on any others: It is perhaps to this Controversy we owe the present Decency of our Dramatic Compositions. His Plays are,

I. *The Old Batchelor*, a Comedy, 1691. This Comedy was wrote when he was but nineteen Years of Age.

II. *The Double Dealer*, a Comedy, 1692.

III. *Love for Love*, a Comedy, 1663.

IV. *The Mourning Bride*, a Tragedy, 1696.

V. *The Way of the World*, a Comedy, 1699.

VI. *Semcle*, an Opera, not performed when it was first written; but was lately set to Musick by Mr. *Handel*.

VII. *The Judgment of Paris*, a Masque, set to Music.

### Mr. RUBEN BOURNE.

A Gentleman of the *Temple*, who left one Play under the Title of

*The Contented Cuckold, or the Woman's Advocate*, 1692.

### HENRY HIGDEN, Esq;

This Gentleman was a Member of the *Middle-Temple*, and wrote one Play, called

*The Wary Widow, or Sir Noisy Parrot*, a Comedy, 1693.

### Mr. THOMAS WRIGHT.

This Author, who was Machinist to the Theatre, wrote one Play, called

*The Female Virtuofos*, a Comedy, 1693.

### Mr. JOHN DENNIS,

Was born in *London* in 1657. His Father was an eminent Merchant, who bestowed a liberal Education on him. He was some Time at *Caïus College, Cambridge*, and afterwards made the Tour of *France* and *Italy*, with Lord *Francis Seymour*, afterwards Duke of *Somerset*. His Dramatic Pieces are,

I. *Rinaldo*, and *Armida*, a Tragedy, 1694.

II. Plot

- II. Plot and no Plot,<sup>d</sup> or Jacobite Credulity, a Comedy, 1695.
- III. *Gibraltar*, or the *Spanish* Adventure, a Comedy, 1696.
- IV. *Iphigenia*, a Tragedy, 1697.
- V. Liberty Asserted, a Tragedy, 1704.
- VI. *Appius* and *Virginia*, a Tragedy, 1709.
- VII. The Comical Gallant, with the Humours of Sir *John Falstaff*, 1710.
- VIII. *Coriolanus*, the Invader of his Country, a Tragedy, 1720.

He died at his Lodgings near *Charing-Cross*, (where he lived several Years to screen himself from the Law) *January* the 6th 1733-4, in the 77th Year of his Age.

Rev. Mr. LAURENCE ECHARD.

This Gentleman gave the Public a Translation of the Comedies of *Terence*, and three of those of *Plautus*, viz.

- I. *Amphitryon*, 1694.
- II. *Epidicus*.
- III. *Rudens*. With critical Remarks to each Play; and a Parallel between *Terence* and *Plautus*.

Mr. CHARLES HOPKINS.

This Gentleman was the Son of Dr. *Hopkins*, Bishop of *Londonderry*, in the Kingdom of *Ireland*; he had a promising Genius, but died young. The Harmony of his Numbers was admired in his Translation of *Ovid's Art of Love*. He wrote three Plays:

- I. *Pyrrhus* King of *Epirus*, a Tragedy, 1694.
- II. *Boadicea*, Queen of *Britain*, a Tragedy, 1697.
- III. *Friendship improved*, or the Female Warrior, a Tragedy, 1698.

Mrs. DE LA RIVIER MANLEY.

This Lady was the Daughter of Sir *Roger Manley*, born in the Island of *Guernsey*, when her Father was Governor there: Sir *Roger* is said to have been the real Author of that celebrated Work, the *Turkish Spy*. Mrs. *Manley* was taken great Notice of for her Writings, particularly a Work in four Volumes called *Memoirs of the new Atalantis*, in which she was very free with the Characters of many Persons of Quality and Distinction. She wrote the four following Plays.

I. The

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I. *The Loft Lover, or the Jealous Husband, a Comedy, 1696.*

II. *The Royal Mischief, a Tragedy, 1698.*

III. *Almyna, or the Arabian Vow, a Tragedy, 1707.*

IV. *Lucius the first Christian King of Britain, a Tragedy, 1717.*

Mr. ROBERT GOULD.

A Domestic of the Earl of *Dorset* and *Middlesex*; who afterwards became a Country School-master. He wrote one Play, called

*The Rival Sisters, or the Violence of Love, a Tragedy, 1696.*

The Right Honourable GEORGE GRANVILLE, Lord LANSDOWNE.

This accomplished Nobleman was descended from the Ancient and Noble Family of the *Granvilles*, seated for many Ages in *Devonshire* and *Cornwall*.

He received the first Rudiments of Education in *Paris*, under the Tuition of the Learned Sir *William Ellis*: At ten Years of Age, he was called back to *England*, and at eleven was sent to *Trinity-College, Cambridge*. Besides his Poems, &c. he is Author of the following Dramatic Pieces.

I. *The She Gallants, a Comedy, 1696.*

II. *Heroic Love, a Tragedy, 1702.*

III. *The British Enchanters, or No Magic like Love, a Dramatic Opera, 1707.*

IV. *The Jew of Venice, a Comedy from Shakespear, 1708.*

V. *Peleus and Thetis, a Masque.*

Mr. JOSEPH HAINES, (commonly called Count HAINES.)

There is one Play that goes under his Name, called *A Fatal Mistake, or the Plot spoiled.*

This excellent Comedian died of a Fever, (after a short Illness) *April* the 4th 1701, at his Lodgings in *Hart Street Long Acre*, and was buried in *Covent-Garden Church Yard*.

Mr. THOMAS SCOTT.

This Gentleman received his first Education at *Westminster School*, from whence he removed to the University of *Cambridge*, and was afterwards Secretary to the Earl of *Roxburgh*. He wrote two Plays.

I. *The Mock Marriage, a Comedy, 1696.*

II. *The*



II. *The Unhappy Marriage, or a Fruitless Revenge, a Tragedy, 1698.*

Mrs. CATHARINE TROTHER,

A Gentlewoman descended of *Scots* Parents, but born and bred in *England*.

Her Dramatic Pieces are,

I. *Agnes de Castro, a Tragedy, 1696.*

II. *Fatal Friendship, a Tragedy, 1698.*

III. *The Unhappy Penitent, a Tragedy, 1701.*

IV. *Love at a Loss, or Most Votes carry it, a Comedy, 1704.*

V. *The Revolution of Sweden, a Tragedy. 1707.*

Mr. JOHN DRYDEN, Junior.

The Son of the great Mr. *Dryden*. He went when young to *Rome*; where he was entertained by the Pope, as one of the Grooms of the Bed-chamber. He wrote one Play, called *The Husband his own Cuckold, a Comedy, 1696.*

COLLEY CIBBER, Esq; Poet Laureat.

His Dramatic Pieces are,

I. *Love's Last Shift, or the Fool in Fashion, a Comedy, 1696.*

II. *Woman's Wit, or the Lady in Fashion, a Comedy, 1697.*

III. *Xerxes, a Tragedy, 1699.*

IV. *Love makes a Man, or the Fop's Fortune, a Comedy, 1700.*

V. *She would and She would not, or the Kind Impostor, a Comedy, 1703.*

VI. *The Careless Husband, a Comedy, 1704.*

VII. *Perolla and Izadora, 1706.*

VIII. *The Rival Fools, a Comedy, 1708.*

IX. *The Lady's last Stake, or the Wife's Repentment, a Comedy, 1709.*

X. *Richard III. a Tragedy, altered from two or three of Shakespear's Plays, 1710.*

XI. *The Double Gallant, or the Sick Lady's Cure, a Comedy, 1710.*

XII. *The Comical Lovers, a Comedy, 1712.*

XIII. *The School-Boy, a Farce, 1712.*

XIV. *Ximena, or the Heroic Daughter, a Tragedy, taken from the *Cid* of Racine, 1713.*

XV. The

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XV. *The Nonjuror*, a Comedy, 1717.

XVI. *Venus and Adonis*, a Masque, set to Music by Dr. Pepusch, 1717.

XVII. *Myrtilla*, a Pastoral Interlude, 1717.

XVIII. *The Refusal, or the Ladies Philosophy*, a Comedy, 1720.

XIX. *Cæsar in Egypt*, a Tragedy, 1725.

XX. *The Provoked Husband*, or a Journey to London, a Comedy, 1727. This Play was begun by Sir John Vanbrugh, and after his Death finished by Mr. Cibber. What the latter has added may be seen by comparing this Piece with what Sir John left, printed by itself under the Title of a Journey to London.

XXI. *Love in a Riddle*, a Pastoral Opera, 1728.

XXII. *Damon and Pbillida*, a Ballad Farce.

XXIII. *Papal Tyranny in the Reign of King John*, a Tragedy, 1744.

XXIV. *Hob*, or the Country Wake, a Farce, altered from Dogget's Comedy of the Country Wake.

XXV. *The Rival Queens*, with the Humours of Alexander the Great, a Burlesque on Lee's Rival Queens.

This Piece, tho' mentioned last, was acted near forty Years ago, and not printed till 1729 in Dublin.

Mr. THOMAS DILKE.

This Gentleman was of *Oriel-College, Oxford*, and afterwards a Captain of Foot. He wrote three Plays, viz.

I. *The Lover's Luck*, a Comedy, 1696.

II. *The City Lady, or Folly Reclaimed*, a Comedy, 1697.

III. *The Pretenders, or Town Unmasked*, a Comedy, 1700.

Mr. PETER MOTTEUX,

Was born and bred at *Roban in Normandy*: and came over very young into *England* on account of the Persecution of the Protestants there.

This unfortunate Gentleman was found dead in a disorderly House in the Parish of *St. Clements Danes*, not without suspicion of having been murdered, on which Account the Woman of the House and some others took their Trials at the *Old Bailey*, and were acquitted.

He died in the 57th Year of his Age; and was interred in the Parish Church of *St. Mary Axe*.

His Dramatic Pieces are,

I. *Love's a Jest*, a Comedy, 1696.

II. The

- II. The Loves of *Mars* and *Venus*, a Comic Masque, 1696.  
 III. The Novelty, or Every Act a Play, consisting of a Pastoral, Comedy, Masque, Tragedy and Farce, 1697.  
 1. A Piece, or Act of *Thyrsis*.  
 2. All for Money.  
 3. *Hercules*.  
 4. The Unfortunate Couple.  
 5. Natural Magic.  
 IV. *Europe's* Revels for the Peace and his Majesty's happy Return, an Interlude, 1697.  
 V. Beauty in Distress, a Tragedy, 1698.  
 VI. The Amorous Miser, or the Younger the Wiser, a Comedy.  
 VII. *Acis* and *Galatea*, a Masque.  
 VIII. Love Dragooned, a Farce.  
 IX. The Island Princess, or the Generous Portuguese, a Dramatic Opera, altered from *Fletcher*.  
 X. *Arfinoe* Queen of *Cyprus*, an Opera.  
 XI. *Tomyris* Queen of *Scythia*, an Opera.

## Mrs. MARY PIX.

This Gentlewoman was the Daughter of Mr. *Griffith*, a Clergyman, at *Nettlebed* in *Oxfordshire*. She has left seven Dramatic Pieces.

- I. The *Spanish* Wives, a Farce, 1696.  
 II. *Ibrahim* the XII. Emperor of the Turks, a Tragedy, 1696.  
 III. The Innocent Mistress, a Comedy, 1697.  
 IV. Queen *Catharine*, or the Ruins of Love, a Tragedy, 1698.  
 V. The Deceiver Deceived, a Comedy.  
 VI. The *Czar* of *Muscovy* a Tragedy.  
 VII. The Double Distress, a Tragedy.

## Mr. JOSEPH HARRIS.

This Author was a Comedian. He published two Plays.

- I. The City Bride, or the Merry Cuckold, a Comedy, 1696.  
 II. The Mistakes, or the False Report, a Comedy, 1700.

## Mr. THOMAS DOGGET,

A Humorous Comedian, who was born in *Castle-Street*, *Dublin*, and made his first Essay as an Actor on the *Irish* Theatre; but not meeting with Encouragement, he went to *England*, and joined a travelling Company.

He

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He wrote one Comedy, called  
The Country Wake, 1696.

He was a Whig up to the Head and Ears, as Sir *Richard Steele* called him, and to show his Loyalty to the *Hanover* Line, gave a Sum of Money for a Silver Badge to be annually rowed for on the *Thames* the first of *August*, the Day of his Majesty King *George I.* his Accession to the Throne.

### Mr. CHARLES GILDON.

This Gentleman was born at *Gillingham* near *Shaftesbury* in *Dorsetshire*. He had the first Rudiments of his Education at the Place of his Nativity, from whence his Relations, who were *Roman Catholics*, sent him to the *English* College at *Dorway* in *Hainault*, with Design to make him a Priest, but after five Years Study, he found his Inclinations led him another Way. He wrote three Dramatic Pieces.

- I. The *Roman* Bride's Revenge, a Tragedy, 1697.
- II. *Phaeton*, or the Fatal Divorce, a Tragedy, written after the Manner of the Ancients.
- III. Love's Victim, or the Queen of *Waies*, a Tragedy.

### Dr. JAMES DRAKE.

This Gentleman was a Member of the College of Physicians. He wrote one Play, called  
The Sham Lawyer, or the Lucky Extravagant, a Comedy, 1697.

### Mr. EDWARD FILMER,

Was a Doctor of the Civil Law, and wrote one Play, called  
The Unnatural Brother, a Tragedy, 1697:

### Sir JOHN VANBRUGH.

This Gentleman was descended from an ancient Family in *Cheshire*, originally from *France*, though by the Name, it might be thought of *Dutch* Extraction.

Sir *John* was imprisoned in the Bastile in *Paris* as a Spy. The Occasion of that Misfortune was his being found taking Plans of some Fortifications; and many being found in his Possession confirmed their Belief. During his Confinement He wrote several of his Comedies, merely for Amusement. But speaking *French* with great Fluency and Elegance, several of the Nobility were so highly pleased with his Wit and  
Humour,

Mumour, that he was presented to the King of *France* in his proper Character, and by that means gained his Libery some Days before the Sollicitation came from *England*.

His Dramatic Pieces are,

- I. *The Relapse, or Virtue in Danger*, a Comedy, 1697. This Comedy is a Sequel to *Cibber's Love's last Shift*, most of the Characters being the same,
- II. *Æsop*, a Comedy, in two Parts, 1697.
- III. *The Provoked Wife*, a Comedy, 1698.
- IV. *The False Friend*, a Comedy, 1698.
- V. *The Country-House*, a Farce, 1704.
- VI. *The Confederacy*, a Comedy, 1705.
- VII. *The Cuckold in Conceit*, 1706.
- VIII. *Squire Trelooby*, a Comedy, 1706.
- IX. *The Mistake*, a Comedy, 1706.
- X. *A Journey to London*, a Comedy left unfinished.

Mr. JOHN DOVER.

A Gentleman of *Gray's-Inn*, who wrote one Dramatic Piece, called

*The Roman Generals, or the Distressed Ladies*, 1697.

WILLIAM PHILLIPS, Esq;

This Author wrote three Plays.

- I. *The Revengeful Queen*, a Tragedy, 1698.
  - II. *St. Stevens's Green, or the Generous Lovers*, a Comedy.
  - III. *Hibernia Freed*, a Tragedy, 1721.
- And a Farce called *Britons Strike home*.

Mr. HILDEBRAND HORDEN.

This Gentleman was the Son of Dr. *Horden*, Minister of *Twickenham* in *Middlesex*, an Actor of promising Merit, and most amiable Figure. He was unfortunately killed in an accidental Rencounter in the *Rose-Tavern* Passage as he was going to Rehearſal, for which Colonel *Burgeſs*, Reſident at *Venice*, and ſome other Perſons of Diſtinction, took their Trials, and were acquitted. He was the Author of a Play, called

*Neglected Virtue, or the Unhappy Conqueror*, a Tragedy, 1698.

Mr. WILLIAM WALKER,

A Gentleman of good Family, born in the Iſland of *Barbadoes*, where his Father was a conſiderable Planter, who ſent

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sent him over to *England* for Education at *Eton* College. He wrote two Plays,

- I. *Victorious Love*, a Tragedy, 1698.
- II. *Marry, or do Worfe*, a Comedy, 1707.

### Mr. GEORGE FARQUHAR.

Was born in the North of *Ireland*, of Parents that held no mean Rank in that part of the Country, who having a numerous Issue could bestow on him no other Fortune than a genteel Education; which he compleated in the University of *Dublin*, where he acquired a considerable Reputation.

He wrote his first Comedy of *Love and a Bottle* at nineteen, and was peculiarly happy in the Choice of his Subjects, which he took care to adorn with Variety of Characters and Incidents.

He attempted to play the Part of *Sir Harry Wildair* for his own Benefit in *Dublin*, which answered his Design in gaining a crowded Audience; but he executed the Part so lamely that his Friends were ashamed for him. Thus we see a good Poet may make but an indifferent Actor. His Plays were wrote in Order as follows.

- I. *Love and a Bottle*, a Comedy, 1698.
- II. *The Constant Couple*, a Comedy, 1700. This Piece was played fifty-three Nights the first Season.
- III. *Sir Harry Wildair*, a Comedy, 1701. A Sequel to the former, played nine Nights.
- IV. *The Inconstant, or the Way to win him*, a Comedy, 1703, played eleven Nights.
- V. *The Twin Rivals*, a Comedy, 1705, played 15 Nights.
- VI. *The Recruiting Officer*, a Comedy, 1707, played ten Nights.
- VII. *The Beaux Stratagem*, a Comedy, 1710, played ten Nights.
- VIII. *The Stage Coach*, a Farce.

His last Comedy was wrote in six Weeks, during a settled Illness all the while; he perceived the Approaches of Death before he had finished the last Act, and as he often foretold, died before the Run of the Play was over.

His Friend Mr. *Wilks*, often visited him in his Illness: In one of these Visits, he told Mr. *Farquhar*, that Mrs. *Oldfield* thought he had dealt too freely with the Character of Mrs. *Sullen*, in giving her to *Archer* without a proper Divorce,

orce, which was not a Security for her Honour; To falve that, replied the Author, I'll get a real Divorce, marry her myself, and give her my Bond she shall be a real Widow in less than a Fortnight.

When he expired, Mr. *Wilks* took care to bury him decently in St. *Martin's* in the Fields, and found among his Papers this short Note.

Dear Bob,

I Have not any thing to leave thee to perpetuate my Memory, but two helpless Girls; look upon them sometimes, and think of him that was to the last Moment of his Life thine,

*George Farquhar.*

#### Mr. WILLIAM WILKINSON.

The Author of one Play, called  
Vice Reclaimed, or the Passionate Mistress, a Comedy,  
1699.

#### NICHOLAS ROWE, Esq;

This Gentleman was the Son of *John Rowe*, Esq; Serjeant at Law, descended from a good Family in the County of *Devon*. He was educated at *Westminster* School under the Learned Dr. *Bushy*, and from thence removed to the *Middle Temple*, where he studied the Law, and was called to the Bar.

His Dramatic Pieces are,

I. The Ambitious Stepmother, a Tragedy, 1699.

II. *Tamerlane*, a Tragedy, 1702.

III. The Fair Penitent, a Tragedy, 1703.

IV. The Biter, a Comedy, 1704.

V. *Ulysses*, a Tragedy, 1706.

VI. The Royal Convert, a Tragedy, 1708.

VII. The Tragedy of *Jane Shore*, 1713.

VIII. The Tragedy of the Lady *Jane Gray*, 1715.

Mr. *Rowe* translated *Lucan's Pharsalia*, printed after his Death.

#### Mr. PAUL VEGERIUS.

This Gentleman translated from the *German*, a Play, called  
The Royal Cuckold, or Great Bastard, a Tragi-Comedy.

#### PLAYS

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P L A Y S

Wrote by ANONYMOUS AUTHORS, from the RESTORATION to the end of the 16th CENTURY.

- I. **T**HE Usurper detected, or Right will prevail, a Tragi-Comedy, 1660.
- II. The Subjects Day, or the King's Restoration, a Masque, 1660.
- III. *Andronicus's* Impieties long Success, or Heaven's late Revenge, 1660.
- IV. *Troades*, translated from *Seneca*, a Tragedy, 1660.
- V. Hell's High Court of Justice, or the Tryal of the politic Ghosts, viz. *Oliver Cromwell*, the King of *Sweden*, and Cardinal *Mazarine*, by J. D. 1661.
- VI. The Virgin Martyr, a Tragedy, 1661.
- VII. A Traytor to himself, or Man's Heart is his greatest Enemy, by J. R. 1661. This is a moral Piece, without any Female Characters.
- VIII. Love will find out the Way, a Comedy, 1661.
- IX. The Presbyterian Lash; or *Noctroff's* Maid whipped, 1661.
- X. The Levellers levelled, or the Independents Conspiracy to root out Monarchy, an Interlude, 1662.
- XI. The Marriage Broker, or the Pander, a Comedy, by W. M. M. A. 1662.
- XII. The Witty Combat, or the Female Victor, a Tragi-Comedy, 1663.
- XIII. The unfortunate Usurper, a Tragedy, 1663.
- XIV. Love Alamode, 1663.
- XV. The valiant *Welchman*, or the Life and valiant Deeds of *Charadoc* King of *Cambria* (now called *Wales*) a Tragi-Comedy, 1664.
- XVI. Knavery in all Trades, or the Coffee-House, a Comedy, 1664.
- XVII. *Menæchmi*, or the Brothers, a Comedy, 1664.
- XVIII. The unfortunate Favourite, a Tragedy, 1664.
- XIX. The Step-Mother, a Tragi-Comedy, 1664.
- XX. *Regicidium*, Tragi-Comœdia, 1665. This Play is the black Story of the Death of K. *Charles I.*
- XXI. The Divine Masque, 1666.
- XXII. *Elvira*, or the worst not always true, 1667.
- XXIII. *St. Cecily*, or the Converted Twins, a Tragi-Comedy, 1667.
- XXIV. *Al-*



- XXIV. *Alcarnenes and Menalippa*, a Tragi-Comedy, 1668.  
 XXV. *Mucedorus and Amadon*, with the Merry Conceits of *Moufe*, a Comedy, 1668. This Play by the Stile and Manner, must be much older than the Date.  
 XXVI. *The Unnatural Mother*, a Tragedy, 1669.  
 XXVII. *The Bloody Banquet*, a Tragedy, 1669.  
 XXVIII. *The cruel Debtor*, a Tragedy, 1669.  
 XXIX. *The Revolter*, a Tragedy, 1670.  
 XXX. *Flora's Vagaries*, a Comedy, 1670.  
 XXXI. *The Religious Rebel*, a Tragedy, 1671.  
 XXXII. *Doctor Dodipole*, a Comedy, 1671.  
 XXXIII. *Youth's Tragedy*, written for the Caution and Direction of the Younger sort, 1672.  
 XXXIV. *Youth's Comedy*, by the same Author, 1673. Neither of these Plays was intended for the Stage.  
 XXXV. *The Reformation*, a Comedy, 1673.  
 XXXVI. *Emilia*, a Tragedy, 1673.  
 XXXVII. *English Princess, or the Death of Richard III.* a Tragedy, 1673.  
 XXXVIII. *Fatal Jealousie*, a Tragedy, 1673  
 XXXIX. *A Morning Rambling, or the Town Humours,* a Comedy, 1673.  
 XL. *The Wits, or Sport upon Sport*, in two Parts.  
 This Piece consists of a Collection of Scenes from the most celebrated Plays with new Titles, which we shall set down, with the Names of the Plays they are taken from.

The Bouncing Knight,	taken from <i>Henry IV. Part I.</i>
<i>Jenkins's Love Course.</i>	The School of Compliments.
The False Heir	The Scornful Lady.
The Lame Commonwealth	Beggar's Bush.
The Mock Testator	The <i>Spanish</i> Curate.
A Prince in Conceit	Opportunity.
An equal Match	Rule a Wife.
The Stallion	Custom of the Country.
The Grave-makers	<i>Hamlet.</i>
Invisible Smirk	Merry Milkmaids.
Three Merry Boys	<i>Rollo Duke of Normandy.</i>
The Bubble	<i>Green's Tu Quoque.</i>
The Club Men	<i>Philaster.</i>
Forc'd Valour	Humorous Lieutenant.
	<i>Simpleton</i>

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<i>Simpleton, Simpkin, Hobbinal,</i> <i>Swabber</i>	<i>Cox's Diana and Ac-</i> <i>taon, &amp;c.</i>
<i>French Dancing-Master</i>	Variety.
The Landlady	Chances.
The Testy Lord	Maid's Tragedy.
The Empirick	Alchymist.
The Surprize	Father's own Son.

- XLI. *Wiltshire Tom*, supposed to be wrote by Mr. *Edwards*,  
 XLII. *Woman turned Bully*, a Comedy, 1674.  
 XLIII. *Siege of Constantinople*, a Tragedy, 1675.  
 XLIV. *The Amorous Gallant, or Love in Fashion*, a  
 Comedy, 1675.  
 XLV. *The Mock Duellists*, a Comedy, 1675.  
 XLVI. *Pifo's Conspiracy*, a Tragedy, 1676.  
 XLVII. *Fulgius and Lucretia*, a Pastoral from the *Italian*,  
 1676.  
 XLVIII. *Cromwell's Conspiracy*; a Tragi-Comedy, 1676.  
 XLIX. *Commons Condition*, a Comedy, 1676.  
 L. *As you find it*, a Comedy, 1676.  
 LI. *Rival Brothers*, a Tragedy, 1677.  
 LII. *The Debauchee, or the Credulous Cuckold*, a Co-  
 medy, 1677.  
 LIII. *The General cashiered*, a Tragi-Comedy, 1677.  
 LIV. *Portsmouth Heirefs, or the Generous Refusal*, a  
 Comedy, 1677.  
 LV. *The Counterfeit Bridegroom, or Defeated Widow*,  
 a Comedy, 1677.  
 LVI. *The Constant Nymph, or the Rambling Shepherd*,  
 by D. P. 1678.  
 LVII. *Tunbridge Wells; or a Day's Courtship*, a Co-  
 medy, 1678.  
 LVIII. *The Rival Mother*, a Comedy, 1678.  
 LIX. *Huntington's Divertisement*, a Comedy, 1678.  
 LX. *The French Conjuror*, a Comedy, 1678.  
 LXI. *The Counterfeits*, a Comedy, 1679.  
 LXII. *The different Widows, or Intrigue Alamode*, a  
 Comedy, 1679.  
 LXIII. *The Imposture defeated, or a Trick to cheat the*  
*Devil*, a Comedy, 1679.  
 LXIV. *The Spendthrift*, a Comedy, 1680.  
 LXV. *Alexis his Paradise*, a Dramatic Opera, 1680.  
 LXVI. *An Evening's Adventure, or a Night's Intrigue*,  
 a Comedy, 1680.

LXVII. The

- LXVII. *The Generous Cully*, a Comedy, 1680.
- LXVIII. *The Muse of New-Market*, consisting of three short Comedies, printed together, viz.
1. *The Merry Milk-Maids of Islington*, or the Rambling Gallants defeated.
  2. *Love lost in the Dark*, or the Drunken Couple.
  3. *The Politic Whore*, or the Conceited Cuckold, 1681.
- LXIX. *The Progress of Honesty*, a Dramatic Pastoral, by J. D. 1681.
- LXX. *Rome's Follies*, or the Amorous Fryars, a Comedy, 1681.
- LXXI. *The Siege and Surrender of Mons*, a Comedy, 1681.
- LXXII. *Christmas Ordinary*, an Interlude, 1682.
- LXXIII. *The Rape*, or the Innocent Impostor, a Comedy, 1682.
- LXXIV. *Master Turbulent*, or the Melancholics, a Comedy, 1682.
- LXXV. *Romulus and Hersilia*, or the Sabine War, a Tragedy, 1683.
- LXXVI. *The Amorous Old Woman*, a Comedy, 1684.
- LXXVII. *Altemira*, a Tragedy, 1685.
- LXXVIII. *The Rampant Alderman*, or News from the Exchange, a Comedy, 1685.
- LXXIX. *The Facetious Citizens*, or the Melancholy Visionary, a Comedy, 1685.
- LXXX. *Mistaken Beauty*, or the Lyar, a Comedy, from *Le Menteur* of Corneille, 1688.
- LXXXI. *The Feigned Astrologer*, a Comedy, 1688.
- LXXXII. *Cyrus King of Persia*, a Tragedy, 1688.
- LXXXIII. *The Revolution*, or the Happy Change.
- LXXXIV. *Love without Interest*, a Comedy, 1689.
- LXXXV. *Fashionable Lady*, or Wit in Necessity, a Comedy, 1689.
- LXXXVI. *The New Athenian Comedy*, a Satire on the Society.
- LXXXVII. *Sylla's Ghost*, a Dramatic Sayerical Piece, 1689.
- LXXXVIII. *The Royal Voyage*, or the *Irish Expedition*, a Tragi-Comedy, 1690.
- LXXXIX. *The Royal Flight*, or the Conquest of *Ireland*, a Farce, 1690.
- XC. *The Folly of Priestcraft*, a Comedy, 1690.
- XCI. The

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XCI. The Battle of *Sedgmore*, a Farce, (said to be wrote by *Villiers Duke of Buckingham*), 1690.

XCII. The Banish'd Duke, or the Tragedy of *Fortunatus*, 1690.

XCIII. The Bloody Duke, or the Adventures of a Crown, 1690.

XCIV. The Abdicated Prince, or the Adventures of four Years, a Tragi-Comedy, 1690.

XCV. The Generous Choice, a Comedy, 1691.

XCVI. The Generous Cully, a Comedy, 1691.

XCVII. Sir *Giddy Whim*, or the Unlucky Amour, 1691.

XCVIII. The Rover reclaimed, a Comedy, 1691.

XCIX. The Roving Husband reclaimed, a Comedy, 1691.

C. Wit for Money, or Poet *Stutter*, a Farce, 1691.

This is a poor Performance, wrote in ridicule of *Durfey's Love for Money*, or the Boarding-School, a Comedy.

CI. Win her, and take her, or old Fools will be meddling, a Comedy, 1691.

CII. All Bedeviled, a Farce, 1691.

CIII. Love's Lottery, a Comedy, 1692.

CIV. The Rehearsal of Kings, 1692.

CV. The Siege of *Derry*, a Tragi-Comedy, 1692.

CVI. Piety and Valour, or *Derry* defended, a Tragi-Comedy, 1692.

CVII. Fairy Queen, a Dramatic Opera, 1692.

CVIII. The Battle of *Aughrim*, or the Fall of *St. Ruth*, an Heroic Tragedy in Verse, 1694.

CIX. The Fickle Shepherdes, a Pastoral Comedy, 1695.

CX. She ventures, he wins, a Comedy, 1696.

CXI. The *Cornish* Comedy, 1696.

CXII. The Braggadocio, or the Bawd turned Puritan, 1696.

CXIII. *Pausanias*. or the Betrayer of his Country, a Tragedy, 1696.

CXIV. *Timoleon*, or the Revolution, a Tragi-Comedy, 1667.

CXV. The Triumphs of Virtue, a Tragi-Comedy, 1697.

CXVI. The Female Wits, or a Triumvirate of Poets, 1697.

CXVII. The Unfortunate Mother, a Tragedy, 1698.

CXVIII. The Conquest of *Spain* by the *Moors*, a Tragedy, 1698.

CXIX. The Fatal Discovery, or Love in Ruins, a Tragedy, 1698.

CXX. The

CXX. The Patriot, or the *Italian* Conspiracy, 1693.

CXXI. The Stage Beau tofs'd in a Blanket, 1699.

CXXII. The Quaker's Wedding, a Comedy, 1699.

The following Plays were published in this Century ; but as we cannot ascertain their Dates, have placed them at the End of this Period.

I. The Cares of Love, a Comedy.

II. The Conscientious Lovers, a Comedy.

III. The Faithful General, a Tragi-Comedy. This is an Alteration of *Fletcher's* Loyal Subject.

IV. The Faithful Shepherd, a Pastoral Comedy, from the *Italian*, by D. D. Gent.

V. The Pedlar, his Prophecy, an Interlude.

VI. The Self Rival, a Comedy.

VII. A Trick to catch the Old One, a Comedy.

VIII. Free Will, a Tragedy.

IX. *Zelma*, or the *Corinthian* Queen, a Tragedy.

Dramatic AUTHORS from 1700, to the present Time.

Mr. A. CHAVES.

THE Author of one Play, called  
The Lover's Cure, a Comedy, 1700.

CHARLES BURNABY, Esq;

This Gentleman was a Member of the *Inner-Temple*, and had a University Education. He was Author of four Plays.

I. Love betrayed, or the agreeable Disappointment, a Comedy, 1701.

II. The Modish Husband, a Comedy, 1702.

III. The Ladies Visiting Day, a Comedy, 1703.

IV. The Reformed Wife, a Comedy, 1705.

Mrs. SUSANNA CENTLIVRE,

Was born in *Lincolnshire*, and sprung from a Reputable Family in that County. She died in 1723, in the 56th Year of her Age. The Plays she wrote are as follow.

I. The Perjured Husband, a Tragedy, 1702.

II. Beau's Duel, or a Soldier for the Ladies, a Comedy, 1703.

III. The stolen Heiress, or the *Salamanca* Doctor outwitted, a Comedy, 1704.

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IV. The

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- IV. The Gamester ; a Comedy, 1704.  
V. The Basset-Table ; a Comedy, 1705.  
VI. Love at a Venture ; a Comedy, 1705.  
VII. Love's Contrivances, or *Le Medicin malgre lui* ; a Comedy, 1705.  
VIII. The Busy-Body ; a Comedy, 1708.  
IX. *Marplot*, the second Part of the Busy-Body, 1709.  
X. The *Platonick* Lady ; a Comedy, 1710.  
XI. The Perplexed Lovers ; a Comedy, 1710.  
XII. The Man's bewitched, or the Devil to do about her ; a Comedy, 1713.  
XIII. The Wonder, a Woman keeps a Secret ; a Comedy, 1714.  
XIV. The Cruel Gift ; a Tragedy, 1716. Mr. *Rowe* assisted in this.  
XV. A *Gotham* Election ; a Farce.  
XVI. A Wife well managed ; a Farce.  
These two Farces were printed 1716, but never acted.  
XVII. A *Bickerstaff's* Burial, a Work for the Upholders ; a Farce, 1717.  
XVIII. A Bold Stroke for a Wife ; a Comedy, 1718.  
XIX. The Artifice ; a Comedy, 1721.  
Most of her Comedies have a *French* Extraction.

Sir EDWARD SHERBURNE, Bart.

This Gentleman translated the following Tragedies of *Seneca*.

- I. *Medea*.  
II. *Thebais*.  
III. *Hercules*. Illustrated with Notes, 1702.  
IV. *Troades*, or the Royal Captives.

Mr. ABEL BOYER,

A *Frenchman*, who for many Years was concerned in writing a News-Paper, called the Post-Boy ; he likewise published a Monthly Piece, called the Political State of *Great-Britain* ; the Life of *Queen Anne*, in Folio ; a *French* Dictionary, and a *French* Grammar, which have been always esteemed the best in their Kind. He wrote, or rather translated from the *French* of *Racine*, one Play, called *Achilles*, or *Iphigenia* in *Aulis*, a Tragedy, 1702.

Sir RICHARD STEELE.

He was born in the Kingdom of *Ireland*, and in the City of *Dublin* ; but leaving that Country very young, had his Educa-

Education at the *Charter-House, London*, being School-fellow with Mr. *Addison*, with whom he contracted an Intimacy and Friendship that continued as long as they lived. The Public are indebted to him, for that agreeable Entertainment they have received from those elegant Papers, called the *Tatler*, the *Spectator*, *Guardian*, *Englishman*, *Lover*, *Reader*, and *Theatre*. He wrote the four following Plays,

- I. *The Funeral, or Grief A-la-mode*; a Comedy, 1702.
- II. *The Tender Husband, or the Accomplished Fools*; a Comedy, 1703.
- III. *The Lying Lovers, or the Ladies Friendship*; a Comedy, 1704.
- IV. *The Conscious Lovers*; a Comedy, 1721.

Mr. THOMAS BAKER,

Was the Son of an eminent Attorney, in the City of *London*, and wrote five Plays.

- I. *The Humours of the Age*; a Comedy, 1704.
- II. *An Act at Oxford*, 1705.
- III. *Tunbridge Walks, or the Yeoman of Kent*, a Comedy, 1706.
- IV. *Hampstead Heath*; a Comedy, 1707.
- V. *The Fine Ladies Airs, or an Equipage of Lovers*; a Comedy, 1708.

DAVID CRAUFORD, Esq;

This Author was a Gentleman of *North-Britain*, and wrote two Plays.

- I. *Courtship A-la-mode*; a Comedy.
- II. *Love at first Sight*; a Comedy, 1704.

Rev. Dr. JOSEPH TRAPP.

He was educated at *Wadham College in Oxford*; of which University he was sometime Poetry Professor. He has translated *Virgil's Æneis*, in blank Verse, in three Volumes, and the following Play.

*Abramule, or Love and Empire*; a Tragedy, 1704.

Mr. CHARLES JOHNSON.

This Author was very happy in an Intimacy with Mr. *Wilks*, through whose Friendship he had a Play acted almost every Year. His Dramatic Pieces are,

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I. For-

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- I. Fortune in her Wits; a Comedy, 1705. It is a very indifferent Translation of Mr. Cowley's *Naufragium Joculare*.
- II. The Force of Friendship, a Tragedy, 1710.
- III. Love in a Chest, a Farce, 1710.
- IV. The Wife's Relief, or the Husband's Cure, a Comedy. It is chiefly borrowed from *Shirley's Gamester*, 1711.
- V. The Successful Pirate, a Tragi-Comedy, 1712.
- VI. The Generous Husband, or the Coffee-house Politician, a Comedy, 1713.
- VII. The Country Lasses, or the Custom of the Manor. a Comedy, 1714.
- VIII. Love and Liberty, a Tragedy, 1715.
- IX. The Victim, a Tragedy, 1715.
- X. The Sultaneſs, a Tragedy, 1717.
- XI. The Cobbler of *Preston*, a Farce of two Acts, 1717.
- XII. Love in a Forest, a Comedy, 1721. Taken from *Shakeſpear's* Comedy of, *As you like it*.
- XIII. The Masquerade, a Comedy, 1723.
- XIV. The Village Opera, 1728.
- XV. The *Ephesian* Matron, a Farce of one Act, 1730.
- XVI. *Celia*, or the Perjured Lovers, a Tragedy, 1732.

### MARTIN BLADEN, Esq;

This Gentleman was once in the Army, and had the Commission of a Lieutenant-Colonel in the Reign of *Queen Anne*. He translated *Cæſar's* Commentaries into *English*, was one of the Lords Commissioners of Trade and Plantations, and Member of Parliament for *Portsmouth*. He died *May 1740*. He wrote one Play, called

*Solon*, or Philosophy no Defence against Love, a Tragi-Comedy, 1705. To which was added a Masque, called, *Orpheus and Euridice*.

### The Right Hon. Lord Viscount GRIMSTON.

This Nobleman wrote one Play in his Youth, called *The Lawyer's Fortune*, or *Love in a Hollow Tree*, a Comedy, never acted, but printed in the Year 1705; and reprinted, with an Elephant dancing on the Ropes for the Frontispiece.

### Mr. JOHN COREY,

Was born at *Barnſtople* in *Devonſhire*, and ſprung from a ancient Family in that County. He was entered a Student



dent of *New-Imm*, but admiring the Buskin he took to the Theatre. He was a just Speaker, but Nature having denied him a graceful Person, tho' blessed with a very good Voice, he never made any considerable Figure as an Actor. He wrote two Plays,

I. *The Metamorphosis, or the Old Lover outwitted*, a Comedy.

II. *A Cure for Jealousy*, a Comedy, 1705.

#### Mr. RICHARD ESTCOURT.

This Author was born in *Gloucestershire*, and served his Apprenticeship to an Apothecary in *Hatton-Garden, London*; but afterwards, when he set up for himself, not finding Trade to answer so well as he expected, he went over to *Ireland*, and entered himself in the Company of Players belonging to the Theatre in *Dublin*. He went afterwards for *England*, and was received into *Drury-Lane Theatre*.

Mr. *Estcourt* was so much courted for his Mimicry, that Persons of the greatest Quality frequently invited him to their Entertainments, and made him many Presents. He died in 1713, and was buried in *St. Paul's, Covent-Garden*. He wrote two Dramatic Pieces,

I. *The Fair Example, or the Modish Citizen*, a Comedy, 1706.

II. *Prunella*, an Interlude, designed as a Ridicule of the *Italian Operas*, then much in Vogue.

#### Mrs. WISEMAN.

This Gentlewoman wrote one Play, called *Antiochus the Great, or the Fatal Relapse*, a Tragedy, 1706.

The Right Hon. JOSEPH ADDISON, Esq,  
Was Son of Dr. *Lancelot Addison*, Dean of *Litchfield* and *Coventry*. He was born at *Milston*, near *Amesbury* in *Wiltshire*, on the first of *May*, 1672, and was very early put under the Care of the Rev. Mr. *Naisb* at the School of *Amesbury*, but was soon after removed to *Salisbury School*, and from thence to the *Charter-House* in *London*. From the *Charter-House* he went to *Queen's College, Oxford*, and in about two Years after was elected into *Magdalene College*, and there took his Degrees of Bachelor and Master of Arts. His Dramatic Performances are,

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I. *Rosalind*, an Opera, set to Music after the *Italian* Manner, by Mr. *Clayton*, &c. 1706, and since by Mr. *Arne*.

II. *Cato*, a Tragedy, 1712.

Mr. *Pope* wrote the Prologue, and Sir *Samuel Garth* the Epilogue.

III. *The Drummer, or the Haunted House*, a Comedy, 1715.

### Mr. LEWIS THEOBALD.

This Author was born in *Sittingborne* in the County of *Kent*, being the Son of Mr. *Peter Theobald*, an eminent Attorney of that Town. He had his Education chiefly under the Reverend Mr. *Ellis* at *Isleworth* in *Middlesex*, and afterwards practised as an Attorney at Law. He published an Edition of all *Shakespeare's* Plays. His own are,

I. *The Persian Princess, or the Royal Villain*, a Tragedy, 1707.

II. *Electra*, a Tragedy, translated from the *Greek* of *Sophocles*, with Notes, 1745.

III. *Oedipus King of Thebes*, a Tragedy, translated from *Sophocles*, with Notes, 1715.

IV. *Plutus, or the World's Idol*, a Comedy, translated from the *Greek* of *Aristophanes*, with Notes, 1715.

V. *The Perfidious Brother*, a Tragedy, 1716.

VI. *The Clouds*, a Comedy, translated from *Aristophanes*, with Notes, 1715.

VII. *The Perfidious Brother*, a Tragedy, 1716.

VIII. *Pan and Syrinx*, an Opera of one Act, set to Music by Mr. *Galliard*, 1717.

IX. *The Tragedy of King Richard II.* altered from *Shakespeare*, 1719.

X. *Double Falsehood*, a Tragedy, 1729.

### Mr. EDMUND SMITH.

He was the Son of a Merchant, and was first educated at *Westminster-School*, under Dr. *Busby*. He removed thence to *Christ-Church College, Oxford*. He died in the 42d Year of his Age, in the Year 1710, at the Seat of *George Duckett*, Esq; called *Hartham*, in *Wiltshire*, and was buried in the Parish Church there. He wrote one Play, called

*Phædra and Hippolitus*, a Tragedy, 1707.

### AARON HILL, Esq.

This Author had once the Management of the Theatre, and has published the following Theatrical Pieces.

I. *Ri-*

I. *Rinaldo*, an Opera, set to Music by Mr. *Handel*, soon after his first Arrival in *England*. The Elegance of the Scenes, and Grandeur of the Machinery (our Author's Invention) were justly admired by all, 1708.

II. *Elfrid*, or the Fair Inconstant, a Tragedy, 1709.

III. The Walking Statue, or the Devil in the Wine Cellar, a Farce.

IV. The Fatal Vision, or the Fall of *Siam*, a Tragedy, 1716.

V. Trick upon Trick, or Squire *Brainless*, a Comedy.

VI. King *Henry V.* or the Conquest of *France* by the *English*, 1723.

VII. *Athelwold*, a Tragedy, 1730.

VIII. *Zara*, a Tragedy, 1734.

IX. *Alzira*, a Tragedy, 1735.

X. *Merope*, a Tragedy, 1749.

#### CHARLES GORING, Esq;

Wrote one Play, called  
*Irene*, or the Fair *Greek*, a Tragedy, 1708.

#### Mr. OWEN.

This Gentleman, who was educated at *Eton School*, and afterwards remov'd to *King's College*, in the University of *Cambridge*, wrote one Play, called

*Hypermnestra*, or Love in Tears, a Tragedy, 1708.

#### Mr. WILLIAM HARRISON.

This Author wrote one Play, called  
The Pilgrims, or the Happy Converts, a Pastoral Tragedy, 1709.

#### Mr. JOHN OLDMIXON.

This Gentleman was descended of a good Family in *Somersetshire*, near the Town of *Bridgewater*.

He died at *Liverpool*, where he had a Post in the Revenue. He wrote three Plays.

I. *Amyntas*, a Pastoral.

II. The Grove, or Love's Paradise, an Opera, 1709.

III. The Governor of *Cyprus*, a Tragedy.

He published the Life of Queen *Anne*, in Folio.

#### Mr. ANTHONY ASTON.

An Itinerant Player, Author of many Humorous Scenes, and one Play, called

Love in a Hurry, a Comedy, 1709.

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Mr.

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### Mr. EDWARD WARD.

The Author of the *London Spy*, has written one Dramatic Piece, called  
The Humours of a Coffee-House, a Comedy.

### Mr. OWEN SWINEY.

A Gentleman born in *Ireland*, and formerly Manager of *Drury-Lane Theatre*, and afterwards of the *Queen's Theatre* in the *Hay-market*. After leaving that Office he resided in *Italy* several Years, and at his Return, procured a Place in the *Custom-house*.

He wrote one Play, called  
The Quacks, or Love's the Physician, a Comedy, 1710.

### Mr. CHARLES SHADWELL.

The younger Son of the Laureat, wrote the following Dramatic Pieces.

I. The Fair Quaker of *Deal*, or the Humours of the Navy, a Comedy, 1710.

II. The Humours of the Army, a Comedy, 1712.

III. *Irish Hospitality*, or Virtue Rewarded, a Comedy.

IV. The Plotting Lovers, or the Disinial Squire, a Farce, translated from the *French* of *Moliere*.

V. The Hasty Wedding, or the Intriguing Squire, a Comedy.

VI. The Sham Prince, or News from *Passau*, a Comedy.

VII. *Rotheric O Connor*, a Tragedy.

Mr. *Shadwell* had a Post in the Revenue in *Dublin*, which he enjoyed till his Death.

### JOHN HUGHES, Esq;

This Author was born at *Marlborough* in *Wiltshire* in 1677, and received the first Rudiments of Learning in *London*. He died in *February* 1719, in the 42d Year of his Age, just after he had heard of the Success of his Tragedy, called the Siege of *Damascus*, which was that Night acted for the first Time with great Applause.

Besides his Poetical and Prose Works, he has left us the following Dramatic Pieces, viz.

I. *Calypso* and *Telemachus*, an Opera, 1711.

II. *Apollo* and *Daphne*, a Masque, 1717.

III. *Orestes*, a Tragedy from *Euripides*, the second Scene of the first Act.

IV. *Cupid* and *Hymen*, a Masque.

V. The

- V. *The Miser*, a Comedy, from *Moliere*, the first Act.  
 VI. *The Siege of Damascus*, a Tragedy, 1719.

## ANNE Countess of WINCHELSEA.

This Lady published a Collection of Poems, in the Year 1711, and one Play, called *Aristomenes*, or the Royal Shepherd, a Tragedy.

## AMBROSE PHILLIPS, Esq;

This Gentleman is of a very ancient and considerable Family in the County of *Leicester*, and was educated at *St. John's College* in *Cambridge*, where he wrote his Pastorals.

His Dramatic Pieces are,

I. *The Distrest Mother*, a Tragedy, 1711.

II. *The Briton*, a Tragedy, 1721.

III. *Humphry Duke of Gloucester*, a Tragedy, 1722.

These three Plays were printed in one Volume 12mo.

## Mr. WILLIAM TAVERNER.

He was the Son of Mr. *Jeremiah Taverner*, a Portrait Painter, and was bred to the Civil Law, and Proctor of the *Arches* in *Doctors Commons*. His Dramatic Pieces are,

I. *The Faithful Bride of Granada*, a Comedy, 1711.

II. *The Maid the Mistress*, a Comedy, 1713.

III. *The Female Advocates*, or the Stock-Jobbers, a Comedy, 1714.

IV. *The Artful Husband*, a Comedy, 1716.

V. *The Artful Wife*, a Comedy, 1717.

VI. *'Tis well if it takes*, a Comedy, 1720.

## Mr. JOHN GAY.

This Gentleman was born at *Exeter*, in the County of *Devon*, and at first bred a Mercer in the *Strand*; but quitting that Employment, he was entertained in the Service of the *Duchess of Monmouth*, as her Grace's Domestic Steward. His Poetical Genius first shewed itself in a Poem called *Trivia*, or the Art of walking the Streets, which recommended him to the Acquaintance of Mr. *Pope*, with whom he continued in great Intimacy and strict Friendship to the Time of his Death.

He wrote the following Dramatic Pieces.

I. *The Wife of Bath*, a Comedy, 1713. It was altered and revived many Years after at the Theatre in *Lincoln's Inn-Fields*.

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II. The

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- II. The What-d'ye call it, a Tragi-Comi-Pastoral Farce, 1715.
- III. Three Hours after Marriage, a Farce of three Acts, 1717. Mr. *Pope* and Dr. *Arbutnot* assisted in this Piece.
- IV. The Captives, a Tragedy, 1720.
- V. No Fools like Wits, a Comedy, 1721.
- VI. The Mohocks, a Farce, printed but never acted.
- VII. The Beggar's Opera, 1727.
- VIII. *Polly*, an Opera, being the second Part of the Beggar's Opera, which was forbid to be acted, but printed.
- IX. *Achilles*, an Opera, acted in 1733, two Years after the Death of the Author,
- X. The Distrest Wife, a Comedy, 1743.
- XI. Rehearsal at *Gotham*, a Farce, printed after the Author's death.

### Mr BENJAMIN GRIFFIN.

This Author was the Son of the Reverend Mr. *Benjamin Griffin*, Rector of *Buxton* and *Oxnead*, in the County of *Norfolk*. He wrote five Dramatic Pieces.

- I. Injured Virtue, or the Virgin Martyr, a Tragedy, 1714.
  - II. Love in a Sack, a Farce, 1715.
  - III. The Humours of Purgatory, a Farce, 1716.
  - IV. The Masquerade, or an Evening's Intrigue, a Farce, 1717.
  - V. Whig and Tory, a Comedy, 1721.
- He died in the Year 1739, in the 50th Year of his Age.

### Mrs. DAVIS.

This Gentlewoman was a Clergyman's Widow, born in *Ireland*, and wrote one Play, called  
The Humours of *York*, a Comedy, 1715.

### Mr. CHARLES KNIPE.

A Gentleman who was educated at *Trinity College, Cambridge*. He wrote one Dramatic Piece, called  
A City Ramble, or the Humours of the Compter, a Farce, 1715.

### Mr. NEWBURGH HAMILTON,

Wrote two Plays,

- I. The Doating Lovers, or the Libertine Tamed, a Comedy, 1715.

II. The

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II. *The Petticoat Plotter*, a Comedy of two Acts, 1716.

CHARLES MOLLOY, Esq;

This Gentleman was born in *Ireland*, and descended from an ancient Family in that Kingdom. He studied the Law at the *Temple*, and is Author of three Dramatic Pieces.

I. *The Perplexed Couple*, or *Mistake upon Mistake*, a Comedy, 1715.

II. *The Coquet*, or the *English Cavaliers*, a Comedy, 1718.

III. *The Half-Pay Officers*, a Farce, 1720.

Mr. THOMAS BRERETON.

A Gentleman of *Cheshire*, and a Member of *Brazen-Nose* College in *Oxford*. He published two Plays.

I. *Eſſer*, or *Faith Triumphant*, a sacred Tragedy in Rhime, with a Chorus after the Manner of the ancient *Greeks*. This Play is translated from *Racine*, 1716.

II. *Sir John Oldcastle*, or *Love and Zeal*, a Tragedy. He wrote a Political Book in 12mo. called the Critic.

Mr. JOHN WEAVER.

This Person is a celebrated Dancing-Master, who makes his chief Residence at *Sbrewsbury*.

He has wrote or invented several Pieces called Dramatic Pantomimes.

I. *The Loves of Mars and Venus*, 1716.

II. *Orpheus and Euridice*, 1717.

III. *The Judgment of Paris*, 1732.

He has written several judicious Books, *viz.*

*A History of the Mimes and Pantomimes of the Ancients.*

*The Art of Dancing*, with a Treatise on Action and Gesture.

He was the first Restorer of Pantomimes after the ancient Manner.

Mr. BARTON BOOTH.

This excellent Tragedian was born in 1681, and was Son of *John Booth*, Esq; nearly related to the Earl of *Warrington*. He was educated at *Westminster* School, first under Dr. *Busby* and afterwards under his Successor Dr. *Knipe*.

He

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He died *May* the 10th, 1733.

He wrote one Piece for the Stage, called  
*Dido and Æneas*, 1716.

### Mr. JOHN PHILLIPS.

He wrote two temporary Farces,

I. The Earl of *Mar* Marr'd, with the Humours of  
*Jockey* the Highlander, 1716.

II. The Pretender's Flight, or a mock Coronation, with  
the Humours of the facetious *Harry St. John*, 1716.

### Mr. JOHN OZELL.

This Gentleman was not the Author of any Play him-  
self, but the Translator of many, viz.

I. *Alexander*, a Tragedy.

II. *Britannicus*, a Tragedy. Both from *Racine*.

III. The Litigants, a Comedy, from *Racine*.

IV. *Manlius Capitolinus*, a Tragedy, from *La Fosse*.

V. The *Cid*, a Tragedy, from *Corneille*.

VI. *Cato of Utica*, a Tragedy, from *Des Champs*, 1716.

VII. The Fair of *St. Germain*, a Farce from *Boursault*.

The following thirty-two Plays are all from *Moliere*.

VIII. *Sir Martin Mar-all*; from the Play called *L'Es-  
tourdi*.

IX. The Amorous Quarrel, a Comedy, from a Play  
called *Le Depot Amoureux*.

X. The Affected Ladies, a Comedy, from *Les Precieuses  
Ridicules*.

XI. The Imaginary Cuckold, a Comedy, from *Le Cocu  
Imaginaire*.

XII. A School for Husbands.

XIII. The Impertinents, from *Les Facheux*.

XIV. A School for Women.

XV. The School for Women criticized.

XVI. The Princess of *Elis*, or the Pleasures of the In-  
chanted Island.

XVII. Ditto second Part.

XVIII. Ditto third Part.

XIX. The Forced Marriage, a Comedy.

XX. Love the best Physician, a Comedy.

XXI. The



- XXI. The Man-Hater, from *Misanthrope*.  
 XXII. The Forced Physician, a Comedy, from *Le Medecin malgre lui*.  
 XXIII. The Sicilian, or Love makes a Painter, a Comedy.  
 XXIV. *Amphitryon*, a Comedy.  
 XXV. The Miser, a Comedy.  
 XXVI. *George Dandin*, or the Wanton Wife, a Comedy.  
 XXVII. *Tartuffe*, or the Hypocrite, a Comedy.  
 XXVIII. *Monsieur de Pourceaugnac*, or Squire Trelooby, a Comedy.  
 XXIX. The Gentleman Citizen, a Comedy.  
 XXX. The Cheats of *Scapin*, a Comedy.  
 XXXI. *Psyche*.  
 XXXII. The Learned Ladies, a Comedy.  
 XXXIII. *Don Garcia of Navarre*, or the Jealous Prince.  
 XXXIV. The *Impromptu* of *Versailles*.  
 XXXV. The Libertine.  
 XXXVI. *Melicerta*, an Heroic Pastoral.  
 XXXVII. The Magnificent Lovers.  
 XXXVIII. The Countess of *Escarbagnas*.  
 XXXIX. The Hypochondriac, a Comedy.

#### Mr. CHRISTOPHER BULLOCK.

This Author was a Player by Profession, and the Son of another. He grew into pretty good Esteem in his Business; and was for some time a Joint-Manager with two other Actors of the Theatre in *Lincoln's-Inn-Fields*.

He married a natural Daughter of the late Mr. *Wilks* by Mrs. *Rogers* the Actress, whom he left a Widow in 1724. He published six Dramatic Pieces.

- I. *Woman's a Riddle*, a Comedy, 1716.
  - II. *The Slip*, a Farce, 1716.
  - III. *The Cobler of Preston*, a Farce, 1717.
  - IV. *The Adventures of Half an Hour*, a Farce, 1717.
  - V. *The Perjurer*, a Farce of one Act, 1717.
  - VI. *Woman's Revenge*, or a Match in Newgate, 1718.
- Taken from an old Play of *Marston's* called the *Dutch Courtezan*.

#### RICHARD SAVAGE, Esq;

This Gentleman was a natural Son of the late Earl of *Rivers* by the Countess of *Macclesfield*, who was divorced from her Husband, but not till she was pregnant of this Child, upon which account partly the Divorce was obtained; other-

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otherwise our Author would have been born the legitimate Heir to the Earldom of *Macclesfield* and a very large Estate. He died at *Bristol*, in the Year 1743, and in the 46th Year of his Age. He has wrote two Dramatic Pieces,

I. *Love in a Veil*, a Comedy, 1717.

II. *Sir Thomas Overbury*, a Tragedy, 1725. In this Play the Author performed the principal Part himself; but to no great Advantage, having neither an agreeable Voice nor A.pect.

### Sir THOMAS MOOR.

A Gentleman knighted by his late Majesty King *George I.* he lived in *Surry*, and wrote the following Play :

*Mangora King of the Timbuzians*, a Tragedy, 1717.

### Mr. JOHN DURANT BREVAL.

This Gentleman was the Son of *Dr. Breval*, one of the Prebendaries of *Westminster*. He had his Education in *Westminster* School, from whence he was elected to *Trinity* College in *Cambridge*, of which he was some time Fellow. His Dramatic Pieces are,

I. *The Play's the Plot*, a Comedy, 1717, out of which has been extracted a Farce, called

*The Strollers*; sometimes acted with the Addition of *The Mock Countess*.

II. *The Confederates*, a Farce, never acted, but printed under the fictitious Name of *Joseph Gay*. This Piece was designed as a Satire upon *Mr. Pope*, *Mr. Gay*, and *Dr. Arbuthnot*, and a Comedy supposed to be wrote by all three, called *Three Hours after Marriage*, tho' *Mr. John Gay's* Name only was to it. Upon this Account *Mr. Pope* introduced *Captain Breval*, among the Authors he exposed, in his *Dunciad*.

### Mr. HENRY CAREY,

Was a Music-Master by Profession. He wrote several Poems and Pamphlets, besides the following Dramatic Pieces.

I. *The Contrivances*, a Farce, 1717.

II. *Amelia*, an Opera.

III. *Cænonbotanologos*, a Mock Tragedy, 1734.

IV. *The Honest Yorkshire Man*, a Farce, 1735.

V. *A Wife well managed*, a Farce.

VI. *Betty*,

- VI. *Betty*, or the Country Bumpkins, a Ballad Farce, 1738.  
 VII. *Nancy*, or the parting Lovers, a Musical Interlude, 1739.  
 VIII. The Dragon of *Wantley*, a Burlesque Opera, 1738.  
 IX. *Margery*, or a worse Plague than the Dragon, a Ballad Farce, 1739.

Mr. CHARLES BECKINGHAM.

A young Gentleman who very early discovered an uncommon Genius in Poetry. He was the Son of a Linen-Draper in *Fleet-street*, and was educated at *Merchant Taylors* School. He wrote two Plays,

I. *Scipio Africanus*, a Tragedy, 1718.

II. The Tragedy of King *Henry IV. of France*, 1719.

This Gentleman likewise wrote several other Pieces. He died on the 18th of *February*, 1730, in the 32d Year of his Age.

The Rev. Dr. EDWARD YOUNG.

This Gentleman was bred at *Oxford*, being a Fellow of *All-Souls* College in that University, which no one can be who is not a Gentleman by Birth. He took his Degree of Doctor of the Civil Law; and afterwards going into Holy Orders, was made one of his Majesty's Chaplains. He married the Right Honourable the Lady *Elizabeth Lee*, Daughter of the late Earl of *Litchfield*.

He is the Author of the *Last Day*; those fine moral Satires, called the *Universal Passion*; of a Paraphrase on Part of the *Book of Job*; *Night Thoughts*; and other Poems, besides the three following Plays.

I. *Bufiris*, a Tragedy, 1719.

II. The *Revenge*, a Tragedy, 1721.

He also wrote a Play, called *Philip and Demetrius*, which was rehearsed in 1722, but withdrawn on the Author's entering into Orders about that time. But in the Year 1753 it was acted at *Drury-Lane*, and printed under the Title of the *Brothers*.

GEORGE SEWELL, M. D.

This Gentleman was born at *Windsor* in *Berkshire*, the Residence of his Father, who was Treasurer and Chapter Clerk of the Royal College there. He received his first Rudiments of Learning at *Eton*, from whence he removed to *St. Peter's College*,

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College, Cambridge. He afterwards studied Physic under the great Dr. *Boerhaave* at *Leyden*. At his Return, his chief Practice was at *Hampstead*, where he died in the 53d Year of his Age, 1729. He wrote one Tragedy, called *Sir Walter Rawleigh*, 1719.

### Mr. JOHN LEIGH,

Was born in *Ireland*, and commenced Actor on the *Dublin* Stage. His Figure only recommended him to Mr. *Rich*, to make one of his Company at the opening of his new Theatre in *Lincoln's-Inn-Field*, 1714. He died in the Year 1726, in the 37th Year of his Age. He wrote one Piece, and altered another.

I. *Kensington Gardens*, a Comedy, 1720.

II. *Hob's Wedding*, a Farce, being a Sequel to the *Country Wake*, 1721.

### JOHN MOTTLEY, Esq;

This Gentleman is the Son of Colonel *Mottley*, who followed the Fortune of King *James II*. was preferred to a Regiment in the Service of *Lewis XIV*. and was killed at the Battle of *Turin* in 1706. Our Author being nearly allied to several Families had many Court Promises of Preferment, but being disappointed of every Promise, he was obliged to have recourse to his own Genius, and produced the following Dramatic Pieces.

I. *The Imperial Captives*, a Tragedy, 1720.

II. *Antiochus*, a Tragedy, 1721, dedicated to *Washington* Earl of *Ferrers*, who, by the Dedication, we may gather was a Relation of the Author.

III. *Penelope*, a Mock Ballad Opera, 1728. Mr. *Cook* joined him in this Piece.

IV. *The Craftsman*, or *Weekly Journalist*, a Farce, 1729.

V. *The Widow Bewitch'd*, a Comedy, 1730.

Besides these Plays, he has published the *Life of Peter the Great*, Emperor of *Russia*.

### Mr. JOSEPH MITCHEL.

A Gentleman was born in *Scotland*, and brought two Dramatic Pieces on the Stage.

I. *The Fatal Extravagance*, a Tragedy, 1720. It is partly borrowed from *Shakespeare's Yorkshire* Tragedy. The Author was said to be greatly obliged to Mr. *Aaron Hill* for his Assistance in this Play.

II. The

II. The *Highland Fair*, or the Union of the Clans, a Ballad Opera, 1731.

THOMAS ODELL, Esq;

This Gentleman was born in *Buckinghamshire*, in which County he had a good paternal Estate, but spent it mostly in the Court Interest; and not being properly requited, he erected a Theatre in *Goodman's Fields* in *October* 1729, which answered his Expectations extremely well the first Year; but the Lord Mayor and Court of Aldermen of the City of *London* addressed his Majesty to suppress it, and in Compliance with their Request an Order was sent from Court, upon which (for there was then no Act of Parliament to restrain the Stage) Mr. *Odell* shut up his House for a short Time, and found himself under a Necessity of disposing of it to Mr. *Henry Giffard*, who raised a Subscription, and built a new Theatre in the same Place, which went on successfully till the Act abovementioned passed.

Mr. *Odell* was Deputy under the Duke of *Grafton*, and *William Chetwynd*, Esq; the Licenser of the Stage. He is Author of the following Dramatic Pieces.

- I. The *Chimæra*, a Farce, 1720.
- II. The *Smugglers*, a Farce, 1729.
- III. The *Patron*, or the Statesman's Opera, 1729.
- IV. The *Prodigal*, or *Recruits for the Queen of Hungary*, a Comedy, 1744.

Mr. STURMY.

This Gentleman was the Author of two Dramatic Pieces,

- I. *Love and Duty*, a Tragedy, 1721.
- II. *The Compromise*, a Comedy, 1722.

Mr. WILLIAM HUNT.

A Collector of the Excise, who wrote one Play, called *The Fall of Tarquin*, a Tragedy.

MATTHEW CONCANNEN, Esq;

This Gentleman was born in the Kingdom of *Ireland*, bred to the Law, and obtained the Post of Attorney General of *Jamaica*, which Post he filled above twenty Years. Having acquired an ample Fortune, he left *Jamaica* and came to *London*, in order to retire to his Native Country; but the Change of the Climate so altered his Constitution, that  
in

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in a few Weeks after his Arrival in *London*, he died of a Consumption.

He has wrote one Play, called  
*Wexford Wells*, a Comedy, 1721.

### Mrs. ELIZA HEYWOOD.

This Gentlewoman was made eminent by several Novels. She has published three Dramatic Pieces.

- I. *The Fair Captive*, a Tragedy, 1721.
- II. *Frederick Duke of Brunswick*, a Tragedy, 1724.
- III. *A Wife to be let*, a Comedy, 1725.

Mrs. *Heywood* was also concerned with one Mr. *Hatchet*, in turning Mr. *Fielding's Tom Thumb* into a Ballad Opera, which was set to Music.

### Mr. JEFFERIES.

A Gentleman of the Custom-house, who wrote one Play, called

*Edwin*, a Tragedy, 1721.

### Mr. TOLSON.

This Gentleman, who went afterwards into Priest's Orders, was the Author of one Play, called  
*The Earl of Warwick*, a Tragedy, 1721.

### Captain HURST.

This Gentleman was the Author of one Play, called  
*The Roman Maid*, a Tragedy, 1721.

### Mr. THEOPHILUS CIBBER.

This Author is Son to *Colley Cibber*, Esq; the present Poet Laureat.

His Dramatic Pieces are,

- I. *Henry VI.* from *Shakespear*, 1721.
- II. *The Lover*, a Comedy, 1731.
- III. *Patie and Peggy*, a Ballad Opera, 1731.

This is *Allan Ramsay's Gentle Shepherd*, reduced to one Act with additional Songs.

### THOMAS KILLEGREW, Esq;

Was Gentleman of the Bedchamber to his present Majesty, when Prince of *Wales*. He wrote one Play, called  
*Chit-Chat*, a Comedy, 1722.

Mr.

## Mr. RICHARD BARFORD.

This Gentleman was the Author of one Play, called  
The Virgin Queen, a Tragedy, 1723.

## Mr. HENRY NORRIS.

This Person is Son to Mr. *Norris*, an eminent Comedian who gained the Nick-name of *Jubilee Dicky*, for his excellent Performance in Mr. *Farquhar's* Comedy of the Constant Couple, or a Trip to the Jubilee. He is Author of a Dramatic Piece, called

The Deceit, a Farce, 1723.

## HILDEBRAND JACOB, Esq;

A Gentleman of Fortune and Family, who wrote the following Dramatic Pieces.

- I. Fatal Constancy, a Tragedy, 1723.
- II. The Nest of Plays, consisting of three Comedies.
  1. The Prodigal reformed.
  2. The Happy Constancy.
  3. The Tryal of Conjugal Love.

## ELIJAH FENTON, Esq;

A Person of Worth, Learning and Genius. He was born at *Shelton* in *Staffordshire*, and educated at *Jesus-College* in *Oxford*. He wrote one Dramatic Piece that had great Success, called

*Mariamne*, a Tragedy, 1723.

This Gentleman has published a Volume of Miscellany Poems, Serious and Comic.

## Mr. ODINGSSELLS.

This Gentleman was Author of the three following Dramatic Pieces :

- I. The Bath unmask'd, a Comedy, 1725.
- II. The Capricious Lovers, a Comedy.
- III. *Bayes's* Opera, 1731.

## JAMES MOORE SMYTH, Esq;

This Gentleman was Son of *Arthur Moore*, Esq; one of the Lords Commissioners of Trade in the Reign of Queen *Anne*.

He

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He was bred at *Oxford*, and wrote one Comedy, called  
The Rival Modes, 1726.

He died in the Year 1734.

LEONARD WELSTED, Esq;

His only Dramatic Performance is,  
The Dissembled Wanton, or My Son Get-Money, a  
Comedy, 1726.

PHILIP FROWDE, Esq;

This Gentleman wrote two Plays.

I. The Fall of *Saguntum*, a Tragedy, 1727.

II. *Philotas*, a Tragedy, 1731.

HENRY FIELDING, Esq;

A Gentleman descended from the ancient Family of the  
Earls of *Denbigh*, and Son of the late Lieutenant-General  
*Fielding*.

Besides his Dramatic Pieces, he has published three  
Octavo Volumes of Miscellanies in Verse and Prose; the  
*Adventures of Joseph Andrews*, wrote in imitation of *Cer-  
vantes*; the History of *Tom Jones*, a Foundling; *Amelia*;  
and a Voyage to *Lisbon*, where he went for the Recovery of  
his Health, and dy'd 1754.

His Dramatic Pieces are,

I. Love in several Masks, a Comedy, 1728.

II. The Temple Beau, a Comedy, 1730.

III. *Tom Thumb* the Great, a Farce of two Acts, 1730.

IV. The Author's Farce, a Comedy of three Acts, 1730.

V. The Coffee-House Politician, or the Justice caught in  
his own Trap, a Comedy, 1730.

VI. The Letter Writers, or a new Way to keep a Wife  
at Home, a Comedy, 1731.

VII. The *Grub-street* Opera, 1731.

VIII. The Modern Husband, a Comedy, 1732.

IX. The *Covent-Garden* Tragedy, 1732.

X. The Debauchees, or the Jesuit caught, a Comedy,  
1733. This is the Story of Father *Girard* and Miss *Cadiere*.

XI. The Mock Doctor, or the Dumb Lady cured, a Farce,  
taken from *Moliere's Medicin malgre lui*, 1733.

XII. The Miser, a Comedy, 1734.

XIII. The



- XIII. The Intriguing Chambermaid, a Farce, 1734.  
 XIV. The Old Man taught Wisdom, ort he Virgin un-  
 mask'd, a Farce, 1734.  
 XV. *Don Quixote*, in *England*, a Comedy, 1734.  
 XVI. The Lottery, a Ballad Farce.  
 XVII. The Tragedy of Tragedies, or the Fall of *Tom  
 Thumb*. This is the Farce of *Tom Thumb*, altered and in-  
 larged.  
 XVIII. *Pasquin*, a Comedy, 1735.  
 XIX. *Euridice*, or the Devil Henpeckt, a Farce, 1735.  
 XX. The Universal Gallant, or the Different Husbands,  
 a Comedy, 1735.  
 XXI. The Historical Register for the Year 1736, a Co-  
 medy.  
 XXII. *Miss Lucy* in Town, a Farce, 1742. It was for-  
 bid to be played any more, by an Order from the Lord  
 Chamberlain.  
 XXIII. The Wedding Day, a Comedy, 1743.  
 XXIV. Tumble-down *Dick*, or *Phaeton* in the Suds, a  
 Farce, 1744.  
 XXV. An Interlude between *Jupiter*, *Juno*, and *Mercury*,  
 intended as the Beginning of a Comedy, called  
*Jupiter* on Earth.  
 Besides the foregoing, he joined with the Reverend Mr.  
*Young* in translating a Comedy from the *Greek* of *Aristo-  
 phanes*, called  
*Plutus* the God of Riches, 1742.

Mr. HAWKS.

This Author wrote one Piece, called  
 The Country Wedding, a Ballad-Farce, 1729.

Mr. CHARLES COFFEY.

This Author was born in *Ireland*, Nature took little care  
 in forming his Person, and no Man made more free with her  
 Faults than himself; to ridicule which, he performed the Part  
 of *Æsop*, for his own Benefit, at the Theatre in *Dublin*. He  
 wrote

I. The Beggar's Wedding, a Ballad-Opera of three Acts,  
 first played in *Dublin*, and afterwards in *London*, then re-  
 duced to one Act, and often performed with the additional  
 Title of *Phebe*, 1729.

II. The

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II. *The Devil to pay, or the Wives Metamorphosed*, taken from *Jewon's Devil of a Wife*.

This Piece was performed in three Acts without Success, but when formed into one, as a Farce, has been performed every where with Success. It has been greatly helped by several additional Songs, by Mr. *Cibber* and others, 1730.

III. *The Merry Cobler, or the 2d Part of the Devil to pay*, damned the first Night, 1731.

IV. *The Female Parson, or the Beau in the Suds*, 1732, met with the same Fate.

V. *Southwark Fair, or the Sheep-Shearers*, 1732.

VI. *A Wife and no Wife*, never acted, 1732.

VII. *The Boarding-School Romps*, a Ballad Opera of one Act, taken from *Durfey's Love for Money, or the Boarding-School*, 1733.

VIII. *The Devil upon two Sticks, or the Country Beau*, 1744. He died the 15th of *May*, 1745, and was buried in *St. Clement's Danes*.

### Mr. JOHNSON.

A Dancing-Master from *Cheshire*, who entertained the Town with three extraordinary Pieces :

I. *Hurlo Thrumbo*, 1729.

II. *The Cheshire Comics*, a Comedy of the same Cast, 1730.

III. *All alive and merry*, a Comedy, 1738.

### Mr. JOHN HIPPISEY,

Was much more noted for a Comedian than an Author. To a large Fund of natural Humour, an accidental Scald in his Face had new formed his Countenance to a Risible Grimace, that seemed greatly to aid the Comic Parts he performed. He wrote one Farce, called

*A Journey to Bristol*, 1729.

He died at *Bristol*, in 1748, where he was every Summer, Head of a Company of Comedians.

### Mr. LEWIS.

An Author that wrote one Play, called *Philip of Macedon*, a Tragedy, 1729.

### The Rev. Mr. MILLER.

This Gentleman was at first designed for Business, and was

was for some Time on that account with a Merchant, his near Relation in the City, but afterwards went into Orders. He had no Benefice till within a few Weeks of his Death, in 1743, but subsisted, I believe, chiefly upon his Pen. He was the Author of eight Dramatic Pieces.

I. The Humours of *Oxford*, a Comedy, 1729.

II. The Man of Taste, a Comedy, 1731.

III. The Mother in Law, or the Doctor the Disease, a Comedy, 1733.

IV. The Universal Passion, a Comedy, 1734.

V. Art and Nature, a Comedy, 1735.

VI. The Savage, or the Force of Nature, 1736.

VI. The Coffee-House, a Farce, 1737.

VIII. An Hospital for Fools, a Farce, 1738.

IX. *Mabomet* the Impostor, a Tragedy, 1743.

During the Run of this Play the Author died.

BENJAMIN MARTYN, Esq;

This Gentleman wrote a Tragedy, called *Timoleon*, acted in 1729.

WILLIAM BILLERS, Esq;

Wrote one Piece, called

Injured Innocence, a Tragedy, 1729.

Mr. THOMAS WALKER.

An Actor first taken notice of for the Part of *Macheath* in the Beggar's Opera; but his Success in that Part destroyed him, by making him vain and careless, insomuch that he was dismissed the Theatre: He afterwards went over to *Ireland*, where he died in 1745.

He brought two Dramatic Pieces on the Stage.

I. The Quaker's Opera, 1729.

II. The Fate of Villainy, a Tragedy, 1730.

JOHN SHEFFIELD, Earl of *Mulgrave*, Marquis of *Normanby*, Duke of *Buckingham*.

This illustrious Nobleman altered *Shakespeare's Julius Cæsar*, and formed two Plays from that noble Model.

I. *Julius Cæsar*.

II. The Death of *Marcus Brutus*.

Both with Chorus's after the manner of the Ancients.

These Plays were to have been performed in the Year 1729. All the Chorus's were set to Music by that great Master in Composition, Signor *Bononcini*; but *English* Voices being few, the *Italians* were applied to, who demanded more for

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for their nightly Performance, than the Receipts of the House could amount to at the usual raised Prices, and on that account the Design was dropt.

Mr. ALLAN RAMSAY.

A celebrated *Scots* Poet, who has acquired great Reputation by his *Tea-Table Miscellany*, and other Poetical Works.

He wrote one Dramatic Piece, called  
The Gentle Shepherd, a *Scots* Pastoral Comedy, 1729.

Mr. ROOME.

This Gentleman was bred to the Law, and Author of one Piece, called

The Jovial Crew, a Ballad Opera, taken from a Comedy of the same Title by Mr. *Brome*.

Mr. JAMES WETHERBY.

This Person belonged to the Revenue at *Bristol*, and wrote a Farce of two Acts, called  
*Paul the Spanish* Sharper, 1730.

Mr. GEORGE LILLO.

This Author was by Profession a Jeweller; but having a strong Inclination to Poetry, he wrote five Dramatic Pieces.

I. The *London Merchant*, or the History of *George Barnwell*, a Tragedy, 1730.

II. *Sylvia*, or the Country Burial, a Ballad Opera, 1731.

III. The Christian Hero, a Tragedy, 1734.

IV. *Elmerick*, a Tragedy, 1735.

V. Fatal Curiosity, a Tragedy, 1736.

Mr. DANIEL BELLAMY sen. and Mr. DANIEL BELLAMY jun.

These Gentlemen published two Volumes of Miscellanies in Prose and Verse, among which are some Dramatic Pieces.

The Father, as we are informed by the Title Page, was sometime since of *St. John's College, Oxford*, and the Son of *Trinity College, Cambridge*. Their Plays are,

I. The Rival Priests, or the Female Politician.

II. The Perjured Devotee, or Force of Love.

III. Vanquished Love, or the Jealous Queen.

IV. The Rival Nymphs, or the Merry Swain.

V. Innocence betrayed, or the Royal Impostor.

VI. Love

VI. Love triumphant, or the Rival Goddeffes.

VII. Three Select Scenes of the celebrated *Guarini's Pastor Fido*.

Mr. JAMES THOMSON.

This Gentleman was of *North-Britain*, but lived most of his Time in *England*. He was Tutor to the elder Brother of the present Lord *Talbot*; with whom he travelled for some Time into *France, Italy*, and other Parts. Besides his Plays he is the Author of those much applauded Poems called the *Seasons*, and some others.

His Dramatic Pieces are.

I. *Sophonisba*, a Tragedy, 1730.

II. *Agamemnon*, a Tragedy, 1734.

III. *Edward and Eleonora*, a Tragedy, 1736.

IV. *Tancred and Sigismund*, a Tragedy, 1744.

V. *Coriolanus*, a Tragedy, 1748. This was not acted till some time after the Author's Death.

VI. *Alfred*, a Masque.

This last was writtee between him and Mr. *Mallet*.

Mr. LACY RYAN,

An eminent Comedian, who wrote a small Piece, called *The Cobler's Opera*, or the Humours of *Billingsgate*, 1730.

Mr. WILLIAM RUFUS CHETWOOD.

This Author was for twenty Years Prompter to *Drury-Lane Theatre*, and accounted very excellent in that Business; he was for some time an eminent Bookseller in *Covent-Garden*, and has wrote the following Dramatic Pieces.

I. *The Lovers Opera*, 1730.

II. *The Generous Free-Mason*, or the Constant Lady, with the Humours of *Squire Noodle* and his Man *Doodle*; a Tragi-Comi-Farcical Ballad Opera, in three Acts.

III. *The Humours of Exchange-Alley*, a Farce.

IV. *South-Sea*, or the Biters Bit, a Farce.

These two last were not intended for the Stage, but designed as a Satire on the *South-Sea Project*.

Mr. JAMES RALPH.

This Author has brought the following Dramatic Pieces upon the Stage.

I. *The Fashionable Lady*, or *Harlequin's Opera*, 1730.

II. *The Fall of the Earl of Essex*, 1731.

III. *The Lawyers Feast*, a Farce, 1744.

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IV. The Astrologer, a Comedy, 1744.

This is taken from *Albumazar*.

JOHN TRACY ATKINS, Esq;

A Gentleman of *Gloucestershire*, who wrote one Play,  
called

*Periander King of Corinth*, a Tragedy, 1731.

Mr. SHIRLEY.

This Gentleman wrote one Play, called

*The Parricide, or Innocence in Distress*, a Tragedy, 1731.

Mr. LANGFORD.

This Author wrote one Piece, called

*The Mad Captain, or the Lover his own Rival*, a Comedy,  
1731.

JAMES DARCY, Esq;

This ingenious Gentleman is a Native of the County of  
*Galway* in *Ireland*.

He is Author of two Tragedies, both played at the Theatre  
in *Dublin*.

I. *Love and Ambition*, 1731.

II. *The Orphan of Venice*, 1749.

DAVID MALLETT, Esq;

A Gentleman of *North-Britain*, and some time Tutor to  
his Grace the Duke of *Montrose* and his Brother the Lord  
*George Graham*, who has given the Public two Dramatic  
Pieces.

I. *Eurydice*, a Tragedy, 1731.

II. *Mustapha*, a Tragedy, 1739.

Besides which, he was jointly concerned with Mr. *Thomson*  
in writing the Masque of *Alfred*.

Mr. THOMAS FABIAN.

He was one of the Footmen to his present Majesty, and  
wrote the following Piece.

*Trick upon Trick*, a Farce, 1731.

Mr. THOMAS COOKE,

Hath given us the four following Dramatic Pieces.

I. *The Triumphs of Love and Honour*, a Tragedy of three  
Acts, 1731.

II. The

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II. The Mournful Nuptials, or Love the Cure of all Woes, never acted, but printed, 1735.

III. The Eunuch, or *Derby* Captain, a Farce, from the Eunuch of *Terence*, 1737.

IV. Love the Cause and Cure of Grief, or the Innocent Murderer, a rural Tragedy, of three Acts, 1743.

Mr. EDWARD PHILLIPS,

The Author of the following Pieces.

I. The Livery Rake and Country Lads, an Opera, 1731.

II. The Mock Lawyer, a Farce, 1733.

III. The Chambermaid, a Ballad Opera, 1734.

Mr. DUNCOMB.

This Gentleman wrote two Plays.

I. *Lucius Junius Brutus*, a Tragedy, 1732.

II. *Athaliah*, a sacred Tragedy, translated from the *French* of *Racine*, 1734.

FRANCIS LYNCH, Esq;

Wrote two Dramatic Pieces.

I. The Independent Patriot, or Musical Folly, a Comedy, 1733.

II. The Man of Honour, a Comedy.

JOHN KELLY, Esq;

A Member of the Society of the *Middle-Temple*, has wrote five Dramatic Pieces.

I. *Timon* in Love, or the Innocent Theft, a Comedy of three Acts, 1733.

II. The Fall of *Bob*, a Farce, 1735.

III. The Married Philosopher, a Comedy, 1737.

IV. The Levee, a Farce, 1740.

V. *Pill* and *Drop*, an Entertainment in Favour of *Pill* and *Drop Ward*, as he was generally called.

Mr. THOMAS DRURY,

An Attorney at Law. He wrote three Farces.

I. The Mock Captain, 1733.

II. The Devil of a Duke, a Ballad Farce, 1733. It is an Alteration of Duke and no Duke.

III. The Rival Milliners, 1735.

CHARLES BODENS, Esq;

Wrote one Play, called

The Modish Couple, a Comedy, 1733.

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Mr.

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### Mr. WILLIAM HAVARD,

Was born in *Dublin*, and bred a Surgeon; but having a Genius for the Stage, he made his first Essay in *Dublin*; when his Success encouraged him to go over to the *English* Stage, where his Learning, Behaviour, and good Understanding, gained him much Esteem. He wrote three Plays.

- I. *Scanderbeg*, a Tragedy, 1733.
- II. *King Charles I.* a Tragedy, 1737.
- III. *Regulus*, a Tragedy, 1744.

### Mr. STERLING.

A Gentleman of *Ireland*, who wrote two Plays.

- I. *The Rival Generals*, a Tragedy.
- II. *The Parricide*, a Tragedy, 1733.

### Mr. CONOLLY.

A Gentleman born in *Ireland*, and a Student in the *Temple*, who wrote one Play, called  
*The Connoisseur*, a Comedy, 1734.

### Mr. JAMES WORSDALE.

This Author is both a Poet and a Painter; he has published several Songs, and the following Dramatic Pieces.

- I. *A Cure for a Scold*, a Ballad Farce, taken from *Shakespeare's* *Taming of the Shrew*.
- II. *The Assembly*, a Farce. Mr. *Worsdale* acted the Part of *Old Lady Scandal*, in the utmost Perfection.
- III. *The Queen of Spain*.
- IV. *The Extravagant Justice*, a Farce.

### Mrs. CHARLOTTE CHARKE,

Daughter to *Colley Cibber*, Esq; has wrote one Dramatic Piece, called

*The Art of Management*, or *Tragedy expelled*, performed once at the Concert Room, in *York-Buildings*.

This Piece was intended as a Satire upon *Charles Fleetwood*, Esq; then Manager of the Theatre-Royal in *Drury-Lane*, but that Gentleman and his Possé stopped it from a farther Progress on the Stage. It was printed in 1735, with a humorous Dedication to Mr. *Fleetwood*, who endeavoured to smother it by purchasing the whole Impression; however some escaped the Flames, and crept into the World.

Mr.



## Mr. ROBERT DODSLEY,

Is Author of five Dramatic Pieces.

I. The Toy-Shop, a Dramatic Satire, 1735. The Plan of this Piece was hinted to the Author by *Randolph's* Conceited Pedlar.

II. The King and the Miller of *Mansfield*, a Farce, 1736.

III. Sir *John Cockle* at Court, being a Second Part of the Miller of *Mansfield*, a Farce, 1737.

IV. The Blind Beggar of *Bednal Green*, a Ballad Farce, 1739.

V. The Triumph of Peace, a Masque, set to Music by Mr. *Arne*, 1748.

## WILLIAM POPPLE, Esq;

This Gentleman, the present Governor of *Bermudas*, is the Author of one Play, called

Double Deceit, or a Cure for Jealousy, a Comedy, 1736.

## Mr. SAMUEL DAVY.

This Author was born in *Ireland*, and wrote one Play, called

The Treacherous Husband, a Tragedy, 1737.

## Mr. JOHN HEWIT,

Is Author of a Comedy, called

A Tutor for the Beaus, or Love in a Labyrinth, a Comedy, 1737.

## HENRY BROOKE, Esq;

This Gentleman is of *Ireland*, and is now Barrack-Master of *Mullingar*. He wrote three Plays.

I. *Gustavus Vasa*, a Tragedy, 1738.

This was forbid to be acted, by an Order of the Lord Chamberlain, when it had been rehearsed at the Theatre Royal in *Drury-Lane*, and the Actors all ready in their Parts, ut that Prohibition turned more to the Author's Advantage, than if it had appeared on the Stage; for as he was looked upon as a Person of Merit, and the Town had great Expectations from this Piece, he was advised to print it by Subscription,

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tion, which was done accordingly in the Year 1738; and the Generosity of his Friends, and many of the Nobility, to make amends for his Disappointment, was so great, that I have heard, his Subscription amounted to above eight hundred Pounds. It has been since revived with Alterations, and acted at the Theatre in *Dublin* under the Title of the *Patriot*.

II. The Betrayer of his Country, a Tragedy, 1741. It was since revived under the Title of the Earl of *Westmoreland*.

III. *Jack the Giant-Queller*, an Operatical Play performed at the Theatre in *Dublin*, in 1748, but prohibited after the first Night's Representation.

### Dr. DALTON.

This Gentleman altered *Milton's* Masque of *Ludlow-Castle*, and brought it on the Stage under the Title of

*Comus*. It was set to Music by Mr. *Arne*, and acted with great Applause, 1739.

In the Run of this Piece (to his Honour be it mentioned) Dr. *Dalton* found out a Daughter of *Milton*, a Woman of great Age, and mean Circumstances, and procured her *Comus* for a Benefit, from whence she received upwards of 120 l.

### DAVID GARRICK, Esq;

This Gentleman is descended from a good Family in *Staffordshire*, his Father was an Officer in the Army. He was designed for the Law, and entered of the *Society of Lincoln's-Inn*; but having a strong Inclination to the Stage, he commenced Actor in 1740, at the Theatre in *Goodman's-Fields*, and seemed even at his first Appearance to reach Perfection.

An Account of his Excellence spread through the whole Town, and his great Merit soon brought him to the established Theatre in *Drury-Lane*, where he is now justly rewarded with

Share in the Patent, and in the Government of the same; an Undertaking no Person understands better than himself.

He is the Author of many humorous Prologues and Epilogues: Also of three Dramatic Pieces.

I. The Lying Valet, a Farce, 1740.

II. *Miss in her Teens*, or the Medley of Lovers, a Farce, 1747.

III. *Lethe*, a Dramatic Satire, 1748. He likewise altered from *Shakespear*, *Romeo and Juliet*; and the *Winter's Tale*; and from *Ben Johnson*, *Every Man in his Humour*; all which have been acted with great Applause.

WILLIAM

WILLIAM HAMMOND, Esq;

A young Gentleman in the Army, who wrote a Ballad Opera of one Act, called  
The Preceptor, or the Loves of *Abelard* and *Heloise*, 1740

Mr. JOSEPH REED.

This Person has printed one Dramatic Piece, called  
The Superannuated Gallant, a Farce, 1740.

Mr. MATTHEW GARDINER,

A Native of *Ireland*, who wrote two Dramatic Pieces.  
I. The Sharppers, a Ballad Opera, 1740.  
II. The *Parthian* Hero, a Tragedy, 1741.

Mr. CHARLES MARSH.

A Bookseller, who wrote one Play, called  
*Amasis* King of *Egypt*, a Tragedy, 1741.  
He also printed an Alteration of *Shakespeare's* Winter's Tale.

Mr. JAMES AYRES.

This Author is a Native of *Ireland*. He wrote one Dramatic Piece called  
*Sancho* at Court, or the Mock Governor, a Ballad Opera of three Acts 1741.

ANTHONY BROWNE, Esq;

A Gentleman of the *Temple*, who wrote one Play, called  
Fatal Retirement, a Tragedy, 1741.

Mr. SAMUEL FOOTE.

This Gentleman may be justly ranked among Dramatic Authors, since he has so long supported himself by his own Compositions, which are certainly a Species of the Drama.

He is descended from a good Family, has received a liberal Education, and may be said to abound with true Humour, if it may not be called Wit.

He is Author of a Dramatic Piece, called  
The *Englishman* in *Paris*. And also of a second Part, called, The *Englishman* returned from *Paris*, 1756.

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### THOMAS SHERIDAN, Esq;

This Gentleman is an eminent Actor, who received his Birth and Education in the Kingdom of Ireland.

He is at present, Manager of the Theatre-Royal in *Dublin*; and has wrote an entertaining Farce, called

*Captain O Blunder, or the Brave Irishman.*

He has also altered and revived the following Pieces.

*Romeo and Juliet*, a Tragedy, from *Shakespear*.

*The Loyal Subject*, a Comedy, from *Beaumont and Fletcher*.

None of these Pieces have been printed.

### Mr. PATTISON,

The Author of one Play, called

*Arminius*, a Tragedy, refused by the Licence-Office, 1741.

### Mr. JOHN STEVENS,

A Bookfeller in *London*, who wrote and published a Piece, called

*The Modern Wife, or the Virgin her own Rival*, a Comedy, 1745.

### Mr. GEORGE ALEXANDER STEVENS,

Wrote an Heroi-Comi-Parodi-Tragi-Farcical Burlesque, called

*Distress upon Distress, or Tragedy in true Taste*. In two Acts.

### Mr. CHARLES MACKLIN,

Has brought four Pieces upon the Stage.

I. *King Henry VII. or the Popish Impostor*, a Tragedy, 1746.

II. *The Suspicious Husband Criticized*, a Farce, 1747.

III. *A Will, and no Will, or a new Case for the Lawyers*.

IV. *The Fortune-Hunters, or the Widow bewitch'd*.

These two last have been played, but are not yet printed.

### Mr. JOHN BAILIE,

A Physician, who left at his Death one Play, called

*The Married Coquet*, a Comedy, printed 1746, but never acted.

MICHAEL

**MICHAEL CLANCY, M. D.**

This Gentleman is a Physician, and Author of two Plays, viz.

- I. *Hermon Prince of Chorea*, or the Extravagant Zealot.
- II. *The Sharper*, a Comedy. The Subject is the Story of the late Colonel *Chartres*.

**Mr. DORMAN.**

A Gentleman who lives at *Hamstead*, the Author of one Piece, called

*Sir Roger de Coverly*, a Comedy, 1746.

**THOMAS WHINCOP, Esq;**

This Gentleman wrote one Play, called *Scanderbeg*, or Love and Liberty, a Tragedy; not acted, but published with the Life of *Scanderbeg*, after his Decease, by his Widow, 1747.

**Dr. BENJAMIN HOADLEY.**

This Gentleman is a Son of the Lord Bishop of *Winchester*, and Physician to his Majesty's Household.

He has wrote one Play, called

*The Suspicious Husband*, a Comedy, 1747.

**Mr. HENRY WARD.**

This Author is a Comedian by Profession. He published three Dramatic Pieces in 1747.

I. *The Happy Lovers*, or the Beau metamorphosed, a Comedy.

II. *The Petticoat Plotter*, or More Ways than One for a Wife, a Comedy

III. *The Widow's Wish*, or an Equipage of Lovers, a Comedy.

**Mr. EDWARD MOORE,**

The Author of the Fables for the Female Sex, has written three Plays.

I. *The Foundling*, a Comedy, 1748.

II. *Gilblas*, a Comedy, 1750.

III. *The Gamester*, a Tragedy, 1753.

**Mrs. LETITIA PILKINGTON.**

This Lady was born in *Ireland*. In the 2d Vol. of her  
Memoirs,

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Memoirs, she has given us one Act of a Tragedy, called the *Roman Father*. Also a Burlesque Satirical Piece, called The *Turkish Court*, or the *London Prentice*, performed at the Theatre in *Caple-Street*, (but never printed) 1748.

Mr. SAMUEL JOHNSON,

The Author of the New *English Dictionary*, and of an excellent Collection of Papers, called the *Rambler*, hath written one Play, called *Irene*, a Tragedy, 1748.

Mr. WILLIAM HAWKINS.

This Gentleman is a Fellow of *Pembroke College, Oxford*, and Professor of Poetry. He has wrote one Play, called *Henry and Rosamond*, a Tragedy, (printed but not acted) 1749.

Mr. THEOPHILUS MOSS,

Author of a Comedy, called  
The General Lover.

Mr. WILDER.

This Person was both an Actor and Poet. He wrote one Piece, called  
The Gentleman Gardener, a Farce, 1749.

WILLIAM SHIRLEY, Esq;

The Author of one Play, call'd  
*Edward the Black Prince*, a Tragedy, 1749.

Mr. SMOLLET.

This Gentleman is the Author of *Roderick Random*, *Peregrine Pickle*, and some other Works. He also wrote a Tragedy, called,  
The Regicide, or *James Ist. of Scotland*, 1749.

The Rev. Mr. MASON.

This Gentlemn is the Author of that justly celebrated Dramatic Poem, entitled  
*Elfrida*, written on the Model of the ancient *Greek Tragedy*, which for that Reason he did not offer to the *English Stage*.

WILLIAM

WILLIAM WHITEHEAD, Esq;

This Gentleman is Secretary and Register to the Order of the *Bath*, and has written two Plays.

- I. *The Roman Father*, a Tragedy, 1750.
- II. *Creusa Queen of Athens*, a Tragedy, 1753. Both acted with Applause.

Mr. HENDERSON.

This Gentleman in 1752 wrote a Tragedy, called *Arfinoe*, or the Incestuous Marriage.

The Rev. Mr. FRANCIS,

Is the Author of two Tragedies.

- I. *Eugenia*, acted at *Drury-Lane*, 1752.
- II. *Constantine*, acted at *Covent-Garden*, 1754.

Mrs. CIBBER.

This elegant and highly celebrated Actress translated, or rather imitated, from the *French*, a Petit Piece of one Act, entitled

*The Oracle*, acted at *Drury-Lane*, 1752.

Mrs. CLIVE.

This Actress, so justly admired for her excellent Vein of Comic Humour, wrote a Farce of one Act, entitled *Bays in Petticoats*, acted at *Drury-Lane*, 1753.

Mr. HENRY JONES,

Is the Author of a Tragedy, entitled

*The Earl of Effex*, acted at *Covent-Garden Theatre*, in 1753, with great Applause.

Mr. RICHARD GLOVER.

This Gentleman is the Author of an elegant Epic Poem called *Leonidas*.

He also wrote *Boadicea*, a Tragedy, acted in 1755.

Mr. CRISP.

This Gentleman wrote a Tragedy, called *Virginia*, acted at *Drury-Lane* in 1754.

Mr.

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Mr. MORGAN,

Is the Author of a Tragedy, called  
*Philoclea*, acted at *Covent-Garden* in 1754.

Mr. MONCRIEFF.

Is the Author of a Tragedy, called  
*Appius*, acted at *Covent-Garden*, 1755.

Mr. MURPHY,

Is the Author of a Farce acted at *Drury-Lane*, 1756,  
called  
*The Apprentices*.

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### P L A Y S

Wrote by Anonymous AUTHORS, in the 17th CENTURY.

- I. **T**HE Adventures of *Madrid*, a Comedy, 1700.
- II. **T**he *Cornish* Squire, a Comedy, 1701.
- III. All puzzled, a Farce, 1702.
- IV. The Humours of *Wapping*, a Farce, 1703.
- V. The Merry Pranks, or *Windmill-hill*, a Farce, 1704.
- VI. Injured Love, or the Ladies Satisfaction, a Comedy,  
1706.
- VII. The merry Sailors, or the Landlord Bit, a Farce  
1707.
- VIII. *Celestina*, or the *Spanish* Bawd, 1708.  
This was wrote originally in *Spanish*, by *Don Mateo Aleman*  
(the best esteemed Dramatic Author in *Spain*) in 21 Acts, and  
translated above a Hundred Years since at the End of *Guzman*  
*de Arjarache*, the *Spanish* Rogue. In the 2d Volume of  
the new Translation, it is reduced to five Acts.
- IX. *Cinna's* Conspiracy, a Tragedy, 1710.
- X. The Apparition, or the Sham Wedding, 1714.
- XI. The Lucky Prodigal, a Farce, 1715.
- XII. *Ajax* from *Sophocles*, a Tragedy, 1717.
- XIII. The Juror, a Farce, 1717.
- XIV. The Stock-Jobbers, a Farce, 1720.
- XV. The fatal Legacy, 1721.
- XVI. *Cartouche*, or the *French* Robber, a Farce, 1722.
- XVII. The Impertinent Lovers, or the Coquet at her Wits,  
end, a Comedy, 1723.

XVIII. *Bel-*



- XVIII.** *Bellisarius*, a Tragedy, 1725.
- XIX.** *The Lottery*, a Comedy, 1728.
- XX.** *Love and Revenge, or the Vintner outwitted*, a Ballad Opera, 1729.
- XXI.** *Themistocles*, a Tragedy, 1729.  
This Play was wrote by an eminent Divine of the Kingdom of *Ireland*, whose Characteristics are, Benevolence, Charity, and Humanity; a Friend and Patron to Virtue, and a distinguished Benefactor to his Country.
- XXII.** *Momus turned Fabulist*, a Ballad Opera, 1730.
- XXIII.** *The Footman's Opera*, 1731.
- XXIV.** *Antiochus*, a Tragedy, 1733.
- XXV.** *All Vows kept*, a Comedy, 1733.
- XXVI.** *The Theatres*, a Farce, 1733.
- XXVII.** *The Trooper's Opera*, 1736.
- XXVIII.** *Chuck, or the School Boy's Opera*, 1736.  
The Author or the Printer has set the Name of *Mr. Cibber* to this Piece.
- XXIX.** *The Royal Marriage*, a Ballad Opera, 1736.
- XXX.** *Tchao-chi cou ell*, or the Little Orphan, of the Family of *Tchao*, a Tragedy, 1738.  
This Play is translated from the *Chinese*, and printed in the first Volume of *Du Halde's History of China*, in *English*.
- XXXI.** *The Projectors*, a Comedy, 1738.
- XXXII.** *The Humours of the Road, or a Ramble to Oxford*, 1739.
- XXXIII.** *Fatal Necessity*, a Tragedy, 1741.
- XXXIV.** *Bickerstaff's unburied Dead*, a Farce, 1742.
- XXXV.** *The State of Phycic*, a Farce, 1742.
- XXXVI.** *Pamela*, a Comedy, 1742.
- XXXVII.** *Pamela, or Virtue rewarded*, a Comedy, 1742.
- XXXVIII.** *The Decoy*, an Opera, 1743.
- XXXIX.** *The Lucky Discovery, or the Tanner of York*, a Comedy, 1743.
- XL.** *The Picture, or the Cuckold in Conceit*, a Ballad Opera, 1744.
- XLI.** *Mithridates*, a Tragedy, acted in *Dublin*, 1744.
- XLII.** *Double Deceit, or the Happy Pair*, a Farce, 1745.
- XLIII.** *Love in a Mist, or a Lafs of Spirit*, a Farce, 1746.
- XLIV.** *The Double Disappointment*, a Farce, 1747.
- XLV.** *The Oculist*, a Farce, 1747.
- XLVI.** *Charles XIIth King of Sweden, or the Adventures of Roderic Random, and his Man Strap*, 1748.
- XLVII.** *Queen*

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XLVII. *Queen Tragedy* restored, a Dramatic Entertainment, 1749.

XLVIII. *Tittle Tattle*, or *Taste A-la-mode*, a Farce, 1749.

XLIX. *The Conspirators*, a Tragi-Comic Opera, as it was acted in *England* and *Ireland*, 1749.

L. *The Jerusalem Intimacy*, a Farce, 1749.

LI. *The Hen-peckt Captain*, or the Humours of the *Militia*, a Farce, 1749.

LII. *The Usurpers*, or the Coffee-House Politicians, 1749.

LIII. *The Election*, a Comedy, 1749.

LIV. *Chaplet*, a Musical Drama, 1749.

LV. *Robin Hood*, a Musical Drama, performed at *Drury-Lane*, 1750.

LVI. *Fair Parricide*, a Tragedy of three Acts, 1752.

LVII. *Alfred the Great*, 1753.

LVIII. *Barbarossa*, a Tragedy, 1754. } Both acted at

LIX. *Atbelstan*, a Tragedy, 1756. } *Drury-Lane*.

A List of Plays published in this Period of Time, but having no Dates, could not be inserted in their proper Places.

I. *Love in a Puddle*, a Comedy.

II. *Author's Triumph*, or the Manager managed, a Farce.

III. *The Beau Merchant*, a Comedy.

IV. *The Beggar's Pantomime*, or *Contending Pollys*, a Farce.

V. *The Grey Mare's the better Horse*, a Farce.

VI. *Harlequin Hydaspes*, a Farce.

VII. *Love in a Wood*, or the Country Squire, by J. G. a Farce.

VIII. *The Lost Princess*, a Tragedy.

IX. *The Mad-House*, a Comedy.

X. *Merope*, from *Voltaire*, a Tragedy.

XI. *The Mock Preacher*, a Farce.

XII. *A Night's Intrigue*, a Farce.

XIII. *The Plague of Riches*, a Comedy.

XIV. *Rape upon Rape*, a Comedy.

XV. *Richmond Wells*, a Farce.

XVI. *Socrates Triumphant*, a Farce.

XVII. *The two Harlequins*, a Farce.

XVIII. *The Whim*, or the Miser's Retreat, a Farce.

XIX. *Ynkle and Yarico*, a Tragedy.

XX. *The Younger Brother*, or the Sham Marquess, a Comedy.

XXI. *The Careless Shepherd*, a Pastoral.

XXII. The

- XXII. *The Broken Stock-Jobbers*, a Farce.  
XXIII. *Hecuba*, a Tragedy.  
XXIV. *Feign'd Friendship, or the Mad Reformer*, a Comedy.  
XXV. *The Mall, or the Modish Lovers*, a Comedy.  
XXVI. *The Man too hard for the Master*, a Comedy.



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