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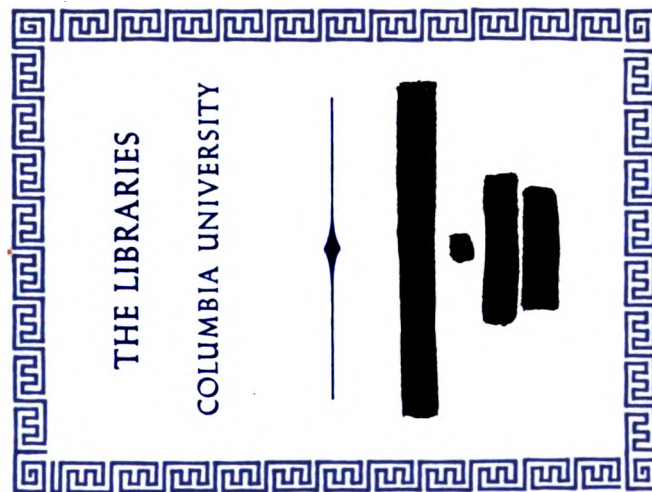
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Totus Mundus Agit Astrionem.

THE L I F E

OF

Mr. *Thomas Betterton*,

The late Eminent

TRAGEDIAN.

WHEREIN

The ACTION and UTTERANCE of the Stage,
Bar, and *Pulpit*, are distinctly consider'd.

WITH

The JUDGMENT of the late Ingenious *Monsieur de St. EVREMOND*, upon the *Italian* and *French* MUSIC and OPERA's; in a Letter to the Duke of *Buckingham*.

C. R. Alden

To which is added,

The AMOROUS WIDOW, or the *Wanton Wife*.
A Comedy: Written by Mr. BETTERTON.
Now first printed from the Original Copy.

Quis Nostrum tam animo agresti, & duro fuit, ut Roscii Morte nuper non commoveretur? Qui cum esset Senex mortuus; tamen propter excellentem Artem ac Venustatem videbatur omnino mori non debuisse. o. b. o. Parker del. h. o. h.

Cic. in Orat. pro ARCHIA Poeta.

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TO

Richard Steele, Esq;

S I R,

 HE following Piece was
scarce yet an *Embryo*,
when I design'd its full
Growth for your Protection. For
tho we Authors generally seem fond

A 3

of

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iv *The Epistle Dedicatory.*

of adorning the Frontispiece of our Books with *pompous Titles*, as if we deriv'd from those not only Security but Fame to our Works: yet I can't but remember, that, among the *Ancients*, the Name of a *learned Friend* was of greater Consideration with the Writer, than the Dignity of a Man of Power; and that the Greatness of any Man in the *Political State*, according to them, did not raise his Authority in the Common-Wealth of Letters, above his real Merits in the *Arts and Sciences*, unless he ennobled it, by giving such Encouragement to them, as they very rarely in our Days meet with from the GREAT ONES.

Being,

The Epistle Dedicatory. v

Being, therefore, to write on an Art, which has not been much cultivated in our Nation, either in the *Practice* or *Theory*; what I had most to wish for, on the Publication of this Essay, was the Approbation of One, to whom the *Witty* and the *Learned* allow some Place in the POLITER STUDIES and FINE ARTS. An Address of this Nature is not without the agreeable Vanity of recommending a Man to the World, as a Person skilful in the Matter, of which he treats; and the Merit of Mr. STEELE, in the Kingdom of the *Muses*, is too well known to the *Beaux Esprits*, not to secure me from the Fear of the Railery of *Ascylos* on *Encol-*

A 4 *pus,*

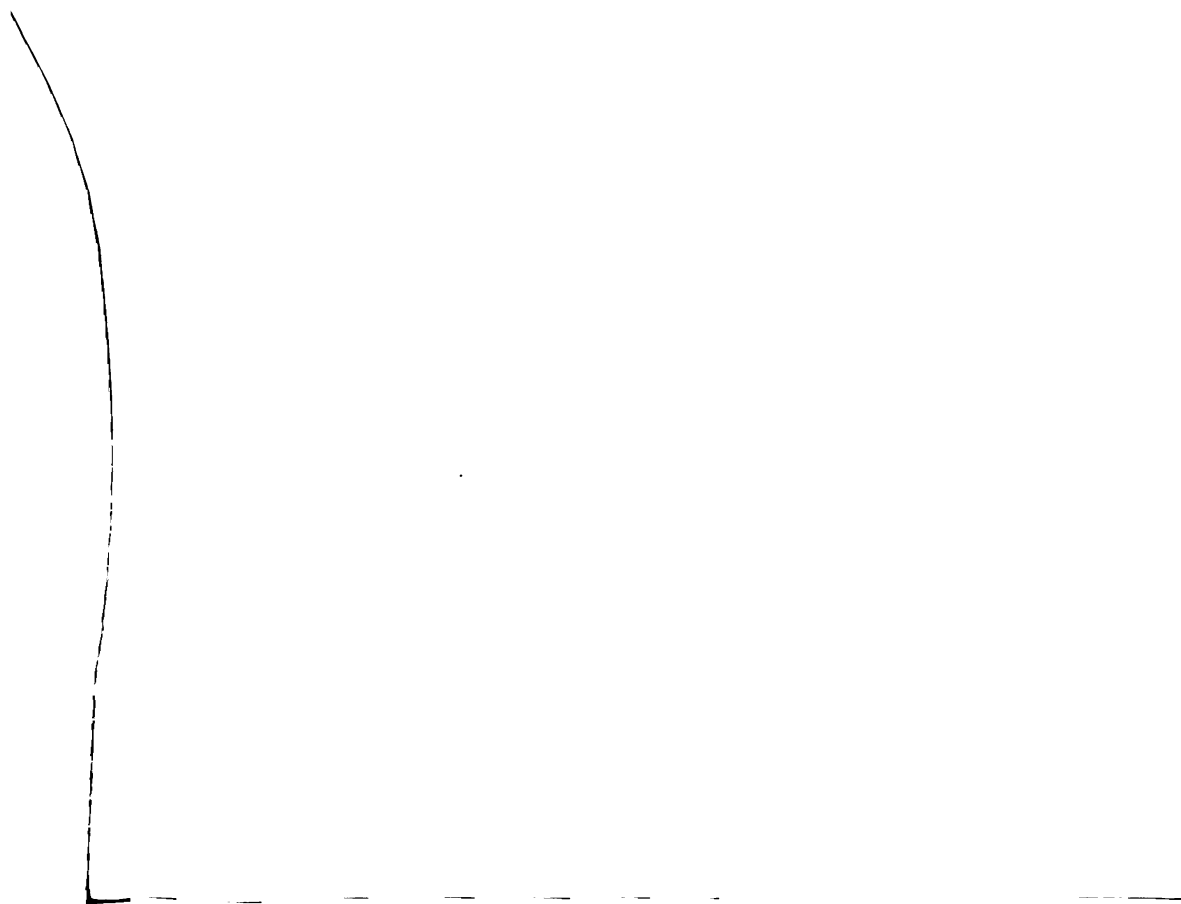
vi *The Epistle Dedicatory.*

*pius, in Petronius Arbitrator----- Ut
foris Canares Poetam laudasti; or of
Manley on my Lord Plausible---
That rather than not flatter, he
would flatter the Poets of the
Age, whom no Body else would
flatter.*

But I have chosen to address this Discourse to you, because the *Art*, of which it treats, is of your familiar Acquaintance, and the Graces of ACTION and UTTERANCE come naturally under the Consideration of a *Dramatic Writer*. I flatter my self, that, as I am (as far as I know) the first, who in *English* has attempted this Subject, in the Extent of the Discourse before you, so I am apt to believe, that I have pretty well

The Epistle Dedicatory. vii
well exhausted the Matter; and laid down such *General* and *Particular Rules*, as may raise the Stage from the present Neglect it lies under, to that Esteem, which it drew from the most polite Nation, that ever was in the World, and that, which it will always deserve from Men of Sense, when under a just Regulation, and adorn'd, as it ought to be, with GOOD ACTORS and GOOD PLAYS.

The *former* may be rais'd, I hope, from what I have deliver'd in the following Treatise, as the *later* from your Example, which may inspire our Authors with the Knowledge of Nature, and the Art of keeping her always in their View, adorn'd with that



viii *The Epistle Dedicatory.*
that *Harmony, Decorum, and Order*, which ought perpetually to shine in such PUBLIC REPRESENTATIONS.

I am, S I R,

Your Sincere Friend,
and Humble Servant,

Charles Gildon.

T H E

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T H E
PREFACE.



Should not have troubled the Reader with a Preface to this little Treatise, but to prevent an Objection, which may be made, and that is, that I have been a Plagiary, and deliver'd Rules for my own, which are taken out of other Authors. I first allow, that I have borrow'd many of them from the French, but then the French drew most of them from Quintilian and other Authors. Yet the Frenchman has improv'd the Ancients in this Particular, by supplying what was lost by the Alteration of Custom, with

x The PREFACE.

with Observations more peculiar to the present Age.

ARTS were never brought to Perfection by one Hand, and tho I have made several Advancements my self upon those, who have gone before me, yet I know not but a diligent Study, and judicious Observation, may produce new and more easy Rules. If I have lead the Way with any tolerable Success, the Satisfaction will be too great to be lessen'd by being succeeded with a more masterly Endeavour.

Being oblig'd to have a Regard to the Action and Utterance of the Pulpit and Bar, as well as the Stage, I was compell'd to bring my Examples from Oratory more than from the Drama. But if this meets with the Approbation of the Learned, I may perhaps publish a Treatise for the Stage alone. However, a Player, that is Master of those Qualities, which he ought to possess, by studying with Application this Discourse, may arrive at a Perfection, which this Age has not seen.

EPI.

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EPILOGUE

Spoken by Mrs. BARRY,

At the Theatre Royal in Drury-Lane, April the 7th, 1709.

At Her Playing in *Love for Love* ;
With Mrs BRACEGIRDLE.

For the Benefit of Mr. BETTERTON.

Written by N. Rowe, Esq;



SOME brave Knight, who once with
Spear and Shield,

Had sought Renown in many a well
fought Field,

But now no more with Sacred Fame inspir'd,

Was to a Peaceful Hermitage retir'd ;

3

There

xii *EPILOGUE.*

There, if by Chance difast'rous Tales he hears,
Of Matrons Wrongs and captive Virgins Tears,
He feels soft Pity urge his Gen'rous Breast,
And vows once more to succour the Distress'd,
Buckled in Mail he fallies on the Plain,
And turns him to the Feats of Arms again.

So we, to former Leagues of Friendship true,
Have bid once more our peaceful Homes adieu,
To aid Old THOMAS, and to pleasure you.
Like Errant Damfels boldly we engage,
Arm'd, as you see, for the defenceless Stage.
Time was, when this good Man no Help did lack,
And scorn'd that any She should hold his Back.
But now, so Age and Frailty have ordain'd,
By two at once He's forc'd to be sustain'd.

You

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EPILOGUE. xiii

You see, what Failing Nature brings Man to,
And yet let none Insult, for ought we know,
She may not wear so well with some of you :
Tho Old, you find his Strength is not clean past,
But true as Steel, he's Mettle to the last.
If better he perform'd in Days of Yore,
Yet now he gives you all that's in his Pow'r;
What can the youngest of you all do more?

What he has been, tho present Praise be
Shall haply be a *Theme* in Times to come,
As now we talk of ROSCIUS, and of *Rome*.
Had you with-held your Favours on this Night,
Old SHAKESPEAR's Ghost had ris'n to do him
Right.
With Indignation had you seen him frown
Upon a worthless, witless, tasteless Town ;

Griev'd

xiv **EPILOGUE.**

Griev'd and Repining you had heard him say,
 Why are the *Muses* Labours cast away?
 Why did I only Write what only he could Play?

But since, like Friends to Wit, thus throng'd you
 meet,

Go on and make the Gen'rous Work complete;

Be true to Merit, and still own his Cause,

Find something for him more than bare Applause.

In just Remembrance of your Pleasures past,

Be kind, and give him a Discharge at last.

In Peace and Ease Life's Remnant let him wear,

And hang his consecrated Buskin here.

T H E

(1)



T H E
L I F E
O F
Mr. Thomas Betterton, &c.

I N T R O D U C T I O N .



AS it was said of *Brutus* and *Cassius*, that they were the last of the *Romans*; so it may be said of Mr. BETTERTON, that he was the last of our *Tragedians*. There being, therefore, so much due to his Memory from all Lovers of the Stage; I could not lay aside my Design of conveying his Name with this Discourse at least to a little longer Date, than Nature has given his Body. Nor can I imagine, that it can be look'd on, as injurious to our Reputation, either as Men of Can-
 B dour,

dour, Figure or Sense, to express a Concern for the Loss of a Man so excellent in an Art which is now expiring, and for which Antiquity had so peculiar a Value; since it is plain from the Motto of this Book, that *Cicero* pleading the Cause of the Poet *Archias*, tells the Judge, a Man of the first Quality, that every Body was concern'd for the Death of *Roscus* the Comedian; or which is more emphatic, says he, *Who of us was of so brutish and sour a Temper as not to be mov'd at the late Death of ROSCIUS? Who, though he dy'd old, yet for the Excellence of his Art, and Beauty in Performance, seem'd as if he ought to have been exempted entirely from Death.*

Whether Mr. *Betterton* or *Roscus* make a just Parallel or not in their Merits as Actors, is difficult to know; but thus far it is certain, that let the Excellence of the *Roman* be never so great, that of the *Briton* was the greatest we had: and tho we shall find, that in *Cicero's* Time the Decorums of the Stage were more exactly observ'd, than in ours, yet we may suppose Mr. *Betterton*, in his own particular Performance, on a Foot with *Roscus*, especially when we consider that our Player excelled in both *Comedy* and *Tragedy*, the *Roman* only in the former, as far as we can discover.

To give our *English* Actor yet the Preheminence, I shall here by writing his Life make him convey to others such Instructions, that if they are perfectly understood, and justly practis'd,

tis'd, will add such Beauties to their Performances, as may render his Loss of less Consequence to the Stage. *Plato* and *Xenophon* introduce *Socrates* in their Discourses, to give the greater Authority to what they say, on those important Points which they would the more forcibly recommend to their Readers. I shall, therefore, make the same Use of Mr. *Betterton*, on a Subject in which he may reasonably be thought a very competent Judge.

I know it may be objected, that the Qualifications I make him require, and the Precepts he gives, may seem to render this Art impossible for any other to attain to, as *Cicero* is said in his *Orator*, to do with the Oratorian Art.

I confess that I do make him require Qualifications, of which he was not perhaps Master himself; but I presume that can be no Objection to them provided they are necessary, or at least conducive to the forming a complete Player; for we may daily hear many Painters, or even *Lovers* of the Art, who will tell you what Qualities are necessary to a great Master in History Painting, who yet do not themselves pretend to be possess'd of them. And the same will hold of many other Arts.

But if, indeed, there were any Precepts deliver'd, or any Qualifications requir'd, which would render a Mastery in this Art so difficult, that it could not be attain'd, the Objection would be far more solid, and worthy of our Notice; but I dare affirm, that as the Stages are

now in the Hands and Management of the Players, there is not one Qualification set down, which is not absolutely necessary to do Justice to Art, in Judgment and Performance.

Nor can I find that Cicero, in his Book *de Oratore*, has requir'd any Impossibility in his Candidate for Eloquence; and it is evident, that has not so far discourag'd others from attempting that noble Science, but that every Age has produc'd some eminent in it, tho few or none have arriv'd to an Equality with him in the Performance for want of those very Qualities requir'd by him to the forming a *complete Orator*. Thus tho, to be a perfect Master, all the Qualities deliver'd be necessary, yet there is Room for Praise as well as Industry for others, who are not capable of attaining the whole. Such therefore, whose Genius is not so extensive as to comprehend the whole, ought entirely to apply themselves to, and be content with, the *Performance*, leaving the Office of *Judging* to those, whose greater Skill and Knowledge better qualify them for Judges.

Having premis'd these things by way of Introduction, I shall now proceed to the Life of Mr. *Betterton*.

Mr.

MR. Thomas Betterton was born in *Tuttle-street, Westminster*; his Father being Under-Cook to King Charles the First: And when he was now come to Years sufficient, his Father bound him Apprentice to one Mr. *Rhodes* a Bookseller, at the Bible at *Charing-Cross*, and he had for his Under-Prentice Mr. *Kynaston*.

But that which prepar'd Mr. *Betterton* and his Fellow-Prentice for the Stage, was that his Master *Rhodes* having formerly been *Wardrobe Keeper* to the King's Company of *Comedians* in the *Black-Fryars*, on General *Monck's* March to *London*, in 1659. with his Army, got a Licence from the Powers then in being, to set up a Company of Players in the *Cockpit* in *Drury-lane*, and soon made his Company compleat, his Apprentices, Mr. *Betterton* for Mens Parts, and Mr. *Kynaston* for Womens Parts, being at the Head of them.

Mr. *Betterton* was now about 22 Years of Age, when he got a great Applause by acting in the *Loyal Subject*, the *Wildgoose Chase*, the *Spanish Curate*, and many more. But while our young Actor is thus rising under his Master *Rhodes*, Sir William D'Avenant getting a Patent of King Charles the Second, for erecting a Company under the Name of the Duke of *Tork's* Servants, took Mr. *Betterton* and all that acted under Mr. *Rhodes* into his Company. And in the Year 1662. open'd his House in *Lincolns-Inn Fields*, with the first and second part of the

B 3

Siege

6 *The Life of Mr. Tho. Betterton.*

Siege of Rhodes, having new Scenes, and Decorations of the Stage, which were then first introduc'd into *England*.

Tho this be affirm'd by some, others have laid it to the Charge of Mr. *Betterton* as the first Innovator on our rude Stage, as a Crime; nay, as the Destruction of good Playing; but I think with very little Show of Reason, and very little Knowledge of the Stages of *Athens* and *Rome*, where, I am apt to believe, was in their flourishing times as great Actors as ever play'd here before Curtains. For how that which helps the Representation, by assisting the pleasing Delusion of the Mind in regard of the Place, should spoil the Acting, I cannot imagine.

The *Athenian* Stage was so much adorn'd, that the very Ornaments or Decorations cost the State more Money, than their Wars against the *Persians*: and the *Romans*, tho their Dramatic Poets were much inferiour to the *Greeks*, (if we may guess at those, who are perished by those who remain) were yet not behind them in the Magnificence of the Theatre to heighten the Pleasure of the Representation. If this was Mr. *Betterton's* Thought, it was very just; since the Audience must be often puzzled to find the Place and Situation of the Scene, which gives great Light to the Play, and helps to deceive us agreeably, while they saw nothing before them but some *Linsy Woolsy* Curtains, or at best some piece of old Tapisstry fill'd with awkerd Figures, that would almost fright the Audience.

This,

The Life of Mr. Tho. Betterton. 7

This, therefore, I must urge as his Praise, that he endeavour'd to complete that Representation, which before was but imperfect.

Mr. *Betterton* making now the foremost Figure in Sir *William's* Company among the Men, cast his Eyes on Mrs. *Saunderson*, who was no less excellent among the Female Players, and who being bred in the House of the Patentee, improv'd her self daily in her Art; and having by Nature those Gifts which were requir'd to make a perfect Actress, added to them the Beauty of a virtuous Life, maintaining the Character of a good Woman to her old Age. This Lady therefore Mr. *Betterton* made choice of to receive as his Wife; and this proceeding from a Value he had for the Merits of her Mind, as well as Person, produc'd a Happiness in the married State nothing else could ever have given.

But notwithstanding all the Industry of the Patentee and Managers, it seems the *King's House* then carry'd the vogue of the Town; and the *Lincolns-Inn Fields* House being not so commodious, the Players and other Adventurers built a much more magnificent Theatre in *Dorset Gardens*; and fitted it for all the Machines and Decorations the Skill of those times could afford. This likewise proving less effectual than they hop'd, other Arts were employ'd, and the Political Maxim of *Divide and Govern* being put in Practice, the Feuds and Animosities of the *King's Company* were so well improv'd, as to

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8 *The Life of Mr. Tho. Betterton.*

produce an Union betwixt the two Patents. To bring this Design about, the following Agreement was sign'd by the Parties hereafter mention'd.

Memorandum, Octob. 14. 1681.

“ IT was then agreed upon between Dr. *Charles Davenant*, *Thomas Betterton*, Gent. and *William Smith*, Gent. of the one Part, and *Charles Hart*, Gent. and *Edward Kynaston*, Gent. on the other Part, — That the said *Charles Davenant*, *Thomas Betterton*, and *William Smith*, do pay, or cause to be paid, out of the Profits of Acting, unto *Charles Hart* and *Edward Kynaston*, five Shillings a-piece for every Day there shall be any Tragedies, or Comedies, or other Representations acted at the *Duke's Theatre in Salisbury Court*, or where-ever the Company shall act during the respective Lives of the said *Charles Hart*, and *Edward Kynaston*, excepting the Days the young Men or young Women play for their own Profit only; but this Agreement to cease, if the said *Charles Hart* or *Edward Kynaston* shall at any time play among, or effectually assist the King's Company of Actors; and for as long as this is pay'd, they both covenant and promise not to play at the King's Theatre.

“ If Mr. *Kynaston* shall hereafter be free to act at the *Duke's Theatre*, this Agreement with him, as to his Pension, shall also cease.

“ In

The Life of Mr. Tho. Betterton. 9

“ In Consideration of this Pension, Mr. *Hart* and Mr. *Kynaston* do promise to make over, within a Month after the Sealing of this, unto *Charles Davenant*, *Thomas Betterton*, and *William Smith*, all the Right, Title, and Claim which they or either of them may have to any Plays, Books, Cloaths, and Scenes in the King's Play-house.

“ Mr. *Hart* and Mr. *Kynaston* do both also promise, within a Month after the Sealing hereof, to make over to the said *Charles Davenant*, *Thomas Betterton*, and *William Smith*, all the Title which they each of them have to Six and Three Pence a-piece for every Day there shall be any Playing at the King's Theatre.

“ Mr. *Hart* and Mr. *Kynaston* do both also promise to promote with all their Power and Interest an Agreement between both Play-houses; and Mr. *Kynaston* for himself promises to endeavour as much as he can to get free, that he may act at the *Duke's Play-house*, but he is not obliged to play unless he have ten Shillings *per day* allow'd for his Acting, and his Pension then to cease.

“ Mr. *Hart* and Mr. *Kynaston* promise to go to Law with Mr. *Killigrew* to have these Articles perform'd, and are to be at the Expence of the Suit.

“ In Witness of this Agreement, all the Parties have hereunto set their Hands, this 14th of *October*, 1681.

I am

10 *The Life of Mr. Tho. Betterton.*

I am sensible, that this private Agreement has been reflected on as Tricking and unfair, but then it is by those, who have not sufficiently consider'd the Matter ; for *an dolus, an Virtus quis in Hoste requirit ?* All Stratagems are allow'd betwixt Enemies ; the two Houses were at War, and Conduct and Action were to decide the Victory ; and whatever the Duke's Company might fall short of in Action, it is plain they won the Field by their Conduct. For Mr. Hart and Mr. Kynaston performed their Promises so well, that the Union was effected in 1682. and so continu'd till the Year 1695. when the Actors under the united Patents, thinking themselves aggrieved with Mr. Betterton at the head of them, got a new Licence to set up a Play-house once more in *Lincolns-Inn Fields*. But when the Success of that Company began to give way to the Industry of the other, and Mr. Vanbrugh had built a new Theatre in the *Hay-Market*, Mr. Betterton, weary of the Fatigues and Toil of Government, deliver'd his Company over to the new Licence. But they again giving way to the new Mode of *Opera's*, the Companies were once more united in *Drury-Lane*, and the *Opera's* confin'd to the *Hay-Market*. But Revolutions being so frequent in this *Mimic State*, Mr. Swinny got the chief Players over to him and the *Opera House*, among whom was Mr. Betterton ; who now being very old, and much afflicted with the Gout, acted but seldom ; and the Year before he dy'd, the Town paid a par-

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particular Deference to him by making his Day worth 500 l.

Mr. Betterton was so sensible of Friendship, that tho he lost near 8000 l. by the Father, yet he took Care of the Daughter himself, till she marry'd according to her own Inclinations. Three Plays were written or translated by him, and brought on the Stage with Success ; *The Woman made a Justice* ; *The Amorous Widow, or the Wanton Wife* ; and *The Unjust Judge, or Appius and Virginia*. But he never would suffer any of them to be printed, tho the *Amorous Widow* from a surreptitious Copy visited the World after it had been acted almost 20 Years ; but a true Copy will be added to this Book.

Being now seventy five Years of Age, and long troubled with the Stone and Gout, the latter at last, by repellatory Medicines, was driven into his Stomach, which prov'd so fatal as in a few Days to put an End to his Life. He was bury'd with great Decency at *Westminster-Abby*.

The Year before his Death being at his Country House in *Reading*, my Friend and I travelling that way, according to my Promise, I call'd to see him ; and being Hospitably receiv'd, one Day after Dinner we retir'd to his Garden, and after a little Walk there, we fell into the Discourse of *Acting*. Much was said by my Friend against the present Players, and in Praise of those of his younger Days, for he was an old Man. But being pretty well tired with the Dispute as well as Walk, we sat down in an agreeable Shade,

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Shade, and I address'd my self to Mr. *Betterton* in this manner.

I am sensible, that my Friend's Taste of these Pleasures was stronger in his Youth, than at this time, when the *Moroseness* of Age rebates the Edge of our Appetites in more Pleasures, than one: He would else allow that no Woman of his Time excelled Mrs. *Barry*, nor any Man your self. I mean not to flatter you, (said I, finding him a little uneasy with my Complement) for it is really my Opinion; but I must confess, I see but little Prospect, that we have of the Stage's long surviving you two, at least, in its most valuable part, *Tragedy*; for this excellent Poem loses Ground every Day in the Esteem of the Town; nor can I, by any means, attribute this entirely to the Want of Genius in our present Poets, since notwithstanding that we must allow, that they are still far from Perfection in *Tragedy*, yet we have seen much better Performances in that kind of late Years, than in the so much cried up Days of *Charles the Second*, when the Gayety of the Age made strange indigested Things, under that Title, go down, in which there was neither *Nature*, nor her Handmaid ART. But I attribute this Disregard to *Tragedy* chiefly to a Defect in the *Action*, to which we may add the Sowerness of our Tempers under the Pressures of so long and heavy a War, and lastly to an Abundance of odd Spectators, whom the Chance of War have enabled

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to crowd the Pit and Stage-Boxes, and sway too much by their Thoughtless and Arbitrary Censure, either to the Advantage or Prejudice of the *Author* and *Player*.

For as War carries abundance of peccant Humours from a State, generated by the Corruptions of a long and luxurious Peace; so does it introduce a sort of Libertinism in our Diversions, contrary to Decorum and Regularity; without which no Pleasure can be truly noble. Another ill Effect of Warlike Times, is a Neglect of the politer Sciences of Peace, and a sort of Barbarism in our Gusto of all the fine Arts. To these add, the multiplying the Avenues to Wealth, whose Number increasing, increase likewise the Number of those, who are drawn into the Pursuit of Riches; which as it spreads a mean and private Spirit, of necessary Consequence makes the Love of the Public more weak and languishing.

Nor is there any greater Proof of the Virtue or Corruption of the People, than their Pleasures. Thus in the Time of the Vigour of the *Roman* Virtue, *Tragedy* was very much esteem'd, its Dignity kept up, and the Decorum of the Stage so very nicely observ'd, that a Player's standing out of his Order, or speaking a false Quantity, was sufficient for him to be hiss'd off the Stage, as *Cicero* assures us in his 3d *Paradox* *.

* *Histrion si paulo movit extra Numerum, aut si Versus pronuntiatus est Syllabâ una brevior aut longior exhibetur & exploditur.*

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And when they gave us the most noble Examples of Virtue in their real Life, they were most pleas'd with the Representation of noble Examples on the Stage ; for People are delighted with what bears the greatest Likeness to the Turn and Temperament of their own Minds. Thus when the *Roman* Virtue decay'd, or indeed was lost with their Liberty, and they subsisted and spread their Dominions more by the Merits of their Ancestors, and the *Roman* Name, made terrible by them, than by their own Bravery, then Effeminacy and Folly spread through the People, which immediately appear'd in their Sports or Spectacles ; *Tragedy* was slighted ; Farce on the one hand, with its *Mimes* and *Pantomimes* ; and *Opera* on the other, with its emasculating Sounds, invade and vanquish the Stage, and drew the Ears and Eyes of the People ; who now care only to laugh, or to see things extravagant and monstrous.

I wish this may not be too much our own Case. But being unwilling to guess at a hidden Cause, when there is an apparent one, I choose rather to attribute this Decay of *Tragedy* to our want of *Tragedians*, and indeed *Tragic Poets*, than to the Corruption of the People ; which, tho' great enough, yet I hope not so desperate, as what I have mention'd in the *Roman* State.

Tho' I am of Opinion, (reply'd Mr. *Betterton*) that the Decay of the Stage is in great measure owing to the long Continuance of the War ;

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War ; yet, I confess, I am afraid, that too much is deriv'd from the Defects of the Stage it self. When I was a young Player under Sir *William Davenant*, we were under a much better Discipline, we were obliged to make our Study our Business, which our young Men do not think it their duty now to do ; for they now scarce ever mind a Word of their Parts but only at *Rehearsals*, and come thither too often scarce recovered from their last Night's Debauch ; when the Mind is not very capable of considering so calmly and judiciously on what they have to study, as to enter thoroughly into the Nature of the Part, or to consider the Variation of the Voice, Looks, and Gestures, which should give them their true Beauty, many of them thinking the making a Noise renders them agreeable to the Audience, because a few of the Upper-Gallery clap the loud Efforts of their Lungs, in which their Understanding has no share. They think it a superfluous Trouble to study real Excellence, which might rob them of what they fancy more, Midnight, or indeed whole Nights Debauches, and a lazy Remisness in their Business.

Another Obstacle to the Improvement of our young Players, is, that when they have not been admitted above a Month or two into the Company, tho' their Education and former Business were never so foreign to *Acting*, they vainly imagine themselves Masters of that *Art*, which perfectly to attain, requires a studious Application of a Man's whole Life. They take it there-
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fore amiss to have the Author give them any Instruction; and tho they know nothing of the Art of Poetry, will give their Censure, and neglect or mind a Part as they think the Author and his Part deserves. Tho in this they are led by Fancy as blind as Ignorance can make it; and so wandering without any certain Rule of Judgment, generally favour the bad, and slight the good. Whereas it has always been mine and Mrs. Barry's Practice to consult e'en the most indifferent Poet in any Part we have thought fit to accept of; and I may say it of her, she has often so exerted her self in an indifferent Part, that her Acting has given Success to such Plays, as to read would turn a Man's Stomach; and tho I could never pretend to do so much Service that way as she has done, yet I have never been wanting in my Endeavours. But while the young Gentlemen will think themselves Masters before they understand any one Point of their Art, and not give themselves Leisure and Time to study the *Graces of ACTION and UTTERANCE*, it is impossible that the Stage should flourish, and advance in Perfection.

I am very sensible (said I, finding that he had done) of the Justness of what you have said, Sir, but am apt to believe much of those Errors, which you remark proceed from want of Judgment in the Managers, in admitting People unqualified by Nature, and not providing such Men to direct them, who understand the Art they should be improv'd in. All other Arts People
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are taught by Masters skilful in them, but here Ignorance teaches it self, or rather confirms it self into the Confidence of Knowledge, by going on without any Rebuke. I have often wish'd, therefore, that some Men of good Sense, and acquainted with the *Graces of Action and Speaking*, would lay down some Rules, by which the young Beginners might direct themselves to that Perfection, which every body is sensible is extremely (and perhaps always has been) wanted on our Stage. And tho you have not had the Benefit of such an Education in the learned Languages, as some Men may have had, yet since you have read much in *French*, and your own Mother Tongue, by the Assistance of which Languages all Knowledge may now be obtain'd, and have besides a confess'd Genius, and a long practice in the Art, I wish I could prevail with you to deliver your Sentiments on this Head, so that from them we might form a System of *Acting*, which might be a Rule to future Players, and teach them to excel not only themselves, but those who have gone before them.

Were I, Sir, (reply'd he with a graceful Modesty) as capable as you would persuade me that you think me, I should easily be prevail'd with to communicate my Notions on this Head; but being sensible of my Incapacity, for the very Reasons you have mention'd, of my Ignorance of the learned Tongues, I must be excus'd; yet not to disappoint you entirely, I shall fetch you a Manuscript on this Head, written by a Friend

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of mine, to which I confess I contributed all, that I was able; which if well perus'd, and thoroughly weigh'd, I persuade my self our Stage would rise and not fall in Reputation.

On this he went into his House, and after a little Stay return'd to us with some loose Papers, which I knew to be his own Hand; and being feated, after a Glass of Wine about, he thus began.

Being to treat of the Art of Playing, and the Duty and Qualifications of Actors, I think it will be no improper Method first to consider, What Regard an Actor ought to have to his Conduct off the Stage, before we treat of what he is to do upon it.

I have not found in all the Clamours against the Stage, any one that denies the Usefulness of the *Drama*, if justly manag'd; nay, Mr. *Collier* the most formidable Enemy of this Diversion, (tho his *Proto-Martyr*, Archbishop *Laud*, contended so violently for the Book of Sports, and Plays were acted at Court, in the Time of the Royal Martyr, even on *Sundays*) does allow, that the Wit of Man cannot invent any more efficacious means of encouraging Virtue, and depressing of Vice.

Hence I believe it is evident, that they suppose the Moral Lessons, which the Stage presents, may make the greatest Impressions on the Minds of the Audience; because the Instruction is convey'd with Pleasure, and by the Ministration of the Passions, which always have a stronger

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stronger Remembrance, than the calmer Precepts of Reason.

But then I think there is no manner of doubt but that the Lives and Characters of those Persons, who are the Vehicles, as I may call them, of these Instructions, must contribute very much to the Impression the Fable and Moral will make. For to hear Virtue, Religion, Honour recommended by a Prostitute, an Atheist, or a Rake, makes them a Jest to many People, who would hear the same done with Awe by Persons of known Reputation in those Particulars. Look but into Religion it self, and see how little the Words and Sermons of a known Drunkard, or Debauchee affect his Parishioners; and what an Influence a Divine of a pious and regular Life has on his Congregation, his Virtues preparing them to hear him with Respect, and to believe him as a Man whose Actions call not his Faith into doubt. Tho' the Pulpit must be allow'd to be the more sacred Place, as dispensing the most holy Mysteries of the Christian Religion; yet since the Gospel consists of the *Agenda* as well as *Credenda*, of Practice as well as Belief, and since the Practice is so forcibly recommended from the Stage by a purifying our Passions, and the Conveyance of Delight, the Stage may properly be esteem'd the Handmaid of the Pulpit.

For this Reason, I first recommend to our Players, both Male and Female, the greatest and most nice Care of their Reputation imaginable;

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for on that their Authority with the People depends and on their Authority in great measure their Influence. They should consider, that the Infamy, that the Profession lies under is not deriv'd from the Business, which is truly valuable and noble; that the Players in *Athens* were honourable, and so highly esteem'd, that they were sometimes Ambassadors, and the Masters to two of the most noble and glorious Orators that ever *Greece* or *Rome* produc'd; I mean, *Demosthenes* and *Cicero*, as we shall immediately see; that in *Rome* it self, where the Stage had a more disadvantageous Rise, than in *Athens*, *Cicero* looks on it as such a piece of Ill-breeding and Barbarism not to grieve for the Death of old *Roscus*, that he could suppose no Noble-man of *Rome* or Commoner could be guilty of. He likewise calls it *an excellent Art*. All which is a sufficient Proof, that the Business it self was never infamous in either of those two Cities; nor could be here, if the Professors of it by their own loose Lives, by an open Contempt of Religion, and making Blasphemy and Profaneness the Marks of their Wit and good Breeding; by an undisguis'd Debauchery and Drunkenness, coming on the very Stage, in Contempt of the Audience, when they are scarce able to speak a Word; by having little Regard to the Ties of Honour and Common Honesty: to say nothing of the Irregularities of the Ladies, which rob them of that Deference and Respect, that their Accomplishments of Person would else command from their

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their Beholders, especially when set off to such an Advantage as the Stage supplies in the Improvement of the Mind and Person.

This is an Evil, which, tho in the Mouths of half the Town, yet to tell those, who know themselves guilty of it, is an Affront never to be forgiven; so much more fond are they of defending their Follies, than of removing them, tho to their own Advantage; and so much in Love seem they with Infamy more, than a general Respect and Reputation. Mr. *Harrington* in his *Oceana*, proposing something about a regulated Theatre, would have all Women, who have suffer'd any Blemish in their Reputation, excluded the Sight of the Play, by that means to deter Women from Lewdness, while by that they lost the Benefit of Public Diversions. If this were push'd farther, and all Ladies of the House immediately discarded on the Discovery of their Follies of that Nature, I dare believe, that they would sooner get Husbands, and the Theatre lose Abundance of that Scandal it now lies under.

Nor is this so hard a Task but even our Times, as corrupt as they are, have given us Examples of Virtue in our Stage Ladies. I shall not name them, because I would draw no Censure on those, who are not nam'd.

From what I have said I believe it is plain, that I wish such a Reformation of the People of the Stage, as would render it more reputable than it is at this Time. I would have no Man

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of it a common *Drunkard*, public *Debauchee* ; nor so fond of his own Opinion, as to imagine that a dull Ridicule on things sacred will pass for Wit with any Man of Sense or Probity ; nor would I have him thunder out a Volley of Oaths and Execrations to supply the Emptiness of his Discourse, with a Noise that is offensive to all Mens Ears, who are not daily conversant with the Refuse of Mankind, but acquainted with good Manners and good Breeding ; nor to be vain of owing a great Deal, because by Tricks and expensive Evasions they can keep a Man from his lawful Debts, tho they might pay them with half the Money. In short, I would have them keep a handsome Appearance with the World ; to be really virtuous if they can, if not, at least, not to be publicly abandon'd to Follies and Vices, which render them contemptible to all ; that they would live within the Compass of what their Business affords them, and then they would have more Leisure to study their Parts, raise their Reputation, and Salaries the sooner, and meet with Respect from all Men of Honesty and Sense.

The Ladies likewise should set a peculiar Guard on their Actions, and remember, that tho it may happen, that their parting with their Honour, and setting up for Creatures of Prey on all that address to them, may bring them in mercenary Advantages, yet that by keeping their Reputation entire, they heighten their Beauties, and would infallibly arrive at more

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more Happiness (if not Wealth) in Marriages ; which they can never find in making themselves subject to the Insults of Rakes, and Infirmities of Debauchees, and other Slaveries and Evils not proper to mention, which the Virtuous are free from, admir'd and ador'd by all.

Thus much I thought was proper for me to say on the Conduct of our Players, Male and Female, off the Stage ; which is a Lesson as well worth their learning as any I shall deliver.

Tho these are Duties which seem absolutely necessary to make our *Players* shine, and draw that Respect from the People, which now they want, yet are not these sufficient to make a good *Astor* ; but there are other Lessons to be learn'd for his Qualifications on the Stage.

From his very Name we may derive his Duty, he is call'd an *Astor*, and his Excellence consists in *Action* and Speaking : The *Mimes* and *Pantomimes* did all by Gesture, and the Action of Hands, Legs, and Feet, without making use of the Tongue in uttering any Sentiments or Sounds ; so that they were something like our *dumb Shows*, with this difference, one *Pantomime* expressed several Persons, and that to the Tunes of Musical Instruments ; the dumb Shows made use of several Persons to express the Design of the Play as a silent Action ; and the Nature of this is best express'd in *Hamlet*, before the Entrance of his Players in the third Act.

Enter a King and a Queen very lovingly, the Queen embracing him ; she kneels, and makes
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shew of Protestation unto him; he takes her up, and declines his Head on her Neck. Lays him down on a Bed of Flowers; she seeing him asleep, leaves him. Anon comes in a Fellow, takes off his Crown, kisses it, and pours Poison into the King's Ear, and exit. The Queen returns, finds the King dead, and makes passionate Action. The Poisoner with two or three Mutes comes in again, seeming to lament with her; the dead Body is carry'd away. The Poisoner woos the Queen with Gifts; she seems loath and unwilling awhile, but in the end accepts his Love.

I only repeat this to shew the manner of the old Time, and what they meant by dumb Shows, which *Shakespeare* himself condemns in this very Play, when *Hamlet* says to the Players,—“ O! it
“ offends me to the Soul to see a robustuous Per-
“ riwig-pated Fellow tear a Passion to tatters, to
“ very Raggs, to split the Ears of the *Groundlings*,
“ who (for the most part) are capable of no-
“ thing but *inexplicable dumb Shows* and Noise—

But the *Pantomimes* or *Roman Dancers* expressed all this in one Person, as we have it in *Mr. Mayne's Lucian*; where *Demetrius* the *Cynic Philosopher* railing against Dancing, is invited by one of them in the Time of *Nero*, to see him perform without either Pipe or Flute, and did so;
“ for having impos'd Silence on the Instru-
“ ments, he by himself danc'd the Adultery of
“ *Mars* and *Venus*, the *Sun* betraying them, and
“ *Vulcan* plotting, and catching them in a Wire
“ Net; then every God, who was severally

“ Specta-

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“ Spectator; then *Venus* blushing, and *Mars*
“ beseeching; in a Word, he acted the whole
“ Fable so well, that *Demetrius* much pleas'd
“ with the Spectacle, as the greatest Praise, that
“ could be bestow'd upon him, cry'd out in a
“ loud Voice, I hear my Friend, what you act;
“ nor do I only see them, but methinks you
“ speak with your Hands.

This Instance not only shews the Difference of these *Pantomimes* from our old dumb Shews, but the Power of *Action*, which a *Player* ought to study with his utmost Application. The Orator at the Bar, and in the Pulpit, ought to understand the Art of Speaking perfectly well; but *Action* can never be in its Perfection but on the Stage, and in our Time the Pulpit and the Bar have left off even that graceful Action, which was necessary to the Business of those Places, and gave a just Weight and Grace to the Words they uttered. And I wonder that our Ministers do not a little more consider this Point, and reflect, that they speak to the People as much as the Orators of *Greece* and *Rome*; and what Influence Action had on them, will be evident from some Instances we shall give in their proper Places.

ACTION indeed has a natural Excellence in it, superiour to all other Qualities; *Action* is *Motion*, and Motion is the Support of Nature, which without it would again sink into the sluggish Mass of Chaos. Motion in the various and regular Dances of the Planets surprizes and delights: Life is Motion, and when that ceases,
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the Humane Body so beautiful, nay, so divine when enlivened by Motion, becomes a dead and putrid Coarse, from which all turn their Eyes. The Eye is caught by any thing in Motion, but passes over the sluggish and motionless things as not the pleasing Objects of its View.

This Natural Power of *Motion* or *Action* is the Reason, that the Attention of the Audience is fixt by any irregular or even fantastic Action on the Stage of the most indifferent Player; and supine and drowsy, when the best Actor speaks without the Addition of *Action*.

'Twas the Skill the ancient Players of *Athens* and *Rome* had in this, which made them not only so much admir'd by the Great Men of those Times and Places, but rais'd them to the Reputation of being Masters of two of the greatest Orators that *Athens* or *Rome* ever saw; and who had it not been for the Instructions of the Actors *Satyrus*, *Roscious*, and *Æsopus*, had never been able to convey their admirable Parts to the World.

Demosthenes being, after many unsuccessful Attempts, one Time exploded the Assembly, went home with his Head muffled up in his Cloak, very much affected with the Disgrace; in this Condition *Satyrus* the Actor follow'd him, being his intimate Acquaintance, and fell into Discourse with him. *Demosthenes* having bemoan'd himself to him, and his Misfortune, that having been the most industrious of the Pleaders, and having spent almost the whole
Strength

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Strength and Vigour of his Body in that Employment, yet could he not render himself acceptable to the People; That Drunkards, Tar-paulins, Sots, and illiterate Fellows found so favourable a Hearing, as to possess the Pulpit, while he himself was despis'd. What you say (replied *Satyrus*) is very true, but I will soon remove the Cause of all this, if you will repeat some Verses to me out of *Sophocles*, or *Euripides*. When *Demosthenes* had pronounc'd after his way, *Satyrus* presently repeating the same Verses with their proper Tone, Mien, and Gesture, gave such a Turn to them, that *Demosthenes* himself perceiv'd they had quite another Appearance. By which being convinc'd how much Grace and Ornament accrues to Speech by a proper and due Action, he began to think it of little Consequence for a Man to exercise himself in declaiming, if he neglected the just Pronunciation or Decency of Speaking. Upon this he built himself a Place under ground (which remain'd in the Time of *Plutarch*) whither he retir'd every Day to form his Action, and exercise his Voice. To shew what Pains this great Man took as an Example to our young Actors, who think not themselves oblig'd to take any at all, I shall proceed with *Plutarch*. In his House he had a great Looking-Glass, before which he would stand and repeat his Orations, by that means observing how far his Action and Gesture were graceful or unbecoming.

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The same *Demosthenes*, when a Client came to him on an Assault and Battery ; he at large gave him an Account of what Blows he had receiv'd from his Adversary, but in so calm and unconcern'd a manner, that *Demosthenes* said, Surely my good Friend thou hast not suffer'd any one thing of what thou makest thy Complaint : Upon which his Client warm'd, cry'd aloud— *How Demosthenes ? Have I suffer'd nothing ?* Ay marry, replies he, now I hear the Voice of a Man that has been injur'd and beaten. Of so great Consequence did he think the Tone and Action of the Speaker towards the gaining Belief.

This was the Case of *Demosthenes*, as *Plutarch* assures us, (if I may credit the Translation, as without doubt I may;) and that of *Cicero* was not much different— At first (says *Plutarch*) he was, as well as *Demosthenes*, very defective in Action, and therefore he diligently apply'd himself to *Roscius* the Comedian sometimes, and sometimes to *Æsopus* the Tragedian, And such afterwards was the Action of *Cicero*, that it did not a little contribute to make his Eloquence persuasive ; deriding the Rhetoricians of his Time, for delivering their Orations with so much Noise and Bawling, saying, that it was their want of Ability to speak, which made them have Recourse to bellowing, as lame People who cannot walk, get on Horse-back and ride.

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The same might be said to many of our bawling Actors, of which number *Æsopus* was not, yet so possessed with his Part, that he took his acting to be so real, and not a Representation, that whilst he was on the Stage representing *Atreus* deliberating on the Revenge of *Thyestes*, he was so transported beyond himself, that he smote one of the Servants hastily crossing the Stage, and laid him dead on the Place.

But my Lord *Bacon*, in his *Advancement of Learning*, gives us a History from the *Annals* of *Tacitus*, of one *Vibulenus*, formerly an Actor on the Stage, but at that time a common Soldier in the *Pannonian* Garrisons ; which is a wonderful Instance of the Power of Action, and what Force it adds to the Words. The Account is this.

This Fellow, on the Death of *Augustus Caesar*, had rais'd a Mutiny, so that *Blasius* the Lieutenant committed some of the Mutineers to Prison ; but the Soldiers violently broke open the Prison-Gates, and set their Comrades at Liberty ; and this *Vibulenus*, in a Tribunitial Speech to the Soldiers, begins in this manner— “ You “ have given Life and Light to these poor innocent Wretches— but who restores my “ Brother to me, or Life to my Brother ? Who “ was sent hither with a Message from the “ Legions of *Germany* to treat of the common “ Cause ; and this very last Night has he murder'd him by, some of his Gladiators, some “ of his Bravo's, whom he keeps about him

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“ to be the Murderers of the Soldiers. Answer,
 “ *Blasus*, where hast thou thrown his Body ;
 “ the most mortal Enemies deny not Burial to
 “ the dead Enemy : When to his Corps I have
 “ perform’d my last Duties in Kisses, and flow-
 “ ing with Tears, command me to be slain at
 “ his Side, so that these our Fellow-Soldiers
 “ may have leave to bury us.—— He put the
 Army into such a Ferment and Fury by this
 Speech, that if it had not immediately been
 made appear, that there was no such Matter, that
 he never had any Brother, the Soldiers would
 hardly have spar’d the Lieutenant’s Life ; for he
 acted it as if it had been some Interlude on the
 Stage.

There is not so great a Pathos in the Words
 uttered by the Soldier, as to stir the Army into
 so very great a Ferment, they must therefore re-
 ceive almost their whole Force from a most mo-
 ving and pathetic Action, in which his Eyes,
 Hands, and Voice join’d in a most lively Ex-
 pression of his Misery and of his Loss. ’Tis
 true that, when an Army is tumultuous in it
 self, it is no difficult matter to run them into
 Madness ; but then it must be done by some,
 who either by their former Interest there, had
 purchas’d an Opinion among them, or some one
 who by the Artfulness of his Address should
 touch their Souls, and so engage them to what
 he pleases. The later I take to be our Case in
Vibulenus, who by the Advantage of his Skill
 in Action recommended himself and his supposi-
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titious Cause so effectually to them, as to make
 the General run a great hazard of his Life for an
 imaginary Murder.

This has made some of the old Orators give
 the sole Power and sovereign Command in Speech
 to Action, as I have read in some of those learn-
 ed Men who have treated of this Subject in *En-
 glish* and *French*. And I am perswaded, that our
 Parsons would move their Hearers far more, if
 they added but graceful Action to loud Speaking.
 This often sets off indifferent Matter, and makes
 a Man of little Skill in any other Part of Ora-
 tory, pass for the most eloquent ; this, I have
 read, was the Case of *Trachallus*, who tho none
 of the best Orators of his Time for the Compo-
 sition and Writing part, yet excell’d all the
 Pleaders of that Age, his Appearance and Deli-
 very was so plausible and pleasing. The State-
 liness of his Person and Port, the Sparkling of
 his Eyes, the Majesty of his Looks, and the
 Beauty of his Mien ; and his *Voice* added to
 these Qualities, which not only for Gravity and
 Composedness came up to that of a *Tragedian*,
 but even excell’d any Actors, that ever yet trod
 the Stage, as my Author assures us from *Quin-
 tilian*. *Philistus*, on the other hand, for want
 of these Advantages of Utterance, lost all the
 Beauty and Force of his Pleadings, tho for Lan-
 guage and the Art of Composition excell’d all
 the *Greeks* of his Time.

The same Advantage of *Pericles* and *Horten-
 sius*, with this difference, *Hortensius* ascrib’d all
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the Success of his Pleadings to the Merit of the Writing, and convinc'd the World of his Error by publishing his Orations; *Pericles*, tho'tis said he had the Goddess Persuasion on his Lips, and that he thundred and lightned in an Assembly, and made all *Greece* tremble when he spoke, yet would never publish any of his Orations, because their Excellency lay in the ACTION.

What I have said here of *Action* in general, and the particular Examples I have given of it, is I believe sufficient to satisfy any one, that is studious of Excellence on the Stage, that it ought to be his chief Aim and Application. But next to this is the Art of Speaking, in which also a Player ought to be perfectly skill'd; for as a learned Country-man of ours observes—
 “ The Operation of Speech is strong, not only
 “ for the Reason or Wit therein contained, but
 “ by its Sound. For in all good Speech there
 “ is a sort of Music, with Respect to its Measure, Time and Tune. Every well-measur'd
 “ Sentence is proportional three ways, in all its
 “ Parts to the Sentences, and to what it is intended to express, and all Words that have
 “ Time allow'd to their Syllables, as is suitable
 “ to the Letters whereof they consist, and to
 “ the Order, in which they stand in a Sentence.
 “ Nor are Words without their Tune or Notes
 “ even in common Talk, which together compose that Tune, which is proper to every Sentence, and may be prick'd down as well as
 “ any musical Tune: only in the Tunes of
 “ Speech

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“ Speech the Notes have much less Variety,
 “ and have all a short Time. With Respect also to Time and Measure, the Poetic is less
 “ various and therefore less powerful, than that
 “ of Oratory; the former being like that of a
 “ short Country Song repeated to the End of the
 “ Poem, but that of *Oratory* is vary'd all along,
 “ like the Divisions, which a skilful Musician
 “ runs upon a Lute.

He proceeds to our former Consideration, saying—“ The Behaviour and Gesture is also of
 “ Force; as in Oratory so in Converse, consisting of almost as many Motions, as there are
 “ moveable Parts of the Body, all made with
 “ a certain agreeable Measure between one another, and at the same time answerable to
 “ that of Speech, which when easy and unaffected is becoming.

A Mastery in these two Parts is what compleats an Actor: And I hope the Rules I shall give for both will be of Use to such as have truly a Genius for this *Art*; the Rules of which, like those of Poetry, are only for those, who have a Genius, and are not perfectly to be understood by those, who have not.

To begin therefore with *Action*, the Player is to consider, that it is not every rude and undesigning *Action*, that is his Business, for that is what the Ignorant as well as skilful may have, nor can indeed want: But the Action of a Player is that, which is agreeable to Personation, or the Subject he represents. Now what he represents

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As Man in his various Characters, Manners, and Passions, and to these Heads he must adjust every Action; he must perfectly express the Quality and Manners of the Man, whose Person he assumes, that is, he must know how his Manners are compounded, and from thence know the several Features, as I may call 'em, of his Passions. A Patriot, a Prince, a Beggar, a Clown, &c. must each have their Propriety, and Distinction in Action as well as Words and Language. An Actor therefore must vary with his Argument, that is, carry the Person in all his Manners and Qualities with him in every Action and Passion; he must transform himself into every Person he represents, since he is to act all sorts of Actions and Passions. Sometimes he is to be a Lover, and know not only all the soft and tender Addresses of one, but what are proper to the Character, that is in Love, whether he be a Prince or a Peasant, a hot and fiery Man or of more moderate and flegmatick Constitution, and even the Degrees of the Passion he is possessed with. Sometimes he is to represent a choleric, hot and jealous Man, and then he must be thoroughly acquainted with all the Motions and Sentiments productive of those Motions of the Feet, Hands, and Looks of such a Person in such Circumstances. Sometimes he is a Person all dejected and bending under the Extremities of Grief and Sorrow; which changes the whole Form and Appearance of him in the Representation, as it does really in Nature. Sometimes

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times he is distracted, and here Nature will teach him, that his Action has always something wild and irregular, tho even that regularly; that his Eyes, his Looks or Countenance, Motions of Body, Hands and Feet, be all of a Piece, and that he never falls into the indifferent State of Calmness and Unconcern. As he now represents *Achilles*, then *Aeneas*, another Time *Hamlet*, then *Alexander* the Great and *Oedipus*, he ought to know perfectly well the Characters of all these Heroes, the very same Passions differing in the different Heroes as their Characters differ: The Courage of *Aeneas*, for Example, of itself was sedate and temperate, and always attended with good Nature; that of *Turnus* join'd with Fury, yet accompany'd with Generosity and Greatness of Mind. The Valour of *Mezentius* was savage and cruel; he has no Fury but Fierceness, which is not a Passion but Habit, and nothing but the Effect of Fury cool'd into a very keen Hatred, and an inveterate Malice. *Turnus* seems to fight to appease his Anger, *Mezentius* to satisfy his Revenge, his Malice and barbarous Thirst of Blood. *Turnus* goes to the Field with Grief, which always attended Anger, whereas *Mezentius* destroys with a barbarous Joy; he's so far from Fury, that he is hard to be provoked to common Anger; who calmly killing *Ondes*, grows but half angry at his Threats;
At whom Mezentius smiling with a mingl'd Ire.

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Thus

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Thus, 'tis plain, he has not the Fury of *Turmus*, but a Barbarity peculiar to himself, and a savage Fierceness, according to his Character in the tenth Book of *Virgil*.

To know these different Characters of established Heroes, the Actor need only be acquainted with the Poets, who write of them; if the Poet who introduces them in his Play have not sufficiently distinguish'd them. But to know the different Compositions of the Manners, and the Passions springing from those Manners, he ought to have an Insight into Moral Philosophy, for they produce various Appearances in the Looks and Actions, according to their various Mixtures. For that the very same Passion has various Appearances, is plain from the History Painters, who have followed Nature. Thus *Jordan* of *Antwerp*, in a Piece of our Saviour's being taken from the Cross, which is now in his Grace the Duke of *Marlborough's* Hands, the Passion of Grief is express'd with a wonderful Variety; the Grief of the Virgin Mother is in all the Extremity of Agony, that is consistent with Life, nay indeed that leaves scarce any Signs of remaining Life in her; that of *St. Mary Magdalen* is an extreme Grief, but mingled with Love and Tenderneſs, which she always express'd after her Conversion for our blessed Lord; then the Grief of *St. John* the Evangelist is strong but manly, and mixt with the Tenderneſs of perfect Friendship; and that of *Joseph* of *Arimathea* suitable to his Years and Love for *Christ*,

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Christ, more solemn, more contracted in himself, and yet forcing an Appearance in his Looks. *Coyppel's* Sacrifice of *Jeptha's* Daughter has not unluckily express'd a great Variety of this same Passion. The History Painters indeed have observ'd a Decorum in their Pieces, which wants to be introduc'd on our Stage; for there is never any Person on the Cloth, who has not a Concern in the Action. All the very Slaves in *Le Brun's* Tent of *Darius* participate of the grand Concern of *Sisigambis Statira*, &c. This would render the Representation extremely solemn and beautiful; but on the Stage, not only the Supernumeraries, as they call them, or Attendants, mind nothing of the great Concern of the Scene, but even the Actors themselves, who are on the Stage, and not in the very principal Parts, shall be whispering to one another, or bowing to their Friends in the Pit, or gazing about. But if they made Playing their Study, (or had indeed a Genius to their Art) as it is their Business, they would not only not be guilty of these Absurdities, but would, like *Le Brun*, observe Nature where-ever they found it offer any thing that could contribute to their Perfection. For he was often seen to mind a Quarrel in the Street betwixt various People, and there not only observe the several Degrees of the Passion of Anger rising in the Quarrel, and their different Recess, but the distinct Expressions of it in every Face that was concern'd.

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Our Stage at the best indeed is but a very cold Representation, supported by loud prompting, to the eternal Disgust of the Audience, and spoiling the Decorum of the Representation; for an imperfect Actor affronts the Audience, and betrays his own Demerits. I must say this in the Praise of Mr. *Wilks*, he always takes Care to give the Promptor little Trouble, and never wrongs the Poet by putting in any thing of his own; a Fault, which some applaud themselves for, tho they deserve a severe Punishment for their equal Folly and Impudence. They forget *Hamlet's* Advice to the Players—*And let those who play your Clowns speak no more, than is set down for them; for there be of them that will of themselves laugh to set on some Quantity of barren Spectators to laugh too; tho in the mean time some necessary Question of the Play be then to be consider'd. That's VILLANOUS, and shews a most PITIFUL Ambition in the FOOL that uses it.* This is too frequently done by some of our popular but half Comedians. But it is, I think, a greater Fault in a Tragedian, who through his Imperfectness in his Part shall speak on any Stuff, that comes in his Head, which must infallibly prejudice the true Expression of the Business of the Play, let it be Passion, Description, or Narration. But notwithstanding this Supinuity in general of too many of our modern Players, we have sometimes some of them who are in earnest; for I remember I once saw Mr. *Benjamin Johnson* (our present *Roscus*) act

Nymphs

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Nymphs with such an Engagement in the Part, that I could not persuade my self, that it was acting but the Reality; tho this often depends on the Poet in his furnishing his Characters with Matter enough to engage the Player to enter entirely into it, but a good Player will help out an indifferent Poet.

But this Address in the Performance can never be obtain'd without the last Degree of Perfection, for without that the Player can never be free from the Apprehension of being out. Among those Players, who seem always to be in earnest, I must not omit the Principal, the incomparable Mrs. *Barry*; her Action is always just, and produc'd naturally by the Sentiments of the Part, which she acts, and she every where observes those Rules prescrib'd to the Poets by *Horace*, and which equally reach the Actors.

*We weep and laugh as we see others do;
He only makes me sad, who shews the way,
And first is sad himself; Then Telephus
I feel the Weight of your Calamities,
And fancy all your Miseries my own;
But if you ACT them ill I sleep or laugh.
Your Look must needs alter as your Subject does,
From kind to fierce, from wanton to serene.
For Nature forms and softens us within,
And writes our Fortune's Changes in our Face.
Pleasure enchants, impetuous Rage transports,
And Grief dejects, and wrings the tortur'd Soul;
And these are all interpreted by Speech.*

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*But he, whose Words and Fortunes disagree,
Absurd, unpity'd grows a public Jest.*

Lord Roscommon's Translation.

She indeed always enters into her Part, and is the Person she represents. Thus I have heard her say, that she never said, *Ab ! poor Castalio !* in the *Orphan*, without weeping. And I have frequently observ'd her change her Countenance several Times as the Discourse of others on the Stage have affected her in the Part she acted. This is being thoroughly concern'd, this is to know her Part, this is to express the Passions in the Countenance and Gesture.

The Stage ought to be the Seat of Passion in its various kinds, and therefore the Actor ought to be thoroughly acquainted with the whole Nature of the Affections, and Habits of the Mind, or else he will never be able to express them justly in his Looks and Gestures, as well as in the Tone of his Voice, and manner of Utterance. They must know them in their various Mixtures, and as they are differently blended together in the different Characters they represent; and then that Rule of the present Duke of *Buckingham* will be of use to the Player as well as Poet.

— *For they must look within to find
Those secret Turns of Nature in the Mind ;
Without this Part in vain wou'd be the whole,
And but a Body all without a Soul,*

Then

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Then that Conduct of the other Hopes of the *English Stage*, Mrs. *Bradshaw*, (of whom we might say in Acting, as one said of *Tasso* in Poetry, that if he was not the best Poet, he had hindred *Virgil* from being the only Poet ; so that if she be not the best Actress the Stage has known, she has hindred Mrs. *Barry* from being the only Actress) would certainly be very just ; for a Friend of mine discoursing with her of the Action of the Stage, she told him, *that she endeavour'd first to make her self Mistress of her Part, and left the Figure and Action to Nature.*

Tho a great Genius may do this, yet Art must be consulted in the Study of the larger Share of the Professors of this Art ; and we find so great a Man as *Demosthenes* perfected himself by consulting the Gracefulness of the Figure in his Glafs : And to express Nature justly, one must be Master of Nature in all its Appearances, which can only be drawn from Observation, which will tell us, that the Passions and Habits of the Mind discover themselves in our Looks, Actions and Gestures.

Thus we find a rolling Eye that is quick and inconstant in its Motion, argues a quick but light Wit ; a hot and choleric Complexion, with an inconstant and impatient Mind ; and in a Woman it gives a strong Proof of Wantonness and Immodesty. Heavy dull Eyes a dull Mind, and a Difficulty of Conception. For this Reason we observe, that all or most People in Years,

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Years, sick Men, and Persons of a flegmatic Constitution are slow in the turning of their Eyes.

That extreme Propension to Winking in some Eyes, proceed from a Soul very subject to Fear, arguing a Weakness of Spirit, and a feeble Disposition of the Eye-lids.

A bold staring Eye, that fixes on a Man, proceeds either from a blockish Stupidity, as in Rusticks; Impudence, as in Malicious Persons; Prudence, as in those in Authority, or Incontinence as in lewd Women.

Eyes inflam'd and fiery are the genuine Effect of Choler and Anger; Eyes quiet, and calm with a secret kind of Grace and Pleasantness are the Offspring of Love and Friendship.

Thus the Voice, when loud, discovers Wrath and Indignation of Mind, and a small trembling Voice proceeds from Fear.

In like manner, to use no Actions or Gestures in Discourse, is a Sign of a heavy and slow Disposition, as too much Gesticulation proceeds from Lightness; and a Mean betwixt both is the Effect of Wisdom and Gravity; and if it be not too quick, it denotes Magnanimity. Some are perpetually fiddling about their Cloaths, so that they scarce are dress'd till they go to Bed, which is an Argument of a childish and empty Mind.

Some cast their Heads from one side to the other wantonly and lightly, the true Effect of Folly and Inconstancy. Others think it essential to

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to Prayer, to writh and wrest their Necks about, which is a Proof of Hypocrisy, Superstition, or Foolishness. Some are wholly taken up in viewing themselves, the Proportion of their Limbs, Features of their Faces, and Gracefulness of Mien; which proceeds from Pride, and a vain Complaisance in themselves; of this number are Coquets.

In this manner I might run through all the Natural Actions, that are to be found in Men of different Tempers. Yet not to dismiss the Point without a fuller Reflection, I shall subjoin here the Signification of the various Natural Gestures from a Manuscript of a Friend of mine, which he assur'd me was taken from a learned Jesuit who wrote on this Subject.

Every Passion or Emotion of the Mind has from Nature its proper and peculiar Countenance, Sound and Gesture; and the whole Body of Man, all his Looks, and every Sound of his Voice, like Strings on an Instrument, receive their Sounds from the various Impulse of the Passions.

The Demission or hanging down of the Head is the Consequence of Grief and Sorrow. And this therefore is a Posture and Manner observ'd in the Deprecations of the Divine Anger, and on such occasions ought to be observ'd in the Imitations of those things.

A lifting or tossing up of the Head is the Gesture of Pride and Arrogance. Carrying the Head aloft is the sign of Joy, Victory and Triumph.

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A hard and bold Front, or Fore-head is look'd on as a Mark of Obstinacy, Contumacy, Perfidiousness and Impudence.

The Soul is most visible in the Eyes, as being, according to one, the perfect Images of the Mind; and, as *Pliny* says, they burn, yet dissolve in Floods; they dart their Beams on Objects, and seem not to see them; and when we kiss the Eyes, we seem to touch the very Soul.

Eyes lifted on high shew Arrogance and Pride, but cast down express Humbleness of Mind: Yet we lift up our Eyes when we address ourselves in Prayer to God, and ask any thing of him.

Lifting in vain his burning Eyes to Heav'n.
Virgil.

Denial, Aversion, Nauseating, Dissimulation, and Neglect, are express'd by a turning away of the Eyes.

A frequent Winking, or tremulous Motion of the Eyes, argues malicious Manners, and perverse and noxious Thought and Inclinations.

Eyes drown'd in Tears discover the most vehement and cruel Grief, which is not capable of Ease ev'n from Tears themselves.

To raise our Eyes to any thing or Person, is an Argument of our Attention to them with Desire.

The Hand put on the Mouth is a Token of Silence by Conviction, and is a Ceremony of the Heathen Adoration. The

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The Contraction of the Lips and the scant Look of the Eyes expresses the Gesture of a deriding and malicious Person. Shewing the Teeth, and streightening the Lips on them, shews Indignation and Anger.

To turn the whole Face to any thing is the Gesture of one, who attends and has a peculiar Regard to that one thing. To bend the Countenance downward argues Consciousness and Guilt; and, on the contrary, to lift up the Face is a Sign of a good Conscience or Innocence, Hope and Confidence.

The Countenance, indeed, is chang'd into many Forms, and is commonly the most certain Index of the Passions of the Mind. When it is pale it betrays Grief, Sorrow, and Fear, and Envy, when it is very strong. A lowering and dark Visage is the Index of Misery, Labour and vehement Agitations of the Soul.

In short, as *Quintilian* observes, the Countenance is of very great Power and Force in all that we do. In this we discover when we are suppliant, when minacious, when kind, when sorrowful, when merry; in this we are lifted up and cast down; on this Men depend; this they behold, and this they first take a View of before we speak; by this we love some, and hate others; and by this we understand a Multitude of things.

The Arm extended and lifted up signifies the Power of doing and accomplishing something; and is the Gesture of Authority, Vigour, and Victory.

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Victory. On the contrary, the holding your Arms close is a Sign of Bashfulness, Modesty, and Diffidence.

As the Hands are the most habil Members of the Body, and the most easily turn'd to all sides, so are they the Indexes of many Habits.

But we have two Hands, the Right and the Left, we sometimes make use of one, sometimes of the other, and sometimes of both, to express the Passion and Habit. The chief Forms of which I shall mention,

The lifting of one Hand upright, or extending it, expresses Force, Vigour and Power. The Right Hand is also extended upwards as a Token of Swearing, or taking a solemn Oath; and this Extension of the Hand sometimes signifies Pacification, and Desire of Silence.

The putting of the Hand to the Mouth is the Habit of one, that is silent and acting Modesty; of Admiration and Consideration. The giving the Hand is the Gesture of striking a Bargain, confirming an Alliance, or of delivering ones self into the Power of another. To take hold of the Hand of another expresses Admonition, Exhortation, and Encouragement. The reaching out an Hand to another implies Help and Assistance. The lifting up both Hands on high is the Habit of one who implores, and expresses his Misery. And the lifting up of both Hands sometimes signifies Congratulation to Heaven for a Deliverance, as in *Virgil*;

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*His Hands now free from Bands he lifts on high,
In grateful Action to th' indulgent Gods.*

The holding the Hands in the Bosom is the Habit of the Idle and Negligent. Clapping the Hands, among the *Hebrews* signify'd deriding, insulting, and exploding; but among the *Greeks* and the *Romans*, it was, on the contrary, the Expression of Applause. The Imposition of Hands signifies the imparting a Power, in consecrating of Victims.

In short, *Quintilian* says of the Hands——

“ It is a difficult matter to say what a number
“ of Motions the Hands have, without which all
“ Action wou'd be maim'd and lame, since these
“ Motions are almost as various as the Words we
“ speak. For the other Parts may be said to
“ help a Man when he speaks, but the Hands
“ (as I may say) speak themselves. Do we
“ not by the Hands desire a thing? Do we not
“ by these promise? call? dismiss? threaten?
“ act the Suppliant? express our Abomination
“ or Abhorrence? our Fear? By these do we
“ not ask Questions? deny? shew our Joy,
“ Grief, Doubt, Confession, Penitence, Mode-
“ ration, Plenty, Number, and Time? Do not
“ the same Hands provoke, forbid, make Sup-
“ plication, approve, admire, and express Shame?
“ Do they not in shewing of Places and Persons,
“ supply the Place of the Adverbs and Pronouns?
“ Infomuch that in so great a Variety or Diver-
“ sity

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“ sity of the Tongues of all Nations, this seems
 “ to remain the universal Language common
 “ to all.

It were to be wish'd that this Art were a little reviv'd in our Age, when such useful Members, which of old contributed so much to the Expression of Words, should now puzzle our Players what to do with them, when they seldom or never add any Grace to the Action of the Body, and never almost any thing to the Explanation or fuller Expression of the Words and Passions. But to go on with my Text a very little farther. —

The stamping of the Feet among the *Hebrews* signify'd Derision and Scoffing. Among the *Greeks*, &c. Imperiousness. A constant and direct Foot is the Index of a steady, certain, constant, and right Study and Aim of our Designs.

On the contrary, Feet full of Motion are the Habit of the inconstant and fluctuating in their Counsels and Resolves. And the *Greeks* thought this in Women a sign of a flagitious Temper.

Thus I have gone through my Jesuit's Observations of the several Gestures and Positions of the several Parts and Members of the Body. And tho' some of them may to a hasty View seem trifling, and others of no great Importance, yet I am persuaded, that a Man of true Judgment may find some secret Excellencies in them, which may afford him great Helps in the rendering his Gestures beautiful and expressive. There

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There is no greater Proof of this, than the Example I have already urg'd of the *Pantomime* and *Demetrius* the *Cynic* Philosopher, who cry'd out to him, *I hear my Friend what you act; nor do I only see them, but methinks you speak with your HANDS.* But this Speaking with the Hands, (as 'tis here call'd) I find contain a great deal of the Representation of the dancing dumb Shows of the *Mimes* and *Pantomimes*. It may be perhaps objected, that these Motions of the Hands were so well known to the Frequenters of the Theatres, that, like our talking on our Fingers with those, who understand it, there would be no Difficulty in the Representation; but that if any Stranger or Foreigner should have been there, it would have been nothing but an unintelligible Gesticulation, and what *Shakespeare* calls it *unexplicable dumb Shews*; whereas if these Actions and Gestures were drawn from their Natural Significancy, according to those Marks I have already given, or others referr'd to by my Quotation of *Quintilian*, they must be intelligible to all Nations, on first Sight to *Barbarians*, who never saw them before, as well as to *Greeks* and *Romans*, who convers'd with them every Day.

I allow the Objection, but shall remove it by a farther Account of the very same *Pantomime*, who liv'd in the Time of *Nero*: The Story is this — “ A *Barbarian* Prince, who came “ from *Pontus* to *Rome*, about some Business “ with *Nero*, among other Entertainments saw “ this

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“ this Dancer personate so lively, that tho he
 “ knew nothing of what was sung, being half
 “ a *Grecian*, yet he understood all. Being
 “ therefore to return to his Country after this
 “ Entertainment of *Nero's*, and bid ask what
 “ he would and it should be granted, reply'd,
 “ give me the Dancer, and you will infinitely
 “ please me. *Nero* asking him of what use he
 “ would be to him? My Neighbour *Barbarians*
 “ (said he) are of different Languages, nor is
 “ it easy for me to find Interpreters for them;
 “ this Fellow, therefore, as often as I have need,
 “ shall expound to me by his Gestures. So clear
 and intelligible were his Actions and Gestures,
 and so derived from the Nature of the thing
 represented; which is a Proof, that there are
 certain Natural Significations of the Motions of
 the Hands, and other Members of the Body,
 which are obvious to the Understanding of all
 sensible Men of all Nations. If those which
 I have given you from my *Jesuit* be not, yet I
 am very sure, that many of them are explain'd
 by him, which will be plain to a serious Con-
 siderer.

Gesture has therefore this Advantage above
 mere Speaking, that by this we're only under-
 stood by those of our own Language, but by
 Action and Gesture (I mean just and regular
 Action) we make our Thoughts and Passions in-
 telligible to all Nations and Tongues. 'Tis, as
 I have observ'd from *Quintilian*, the common
 Speech of all Mankind, which strikes our Under-

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derstanding by our Eyes, as effectually, as
 Speaking does by the Ears; nay, perhaps, makes
 the more effectual Impression, that Sense being
 the most vivacious and touching, according to
Horace, as I find him in my Lord *Roscommon's*
 Version;

*But what we hear moves less, than what we see,
 Spectators only have their Eyes to trust, &c.*

I think I have already assign'd a tolerable Reason why *Movement* and *Action* should teach us so sensibly; nay, the very Representation of them in *Painting* often strikes our Passions, and makes Impressions on our Minds more strong and vivid, than all the Force of Words. The chief Work is certainly done by Speech in most other ways of public Discourse, either at the *Bar*, or in the *Pulpit*; where the Weight of the Reason and the Proof are first and most to be consider'd: But on the Stage, where the Passions are chiefly in View, the best *Speaking*, destitute of *Action* and *Gesture* (the Life of all Speaking) proves but a heavy, dull, and dead Discourse.

This, in some measure, will likewise reach all things deliver'd in Public, since I find *Pliny the younger* talking of People in his Days reciting of their Speeches, or Poems, by either reading them themselves, or by having them read by others, tells us, that this reading them was a very great Disadvantage to the Excellence of their Performance either way, lessening both

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their *Eloquence* and *Character*, since the principal Helps of *Pronunciation*, the *Eyes* and the *Hands*, could not perform their Office, being otherwise employ'd to read, and not adorn the Utterance with their proper Motions; insomuch that it was no manner of wonder, that the Attention of the Audience grew languid, on so unactive an Entertainment. On the contrary, when any Discourse receives Force and Life, not only from the Propriety and Graces of Speaking agreeable to the Subject, but from a proper *Action* and *Gesture* for it, it is truly touching, penetrating, transporting; it has a Soul, it has Life, it has Vigour and Energy not to be resisted. For then the *Player*, the *Preacher*, or *Pleader*, holds his Audience by the Eyes, as well as Ears, and engrosses their Attention by a double Force. This seems to be well represented in some Words of *Cicero* to *Cacilius*, a young Orator, on his first Cause, who would needs undertake the *Action* against *Verres*, in Opposition to *Hortensius*. After he has shown his Incapacity in many Points to accuse *Verres*, both in Ability, and in not being free from a Suspicion of a share in the Guilt, he comes at last to the Power and Art of his Adversary *Hortensius* — *Reflect*, (says he) *consider again and again what you are going to do! for there seems to me to be some Danger not only of his oppressing thee with his Words; but even of his confounding and dazzling the Eyes of thy Understanding with his GESTURE, and the MOTION of his Body, and so entirely drive thee from thy*

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thy Design, and all thy Thoughts. The same *Cicero*, in his Books of *Oratory*, tells us, that *Crassus* pleading against *Brutus*, deliver'd his Words with such an Accent and such a Gesture, that he perfectly confounded the later, and put him out of Countenance, fixing his Eyes steadfastly on him, and addressing all his Action up to him, as if he would devour him with a Look and a Word.

But to make these Motions of the Face and Hands easily understood, that is, useful in the moving the Passions of the Auditors, or rather Spectators, they must be properly adapted to the thing you speak of, your Thoughts and Design; and always resembling the *Passion* you would express or excite. Thus you must never speak of mournful things with a gay and brisk Look, nor affirm any thing with the Action of *Denial*; for that would make what you say of no manner of Authority or Credit; you would gain neither Belief nor Admiration. You must also have a peculiar Care of avoiding all manner of *Affectation* in your *Action* and *Gesture*, for that's most commonly ridiculous and odious, unless where the Actor is to express some Affectation in the Character he represents, as in *Melantha* in *Marriage Ala-mode*, and *Millemant* in *the Way of the World*. But even then that very Affectation must be unaffected, as those two Parts were admirably acted by Mrs. Montfort and Mrs. Bracegirdle. But your *Action* must appear purely Natural, as the genuine Offspring

of the things you express, and the *Passion*, that moves you to speak in that manner.

In fine, our *Player*, *Pleader*, or *Preacher*, must have that nice Address in the Management of his Gestures, that there may be nothing in all the various Motions and Dispositions of his Body, which may be offensive to the Eye of the Spectator; as well as nothing grating and disobliging to the Ears of his Auditors, in his Pronunciation; else will his Person be less agreeable, and his Speech less efficacious to both, by wanting all that *Grace*, *Virtue*, and *Power*, it would otherwise obtain.

'Tis true, it must be confess'd, that the Art of Gesture seems more difficult to be obtain'd, than the Art of Speaking; because a Man's own Ear may be judge of the Voice, and its several Variations, but cannot see his Face at all, and the Motion of the other Parts of the Body, but very imperfectly. *Demosthenes*, as I have said, to make a true Judgment how far his Face and Limbs mov'd and kept to the Rules of good Action and Gesture, set before him a large *Looking-Glass* sufficient to represent the whole Body at one View, to direct him in distinguishing betwixt *Right* and *Wrong*, decent and indecent Actions; but yet, tho' this might not be unuseful, it lies under this Disadvantage, that it represents on the Right what is on the Left, and on the contrary, on the Left what is on the Right Hand; so that when you make a Motion with your *Right-Hand*, the Reflection makes it seem

seem as done by the *Left*, which confounds the Gesture, and gives it an awkward Appearance: And to rectify this Appearance to you from the Glass, by giving the Motions by the contrary Hands, might contract such an ill Habit, as ought with the utmost Caution to be avoided.

As to all the other Parts of Action indeed a Glass may prove very advantageous, since in it you have a faithful Representation not only of the *Face* in all its Variations of the Countenance, but of the whole Body likewise in all its Postures and Motions, and the Agreeableness and Harmony of one to the other, and the Parts with the Whole, and the Whole with the Parts. So that you may thus easily discover any *Habit* or *Gesture* that wants *Grace*, and *Agreeableness*, and any Action, which may add them to your Person, and in them that Force and Influence to you utter.

For want of such a Glass there is but a more difficult thing to be apply'd to, and that is some Friend, who is a perfect Master in all the Beauties of *Gesture* and *Motion*, and can correct your Errors, as you perform before him, and point out those *Graces*, which wou'd render your Action compleatly charming. 'Tis true, that some have advis'd the Learner to have some excellent Pattern always before his Eyes, and urge, that *Hortensius* was so to *Roscius* and *Æsopus*, who always made it their Business to be present at his *Pleadings* with that Attention as to improve themselves so far by what they saw, as to carry

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away his fine Actions and *Gesture*, and practice afterwards on the Stage, what they had seen at the *Bar*: Yet can I not allow of this Imitation in Acting; for when a very young Player conceives a strong Opinion of any one of received Authority on the Stage, he at best becomes a good Copy, which must always fall short of an Original. Besides, this Instance of the two *Roman* Players will not reach our Case, since they were established Players, had fixt their Characters, and manner of Playing; and only did by *Hortensius* what a Player now might do by the fine Pieces of History-Painting, carry off the beautiful Passions and Positions of the Figures, or the particular Appearance of any one Passion. But after all it puzzles me, who am not acquainted so well with the Ancients, how to reconcile this of *Roscus* and *Æsopus* learning *Gesture* of *Hortensius*, and instructing *Cicero* in the same: 'Tis true I have been inform'd, that *Hortensius* was Senior to *Cicero*, and therefore they might be thought to have paid that to the *Bar* in *Cicero*, which they had borrow'd from the *Bar* in *Hortensius*. But let this be as it will, the Controversy is not of that Moment as to detain us any longer.

But it may be objected, that what I have deliver'd all this Time seems rather to dwell upon *Generals*, than to come to any Particulars. I confess in this Art it is much an easier Matter to discourse in a general Manner, than to deliver particular Rules for the Direction of our Actions.

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Actions. Yet I believe I may venture to say, that as general as my Discourse may seem to some, those, who have any true Genius to *Playing*, will find such particular Instructions, as may be of very great use to them; and this Art, as well as most others, but especially *Poetry*, delivers such Rules, that are not easily understood without a *Genius*.

However, to gratify those, who require greater Particularities, I shall add some particular Rules of Action; which justly weigh'd, will be of use to the *Bar* and the *Pulpit*, as well as the *Stage*, provided, that the Student allow a more strong, vivid and violent *Gesture* to the *Plays*, than to either of the other.

I shall therefore begin with the *Government*, *Order*, and *Balance*, as I may say, of the whole Body; and thence I shall proceed to the Regiment and proper Motions of the *Head*, the *Eyes*, the *Eye-brows*, and indeed the whole *Face*; and I shall conclude with the *Actions* of the *Hands*, more *copious* and *various*, than all the other Parts of the Body.

The Place and Posture of the Body ought not to be chang'd every Moment, since so fickle an Agitation is trifling and light: Nor, on the other Hand, should it always keep the same Position, fixt like a Pillar or Marble Statue. For this, in the first place, is unnatural, and must therefore be disagreeable, since God has so form'd the Body with Members disposing it to Motion, that it must move either as the Impulse of the Mind

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Mind directs, or as the necessary Occasions of the Body require. This heavy Stability, or thoughtless Fixtness, by losing that *Variety*, which is so becoming of and agreeable in the Change and Diversity of Speech and Discourse, and gives Admiration to every thing it adorns, loses likewise that Genteelness, and Grace, which engages the Attention by pleasing the Eye. Being taught to dance will very much contribute in general to the graceful Motion of the whole Body, especially in Motions, that are not immediately embarrass'd with the Passions.

That the Head has various *Gestures* and *Signs*, *Intimations* and *Hints*, by which it is capable of expressing *Consent*, *Refusal*, *Confirmation*, *Admiration*, and *Anger*, &c. is what every one knows, who has ever thought at all. It might therefore be thought superfluous to treat particularly of them. But this Rule I must lay down on this Head in general, first that it ought not to be lifted up too high, and stretched out extravagantly, which is the Mark of *Arrogance* and *Haughtiness*; but an Exception to this Rule will come in for the *Player*, who is to act a Person of that Character. Nor on the other side should it be *hung down* upon the Breast, which is both disagreeable to the Eye, in rendering the *Mien* clumsy and dull; and would prove extremely prejudicial to the *Voice*, depriving it of its *Clearness*, *Distinction*, and that *Intelligibility*, which it ought to have: Nor should the

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the Head always lean towards the Shoulders, which is equally rustic and affected, or a great Mark of *Indifference*, *Languidness*, and a *faint Inclination*. But the Head, in all the calmer Speeches at least, ought to be kept in its just *Natural State* and *upright Position*. In the Agitation indeed of a *Passion*, the Position will naturally follow the several Accesses and Recesses of the Passion whether *Grief*, *Anger*, &c.

We must farther observe, that the Head must not be kept always like that of a Statue without Motion; nor must it on the contrary be moving perpetually, and always throwing it self about on every different Expression. It must therefore, to steer between this *Scylla* and *Carybdis*, and shun these ridiculous Extremes, turn gently on the Neck, as often, as Occasion requires a Motion, according to the Nature of the thing, turning now to one side, and then to another, and then return to such a decent Position, as your Voice may best be heard by all or the Generality of the Audience. To this I may add, that the Head ought always to be turn'd on the same side, to which the *Actions* of the rest of the Body are directed, except when they are employ'd to express our Aversion to Things, we refuse; or on Things we detest and abhor: For these Things we reject with the *Right Hand*, at the same time turning the Head away to the *Left*.

But the greatest Life and Grace of *Action* derive themselves from the *Face*. For this Reason:

son: *Crassus* in *Cicero* remarks, that *Roscus*, tho so excellent a Player, lost his Admiration among the *Romans* on the Stage, because the Masque on his Face deny'd the Audience the sight of those *Motions*, *Charms*, and *Attractions*, which were to be discover'd in the Countenance. I confess I am extremely surpriz'd at the Ancients Use of those Masks on the Stage, which they call'd the *Persona*; nor could I imagine how they were made, not to destroy that Grace and Beauty of Acting, in the Management of the Lineaments of the Face, which by all that we have of that kind must be entirely hid; and yet what *Plutarch* tells us of *Demosthenes* and *Cicero*, is a Proof, that the Players of *Athens* and *Rome* were absolute Masters of Speaking and Action. 'Tis true, there is much in the *Voice* to express the Passion artfully, yet certainly the several Figurations of the Countenance, as of the *Eyes*, *Brows*, *Mouth*, and the like, add the most touching and most moving Beauties. But this Observation before-mention'd satisfies me, that those were entirely lost by the *Persona*; which is a Proof, that in whatever they excell'd our Actors, we have the Advantage in the making the Representation perfect, by enjoying the Benefit of exposing all the *Motions* of the Face.

The Character which *Lucian* gives (as I find it in *Dr. Jasper Maine's* Translation) of those *Persona*, makes them extremely ridiculous, and by his Description of the rest of the Tragic Equipage would make us very much doubt their

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Excellence in the other Parts of Acting.——
 “ What a deform'd and frightful Sight (says
 “ he) is it to see a Man rais'd to a prodigious
 “ Length, stalking on exalted Buskins, his Face
 “ disguis'd with a grim Vizard, widely gaping,
 “ as if he meant to devour the Spectators; I
 “ forbear to speak of his stuff'd Breasts and
 “ Fore-bellies, which make an adventitious
 “ and artificial Corpulency, lest his unnatural
 “ Length should carry a Disproportion to his
 “ Slenderness.

Surely such a Figure as *Lucian* gives our *Tragedian*, must not only render him incapable of giving the Body all its just *Motions* and graceful Gestures, of which we are talking, and which the great Writers, as I am told, celebrate so much; but must be ridiculous to a Farce. But tho what *Lucian* represents, may be look'd upon as in the Time of the Corruption of the *Roman* Stage, yet the *Cotburni* and the *Persona* were in use among the *Greeks*, and must have been extremely prejudicial to the Beauty of the Representation. The Reason I have heard given for the first was the common Opinion, that the Heroes of former Times were larger and taller, than the Men our Cotemporaries; and I believe the first Use of the Vizard, which succeeded the besmeering the Face with Lees of Wine in the Time of *Thespis*, was chiefly to express the Looks and Countenance of the several Heroes represented, according to their Statues and Portraitsures, which made the Player always new to the Audience;

dience; whereas we coming always on the Stage with the same Face, put a Force on the Imagination of the Audience to fancy us other than the same Persons.

But I think I have found out a way, which, if maturely study'd, would obtain this Variety of Countenance more artfully, and at the same time inspire the Actor better with the Nature and Genius of his Part. I remember that some Years ago I read a *French Book* written by one *Gaffere* a Monk; who tells us, that when he was at *Rome* he went to see *Campanella* in the Inquisition, and found him making abundance of Faces; that he at first imagin'd, that those proceeded from the Torments he had undergone in that *Ecclesiastical Slaughter-House*; but he soon undeceiv'd him, by enquiring what sort of Countenance such a Cardinal had, to whom he had just before sent; for he was forming his Countenance, as much as he could, to what he knew of his, that he might know what his Answer wou'd be.

If therefore a Player was acquainted with the Character of his Hero, so far as to have an Account of his Features and Looks; or of any one living of the same Character, he would not only vary his Face so much by that means, as to appear quite another Face; by raising, or falling, contracting, or extending the Brows; giving a brisk or sullen, sprightly or heavy turn to his Eyes; sharpening or swelling his Nostrils, and the various Positions of his Mouth, which by

by Practice would grow familiar, and wonderfully improve the Art of Acting, and raise the noble Diversion to greater Esteem. The studying History-Painting would be very useful on this Occasion, because the Knowledge of the Figure and Lineaments of the Represented (and in History-Pieces almost all, who are represented are to be found) will teach the Actor to vary and change his Figure, which would make him not always the same, as I have said, in all Parts, but his very Countenance so chang'd, that they would not only have other Thoughts themselves, but raise others in the Audience. Some carry their Heads aloft and stately, others pucker their Brows, look with a piercing Eye, and the like, as I have just said; and these things thoroughly consider'd by the Player, would in every part make him a new Man; and with more Beauty supply the *Persona* of the Ancients, and raise our Stage to a greater Merit, than theirs could pretend to, which depriv'd the Audience of the noblest and most vivacious Part of the Representation, in the Loss of the Motions of the Face; of which we ought to take a peculiar Care, since it is on that, which the Audience or Spectators generally fix their Eyes the whole Time of the Action.

Exercise and frequent Practice ought to reform the least Error in this particular, because in the Performance every one presently discovers it, tho you see it not your self. The surest way of correcting your self in this

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is either a Looking-Glass, or a judicious Friend, who can and will let you know what Countenance is agreeable, and what the contrary. But this is a general Rule, without any Exception, that you adjust all the Lines and Motions of the Face to the Subject of your Discourse, the Passion you feel within you, or should according to your Part feel, or would raise in those, who hear and see you. You must likewise consider the Quality you represent, as well as the Quality of those to whom you speak; for even in great Degrees of the Passions the Difference and Distance of that has a greater or less Awe upon the very Appearance of the Passion. The *Countenance* must be brightened with a pleasant Gayety on things, that are agreeable, and that according to the Degrees of their being so; and likewise in *Joy*, which must still be heighten'd in the Passion of *Love*; tho indeed the *Countenance* in the Expression of this Passion is extremely various, participating sometimes of the Transports of Joy, sometimes of the Agonies of Grief; it is sometimes mingled with the Heats of Anger, and sometimes smiles with all the pleasing Tranquillity of an equal Joy. Sadness or Gravity must prevail in the *Countenance*, when the Subject is grave, melancholy or sorrowful; and Grief is to be expressed according to its various Degrees of Violence. *Hate* has its peculiar Expression composed of *Grief*, *Envy*, and *Anger*, a Mixture of all which ought to appear in the Eye. When you bring

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or offer Comfort, Mildness and Affability ought to spread o'er your Countenance, as *Severity* should when you censure or reprehend. When you speak to Inferiors, or to little People, and your own Quality is great, Authority and Gravity ought to be in your Face; as Submission, Humility, and Respect or Veneration, when you address to those above you.

The Management of the Eyes in an *Orator* at the *Bar*, or in the *Pulpit*, seems something different from what they must be in a *Player*, tho, if we make the rest of the Actors on the Stage with him at the same time his Auditors, the Rules for one will reach the other; for so indeed they are, for all the Regard that is to be had to the Audience is that they see and hear distinctly, what we act and what we speak, that they may judge justly of our Positions, Gestures and Utterance, in regard to each other.

The Orator therefore must always be casting his Eyes on some or other of his Auditors, and turning them gently from side to side with an Air of Regard, sometimes on one Person, and sometimes on another, and not fix them immovably on one Part of your Auditors, which is extremely unaffecting and dull, much less moving, than when we look them decently in the Face, as in common Discourse. This will hold good in Playing, if apply'd according to my former Rule; for indeed I have observ'd frequently some Players, who pass for great ones;

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have their Eyes lifted up to the Galleries, or Top of the House, when they are engag'd in a Discourse of some Heat, as if indeed they were conning a Lesson, not acting a Part; and *Theophrastus* himself (as I find him quoted) condemn'd *Tamariscus*, a Player of his Time, who when ever he spoke on the Stage, turn'd his Eyes from those, who were to hear him, and kept them fixt all the while on one single and insensible Object. But Nature acts directly in a contrary manner, and yet she ought to be the Player's as well as Poet's Mistress. No Man is engag'd in Dispute, or any Argument of Moment, but his Eyes and all his Regard are fixt on the Person, he talks with; not but that there are times according to the Turn or Crisis of a Passion, where the Eyes may with great Beauty be turn'd from the Object we address to several Ways, as in Appeals to Heaven, imploring Assistance, to join in your Addresses to any one, and the like.

When you are free from Passion, and in any Discourse, which requires no great Motion, as our modern Tragedies too frequently suffer their chief Parts to be, your Aspect should be pleasant, your Looks direct, neither severe nor aside, unless you fall into a Passion, which requires the contrary. For then Nature, if you obey its Summons, will alter your Looks and Gestures. Thus when a Man speaks in *Anger* his Imagination is inflam'd, and kindles a sort of Fire in his Eyes, which sparkles from them in such

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such a manner, that a Stranger, who understood not a Word of the Language, or a deaf Man, that could not hear the loudest Tone of his Voice, would not fail of perceiving his Fury and Indignation. And this Fire of their Eyes will easily strike those of their Audience, which are continually fixt on yours; and by a strange sympathetic Infection, it will set them on Fire too with the very same Passion.

I would not be misunderstood, when I say you must wholly place your Eyes on the Person or Persons you are engag'd with on the Stage; I mean, that at the same time both Parties keep such a Position in Regard of the Audience, that even these Beauties escape not their Observation, tho never so justly directed. As in a Piece of History-Painting, tho the Figures direct their Eyes never so directly to each other, yet the Beholder, by the Advantage of their Position, has a full View of the Expression of the Soul in the Eyes of the Figures. Thus in the *Psyche* and *Cupid of Coppel*; Her Eyes are directed to him as he descends on the Wing, and his to her glowing with Love and Desire, and yet all this is seen in him by those, who view the Picture. *Titian* has drawn the same Story, I mean the Loves of *Cupid* and *Psyche*; but as She lies on the Bed naked, we see nothing but her Back-parts, tho *Cupid* advances his Knee to the Bed, with his Eyes fixt on her Face, which are turn'd from the Spectator. I know not what the *Italian's* Fancy was, to imagine that the

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Back-

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Back-parts of the Mistress of Love should be more agreeable, than her Face. But this *en passant* — To return to the Subject.

The Looks, and just Expression of all the other Passions, has the same Effect, as this I have mention'd of Anger. For if the *Grief* of another touches you with a real Compassion, Tears will flow from your Eyes, whether you will or not. And this Art of Weeping, as I have read, was study'd with great Application by the ancient Players; and they made so extraordinary a Progress in it, and work'd the Counterfeit so near a Reality, that their Faces used to be all over blurr'd with Tears when they came off the Stage.

They us'd several means of bringing this passionate Tenderness to a Perfection; yet this they found the most effectual. They kept their own private Afflictions in their Mind, and bent it perpetually on real Objects, and not on the Fable, or fictitious Passion of the *Play*, which they acted. The same Author gives us two notable Examples of this: The first is of one *Polus*, a famous Actor; he had refrain'd the Stage for some time, after the Death of a beloved Son, for the Grief for that Loss had so sensibly affected him, and thrown him into such a Melancholy, that he had no Thoughts of ever returning to his Theatrical Employment; but being at last once more on the Stage, and oblig'd to act *Electra* carrying the suppos'd Urn of her Brother *Orestes*, he went to the Grave
of

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of his own beloved Child, and brings his Urn on, instead of the suppos'd Urn of *Orestes*; which so mov'd him, and melted his Heart into such Compassion and Tenderness, at the Sight of that real Object of Sorrow, that he broke out into such loud Exclamations, and such unfeigned Tears, as fill'd the whole House with Grief, Weeping, and Lamentations.

The other Example is of the famous and wealthy Player *Afipus*, who by his rare Art in this particular did a great Piece of Service to the Common-wealth of *Rome*, in applying his Art to the recalling of *Cicero* from Banishment. For he understanding, that such a thing was in Agitation with the People, acted a Play of *Accius*, in which were some admirable Verses on the Exile of *Telamon*, and the horrible Calamities of *Priam* and his Family. In the speaking of these Verses, the real Sufferings of his Friend so affected him, that he made the imaginary Sufferings of the Poetical Person so moving, that he drew Floods of Tears from those, who were indifferent, and made his very Enemies blush with Tears in their Eyes at his Affliction. And this so mollify'd the People towards *Cicero*, and gave them such a Disposition towards his Recalling and Re-establishment in his former Dignities, that he was soon after brought home in Triumph; and, as my Author assures me, *Cicero* himself tells us, with the utmost Gratitude, what his cordial Friend, this great Actor, had done for him on this Occasion.

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The Player therefore, nay, and the Orator too, ought to form in his Mind a very strong Idea of the Subject of his Passion, and then the Passion it self will not fail to follow, rise into the Eyes, and affect both the Sense and Understanding of the Spectators with the same *Tenderness*. The Performance of this is express'd in *Shakespear's Hamlet* admirably well, and should be often consider'd by our young Players. —

*Ham. Is it not monstrous that the Player here,
But in a Fiction, in a Dream of Passion,
Could force his Soul so to his whole Conceit,
That from her working all his Visage warm'd,
Tears in his Eyes, Distraction in his Aspect;
A broken Voice, and his whole Function suiting
With Forms to his Conceit? And all for nothing!
For HECUBA!
What's HECUBA to him, or he to HECUBA,
That he should weep for her? What would
he do
Had he the Motive, and the Cue for Passion
That I have? He would drown the Stage with
Tears;
And cleave the general Ear with horrid Speech;
Make mad the Guilty, and appal the Free;
Confound the Ignorant, and amaze indeed
The very Faculty of Eyes and Ears.*

This shews, that our *Shakespear* had a just Notion of Acting, whatever his Performance was; for in these few Lines is contain'd almost
all

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all that can be said of Action, Looks and Gesture. Here we find the *Soul* forc'd so to his whole Conceit, &c. The first place is the fixing this in the *Soul*, to engage that thoroughly in the Passion, and then from her Working will his Visage warm, his Eyes flow with Tears, and Distractions spread over all his Face; nay, then will his Voice be broken, and every Faculty of his Body be agreeable to this strong Emotion of the Soul. Tho in the first seven Lines he seems to have expressed all the Duties of a Player in a great Passion; yet in the following seven he derives a yet stronger Action when the Object of Grief is real; which justifies what the Ancients practis'd in heightning their Theatrical Sorrow, by fixing the Mind on real Objects; or by working your self up by a strong Imagination, that you are the very Person and in the very same Circumstances, which will make the Case so very much your own, that you will not want Fire in Anger, nor Tears in Grief: And then you need not fear affecting the Audience, for Passions are wonderfully convey'd from one Person's Eyes to another's; the Tears of *one* melting the Heart of the *other*, by a very visible Sympathy between their Imaginations and Aspects.

You must lift up or cast down your Eyes, according as the Nature of the Things you speak of: Thus if of Heaven, your Eyes naturally are lifted up; if of Earth, or Hell, or any thing terrestrial, they are as naturally cast down.

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Your Eyes must also be directed according to the Passions, as to deject them on things of Disgrace, and which you are ashamed of; and raise them on things of Honour, which you can glory in with Confidence and Reputation. In Swearing, or taking a solemn Oath, or Attestation of any thing, to the Verity of what you say, you turn your Eyes, and in the same Action lift up your Hand to the thing you swear by, or attest.

Your Eye-brows must neither be immoveable, nor always in Motion; nor must they both be rais'd on every thing that is spoken with Eagerness and Consent, and much less must one be rais'd, and the other cast down; but generally they must remain in the same Posture and Equality, which they have by Nature, allowing them their due Motion, when the Passions require it; that is, to contract themselves, and frown in *Sorrow*; to smooth and dilate themselves in *Joy*; to hang down in *Humility*, &c.

The *Mouth* must never be writh'd, nor the *Lips* bit or lick'd, which are all ungenteel and unmannerly Actions, and yet what some are frequently guilty of; yet in some Efforts or Starts of Passion, the Lips have their share of Action, but this more on the Stage, than in any other public Speaking, either in the Pulpit, or at the Bar; because the Stage is or ought to be an Imitation of Nature in those Actions and Discourses, which are produc'd betwixt Man and Man by any Passion, or on any Business, which can

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can afford Action; for all other has in reality nothing to do with the *Scene*.

Tho to shrug up the Shoulders be no Gesture allow'd in Oratory, yet on the Stage the Character of the Person, and the Subject of his Discourse, may render it proper enough; tho I confess, it seems more adapted to Comedy, than Tragedy, where all should be great and solemn, and with which the gravest of the Orators Actions will agree. I have read of a pleasant Method, that *Demosthenes* took to cure himself of this Vice of Action, for he at first was mightily given to it; he us'd to exercise himself in declaiming in a narrow and streight Place, with a Dagger hung just over his Shoulders, so that as often as he shrugg'd them up, the Point, by pricking his Shoulders, put him in mind of his Error: which in time remov'd the Defect.

Others thrust out the Belly, and throw back the Head, both Gestures unbecoming and indecent.

We come now to the Hands, which as they are the chief Instruments of Action, varying themselves as many ways, as they are capable of expressing things, so is it a difficult matter to give such Rules as are without Exception. Those Natural Significations of particular Gestures, and what I shall here add, will, I hope, be some Light to the young Actor in this particular. First, I would have him look back to what I have said of the *Action* of the Hands, as to their Expression of *Accusation*, *Deprecation*, *Threats*,

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Threats, Desire, &c. and to weigh well what those Actions are, and in what manner expressed; and then considering how large a share those Actions have in all manner of Discourse, he will find that his Hands need never be idle, or employed in an insignificant or unbeautiful Gesture.

In the Beginning of a solemn Speech, or Oration, as in that of *Anthony* on the Death of *Cesar*, or of *Brutus*, on the same Occasion, there is no Gesture at least of any Consideration, unless it begin abruptly, as *O! JUPITER, Ob! Heav'ns! is this to be born? the very Ships then in our Eyes, which I preserv'd, &c.* extending here his Hands first to Heav'n; and then to the Ships. In all regular Gestures of the Hands, they ought perfectly to correspond with one another, as in starting in a Maze, on a sudden Fright, as *Hamlet* in the Scene betwixt him and his Mother, on the Appearance of his Father's Ghost——

*Save me, and hover o'er me with your Wings,
You Heavenly Guards!*

This is spoke with Arms and Hands extended, and expressing his Concern, as well as his Eyes, and whole Face. If an Action comes to be used by only one Hand, that must be by the *Right*, it being indecent to make a Gesture with the *Left* alone; except you should say any such thing as,

Rather

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*Rather than be guilty of so foul a Deed,
I'd cut this Right Hand off, &c.*

For here the Action must be expressed by the *Left Hand*, because the *Right* is the Member to suffer. When you speak of your self, the *Right* not the *Left Hand* must be apply'd to the Bosom, declaring your own Faculties, and Passions; your Heart, your Soul, or your Conscience, but this Action generally speaking, should be only apply'd or express'd by laying the Hand gently on the Breast, and not by thumping it as some People do. The Gesture must pass from the *Left* to the *Right*, and there end with Gentleness and Moderation, at least not stretch to the Extremity of Violence. You must be sure as you begin your Action with what you say, so you must end it when you have done speaking; for Action either before or after Utterance is highly ridiculous. The Movement or Gestures of your Hands must always be agreeable to the Nature of the Words, that you speak; for when you say, *Come in* or *approach*, you must not stretch out your Hand with a repulsive Gesture; nor, on the contrary, when you say, *Stand back*, must your Gesture be inviting; nor must you join your Hands, when you command Separation; nor open them, when your order is *closing*; nor hang them down, when you bid *raise such a thing*, or *Person*; nor lift them up, when you say, *throw them down*. For all these Gestures would

would be so visibly against Nature, that you would be laugh'd at by all that saw or heard you. By these Instances of faulty Action, you may easily see the right, and gather this Rule, that as much as possible every Gesture you use should express the Nature of the Words you utter, which would sufficiently and beautifully employ your Hands.

It is impossible to have any great Emotion or Gesture of the Body, without the Action of the Hands, to answer the Figures of Discourse, which are made use of in all Poetical, as well as Rhetorical Diction; for Poetry derives its Beauty in that from Rhetoric, as it does its Order and Justness from Grammar; which surprises me, that some of our modern taking Poets value themselves on that, which is not properly Poetry, but only made use of as an Ornament, and drawn from other Arts and Sciences.

Thus when *Medea* says,

*These Images of JASON,
With my own Hands I'll strangle, &c.*

'tis certain the Action ought to be express'd by the Hands to give it all its Force.

In the lifting up the Hands to preserve the Grace, you ought not to raise them above the Eyes; to stretch them farther might disorder and distort the Body; nor must it be very little lower, because that Position gives a Beauty

to

to the Figure: Besides, this Posture being general on some Surprise, Admiration, Abhorrence, &c. which proceeds from the Object, that affects the Eye, Nature by a sort of Mechanic Motion throws the Hands out as Guards to the Eyes on such an Occasion.

You must never let either of your Hands hang down, as if lame or dead; for that is very disagreeable to the Eye, and argues no Passion in the Imagination. In short, your Hands must always be in View of your Eyes, and so corresponding with the Motions of the Head, Eyes and Body, that the Spectator may see their Concurrence, every one in its own way to signify the same thing, which will make a more agreeable, and by Consequence a deeper Impression on their Senses, and their Understanding.

Your Arms you should not stretch out sideways, above half a Foot from the Trunk of your Body, you will otherwise throw your *Gestures* quite out of your Sight, unless you turn your Head also aside to pursue it, which would be very ridiculous.

In Swearing, Attestation, or taking any solemn Vow or Oath, you must raise your Hand; an Exclamation requires the same Action: But so that the *Gestures* may not only answer the *Pronunciation*, or *Utterance*, but both the Nature of the thing, and the Meaning of the Words. In public Speeches, Orations, and Sermons, it is true your Hands ought not to be always in Motion, a Vice which was once call'd the *Babbling*

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ting of the Hands ; and perhaps, it may reach some Characters, and Speeches in Plays ; but I am of Opinion, that the Hands in Acting ought very seldom to be wholly quiescent, and that if we had the Art of the *Pantomimes*, of expressing things so clearly with their Hands, as to make the Gestures supply Words, the joining these significant Actions to the Words and Passions justly drawn by the Poet, would be no contemptible Grace in the Player, and render the Diversion infinitely more entertaining, than it is at present. For indeed *Action* is the Business of the Stage, and an Error is more pardonable on the right, than the wrong side.

There are some *Actions* or *Gestures*, which you must never make use of in Tragedy, any more than in Pleadings, or Sermons, they being low and fitter for Comedy or Burlesque Entertainments. Thus you must not put your self into the Posture of one *bending a Bow*, *presenting a Musquet*, or playing on any Musical Instrument, as if you had it in your Hands.

You must never imitate any lewd, obscene or indecent Postures, let your Discourse be on the Debaucheries of the Age, or any thing of that Nature, which the Description of an *Anthony* and *Verres* might require our Discourse of.

When you speak in a *Prosopopæia*, a Figure by which you introduce any (thing or) Person speaking, you must be sure to use such Actions only, as are proper for the Character, that you speak for. I can't remember at present one in

Trag.

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Tragedy, but in Comedy *Melantha*, when she speaks for a Man, and answers him in her own Person, may give you some Image of it. But these seldom happen in Plays, and in Orations not very frequently.

Thus I have gone through the Art of Action or Gesture, which tho I have directed chiefly for the Stage, and there principally for Tragedy, yet the *Bar* and the *Pulpit* may learn some Lessons from what I have said, that would be of mighty use to make their Pleadings and Sermons of more Force and Grace. But, I think, the *Pulpit* chiefly has need of this Doctrine, because that converses more with the Passions, than the *Bar* ; and treats of more sublime Subjects, meritorious of all the Beauty and Solemnity of Action. I am persuaded, that if our Clergy, would apply themselves more to this Art, what they preach would be more efficacious, and themselves more respected ; nay, have a greater Awe on their Auditors. But then it must be confess'd it is next to impossible for them to attain this Perfection, while that Custom prevails of reading of Sermons, which no Clergy in the World do but those of the Church of *England*. For while they read they are not perfect enough in what they deliver, to give it its proper Action and Emphasis, either in Pronunciation or Gesture. But the *Tatler* has handled this particular very well ; and, if what he has said will have no Influence upon them, it will be much in vain for me to attempt it.

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The *Comedians*, I fear, may take it amiss, that I have had little or no Regard to them in this Discourse. But I must confess, tho I have attempted two or three Comical Parts, which the Indulgence of the Town to an old Fellow has given me some Applause for ; yet Tragedy is, and has always been, my Delight. Besides, as some have observ'd, that Comedy is less difficult in the Writing ; so I am apt to believe, it is much easier in the Acting ; not that a good *Comedian* is to be made by every one that attempts it, but we have had, almost ever since I knew the Stage, more and better *Comedians*, than *Tragedians* ; as we have had better *Comedies*, than *Tragedies* writ in our Language, as the Critics and knowing Judges tell us. But being willing to raise Tragedies from their present Neglect, to the Esteem they had in the most polite Nation, that ever *Europe* knew, I have endeavour'd to contribute my Part towards the improving of the Representation, which has a mighty Influence on the Success and Esteem of any thing of this Nature.

I might here add some Observations on the Errors in the Action of our present Players ; but as that would be an invidious Task, so they may easily be discover'd by those Rules I have laid down of a just Performance. I shall therefore now proceed to the other Duty of a Player, which is the Art of *Speaking* ; which, tho much the least considerable, yet according to our modern *Tragedies*, I mean those, which have been

been best receiv'd, is of most Use. For those Poets have very erroneously apply'd themselves to write more what requires just *Speaking*, than just Acting. And our Players, generally speaking, fall very much short of that Excellence ev'n in this, which they ought to aim or arrive at ; but too plainly prove what *Roseneraus* describes—*An Airy of Children, little Pases, they cry out on the Top of the Question, and are most tyrannically clapt for't ; these are now the Fashion, and so berattle the common Stages (so they call'em) that many wearing Rapiers are afraid of Goose-Quills, and dare scarce come thither.* And tho in what I have before quoted from *Hamlet* (in his Account of the Actor's Action and Behaviour) do happily express the Soul and Art of Acting, which *Shakespeare* has drawn the compleat Art of Gesture in miniature, in the quoted Speech, yet all the Directions, which he gives, relate (except one Line) wholly to *Speaking*.

HAMLET. " Speak the Speech, I pray you,
 " as I pronounc'd it, trippingly on the Tongue.
 " But if you mouth it, as many of our Players
 " do, I had as lieve the Town-Cryer had spoke
 " my Lines. Nor do not saw the Air too much
 " with your Hand thus, but use all gently ; For
 " in the very Torrent, Tempest, and I may say
 " the Whirlwind of Passion, you must acquire and
 " beget a Temperance, that may give it Smooth-
 " ness. Oh ! it offends me to the Soul to see a
 " robustous, perriwig-pated Fellow tear a Pas-
 " sion to Tatters, to very Rags, to split the Ears
 " of the Groundlings, who for the most part
 " are

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“ are capable of nothing but inexplicable *dumb Shows* and *Noise*. I could have such a Fellow whipt for o’erdoing Termagant : It out-
 “ *Herod’s Herod*. Pray you avoid it—— Be
 “ not too tame neither, but let your own Dis-
 “ cretion be your Tutor. Suit the *Action* to the
 “ *Word*, the *Word* to the *Action*, with this spe-
 / “ cial Observance, that you o’ertop not the Mo-
 “ desty of *Nature*. For any thing so overdone
 “ is from the Purpose of Playing, whose End
 “ both at the first and now was and is to hold
 “ as ’twere the Mirror up to *Nature* ; to show
 “ Virtue her own Feature ; scorn her own I-
 “ mage, and the very Age and Body of the
 “ Time, his Form, and Pressure. Now this
 “ over-done, or come tardy of, tho it make the
 “ Unskilful laugh, cannot but make the Judici-
 “ ous grieve : *The Censure of which ONE, must*
 “ *in your Allowance o’ersway a WHOLE THEA-*
 “ *TRE of others*. Oh ! there be Players, that
 “ I have seen play, and heard others praise,
 “ and that highly, (not to speak it prophanely)
 “ that neither having the Accent of *Christians*,
 “ nor the Gate of *Christian, Pagan, or Norman*,
 “ have so strutted and bellow’d, that I have
 “ thought some of *Nature’s Journey-Men* had
 “ made Men, and not made them well, they imi-
 “ tated Humanity so abominably.
 “ Player. “ I hope we have reformed that indif-
 “ ferently with us, Sir.
 “ Ham. “ Oh ! reform it altogether. And let
 “ those, who play the Clowns, speak no more,
 “ than

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“ than is set down for ’em ; for there be of them,
 “ who will themselves laugh, to set on some
 “ Quantity of barren Spectators to laugh too ;
 “ tho in the mean time, some necessary Que-
 “ stion of the Play be then to be consider’d :
 “ that’s villanous, and shews a most *pitiful Am-*
 “ *bition* in the Fool, that uses it.

If we should consider and weigh these Direc-
 tions well, I am persuaded they are sufficient
 to instruct a young Player in all the Beauties of
Utterance, and to correct all the Errors he might,
 for want of the Art of Speaking, have incurr’d.
 By pronouncing it *trippingly on the Tongue*, he
 means a clear and disembarass’d Pronunciation,
 such as is agreeable to Nature and the Subject
 on which he speaks. His telling the Actor, that
 he had as lieve the Town-Cryer should speak his
 Lines, as one that mouth’d them, is very just ;
 for if Noise were an Excellence, I know not who
 would bear away the Palm, the Cryer, or the
 Player ; I’m sure the Town-Cryer would be less
 faulty, his Business requiring Noise. *Nor do not*
saw the Air with your Hand thus, but use all GENT-
 LY : This is the only Precept of Action, which is
 extremely just ; and agreeable to the Notions of
 all, that I have met with on my full Enquiry a-
 mong my learned Friends, who have read all that
 has been wrote upon Action, and who reckon *rude*
 and *boistrous* Gestures among the faulty ; Art al-
 ways directing a moderate and gentle Motion,
 which *Shakespeare* expresses by *use all gently*. Besides,
 this *sawing of the Air*, expresses one, who is very
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much at a Loss how to dispose of his Hands; but knowing that they should have some Motion, gives them an aukward Violence. The next Observation is extremely masterly—*For in the very TORRENT, TEMPEST, and I may say the Whirlwind of Passion, you must acquire and get a Temperance, that may give it SMOOTHNESS.* I remember among many, an Instance in the Madness of *Alexander the Great*, in *Lee's Play*, Mr. Goodman always went through it with all the Force the Part requir'd, and yet made not half the Noise, as some who succeeded him; who were sure to bellow it out in such a manner, that their Voice would fail them before the End, and led them to such a languid and enervate Hoarseness, as entirely wanted that agreeable *Smoothness*, which *Shakespeare* requires, and which is the Perfection of beautiful Speaking; for to have a just Heat, and Loudness, and yet a *Smoothness* is all that can be desir'd. *Oh! it offends me to the Soul*, he goes on—Methinks some of our young Gentlemen, who value themselves for great Players, nay, and Judges too of the Drama, set up for Critics, and who censure and receive or reject Plays, should be ashamed of themselves, when they read this in *Shakespeare*, whose Authority they seem so fond of on other Occasions; but it is with them here, as with some Enemies of Reason on other Occasions, who are against Reason, when Reason is against them, tho none so clamorous for it at other Times, that is, they are fonder of Error, than

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than Truth, when they can be more remarkable, and clapt by the *Million*, by continuing in their Error, than by quitting it—But that is a *pitiful Ambition* indeed, and unworthy a Master of any Art. *Tully* likens these Bellowers to Criples, that fly to Noise to cover their Ignorance, as the other to a Horse to help their Lameness; and with this Noise they triumph with the Ignorant; but *Homer* never reckon'd *Stentor* among his fine Speakers. So that tho a strong and firm Voice be a very good Ingredient in a Speaker, yet he ought to have a peculiar Care not to offend a nice Ear, by putting it upon the stretch too much. For this Reason when *Carneades* (not yet of so great Authority among the Philosophers) was declaiming in the Schools, the Master sent him word to moderate his Voice a little; but on his requiring a Pitch from him, the Master reply'd, let his Voice be your Tone, with whom you talk. So that the Loudness or Lowness of the Voice is to be modell'd according to the Place of Speaking, and the Audience; that it be not too low, or too loud. An equal Care ought to be taken of the Action, that it be not rude and desultory, nor beyond Measure active; *Quintus Haterius* had a Servant always behind him, when he spoke in Public, who by touching his Garment, when the Ardour of Discourse had made him fly out, recall'd him to the just Medium of Action. The Ancients indeed (if my Authors mislead me not) were extremely against that

that insolent tossing of the Body about, when there was no Occasion. *Sextus Titius* was a very sharp and loquacious Man, but was so dissolute and enervate in his Action and Gestures, that a sort of Dance arose out of his Gesticulation, which was call'd by his Name. Nor was *Manlius Sura*, whom when *Domitius Afer* had seen whilst he was Acting or Speaking, running up and down, dancing, tossing his Hands about, throwing down his Gown now, and then gathering it up again, he said, this Man does not act or use Gestures, but miserably aims at something he does not understand. Some of the Ancients, not content with this Agitation of the Body, that they like the Antisophist of *Virginus*, travell'd a many Miles in their Declamations; which made *Cassius Severus* require some Goal, or Bound to be set them, as in Races, beyond which their Excursions should not reach. Some strike their Chins, some their Thighs, and some their Foreheads in Trifles, and others perpetually buffet the Pulpit, or Place of Action; some proceed so far, as to pull off their Hair. These Vices of Action are not fit for any one, much less for grave People, and on grave Occasions. For tho the Passions are very beautiful in their proper *Gestures*, yet they ought never to be so extravagantly immoderate, as to transport the Speaker out of himself. Tho this has a peculiar Regard to the Bar and the Pulpit, yet has it an equal Authority over the Stage, allowing only for the greater Latitude, which
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is proper to that Place, which would be shocking in the other. But then *Shakespear* would not have his *Player* too tame neither, for that indeed is an Error in the other Extreme; it enervates the Discourse, and makes the whole Passion languish, which ought to warm you with a just and comfortable Heat, and enlivening Fire. Altho Action be of great Use and Force in *Speaking*, Sedateness being to be express'd in some things, in others *Severity*, and Vehemence, yet never Madness in any thing, which happens to those, who wanton in a sort of tragical and howling Voice upon every Trifle. Some, on the contrary, are viciously opposite to these, who act so tamely and so coldly, that when they ought to be angry, to thunder and lighten, as one may say, they are no fuller of Heat, than a wet Hen, as the Saying is; and turn over a *Thyestean* Scene in the calm Tone of a mere Reader; which made *Cicero* say to *Calpurnius*, when he sedately told of his being like to be poison'd, *If you did not feign all this Story, could you deliver it in this manner?* gathering from his Action, that he spoke not feelingly enough for a Reality. Such are fitter to comfort the Sick, than to *speak* in public. In this much is left to the Nature of the Subject, and for this Reason *Shakespear* leaves it to his Discretion. Yet notwithstanding he leaves his Discretion to be his Guide, he soon directs that Guide, by bidding him *suit the Action to the Words, and the Words to the Action*; and

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not to overtop the Modesty of, that is, to go beyond *Nature*, which is to be the Rule of just Acting. But then the same Difficulty will arise here as in Writing, where all sides agree, that *Nature* is the sovereign Guide and Scope; but then they are not so agreed in what *Nature* is: The Skilful lay down those Signs, Marks, and Lineaments of *Nature*, that you may know when she is truly drawn, when not; the Unskilful, which is the greater and more noisy part, leave it so at large, that it amounts to no more, than every one's Fancy, which would make Contradictions *Nature*; for what pleases one, he calls *Nature*; what pleases another, that he calls *Nature*; and I heard once a Man of the Stage, in great Vogue for I know not what off the Stage, say *Nonsense* was natural, when *Nature* has been urg'd as the Rule of good Writing; whether he meant it a *Witticism* or not, I never thought it worth while to examine, being sensible, that *NONSENSE* is very natural to some, ev'n tho they set up for, and are ev'n admir'd by a Set of People for their Wit.

I instance this, to show that there seems a Necessity of some Marks, or Rules to fix the Standard of what is *Natural*, and what not, else it is a loose vague Word of no manner of Use or Authority. But this is what *Shakespear* supposes our Actor to know, and therefore he proceeds to tell him what the End of a Player was and is, viz. *to hold as it were the Mirror up to Nature, to shew Virtue her own Feature;*
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scorn her own Image, and the very Age and Body of the Time, his Form and Pressure. To attain a just Praise in which, besides the Knowledge of them, the Player must neither over or under-act his Part. As I have already laid down such Observations, as may be of great Use to the Actor in his Acting and Gesture, so I shall now set down some, which will give an Insight into the Art of *Speaking*, or regulating and modeling the Voice in such a manner, as may render the Utterance pleasing to the Ear.

Before I come to the Directions for the Beauties of Speaking, I think it will not be amiss to insert here a Paper given me by a Friend, of the several natural Defects and Vices of a Voice, taken from the 26th Chapter of the Second Book of *Julius Pollux's Onomastics*, which he makes about twenty in number.

The first he calls *Black*, drawing the Metaphor from the Eyes to the Ears. For as Black strikes the Eyes more dully, so does this sort of Voice penetrate the Ears with greater Difficulty, and carries with it less of the Pleasant, but something on the contrary of the *dismal* and *horrid*.

Next the *dusky* or *brown*, differs from the Black only, by being something less obscure, but is yet very far from that Brightness of a pure Tone of Voice.

Rough or *unpleasant*, such as your very strong Voices generally are, with which the pleasing Sweetness is seldom mingled; and *Seneca* puts

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it down for a wonder, that *Cassius Severus* retain'd a Sweetness in his Voice, tho it was extremely strong and robust; for it seldom happens, that the same Voice is both sweet and solid.

The opposite to this he calls *small* or *weak*, such is their Voice, who seem rather to pip like a young Chicken, than to speak like humane kind.

Strait or *slender*, which is slenderly melted thro' the narrow Channel of the Throat, and fills not the Ears of the Hearers.

Disfucous, that which is not heard without Difficulty, or that which is very importunately troublesome to the Ears.

That which by *Fabius* is call'd *subfurd* or *deafish*, which wanting vocal Emission, detains the Sound within; like the Harper *Aspendus*, who could touch the Harp so, that no body but himself could hear the Sound.

The *confus'd*, which is not distinguish'd with full articulate Sounds.

The *jarring*, untuneable, absonous, and unharmonious.

Unmelodious, neglected, without Beauty or Grace.

Rude, uncouth, untractable, unmanageable, like unbroken Colts.

Unpersuasive, that is not adapted to Persuasion, such as theirs, who have a perpetual Identity of Tone in Discourse; a *Monotony*.

Rigid,

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Rigid, that which with Difficulty admits any Variation.

Hard or *barsh*, which offends the Ears with a sort of bouncing and cracking Noise.

Defultory or *broken*, which is when the Discourse leaps or bounds, as it were with unequal Distances and Sounds, confusedly mixing short and long, flat and sharp, high and low, so that the Discourse goes lamely on with the Inequality of all these together; the same is call'd the *fickle* or *inconstant*.

The *austere*, *sour* or *dismal*, which strikes the Ears with an unpleasant Sound, something like that of creaking Wheels.

The *infirm* or *feeble*, by which the weak and broken Breath is spread and dispers'd into a hoarse Smallness.

Brazen, which like the vehement Clinking of Brass is perpetually assaulting our Ears.

The *sharp* or *acute*, which strikes and penetrates the Ears with a shriller Sound, than it ought. For the most acute Sounds are not the most fit for Speaking in Public; which is made too thin, too cutting, and of too great a Clearness.

The contrary Virtues enumerated by the same Author are these.

The *high*, which being sent from good Lungs and Chest perfectly fills the Ears.

The *lofty*, that which is not only more fully heard, but by its own Firmness becomes durable.

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The *clear*, that sounds sprightly, and is not blurr'd with any Defects.

The *smooth, spreading, explicit.*

The *grave, bass, or full*, such as generally is the Voice of the most manly and robust Singers, which if mingled with Sweetness is the most valuable Voice, that is ; but when it wants this Sweetness, it scatters and spreads out into wild and desolate Enormity.

The *candid and pure*, which affects the Ears, as White does the Eyes, and is therefore contrary to the Vice of Voice call'd the *black*.

The *pure and simple*, and as it were refin'd from all Vices and Defects.

The *sweet*, which delights with the Flower, as I may say, of a good Grace.

The *alluring*, that abounds in delicate Modulating, and harmonious Warblings.

The *exquisite*, polish'd and rich.

The *round and simple*, and most adapted to Persuasion.

The *tractable or Voice at Command*, which easily rises from the lowest Note to the highest, and with as much Ease falls from the highest to the lowest, and every where divides it self into all the pleasing Variety of Notes.

The *flexible*, that is wholly without Roughness, Stiffness, that obeys the Modulation, as Wax does the Fingers.

The *voluble or swift*, such as that of the best Orators, in the closest and hottest of the Argument.

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The *delicious*, beautiful in a kind of graceful Softness.

The *sounding or canorous*, fit to sing with Musical Instruments.

The *full, perspicuous*, and easy to be heard.

The *splendid*, and *shining* with an agreeable Softness.

These are the several sorts, or kinds of Voices, and their Virtues, which proceed merely from Nature, which yet receive from Art their Brightness, Improvement, and Perfection.

As these are the Virtues and Vices of the Voice, so we shall now proceed to the Beauties and Defects of *Pronunciation* : The chief Excellencies of which are agreed by the Masters of the Art to be *Purity, Perspicuity, Ornament, and Hability or Aptitude.*

PURITY is, as we may say, a certain Healthfulness of Voice, which has in it nothing vicious ; which is obstructed by the Voice we have call'd *subfurd* or deafish, rude, noisy, hard, rigid, inconstant or uncertain, thick or gross ; or by one, that is small, strait, empty, infirm, soft, or effeminate. On the contrary, a Delivery, which is easy, open, pleasant, genteel ; and in which nothing sounds clownish or foreign, is a great Help to *Pronunciation*, as *Quintilian* justly observes. *Cicero*, with equal Justice, and for the same Reason, in his Book *de Oratore*, condemns a Voice, that is soft, womanish, untuneable, absurd, ungenteel and rustic. And he directs his Speaker to a *Delivery*, that

that is neither harsh, nor disorderly, nor clownish, nor gaping, but close, equal, or of the same Tenor, and smooth. To these we must add the Tone and Accent, by which Men are known. This Virtue is obtain'd by Nature and Use, which is of very great Consequence in these Affairs ; for which Reason Boys should inure themselves to a right Pronunciation from the Beginning ; since we find, that in learning foreign Tongues, those seldom reach the Purity of them, who apply not themselves to them till in Years.

The **PERSPICUITY**, and Light of *Pronunciation* consists of a certain articulate Expression of all the Syllables, and their proper Points and Stops ; of which these are the Precepts of *Quintilian*.

The *Pronunciation* will be *perspicuous* and *clear*, first if the whole Words are entirely sounded, part of which is sometimes devoured, part neglected by most, who by indulging and dwelling too much on the Sound of the foregoing Syllables, express not sufficiently the last : But as the making Words have a plain Pronunciation is necessary, so is it very troublesome and odious to run it to a Computation and Enumeration of every Letter, and we must observe nicely in what Place the Discourse is to be sustain'd, and as it were suspended. And this, as is plain, is to be attain'd by Art.

The **ORNAMENT** is the cultivating and Clearness of the Voice ; and to this a great Help is

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naturally deriv'd from a Voice, that is easy, great, happy, flexible, firm, sweet, durable, clear, pure, penetrating, high, and adorn'd indeed with all those Virtues, we have already enumerated out of *Julius Pollux*. To this we must add, the beautiful Composition of the whole Instrument or Body, as the Firmness of the Chest and Lungs, Goodness of Breath, and that not easily giving way to, or failing under Labour and Fatigue.

HABILITY or **APTITUDE** is a pleasing Variety of *Pronunciation*, according to the Diversity of the Subject, and in a constant Equality. For as the best Style is perpetually equal or consistent with it self, and yet is according to the Subject now grave, now florid, and now gently abated ; so is a valuable Utterance always the same, and never deviating from its Excellence, yet derives all its Beauty and Glory from those agreeable Varieties, which according to the Nature of the Things it delivers, it admits. It is impossible to express how great and charming the Grace of the Art of varying the Voice, how much it enlivens the Hearers, and refreshes the Speaker himself by an agreeable Change of his Labour. On the contrary, a *Monotony*, or perpetually Speaking in the same unvary'd Tone, quite destroys the Speaker, and dispirits the Auditors, making them languish under a tiresome Oscitation. As we cannot always stand, or sit, or walk, but relieve our selves by an alternate Use of them, so in *Pronunciation*, we love a grate-

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grateful Variation of the Voice directed by a just Equality.

The Voice therefore, according to *Quintilian*, in *Joy* should be full, simple, pleasant, and flowing; in *Dispute*, extended with all its just Force and Nerves; in *Anger*, vehement and sharp, or acute, close, compact, mixt with frequent Respirations; but more slow in raising *Envy*, since few but Inferiours have Recourse to this.

In Insinuations, Confessions, Atonements and the like, the Voice must be gentle and temperate; when you persuade, admonish, promise, or Comfort it ought to be grave; and contracted in Fear, and Bashfulness and Modesty; strong in Exhortations, in Disputations round, fine and smooth; in Pity and Compassion, turning dolefully, and as it were on purpose more obscure. In Expositions and Discourses, direct; and in a Tone, that is a Medium betwixt an acute and grave. It is rais'd with our Passions, and falls again with them, being higher or lower according to either. Whoever can do all this has attain'd the highest Perfection of *Pronunciation*.

Cicero, in his 3d Book *de Oratore*, divides Pronunciation into many kinds; into *gentle* and *fierce*; contracted and diffus'd; with a continu'd Breath, and with an Intermision of the same; *broken* or *cut*; with a varying or direct Sound; slender and *great*. These, says he, are expos'd for Colours to the Actor, as to the Painter to draw his Variations.

Anger

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Anger loves an acute Sound, vehement, and full of Respirations.

Commiseration or *Pity*, one that is flexible, full, interrupted, and doleful.

Fear, one low, not without Hesitation, and abject.

Force and *Power*, one vehement, earnest, imminent, but carry'd on with a certain Gravity.

Pleasure, one effusive, gentle, tender, joyful, and remiss.

Grief and *Trouble*, one grave, and oppress'd with every straining.

Thus far my Paper, in which, I think, is contain'd the Art of Speaking beautifully on all Occasions; for there is nothing, that an Actor can talk of on the Stage, whether in Passion, or out of Passion, a Pleader at the Bar, or the Divine in the Pulpit, but what must fall under some of these Heads. I therefore recommend to the Study of my *Speaker* a perfect Application to what is here deliver'd. Yet, as this may not appear so obvious to many, who may desire to understand this Art, and may be capable of arriving at some Perfection in it; I shall proceed to give my Learner some more plain Lights, and which may serve, as a thorough Paraphrase and Explanation of what I have here deliver'd.

The first Consideration in the Art of Speaking, is to satisfy the Ear, which conveys all Arts and Sciences to us, and is the natural Judge of the Voice. The Speaker therefore ought to be heard and understood with Ease and Pleasure,

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to which a Voice clear, sweet and strong, is necessary to be heard all over the Audience. Such a Voice as *Quintilian* gives *Trachallus*, would be very useful, who pleading a Cause in one of the four Courts in the *Julian Forum*, was not only heard in that but in all the rest, so well as to be understood, and merit Applause; but tho every Man cannot obtain a Voice like this, yet if he cannot fill the Place, where he speaks, he's not fit to speak.

Some Men have such a Voice naturally, others attain it by the Improvement of Art and Exercise. As has been said of *Demosthenes*, who was as defective in Speaking as in Action and Gesture: He had naturally a weak Voice, and Impediment in his Speech, and a short Breath; and venturing withal these Disqualifications to speak in public twice, he was hiss'd both Times. But by his Industry and Application, he remov'd all these Obstructions. He daily in his under-ground Apartment exercis'd himself, by speaking what he had read aloud, so that his Organs gradually open'd, and his Voice sensibly clearing, grew every Day stronger, than the former. His Tongue was so gross and clumsy, that he mumbled his Words, nor could utter them clear and plain; nay, he could not pronounce an (R) at all; he was so short winded, that he could not speak many Words together without taking his Breath, which was but a sort of broken-winded Pronunciation; and these Difficulties produc'd a wonderful Difficulty, which was the surmounting

ing the great Noise of a Publick Assembly.

First, he cur'd the Grossness of his Tongue, by putting Pebble-stones in his Mouth, whilst he spoke for some time; he cur'd himself of his short Breath, by running up Hills, and repeating upright as he went some Verses, or Sentences of Speeches, which he had by Heart; which strengthen'd his Lungs, and made him long-winded: The Noise of Public Assemblies he conquer'd by Speaking with his utmost Contention of Voice in his Orations to the Roaring of the Sea, when loudest, and so became the most compleat Speaker of his Age.

'Tis true *Demosthenes* overcame these Difficulties, or at least Historians make us believe so; but this should be no Reason for admitting any one into a Play-house, who lies under such Defects, as this great Orator, by unspeakable Diligence, remov'd. For if a Man's Voice be good for nothing, by Reason of any Indisposition of the Organs, as the Tongue, Throat, Breast, or Lungs; if he have any considerable Lispering, Hesitation, or Stammering, he is not proper for the Stage, the Pulpit, or the Bar.

But I have given this Instance of *Demosthenes*, for the Sake of some, who may be on the Stage, and furnish'd with an admirable Genius, yet for want of Breath, or by the Feebleness of their Voice, cannot exert their other beautiful Qualities. Let them always speak out in their private Study, and in *Rehearsals*; it is an exer-

cise, which has been judg'd beneficial to the Health, provided, that you do not overstrain your Voice. Thus we find in *Plutarch*, (for I read all the Ancients I can meet with in *French* or *English*) whilst he advises other bodily Exercises for the Health of others, to those, who speak in *Public*, be it on the Stage, or elsewhere, he prescribes Discoursing, or making Speeches often, or Reading with as exalted a Voice, as Nature will well bear; and he says, it is his Opinion, that this Exercise is more healthy, and useful for this End, than all others; since while the other Motions set only the Limbs at work, and stir the external Members, the Voice employs a nobler part of the Body, and strengthens the Lungs, from which it receives its Breath; it augments the natural Heat, thins the Blood, cleanses the Veins, opens all the Arteries, prevents every Obstruction, and hinders the gross Humours from thickening into Distempers.

Let every Syllable have its distinct and full Sound and Proportion, when you use this Exercise, and then you need not fear muffling your Words, or Stammering. But besides this Vice of Utterance, you must avoid a broad way of speaking with your Mouth wide open, and of bellowing out a great Sound, but so confus'd and inarticulate, that tho you may be heard a great way off, yet the Sound will convey no more to the Understanding, than the Roaring of a Bull, or any other Beast. This proceeds
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from an Affectation, and a false Opinion, that this enormous Loudness gives a Majesty and Force to what they say; whereas it robs it of its Articulation, which is the very Being of Speech, and hinders its being understood, which is the very End of Speaking.

There are, in short, two things to make the Speaker heard and understood without Difficulty; first, a very distinct and articulate Voice, and next a very strong and vigorous Pronunciation. The first is the most important; for an indifferent Voice, with a distinct Pronunciation, shall be far more easily understood, than one, that is stronger and more audible, but which does not articulate the Words so well.

But it is not sufficient to be heard without Difficulty, but it ought to be the Object of your Endeavours to be heard with Pleasure and Satisfaction. To this End you must consider, whether your Voice have any of the fore-mention'd Vices or Defects, whether it be harsh, hoarse, or obsequious, and enquire into the Cause, whether it be from Nature, or an ill Habit; for 'tis your Business to render your Voice as sweet, soft, and agreeable to the Ear, as you possibly can. If the Defect proceeds from only an *ill Habit*, you ought to practice a contrary manner, if you would make your self fit for this Affair. But if it proceed from Nature, in the Defect of any, or all of the Organs of the Body employed in it, tho we have the Examples of *Cicero*, and *Demosthenes* of Success, yet
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at this time, and in this Employ, I think, it is scarce worth the while to aim, by a great deal of uncertain Labour, at the correcting Nature, when there are other Employments fitter for you.

Next to the Fineness of the Tone, the Variation of it is what will make the Auditors pleas'd and delighted with what they hear; you ought therefore to employ much Care and Time in learning the Art of varying the Voice, according to the Diversity of the Subjects, of the Passions you would express or excite, stronger or weaker, higher or lower, as will be most agreeable to what you say.

Tho I have already touch'd on this Point both in my Remarks on what I quoted from *Shakespeare* about Speaking, and in the Paper inserted on the Virtues of *Pronunciation*, yet I cannot dismiss this Subject without some farther Reflections, because we have had some Actors of Figure, who have an admirable Tone of Voice, the Beauty of which they have perverted into a Deformity, by keeping always in the very same Identity of Sound, in the very same Key, nay, the individual Note; for as in Music, so in Speaking, 'tis the Variety, which makes the Harmony; and as for a Fidler or Lutinist, or any other Performer in Music, to strike always the same String and Note, would be so far from tolerable Music, that it would be ridiculously insufferable and dull, so can nothing grate the Ear so much, or give the Auditors a greater Dis-

Disgust, as a Voice still in the same Tone, without Division or Variety.

'Tis true, this Vice is too general among most Speakers, but not in the last Degree. Few arrive to the true Art of varying the Voice with that Beauty and Harmony, which is in Nature, because they do not study what the Words, Subject, and Passion to be express'd properly require. A good Voice, indeed, tho ill manag'd, may fill the Ear agreeably, but it would be infinitely more pleasing, if they knew how to give it the just Turns, Risings, Fallings, and all other Variations suitable to the Subjects and Passions. But those very fine Voices, which in spite of their being ill govern'd please, are very uncommon. But this Vice renders such Voices, as are ordinarily met with, to the last Degree disagreeable.

But this *stiff Uniformity of Voice* is not only displeasing to the Ear, but disappoints the Effect of the Discourse on the Hearers; first, by an equal way of Speaking, when the Pronunciation has every where, in every Word and every Syllable the same Sound, it must inevitably render all Parts of the Speech equal, and so put them on a very unjust Level. So that the Power of the Reasoning Part, the Lustre and Ornament in the Figures, the Heart, Warmth, and Vigor of the passionate part being express'd all in the same Tone, is flat and insipid, and lost in a supine, or at least immusical Pronunciation. So that, in short, that which ought to strike and stir up the Affections, because 'tis spoken all

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alike,

alike, without any Distinction or Variety, moves them not at all. Next there is no greater Opinate in Speaking, nothing so dull and heavy, and fit to lull us asleep, as a whole Discourse turning still on the same *Note* and *Tone*; and indeed it favours of the Cant, which was formerly in some of the Dissenter's Pulpits, which they have of late very much reform'd in their young Men.

I believe a great deal of this is owing to our erroneous way of Education, where the School-Mistresses first, and afterwards the Masters, teach or suffer the Boys to cant out their Lessons in one unvary'd Tone for so many Years, which grows up with us, and is not overcome at last without Application; tho Nature and Reason, if we would consult them, would guide us into a more pleasing and excellent Road.

Nature tells us, that in Mourning, in Melancholly, in Grief, we must and do express ourselves in another sort of Tone and Voice, than in Mirth, in Joy, in Gladness: Otherwise in Reproof of Crimes, &c. than in Comforting the Afflicted: Otherwise when we upbraid a Man with his Faults, than when we ask Pardon for our own; otherwise when we threaten, than when we promise, pray, or beg a Favour; otherwise when we are in a good Humour, the Passions all calm, and the Mind in perfect Tranquillity, than when we are rais'd with Anger, or provok'd by ill Nature.

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This *Variation* is so founded in Nature, that should you hear two People, in a Language you do not understand, talking together with Heat, the one in *Anger*, the other in *Fear*; one in *Joy*, the other in *Sorrow*, you might easily distinguish the Passions from each other by the different Tone, and Cadence of their Voice, as well as by their Countenance and Gesture; nay, a blind Man, who could not observe those, by the Voice would easily know the Distinction.

From this it is plain, that as this Variation of the Voice is founded in Nature, so the nearer you approach to Nature, the nearer you come to Perfection; and the farther you are from her, the more vicious is your *Pronunciation*. The less affected the better, for a natural Variation is much the best; the easiest way of arriving at which, is a just Observation of common Discourse, and to mind how you speak your self in Conversation; how a Woman expresses her Passion for an Injury receiv'd, her Grief for the Loss of a Husband, or any thing dear to her, and from these Observations endeavour to form your Pronunciation in public, with this only difference, that you consider how much louder your Voice ought to be to be heard in all those Particulars, at such a Distance as the Stage, the Bar, or the Pulpit. The best Actors change their Voice according to the Qualities of the Persons they represent, and the Condition they are in, or the Subject of their Discourse; always speaking in the same Tone on the Stage,
as

as they would do in a Room, allowing for the Distance.

We must, therefore, vary the Voice, as often as we can; but the only Difficulty is to know how to do it artfully, and with Harmony; to the accomplishing which, I shall give the following Directions.

There are three chief Differences of *Highness* or *Lowness*, of *Vehemence* and *Softness*, and *Swiftness* and *Slowness*. The Speaker therefore is to observe a just Measure in all these Distinctions thro' all that he has to say. He must be sure to keep a true Medium of the Voice, both the Extremes being vicious and disagreeable. First, as to its *Height*, you must have a Care of either raising it always to the highest Note it can reach, or letting it down to the *lowest*. To strain it always to the Height, would be a *Bawling* or a *Monotony*, a Cant, or Identity of Sound. For besides the Ungenteelness and Indecency of the Clamour and Noise to the Hearer, it wears the Throat of the Speaker into a Hoarseness, and the Ears of the Hearer into an Aversion. To sink the Voice likewise into the lowest and most base Note, and to keep it always in the same Tone, would be to mutter, not to speak, and few of the Audience would be able to hear a Word, that was said.

Nor must a Man force his Voice perpetually to the last Extremity; for not being able to sustain it long in that Key, it would fail him all of a sudden; like the String of a Musical Instrument, that breaks when screw'd up too high.

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Without observing these Directions, he would either like *Adrian* the *Phœnician*, mention'd by *Philostratus*, lose his Voice in the midst of his Discourse, and murmur out the later part in so low a Tone as not to be heard; or like *Zosimus* the Freedman of *Pliny* the younger, over-straining himself, vomit Blood, and endanger his Life. A Man of a weak Constitution, and in Years, ought to have a Care of such an intemperate way of Speaking, lest he incur the Fate of King *Attalus*. He (as I have read) made once a Speech at *Thebes*, in a public Assembly, in which being transported into an Action too violent for the Debility of his old Age, he was of a sudden struck speechless, and without the least Motion or Appearance of Life; so that he was forc'd to be carry'd home to his Lodgings, whence soon after being convey'd to his Palace at *Pergamus*, he dy'd.

On the other side, you ought not to be too supine or remiss either in your *Action* or *Speaking*, because so effeminate and soft a Dissolution of the *Voice* betrays a Feebleness, and destroys the Energy of what you say, nor raises the Passions of any one, that hears above a common and dispassionate Discourse.

Next, as to the Swiftness and Volubility, it ought not to be precipitate. This was the Fault of one *Serapian*, of whom *Lucillius* gives *Seneca* an Account, and says, That his Fancy flow'd so quick, that hudling Word on Word, one Tongue seem'd not sufficient for the Precipitation

tion of his *Pronunciation*. But this, on several Accounts, is a very vicious way of Speaking. This Vice is not only unseemly on all grave Subjects, but an Obstacle to the End propos'd by them, which is Persuasion. For without allowing Time to consider what you say, how can you convince? But on the Stage indeed the Case is something different, because there are Parts, and some particular Speeches, where such an extravagant Volubility is beautiful; as in several Places of the Part of *True Wit* in the *Silent Woman*, and some other Parts: But that we shall see anon, when we come closer to Particulars. This running on Post without any Pause, is also prejudicial to the Speaker himself; for there is nothing hurts the Lungs more, than such a Violence and Precipitation of Speech, as allows no Intermission for the regular drawing the Breath, which has cast some into Consumptions, and cost them their Lives.

But when I give Caution against this Vice, I would not have you throw your self into the contrary Extreme; for when I would not have you run so very fast with your Tongue, I would not have you suppose, that I prescribe such a Slowness of Utterance, that is like a sick Man's Walking, who can hardly draw one Leg after the other; whereas what I aim at is, that the Tongue of the Speaker should keep Pace with the Ear of the Auditors, being neither too swift for them to follow, nor too slow for their Attention. I find in an Author on this Subject,

Vicians

Vicians noted for this, that his Slowness of Delivery was so great, that he spoke scarce three Words together without a Pause, or Intermission. But there can be no manner of Pleasure to hear a Man drawl out his Words at this Rate; his Speech, to be of Value, must be more florid, but then it ought to glide like a gentle Stream, and not pour down like a rapid Torrent.

There is a certain Latitude for the Variation of the Voice, extending to five or six Tones; so that the Speaker has room enough for varying his Voice, without striking on the two Extremes, by forming out of these five or six Notes a just and delightful Harmony.

Next, the Speaker must govern his Voice, in Regard of its Violence and Softness, with such a Moderation, that tho he force it not to that last Extremity, which hurts Nature in himself, as well as jars upon the Ear of the Hearer; nor languish, on the other hand, so far, as to fall into the lowest Degree of Softness and Effeminacy, he may yet give his *Pronunciation* more or less Vehemence, or Mildness, according to the different State of his Subject, and the Quality of his Speech. But in this, as well as in the *Swiftness* and *Slowness*, he must let the Subject and Passions of his Discourse be the Guide of his Judgment. Nor must he, when he would vary his Voice, start out of one Tone into another with too remarkable a Distinction of the latter from the former; but slide from one to the other with all the Moderation, Softness

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and Address in the World; else to those, who see you not, it will seem the Speech of some other Person.

Were I sure of such Readers, as could reduce these general Rules to particular Cases, I need not give my self the Trouble of descending to Particulars: But that there may be no Help wanting, that I am able to procure, I shall come to Rules for all the several Variations of the Voice, tho they might in some Measure be gather'd from what has been urg'd on this Head, both in what regards the Quality of the Subjects, the Nature of the Passions, the several Parts of the Discourse, the Figures made use of, and the Varieties of Words and Phrases.

I shall begin with the Subjects, of which there are several sorts; as, *Things Natural, the good or evil Actions of Men, the happy or unfortunate Events of Life, &c.* All which ought, as they are of a very different kind, to be spoken with as different an Air and Accent. In speaking of Things Natural, when you design only to make your Hearers understand you, there is no need of Heat or Motion, a clear and distinct Voice and Utterance is sufficient; because the informing the Understanding being here all the Business, the moving the Will and Passions has nothing to do. But if from this you rise to strike your Auditors with Admiration of the Wonders of Providence, in its *Beauty, Wisdom and Power*, you must do it in a grave Voice, and a Tone full of Admiration.

If your Discourse be on the Actions of Men, either as *just*, and *honourable*, which you would by Praise recommend to the Esteem or Imitation of those, who hear you; or *unjust* or *infamous*, which you would deter them from by Invective; the Voice must be adapted to the Quality of either; expressing the Just and Honest with a full, lofty, and noble Accent, with a Tone of Satisfaction, Honour, and Esteem; but the *unjust*, *infamous*, or *dishonourable*, with a strong, violent and passionate Voice, and a Tone of Anger, Disdain and Detestation.

If your Discourse be on the Events of human Life, those are some fortunate or happy, others unfortunate and miserable; you must likewise vary your Voice according to the Difference. When you congratulate the Fortunate, your Tone and Accent is brisk and chearful; when you condole the Unfortunate, the Accent must be sad and mournful.

As all the Subjects of Natural Things are not alike for their Grandeur, Beauty and Lustre, as the Heavens and Earth, the Planets and Herbs and Insects, and therefore not to be deliver'd with the same Voice, and State of Magnificence of *Pronunciation*; so are not the Actions and Events of human Life happy or unhappy, good or bad, of the same Import; a great and profligate Crime, or a barbarous and extraordinary Cruelty, are of greater Consequence, than a little and common Peccadillo. The Interest and Honour of Life is of greater Importance, than
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the Interest of many; the brave Actions of an illustrious Conqueror, of a MORDANT or an EUGENE, than those of a *Wat Tyler* or *Jack Straw*; the Destruction or Safety of a *whole Kingdom*, than the Loss or Gain of a *private Person*. So they require a different, and some a more vehement Accent and Pronunciation, than others; for a great Tone and Accent to trivial and common Occurrences, would be as ridiculous and absurd, as to speak in a plain, low, unconcern'd familiar Tone on the most noble and illustrious Affairs.

Tho these things perhaps, at first View, may seem more closely to relate to set Speeches, Oration, or Sermons, yet if the Actor will thoroughly consider them, they are of no less Concern to him, since whatever he speaks of on the Stage, will fall under some of these Heads, or, at least, these Subjects will often fall in his way to discourse of in Tragedy. But what follows will, beyond Contradiction, be of immediate Use to him, since it is directive of the Accents and Tones according to the Passions; and the Passions are or ought always to be in every Part of the *Tragic Scene*; and which, if more introduc'd by our Poets, would get them much more Reputation, as well as Money.

If the *Speaker* will but weigh these Subjects, I have just mention'd, well, and strongly imprint them in his Imagination, they will infallibly give such lively Ideas, as must raise in himself the Passions of *Joy* or *Sorrow*, of *Fear* or *Boldness*,

Boldness, of *Anger* or *Compassion*, of *Esteem* or of *Contempt*; and if these are fully and emphatically represented, and utter'd with that *Variety* of Tone and Cadence, which they ought to be, they cannot fail of moving the very same Affections in his Auditors.

When you are therefore to speak, you ought first with Care to consider the Nature of the Thing of which you are to speak, and fix a very deep Impression of it in your own Mind, before you can be thoroughly touch'd with it yourself, or able by an agreeable Sympathy to convey the same Passion to another. The String of a musical Instrument sounds according to the Force and Impulse of the Master; if the Touch be gentle and soft, the Sound is so too; if strong, the Sound is vivid and strong. It is the same in Speaking as in Music, if violent Passion produce your *Speech*, that will produce a violent Pronunciation; but if it arise only from a tranquil and gentle Thought, the Force and Accent of the Delivery will be gentle and calm; so that the Speaker ought first to fix the Tone and Accent of his Voice to every Passion, that affects him, be it of Joy or Sorrow, that he may by a sympathetic Force convey it to others.

Thus will he best express *Love* by a gay, soft and charming Voice; his *Hate*, by a sharp, fullen, and severe one; his *Joy*, by a full flowing and brisk Voice; his *Grief*, by a sad, dull and languishing Tone; not without sometimes interrupting the Continuity of the Sound with a Sigh.

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Sigh or Groan, drawn from the very inmost of the Bosom. A tremulous and stammering Voice will best express his *Fear*, inclining to Uncertainty and Apprehension. A loud and strong Voice, on the contrary, will most naturally show his *Confidence*, always supported with a decent Boldness, and daring Constancy. Nor can his Auditors be more justly struck with a Sense of his *Anger*, than by a Voice or Tone, that is sharp, violent and impetuous, interrupted with a frequent taking of the Breath, and short Speaking. Thus *Hotspur* in *Henry IV. of Shakespear*.

Hot. He said he would not ransom MORTIMER,
Forbad my Tongue to speak of MORTIMER,
But I will find him when he lies asleep,
And in his Ear I'll hollow MORTIMER.
Nay, I'll have a Starling shall be taught to
speak
Nothing but MORTIMER, and give it him,
To keep his Anger still in Motion.
Why look ye, I am whipt and scourg'd with
Rods,
Nettled and stung with Pismires, when I hear
Of his vile Politician Bullingbrook, &c.

And King Lear in the same Poet.

LEAR. Detested Kite, thou lyest!
My Train are Men of choice and rarest Parts,
That all Particulars of Duty know,
And

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And in the most exact Regard support
The Worship of their Names! O most small
Fault!

How ugly didst thou in CORDELIA show?
Which like an Engine wrench'd my Frame of
Nature

(Love,
From the first Place; drew from my Heart all
And added to the Gull. O LEAR! LEAR!
LEAR!

Beat at this Gate that let thy Folly in,
And thy dear Judgment out.—

And again immediately:

Hear! Nature hear! dear Godless hear!
Suspend thy Purpose if thou dost intend
To make this Creature fruitful,
Into her Womb convey Sterility;
Dry up in her the Organs of Increase,
And from her Dewgate Body never spring
A Babe to honour her. If she must teem,
Create her Child of Spleen, that it may give,
And be a thwart, disnatur'd Torment, like her.
Let it stamp Wrinkles in her Brow of Youth;
With cadent Tears fret Channels in her Cheeks;
Turn all her Mother's Pains and Benefits
To Laughter and Contempt; that she may feel
How sharper, than a Serpent's Tooth it is
To have a thankless Child.

Both these Speeches, with that of *Hotspur*,
must be spoke with an elevated Tone and enra-
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ged Voice, and the Accents of a Man all on Fire, and in a Fury next to Madness. The same may be said of *Othello* in the following Speech.

OTH. Villain ! Be sure thou prove my Love a Whore ;

Be sure of it ; give me the Ocular Proof,
Or by the Worth of my eternal Soul,
Thou hadst better have been born a Dog,
Than answer my wak'd Wrath —

If thou dost slander her, or torture me,
Never pray more ; abandon all Remorse
On Horrors Head, Horrors accumulate ;
Do Deeds to make Heav'n weep, all Earth
amaz'd,

For nothing canst thou to Damnation add
Greater than that.

Old Capulet in *Romeo and Juliet*.

How now !

How now ! chop Logic ? What's this ?

Proud ! and I thank you ! and I thank you not !

Thank me no Thankings ; nor proud me no
prouds ;

But settle your fine Joints 'gainst Thursday
next,

To go with Paris to St. Peter's Church,
Or I will drag thee in a Hurdle thither.

Out you Green-sickness Carrion ; out you Bag-
gage ;

Out you Tallow-Face.

And

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And before in the same Play.

Old CAP. He shall be endur'd.

What good Man Boy—I say he shall. Go to—

Am I the Master here or you ? Go to—

You'll not endure him ! God shall mend my Soul,
You'll make a Mutiny among the Guests !

You'll set cock-a-hoop ! you'll be the Man !

'Tis plain from the Expressions between short Sentences in both these Speeches, that the Actor should speak puffing and blowing, and take his Breath at every Point, as if his Passion had choak'd up his Delivery, and he could not for Anger and Choler utter more Words together. The same may be said of the first Speech of *Hotspur's*.

I cannot but here give a Description of a valiant Anger, or the Heat of a noble Warrior in Fight, out of *Shakespeare's Harry V.* because it gives a lively Image of all the Looks and Actions belonging to it.

HEN. But when the Blast of War blows in our
Ears,

Then imitate the Action of the Tyger.

Stiffen the Sinews, summon up the Blood ;

Disguise fair Nature with hard-favour'd Rage ;

Then lend the Eye a terrible Aspect ;

Let it pry through the Portage of the Head,

Like the Brass Cannon let the Brow o'erwhelm it,

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As

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*As fearfully as does a galled Rock
O'erhang and jutting his confounded Base,
Swell'd with the wild and wasteful Ocean.
Now set the Teeth, and stretch the Nostrils wide,
Hold hard the Breath, and bend up ev'ry Spirit
To its full Height.——*

If a Player would study this Speech, he would find such Looks and Motions would inspire him with more Life on the Representation of such a Character, than he would otherwise feel.

To move Compassion, the Speaker must express himself with a soft, submissive and pitiful Voice, as *Arthur* in *King John*, when *Hubert* shows him the King's Order for burning out his Eyes with a hot Iron.

*ARTH. Have you the Heart ? When your Head
did but ake,*

*I knit my Handkerchief about your Brows,
(The best I had, a Princess wrought it me)
And I did never ask it you again ;
And with my Hand at Midnight beld your Head,
And like the watchful Minutes to the Hour,
Still and anon cheer'd up the heavy Time,
Saying, What lack you ? and where lies your
Grief ?*

*Ob! what good Love may I perform for you ?
Many a poor Man's Son would have lain still,
And not have spoke a loving Word to you,
But you at your sick Service had a Prince, &c.
And*

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And *Anthony* in *Julius Caesar*, in the Beginning of his Speech on *Caesar's* Death.

*ANT. Friends, Romans, Country-men, lend me
your Ears,*

*I come to bury CÆSAR, not to praise him.
The Evil, that Men do, lives after them,
The Good is oft interred with their Bones.
So let it be with CÆSAR. The noble BRUTUS
Has told you, CÆSAR was ambitious.
If it were so, it was a grievous Fault,
And grievously has CÆSAR answer'd it.
Here under Leave of BRUTUS and the rest,
(For BRUTUS is an honourable Man,
So they are all, all honourable Men)
Come I to speak in CÆSAR's Funeral.
He was my Friend, faithful and just to me ;
But BRUTUS says he was ambitious,
And BRUTUS is an honourable Man, &c.*

'Tis plain, that *Arthur* spoke (if it were well acted) with a low Tone, and slender and humble Accents, pleading for his Life ; turning his Voice on such Tones, as were fittest to incline the Affections. The same may almost be said of *Anthony's* Speech, where he pleaded to the People to move their Pity first, and then to raise a stronger Passion, nay, even their Rage ; endeavouring first to melt them with a low and submissive Voice, and yet not without Passion, but that Passion is mingled with a great deal of

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Ten-

Tenderness, that shew'd a Mind sensibly touch'd and afflicted with the Oppression and Murther of his Friend,

I have read in a *French* Author, that *Cicero*, in his *Tusculan Questions*, tells us, that the whole Theatre was fill'd with Melancholly and Grief, when the Actor pronounc'd these Words, of the Ghost of an unbury'd Corps.

*Awake, O Mother ! break off your careless
Slumbers,
Think on your wretched Son, yet uninterr'd ;
Cover, oh ! cover soon his poor defenceless Body,
From wild devouring Beasts of Prey,
That soon my scatter'd Limbs and mangled Corps
May bear away, &c.*

Tho this was spoke with a deplorable Voice, yet to do this well, there are several Manners of softening the Voice necessary to express the different Qualities of the Words uttered, and the Characters of the Things mention'd in the Discourse ; which are much better convey'd to the Learner *vivâ voce*, than by Precept.

But to proceed to other *Passions*, and the Variations and Inflections of the Voice proper to them : If you were to give the Character of a great and brave *Hero*, with a visible Esteem of him, he must do it with a lofty and magnificent Tone, and a Voice noble as the Theme— As if you were speaking of the Earl of *Peterborough*,

His

His Merits are too PUBLIC to need a Recital, his Friends with Joy, and his Enemies with Regret confess, and all Europe is Witness to them with Amazement ; nothing can be said of his Courage or Conduct, of which there are not attested Proofs in the Hands of all Men : The Taking and Relief of BARCELONA, the Stony Cliffs of ALBOCAÇAR, the Surrender of NULES and MOLVEDRO, the Relief of VALENTIA, and the Reduction of that Kingdom, and the Promise of all SPAIN, by the particular Force of his own Genius, and various other Wonders, testified by that Royal Hand, into which his Valour and Conduct only put a SCEPTRE. What should I say of his Generosity, a heavenly Quality, and which must be visible in all the Actions of a Hero truly great ! What, I say, can I speak, equal to those noble Proofs, which remain on Record to all Posterity ? He was always liberal of his OWN TREASURE, but justly frugal of THAT of the PUBLIC ; when he took whole Countries almost without Men, and maintain'd Armies without Money. But what can all the Art of the best Orator say, equal to that unparallel'd Act of Beneficence to the PUBLIC, when his Lordship refus'd a Compensation for the Loss of his Baggage at HUETE ; where, with a Generosity peculiar to his Lordship, he transferred the Amends due to himself to the Advantage of the Public, by obliging the Inhabitants to furnish the Confederate Army with Magazines of Corn (sufficiently then wanted by them) large enough to suffice a Body of 30000 Men for two Months.
This

This is an Action, as unfashionable, as noble, and too likely to raise Envy, as well as Admiration, when the Public is the Bubble of private Interest, and Heroes have the Art of uniting their own Gain with the public Good.

Should this be spoke in a low and languishing Voice, it would be flat, cold and insipid, and altogether beneath the Honour of the Hero; but let them be spoke with that noble Accent, and be animated with a lofty Tone of Voice, agreeable to the Hero's Spirit and Magnificence, then they will not appear wholly unworthy of the Subject.

If a Man is to speak in Contempt of any one, he ought to express that Contempt in the scornful Tone, but without any Eagerness, Passion, or Violence of Voice, for those show Anger; and where there is Anger, justly speaking, there is not Contempt, the Object of which is suppos'd to be below our Anger, and unable to give us Pain. Any thing therefore of this Nature must be spoke calmly, and without any great Emotion; for if you speak on this Occasion with a passionate Voice, discovering a great Concern or Indignation, you plainly contradict your own Design, your Contempt being express'd in only Words, and not in Deeds; you must therefore always avoid this Error, when you treat any Man with Scorn and Derision, or expose the Folly of any ridiculous Argument or Thing; for to be vehement on a Trifle, would be like
using

using a Club against a Worm, which you might crush to pieces with your Foot.

But if you have had any Inhumanity, or barbarous Injustice offer'd you, of which you would complain, you must then speak after quite another manner; you must express your Grievance and your Affliction in a Tone more elevated and strong, proportioning your Passion and Vehemence of Voice to the Greatness of the Injustice done you; for to speak without Emotion in such a Case, is to persuade the Hearer, that you do not feel the Injury, for if you did, it would produce an Utterance much more outrageous. A Client coming to *Demosthenes*, on a Case of Assault and Battery, related his Story with so little Concern, that he plainly told him, he could not believe, that there was the least Reality in what he said; on which the Client replying with a loud Voice and agitated Spirit, *How! do you not believe me?* Ay now (says he) I believe you, this is the Voice of a Man, that has felt the Bastinado. And this Art of Speaking was so well known to the Ancients, that I find *Cicero* quoted on this Occasion, urging the Calmness and Indifference of *Callidius's* Pleading, where Heat and Concern were requir'd, as an Argument against the Reality of what he pleaded for his Client.

I cannot pass from this Head of varying the Voice according to the Passion you are to express, without this Rule, (which indeed will be of more use to the Bar and Pulpit, by Reason of the

the Length of their Discourse, than to the Stage, tho it be not unuseful even to that) when you come to cool on a violent Passion, and recover your self from a Transport, you ought to lower the Tone of your Voice in such a manner, as may express that Languidness of your Faculties and Speech, which the Stretch and Extent of your Passion has produc'd. And I would advise all those, who would speak with Beauty and Harmony in these various Inflections of the Voice, often to read with Caution and Attention aloud the best and most passionate Tragedies, and those Comedies, which may afford the greatest Variety, and such Dialogues as approach nearest to the Stile of the Dramatic Poets. For as a certain Author observes, nothing can be more serviceable to the Improvement of Action and Eloquence.

I must, by the way, add a Word or two, which the Stage has not much to do with, unless in such Speeches, as imitate Orations, or solemn and public Addresses, which have not a Right to have much place in the Drama; and that is, the Art of varying the Voice according to the several parts of the Oration, Pleading, Sermon, or Discourse, which you deliver.

You must therefore begin with a low and modest Voice, both in Regard of that Deference, which you should pay to the Auditors, and for the better Management of your Voice, taking with you the calm State of the Hearers, when you begin to speak, and to raise it by degrees up
to

to such a Height of Passion and Warmth, as may be necessary for your Purpose, and the Energy of the Subject; else first you would put your self out of Breath, for want of a prudent Conduct at your first start, so that you would be unable to return to that Moderation, which allows ways to heighten the rest and more important parts of your Speech to a degree above the Beginning.

On the other hand, I do not propose, that you should begin in so very low a Voice, as not to be heard by more, than a few, who stand or sit nearest to you; but tho you must speak even at first with a Voice so clear and distinct, that every individual Person of your Audience, that attends, may hear you without Difficulty or Trouble; yet it must contain nothing of that Force and Energy, which is proper to Passion. I am therefore only for having the Beginning insinuating, soft and easy, delivered in a Tone more low, and an Address more humble, than the other Parts of the Discourse.

This Rule, 'tis true, does admit of an Exception; for there are some Beginnings, which do not fall under it, which are those, which we call *abrupt*, as that of *Ajax* in *Ovid*.

*Before the Ships, ye Gods, then must I
plead?
And is ULISSES then compar'd to me?*

Nor

Nor has the Speaker any Occasion of raising his Voice to any great stretch of Passion in the *Proposition* or Narration of his Discourse, this being the Place of informing his Hearers in the Matters in Question; so that the Voice here has only need of being a degree higher, than in the Beginning: But he must take Care to be very distinct and articulate, it being the Ground-work of the Whole, and the Force and Vigour of the following Reasons and Arguments taking all their Life from hence; it ought therefore to be perfectly heard and understood, or the Foundation being defective, the Fabric must fall to the Ground. The Difference of Actions and Events in the *Narration* must vary the manner of the Delivery; yet this is not the proper part of the Speech, for the Contention of Voice, which must be chiefly refin'd for the other parts: For the greatest Stress of the Discourse lies in confirming our own Arguments, and refuting those of the Adversary. When the Speaker comes to the summing up the whole, after the Confutation, he ought to make a little Pause, and begin it again with a lower Tone, and a different Accent from the last Cadence of his Voice; then raising himself, he should break out into a louder Voice, and carry it on to the End with more Gaiety, Magnificence, and Triumph of Pronunciation, which would seem born of his Assurance in the Justice of his Cause, now sufficiently made good, and the Conviction and Satisfaction of his Hearers in that and his

In-

Integrity. And then he should conclude with Joy and Satisfaction.

But to omit none of those Helps to this Art, which I have been able to meet with in my little Reading, I must add a few Words, which will assist in this varying the Voice, a Quality so necessary for a Speaker of any kind in *Public*, and that is, by running through those Modes of Speech, or Manners of expressing the Mind, which I find call'd Figures of Speech, or *Rhetoric*; which some call the Lights of Speech, deriving to it both Grace and Variety, there being so peculiar an Air, Ornament and Novelty proper to each, that they are spoken with a different Tone from the rest of the Discourse. I begin therefore with that, which is call'd an EXCLAMATION.— As it would be ridiculously flat and insipid to pronounce this with no louder a Voice and more passionate Accent, than the rest of the Discourse; so the very Nature of the thing gives you the Reason of it; as, *Oh Horror! O unheard of Cruelty! unequal'd Impiety! to stand in fear neither of Man nor God! What a Feast was that of THYESTES! Oh! monstrous Barbarity! to feed the Father with the Flesh of his own Son! to make the Parents Bowels the Grave of his own Child! Well might the fiery Chariot of the Sun turn back, and not give Light to so bellish a Deed, &c.* To speak these Words without an Elevation of Voice, would be to make them flat and insipid, and to rob them of their Force and Energy.

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The same exclamatory way of Speech must be used in Swearing, or a solemn Denunciation, Oath or Vow ; as, that which I find quoted of *Demosthenes*, in his Oration for *Ctesiphon*, which was, it seems, much admir'd by the Ancients. In that Point you have not fail'd, no — I swear by our great Ancestors, who won the Battle of MARATHON with so much Hazard and Bravery ! by those, who maintain'd the Fight at PLATEA with so much Generosity and Glory ! by those, who contended with so much Courage in the Sea-Fight of SALAMIS ! by those, who so bravely fell at ARTEMISIUM ! and by all those gallant Warriors, whose Deeds merited public Monuments with all the Ensigns of Honour, Fortune and Fame !

It cannot be doubted but *Demosthenes*, who had study'd Action and Utterance with so much Application, spoke this with that Elevation of Tone, and Contention of Voice, as was necessary to touch his Hearers with Warmth, and not chill them with a calm Indifference of Pronunciation.

There is a Figure, which comes, or may come often, into the Speeches of the Pulpit, which is the Introduction of some other Person speaking, which they call a *Prosopopæia*, and this has been often us'd on the Stage, in Comedies especially, as in the former Instance I have given of *Melantha*, if that ought not rather to be referr'd to a *Dialogism*. That the Person ought to change his Voice, who introduces this,

is

is evident, and that by the Character of him he introduces, that he may shew, that it is not he but the Person introduc'd, that speaks. For Instance : If a grave, venerable old Man be thus brought in, the Force of the Voice, and the manner of Utterance must be grave and severe, and so answerable to the Person ; and thus if a young Rake or *Debauchee* be introduc'd, it must be loose and effeminate.

When you address your Speech to any Man or thing by way of *Apostrophe*, you ought to consider your own Design, and the Circumstances of him that you address to. If you direct your Discourse to any thing inanimate, you must raise your Voice above the ordinary and common Tone, as to one deaf, or who want their perfect Hearing ; as, *Oh ! sacred Thirst of Gold, how you constrain our mortal Breasts, &c. Ye Walls ! ye Beds ! ye conscious Pillows tell, &c.* Thus if you address your self to Heaven, you must do it in a higher Strain and loftier Tone of Voice, than if you were speaking to Men, who are here on a Level with you ; *To thee, O Jove ! I make my last Appeal. Ye Stars, ye wand'ring Planets of the Night, and thou bright Sun the Source and Prince of Light, I call you all to witness my true Fire, &c.*

When you bring in two Persons in a *Dialogue* talking together, by way of Question and Answer, you must certainly change your Voice by turns, as if two Men, or a Man and Woman, were talking together ; of which, that which

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I have now twice already mention'd will be a just Example.

Upon all these Conferences and Dialogisms, we must always observe to pronounce the Answer with a different Tone from the last Cadence of the foregoing Question or Objection.

When the Speaker presses his Adversary close, and insists upon the same Arguments still, pressing it home upon him several ways, over and over again, 'till he seems ashamed of it, and confounded at the Repetition, his Voice must be *brisk*, pressing and insulting, where he lays the main Stress of what he aims at—— My Author furnishing me with so good an Example of this from *Cicero*, when he defends *Ligarius* against *Tubero*, who accus'd him to *Cæsar*, as having been in *Pompey's Army* at *Pharsalia*; and I choose it rather than any Instance from the *Drama*, because that Speech is famous for having made *Cæsar* drop his Papers, and declare himself vanquish'd by Eloquence, when he had decreed, that he would not forgive *Ligarius* before he came to hear him—— *What, TUBERO, did you in the Battle of PHARSALIA with your Sword drawn? At whose Breast did you aim the Point? What was the Sense of your Weapon? the Design of your Arms? and the Intention of your Appearance there? Where were your Thoughts, your Desires, your Wishes, your Expectations? What meant those Eyes, that Zeal, that Passion, that Hand, that Weapon? But I urge this Matter too hard upon him. The Youth is ashamed, and*
in

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in Confusion at the Conviction. I'll say no more.

When you avow your Liberty of Speaking without Fear, let the Danger be what it will, which the Rhetoricians call *Parrhasia*, the Voice must be full and loud, exalted with Confidence of Success or Boldness, not to be daunted with any Apprehension. Nor can I omit an Example of this likewise from the same Orator, because it is excellent and pathetic. *Oh! Clemency most admirable! and worthy of eternal Praise, Honour, and Memory! CICERO has the Boldness to confess himself guilty before CÆSAR of a Crime, for which he cannot suffer another to be wrongfully accus'd; nor is he under any Apprehensions from the Resentment of his Judge on this Account. Behold how undaunted I am, Sir, in the Confidence of your Goodness; behold the great Lights of Generosity and Wisdom, which from your Aspect favour me in what I say, I will raise my Voice to a Loudness, if I can, sufficient to make all the People of Rome hear what I say! The War now being not only began, but almost ended, I went over to your Enemy's Camp freely, voluntarily, on my own Choice, before this finishing Blow put an end to it at PHARSALIA.*

In a Gradation or Climax, the Voice must with the Sentence climb up by several Degrees of the Sentence to the Period; as, *Luxury is born in the City, out of Luxury there is a Necessity that Avarice should arise, from Avarice must*
K 2
Spring

*Spring audacious Boldness, which must beget
all manner of Wickedness and Mischief.*

*MARS saw the Nymph, and seeing did desire,
And having wish'd, he quench'd his amorous
Fire.*

*The Eye the dangerous Poison soon let in,
And by the Eye the Heart began to sin,
Till the whole Body did the Crime complete, &c.*

The *Suppression* or *Apopsiopefis*, is a suppressing of what might be farther urg'd; and in this the Speaker must lower his Voice a Tone or two, and pronounce the foregoing Words, that introduce it with the highest Accent; as, *Æolus* in *Virgil*.

Which I —

But first the raging Floods, 'tis fit that I compose.

In a *Subjection*, where several Questions are put, and an Answer subjoin'd to ev'ry one of them: He that speaks must vary his Voice, by giving the Question one Tone, and the Answer another; either by asking the Question higher, and giving the Answer lower, or the contrary, according to the Place where he would have the Force lie.

In the *Opposition* or *Antitbesis*, the Contraries must be distinguish'd by giving one a louder Tone, than the other; as, *Truth breeds us Enemies, Flattery Friends. The Romans hate*
PRI-

PRIVATE Luxury, but love PUBLIC Magnificence.

Repetition or *Anadiplosis*, which is a Repetition of the same Word, and the Speaker must give the Word in the second place a louder and stronger Sound; than in the first place.

*Iⁿ Harmonious Nine, to GALLUS tune my Song,
To GALLUS, whose Love, &c.
And yet he lives, not only lives, but comes
Into the very Senate-House.*

There is another Repetition, where the same Word is more, than once repeated, either in the Beginning of several Sentences, or in the several Clauses of the same Sentence, where the Word must be sounded always in the same Tone, but differently from the other Parts of the Discourse. *Does not the Nightly Guards of the Palace touch you at all? Not at all the Watches of the City? Not at all the Peoples Fear? Not at all the Agreement of all honourable Men? Not at all this fortify'd Place of the Senate-Meeting, &c. You lament the Loss of three Roman Armies, MARK ANTONY destroyed them: You resent the Death of so many noble Citizens, MARK ANTONY was their Death; the Authority of the Senate is invaded, MARK ANTONY invades it.*

As for Sentences, some are very short, and those not spoken in a Breath, would be maim'd; there are others, which are something longer,
K 3 yet

yet withal do not exceed the Power of an easy Pronunciation, in one Breath if you can ; for a Period so pronounc'd, sounds rounder and handsomer, and appears with more Beauty and Force, than it would do with several Breathings. To this End you must endeavour by Practice to attain a long Wind, as *Demosthenes* did by the Instructions of *Naoptolemus* the Actor. But when the Period is long, you ought to fetch your Breath at the several Members of the Periods, that is to say, after two Points, or a *Semi-colon*, or at least after a *Comma*, for to do it otherwise or oftner, would be extremely disagreeable. For nothing is more intolerable and clownish, than to break off in the middle of a Word or Expression. 'Tis proper to make a Pause at the End of every Period ; but it must be short on those, that are short, and longer on those, which are of greater Extent.

When you have a Period, that requires a great Contention and Elevation of Voice, you must manage your Voice with the greater Moderation on those, which precede it ; but by employing your whole Force upon those, you are oblig'd to speak this more important one more languidly, which requires more Vigour and Vehemence. This was a Beauty, which was always observ'd by the two famous Actors of the Romans, *Roscus* and *Æsopus*. For in speaking these Verses,

*The noble Warriors generous Choice and Buckler,
Is Honour, not the Plunder of the Field.*

he

he did not pronounce them with all that Vehemence of Action and Utterance, that some now would, but simply, and with Moderation, that he might exert himself in this following Exclamation, which naturally requir'd more Force and Emotion of Admiration and Astonishment.

*What is't I see ! all arm'd, all arm'd be comes !
E'en to your Sacred Temples ! &c.*

Nor did *Æsopus*, with the utmost Contention of Voice, say — *Where shall I find Relief, and whither fly ?* but more softly and languidly, and without any immoderate Action ; the Force of which he reserv'd for the following Exclamation — *O ! my Father ! O ! my Country ! O ! House of PRIAM.* — which his Voice would not have supply'd without that Care. Thus the Painters represent some parts of a Picture in Shades and Distances, to heighten the rest with greater Light.

But tho I have said something of Sentences in their several Kinds, yet I must add a Hint of two of Words likewise. — In them you must regard the common Pronunciation of Custom, and the Conversation of those, who speak well ; avoiding the ill Accent, and Pronunciation of the several Dialects of the different Countries, either in the Quantities of Syllables, or the Sound of the Vowels, either longer or shorter, or broader or narrower ; and you must avoid

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these

these Faults, not only in the Country People, but of those of the City and Court it self, where Affectation often destroys the genuine and just Pronunciation. Next remember to pronounce emphatical Words with an Emphasis, Force and Distinction; as, *certainly, assuredly, infallibly, undoubtedly, necessarily, absolutely, expressly, manifestly*, which are Words of a very strong and positive Pronunciation. Words of Praise and Extolling; as, *admirable, incredible, incomparable, ineffable, inestimable, glorious, glittering, pompous, triumphant, illustrious, heroic, august, majestic, adorable*, which are Terms of Honour, and must be pronounc'd in a magnificent Tone. Or Words, that express our Dispraise or Detestation; as, *cruel, hateful, wicked, detestable, abominable, execrable, monstrous*, and such like, are all to be pronounc'd with a passionate and loud Voice. Words that complain and lament; as, *unfortunate, miserable, fatal, mournful, pitiful, deplorable, lamentable, sorrowful*, require a melancholy Tone and Accent. There must be a more, than common Stress on Words of Quantity; as, *grand, high, sublime, profound, long, large, innumerable, eternal*; as well as on Words of Universality; as, *all the World, generally, every where, always, never*. Here the Pronunciation must be grave, and of an high Accent. As for Terms of Lessening, or Contempt and Slight; as, *pitiful, insignificant, little, low, mean, despicable, feeble, &c.* they must be pronounc'd with a very low, lessening, abject Voice, and

and an Accent of the greatest Scorn and Disdain. To speak otherwise in all these Cases, than I have laid down, would be ridiculous, and to speak so will effect that Variation of Voice, which is so necessary to finish a complete Speaker. In fine, remember to pronounce all your Words with an audible Voice, especially those, which conclude a Period; which is chiefly to be taken Care of, when the Period ends with Syllables of a weak and dull Sound in themselves.

I have thus run through the whole Art of *Acting* and *Speaking*, or rather, as *Shakespeare* calls it, of ACTION and UTTERANCE, in which I have had a just Regard to the PULPIT and the BAR, as well as to the STAGE; in Complaisance to which, I have chosen to give Examples rather oftentimes from *Oratory*, than from the *Drama*, since the *Actor* may learn his just Lessons from that former, as from the latter. I have, in short, laid down such Rules, as if thoroughly consider'd, and reduc'd judiciously to Practice, will form the *Gesture* with that Beauty, as to strike the Eye with Wonder and Pleasure; and teach the Tongue to utter with that Grace and Harmony, that the Ear will be equally ravish'd, and both convey so sensible a Delight to the Mind, that the Success will be much more glorious in the *Pulpit* and on the Stage, than is at present found from the Endeavours of either. I confess, I know not whether *Oratory* be at all useful at the *Bar*, where *Evidence, Proofs, and Methods of Court*, generally prevail, or where Justice

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Justice and Equity ought to carry the Point. Besides, the Subjects, which are furnish'd at the Bar, are in themselves *low* and mean, and afford nothing great and awful, as both the *Pulpit* and the *Stage* always do, or ought to do.

I have given you a Collection of the natural Significations of several *Gestures*, and shown how Nature expresses her self in the several Emotions, which she feels; I have shewn you how Art improves these *Gestures*, and on what Occasions they are proper, and how to make them graceful; I have likewise shewn you how you are to model your Voice to make your Utterance harmonious, shewn the Defects of *Voice* or *Tone*, and its Beauties and Varieties, and laid down Rules how you may avoid that intolerable Vice of *Monotony*, or always sounding the same Note on all Occasions, without any or with very little Variation. Thus I have run through the *Passions*, the Figures of Diction, Sentences, nay, and even Words; each of which afford infinite Variety to the Voice, if the Student will make it his Business to understand and to practise them.

I shall therefore now conclude with those Qualities and Qualifications of a *complete Actor*, which however difficult to attain they may seem, are yet sufficiently, from what I have said, proved to be necessary.

He ought, therefore, to understand History, Moral Philosophy, Rhetoric, not only as far as it relates to Manners and the Passions, but every

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very other Part of it, at least as far as it teaches the Rules of Elocution. He ought not to be a Stranger to *Painting* and *Sculpture*, imitating their Graces so masterly, as not to fall short of a *Raphael Urbin*, a *Michael Angelo*, &c. But that which is the most necessary Quality, that a Player ought to cultivate, which should be open, and much at Command; and the Praise *Thucydides* gave *Pericles*, he should endeavour to obtain, that is, *to know what is fit, and to express it*. He must know how to give the proper Graces to every Character he represents, those of a *Prince* to a *Prince*, those of a *Merchant* to a *Merchant*, and so of all others; for generally speaking, let the Part be what it will, the Person, Mien, Action, Look, is the same, that is, that of the Player, not of the Person represented. He should have farther a penetrating Wit and clear Understanding; he must also be a good Critic in the Art of the Stage, I mean, in the Poetical Performances, that he may choose the Good, and reject the Ill.

Besides these Qualifications of Mind, his Body ought to have several, that are not very common in our Days. He should not be too tall, nor too low and dwarfish, but of a moderate Size; neither over-fleshy, which is prodigious, nor over-lean, like a Skeleton. Tho this is a thing so little regarded by our Managers or Audience, yet I find, that it was of Consequence in the nicer Nations of Antiquity, as those Instances may show, which *Lucian* tells you, were of a People,

ple, who were no dull Observers. — “ The
 “ Citizens of *Antioch* (says he) are most inge-
 “ nious, and much addic’d to the *Stage*, and
 “ so given to remark what is said and done,
 “ that no Passage escapes them ; seeing, there-
 “ fore, on a Time a *little short* Fellow enter,
 “ and act *Hector*, they cry’d out with one Voice,
 “ This is *Astyanax*, but where is *Hector* ? An-
 “ other time, a great tall long Fellow acting
 “ *Capaneus*, attempting to scale the Walls of
 “ *Thebes*, they told him, he might mount the
 “ Walls without a Ladder ; at another Time a
 “ big and corpulent Dancer endeavouring to rise
 “ high, we have need, cry’d they, to under-
 prop the Stage, &c.

A Player, therefore, should be of an active,
 pliant and compacted Body, which may be im-
 prov’d by learning to dance, fence and vault.
 With these Qualities and Qualifications, and a
 thorough Knowledge of what I have written,
 he may justly be allow’d a complete Player.
 But before I put an End to this Discourse, I shall
 give an Instance or two of Affectation and Over-
 acting from *Lucian*. “ I once (says he) saw a
 “ Dancer (or Actor, for in his Sense they are
 “ the same) who tho before of a good Reputa-
 “ tion for his Art, I know not by what mis-
 “ chance, disgrac’d himself by Over-Action. —
 “ For being to represent *Ajax* distracted after
 “ his being vanquish’d by *Ulysses*, he acted not a
 “ Madness, but was himself distemper’d. For
 “ he rent the Garment of one of those, who
 “ stamp’d

“ stamp’d in Iron Shoes, and snatching a Cor-
 “ net from one of the Fiddlers, struck *Ulysses*,
 “ who stood by insulting on his Victory, such
 “ a Blow on his Head, that if his Helmet had
 “ not sav’d him, and born off the Violence of
 “ the Stroke, he had perished, and fall’n prostrate
 “ at his Feet.

“ Tho the whole Theatre of Spectators, as
 “ mad as *Ajax*, stamp’d, shouted, and shook their
 “ Cloaths ; for the Rout and Ideots, who knew
 “ not Decorum, nor were able to distinguish
 “ false Action from true, took this as a great
 “ Expression of Fury ; and the better bred and
 “ more understanding, tho they blush’d at what
 “ was done, yet shew’d not their Dislike, as
 “ much as by their Silence, but colour’d the
 “ Actor’s Folly by their Commendations, tho
 “ they saw not the Madness of *Ajax* acted, but
 “ that of the Representer. So that not yet
 “ contented, the Gentleman play’d a Prank much
 “ more ridiculous ; for descending into the Pit,
 “ he sat down betwixt two, who had been
 “ Consuls, who were much afraid of themselves,
 “ lest this frantic Actor should take one of them
 “ for a Sheep. Which Passage some extoll’d,
 “ others derided ; others suspected, that his O-
 “ ver-Imitation had cast him into a real Mad-
 “ ness. Others report, that after he came to
 “ himself, he was so ashamed of what he had
 “ done, that upon the true Apprehension of his
 “ Disgrace, he fell sick for Grief, and plainly
 “ profess’d it. For those of his Faction desiring
 “ him

“ him to act *Ajax* over again to them, *When I come next on the Stage*, said he; *in the mean time, 'tis enough for me once to have plaid the Madman*. But his chief Discontent sprung from an *Antagonist* or *Anti-Actor*, who represented *Ajax* raving so gracefully and discreetly, that he gain'd a great Applause.

Tho, I fear, I may have tir'd you with all these Rules and Observations, which immediately relate to the Actors; yet I cannot conclude without saying something of our Theatrical Dancing and Musick, as being by *Aristotle* himself allow'd part or an Appendix of the Stage. Under the last Head of Music, I shall presume to say something of *Opera's*, which have of late been dangerous Rivals of the Drama, tho clogg'd with many adventitious or accidental Absurdities more, than the very *Opera* consider'd in it self contains, tho those are so very many and very visible, that they exclude it from the rational Diversions.

I am sensible, that what I am going to say may look like a Condemnation of my own Practice, when I had the Management of the House, and that is in regard of good Dancing. Yet considering, that I was oblig'd, on Account of Self-Defence, to enter into those Measures, I hope what I say here cannot be look'd on as a Deviation from my own Principle; or if it be, I may be allow'd to alter my Opinion in things of this Nature, when we find great Divines do the same every Day in Matters of far greater Importance. I

I know very well, that in this I shall run against the Stream of the Town, I mean of those, who generally make up the Audience; but then I consider, that I am an old Man, and have contracted such a Value for the *Drama*, by so long a Conversation with it, that I would willingly leave for a Legacy to my Successors, a Stage freed from those intolerable Burthens, under which it groans at present by the Depravity of the Taste of the Audience, which as it has risen in Dignity has (I am afraid) fal'n in Purity and Judgment.

About an hundred Years ago, there were about five or six Play-houses at a Time in this Town, tho at that Time much less extended and populous, than at present, all frequented and full; and the Players got Estates, tho the Stage was yet in its Infancy, rude and uncultivated, without Art in the Poet, or in the Decorations, and supported by the *Lower Sort of People*, and yet these LOWER SORT OF PEOPLE discover'd a natural Simplicity and good Taste, when they were pleas'd and diverted with a Drama so naked, and unassisted by any foreign Advantage.

But in our Times (forgive so bold a Truth) the People of Figure, who in Reason might have been expected to be the Guardians and Supporters of the noblest and most rational DIVERSION, that the Wit of Man can invent, which at once instructs and transports the Soul, were the first, nay, I may say, the only People, who conspir'd its Ruin, by prodigal Subscriptions for
Squeak-

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Squeaking Italians, and cap'ring *Monseurs*; and the more infamously to distinguish their poor and mean Diversions from those more noble of the Public, they would have no Play at all mingled with them, lest the World should think, that they pay'd any Deference to Poetry, Wit, and Sense; or that their Satisfaction and Delight reach'd farther, than their Eyes and Ears. But what was yet worse, their Taste was so far sunk, that they were pleas'd with what shock'd a nice Ear, and what could not divert a curious Eye. For first, the best of *French Dancers* are without Variety; their Steps, their Posture, their Risings are perpetually the same UNMEANING Motion; a *French Dancer* being at best but a graceful Mover, full of a brisk and senseless Activity, unworthy the Eye of a Man of Sense, who can take no Pleasure worth attending, in which the Mind has not a considerable Share.

Were our modern Dancers like the *Mimes* and *Pantomimes* of the *Romans*, (tho even those grew into Esteem in the Wain and Corruption of that Empire) our Dotage on them might have been thought more excusable; since one of them, as I have shewn from *Lucian*, by the Variety of his Motions and Gesticulations, would represent a whole History, with all the different Persons concerned in it so plainly and evidently, that every body, that saw him, perfectly understood what he meant.

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In this indeed it might be pretended, that there was something to strike the Mind, and rationally entertain it, every Action depending on the other, and all directed to one End. But to be fond of our modern Dancing is still to be Children, and fond of a Rattle, that makes perpetually the very same Noise. All that could be said of *Ballon*, (or any other Dancer of more Reputation) is, that his Motion was easy and graceful, the Figures he threw his Body into, fine, and that he rose high with Freedom and Strength; or, in short, that he was an active Man. But is that, or would indeed the *Roman Pantomimes*, be a sufficient Ballance for the Loss of the *Drama* to any Man of common Sense?

But before the Depravity of the *Roman State*, nay, ev'n in *Greece*, Dancing was esteem'd, and always perform'd in their Plays, either Tragedies or Comedies; having those, which were proper and peculiar to each, and not to be used promiscuously in both: nay, we find, that ev'n the *Pantomime* Art was in great Perfection, in which *Telefis* the Dancer was so great a Master, that when he danc'd the seven Captains besieging of *Thebes*, he set before the Eyes of the Spectators, by his Gesticulations and Motions all that they perform'd in that Siege.

Nay; Dancing was there in so much Esteem, that *Socrates* being reflected on for frequenting too much the *Egyptian* Performances of that kind, reply'd, that Dancing contain'd all Musical

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cal Exercises; and the ancient Poets *Thespis*, *Cratinus*, *Phrynicius*, &c. were call'd Dancers, not only because they added Dances to their Fables or Plays, but also because they taught to dance. Nay, 'tis certain, that the Art of Dancing was so much in Esteem in Greece, that *Pindar* calls *Apollo* himself the *Dancer*. But then we must remember, that all these Dances contain'd not only an extraordinary Exercise for the Body, but an Instruction to the Mind, both in the Subject represented by the Figures in the Art of War, which was taught by the *Pyrrhic* and other Dances.

For this Reason I suppose, the Poets assign'd Dancing to Children, (except in the more robust Performances of Warlike Dances) and the Figures of the Dances always express'd the things, that were sung by the Voice, preserving always in them something manly and great, and they were call'd *Hyporchemata*, as it were, Dances subservient to the Voice; and therefore they always condemn'd those, whose Steps and Figures did not express or correspond to the Voice. 'Tis likewise plain from *Lucian*, that the *Mimes* and *Pantomimes* of his Time express'd in Figures what they sung, whether the Rape of *Proserpina*, the Loves of *Mars* and *Venus*, or any other of the Poetical Fables: For in his Enumeration of the Faults of Dancers, he says—"There are many, who out of Ignorance (for 'tis impossible, that all should be knowing) commit great Solecisms in Dancing, such, I mean, whose

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" whose Actions are irregular, and not to the Tune, as they say, when the Foot says one thing, and the Instrument another: Others keep Proportion to the Music, but their Presentments, as I have often seen, are disproportion'd to the right Time. For you shall have one, who endeavouring to act the Birth of *Jupiter*, and *Saturn's* eating his Children, dances the Sufferings of *Thyestes*, by reason of the Affinity of the Fables. Another being to act *Semele* burnt with Lightning, likens *Glauce* to her born long after, not enough regarding the Song, that is sung.

But I shall call into my Assistance on this Subject a Manuscript lately left with me by a Friend, better acquainted with these Matters, than I can pretend with all my modern Helps to be.

These Dances, says a certain Author, were in Imitation of those things, which the Words of the Songs express'd. One of them is thus describ'd by *Xenophon*, in his *Expedition of Cyrus*, as perform'd before them at a Feast with *Scutbes* the *Thracian*.

" After we had (says he) perform'd our *Libations* to the Gods, and sung the *Pæana*, (that is, in plain *English*, after we had said Grace) first, some *Thracians* rose up, and arm'd danc'd to the Flute, rising lightly and high, waving and brandishing their Swords, till two of them to the Tune dealing Blows to each other, that when one of them fell artificially down, they all imagining that he was wounded, shriek'd out

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" aloud.

“ aloud. Immediately he, who seem’d to have
 “ wounded him, as he lies there spoils him of
 “ his Arms, and singing the Praises of *Sitalcas*,
 “ makes his Exit. The Rest of the *Thracians*
 “ then take up the suppos’d dead, (who indeed
 “ had felt no harm) and bear him off. After
 “ this enter’d the *Magneſians* and the *Œnians*,
 “ and perform’d the Dance call’d *Semlutes* with
 “ their Arms, which is thus.

“ A Plough-man with his Arms by his Sides
 “ drives in the Oxen and Plough, and sows his
 “ Corn, turning every Minute from one ſide to
 “ the other, as if he were afraid, or apprehen-
 “ ſive of ſome Danger. Preſently a Robber ap-
 “ proaches, and the Plough-man handling his
 “ Arms, fights the Robber, (putting himſelf be-
 “ twixt him and his Plough) adapting all the
 “ Motions of his Body to the Notes of the
 “ Flutes; but in the End the Robber vanquiſh-
 “ ing the Plough-man, binds him, and bears
 “ him off; and ſometimes, on the contrary, the
 “ Plough-man the Robber.

There were indeed many Kinds of Dancing
 among the Ancients, which ſome, according to
Homer, reduce to three; the firſt was call’d *Cu-
 biſtic*, which *Xenophon* and *Suidas* ſay was an
 Art of Dancing on the Head, whiſt they acted
 various Motions and Geſticulations with their
 Hands and Legs. The ſecond ſort was call’d
Sphæriſtic, or the *Play at Ball*, becauſe they
 danc’d playing with a *Ball*, all the while they
 kept Time to the Muſic. The third kind was

plainly call’d *Orcheſis* or *Dancing*. *Plato*, in
 his Book of Laws, divides Dancing into *Mili-
 tary*, Peaceable or proper for Peace, and the
 Medium betwixt both. That he call’d Milita-
 ry, which imitated by riſing on high, or falling
 back, or inclining to any ſide, the Assaults of
 Enemies, their Attacks, Eviſions, and Defences,
 and reſembled by various Figures the *Darters*,
 or thoſe, who fight with cloſe Weapons; and
Plato was ſo fond of this ſort of Dance, that
 he ordains in his Republic, that ſome ſhould be
 paid by the *Public* to teach it to both Men and
 Women; believing, that by this alone there
 would be a very great Help obtain’d towards
 the Perfection of military Diſcipline. In Con-
 firmation of which we find, that the *Lacedemo-
 nians* receiv’d Dancing among their Exerciſes as
 uſeful to War.

It would ſwell this Diſcourſe too much, to
 pick all, that the Authors yet extant could fur-
 niſh on the ſeveral Heads of theſe two Diviſions
 of Dancing, that is, of *Homer* and *Plato*; I ſhall
 therefore keep wholly to the laſt of the former,
 that is, the *Orcheſis* or *Simple Dancing*, deferring
 to ſpeak of the *Cubiſtic* and *Sphæriſtic* till ſome
 other time.

Ariſtotle, in the Beginning of his Poetics,
 having ſaid, that all the Parts and Kinds of Po-
 etry agree in this, that they are all Imitations;
 he divides Imitations into divers Kinds, or ways
 of Imitation, as by *Harmony*, or *Verſe*, &c. or
 into Degrees, as *better*, or *like*, or *worſe*; or
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into divers Modes or Forms and Manners, as Action, or Introduction, or Narration, or assuming the Person of others, or not ; and proceeding, he says, this of Dancers, that they imitate by Number alone without Harmony, for they imitate the Manners, Passions and Actions by the numerous Variety of Gesticulation. Hence it appears, that Dancing was nothing else but a certain Faculty of imitating the Manners, Passions, and Actions of Men, by the Motions and Gestures of the Body, made by a certain Artifice, Number and Reason. For when he had told us in the seventh Book of his Politics, that there was nothing in Nature, which more fully express'd the Similitude of things, than *Number* and *Song*, he justly adds, that Dancers in the Imitations of Actions make use of *Number*. How this Imitation could be effected by numerous Motions, *Plutarch* in his fifteenth Problem expresses this most clearly of all Men after *Aristotle* ; who tells us, that Dancing had three Parts, the *Bearing*, *Figure*, and *Indication* ; because all Dancing consists of Motions, Habitudes, or States of Body, and Pauses, as Harmony of Tones and Intervals, or Stops, he says, the *Bearing* or *Lation* was only the representative moving of any Passion or the Actions ; but the *Figure* the Habitude or State of Body and Disposition, in which the Motion or *Bearing* ended ; for the Dancers pausing near the Figure or Image of *Apollo*, *Pan*, or *Bacchus*, their Bodies being form'd to their Likeness, continu'd

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elegantly a-while in that Posture. But that the Indication was not properly an Imitation, but a Declaration of some certain thing, either of the Earth, or the Heavens, or something else relating to either, express'd by numerous and regular Motions. As the Poets, when they imitate make use of fictitious sometimes, or metaphorical Words ; but when they inform or instruct, employ only those, which are proper. In like manner, the Dancers, when they imitate make use of Figures, and Habitudes, or States of the Body ; but when they declare or inform, they employ the things themselves with the foresaid Indications. So that Art or Faculty of Dancing, according to *Plato*, *Aristotle*, and *Plutarch* consists in Imitation, made only by Motion ; and the Dancers themselves do nothing else but imitate the Manners and Affections, by moving themselves in Number, and using Gesticulations in Order, by *Bearings* or *Lations*, or Figures ; or declare by Indications or Information ; or else at once declare to all the Manners, or represent to all at once the Manners, Passions and Actions of Men. Hence it was that *Simonides*, with a great deal of Reason, us'd to call *Dancing a silent Poesie*, and *Poesie a speaking Dancing*.

But *Plutarch*, even in his Time, complains, that True Dancing was much degenerated from Music, to which it was join'd, and fallen from that Celestial Art, which it once was, into the tumultuous and unlearned Theatres held a most

absolute and tyrannic Sway ; and there is no Man of Knowledge but is sensible, from that Time to our Days, how much more it is corrupted.

It is not sufficiently known, who first taught Men this sort of Dancing, unless you will allow what *Theophrastus* tells us in *Athenæus*, that *Andro*, a Flutist of *Catana*, first added to his Music apt and proper and elegant Motions ; whence the Ancients call'd Dancing *Sicilising*, *Catana* being a City of *Sicily*. After whom *Cleophantes* of *Thebes* and *Æschylus* invented many Figures of Dancing, which were call'd by a *Sicilian* Name *Balliomous*, as *Athenæus* insinuates from the Authority of *Epicharmus* ; and from this Name *Hieronymus Mercurialis* derives the *Italian* Name of *Balli*, as our *Balls* seems to be deriv'd from that.

Dances were perform'd to the Sound of Wind Music, or the Lute, or any other Instrumental or Vocal Music. But *Homer*, *Plato*, *Xenophon*, *Aristotle*, *Strabo*, *Plutarch*, *Gallia*, *Pollux*, and *Lucian*, give an Account of an infinite Number of various Kinds of Dancing. Those that were in most Esteem deriv'd their Names either from the Countries where they were invented, or in great Request, or from the Inventor or Manner of Performance. Those which took their Names from Countries were, the *Laconic*, *Træxenit*, *Empyrephyrian*, *Cretensian*, *Ionic*, *Mantinean*, &c. From the Inventor and Manner of Performance, as the *Pyrrich* from one *Pyrrichus* a *Lacedæmonian*,
or,

or, as others would have it, from *Pyrrhus* the Son of *Achilles* ; in which Dances they danc'd arm'd either with a Song or without it, as we find by a piece of old *Basso Relievo*.

But these *Pyrrich* Dances were divided into several Kinds, or had several Names ; as, among the *Cretans*, the *Orsitan*, and *Epichidian* ; among the *Ænianensetans*, and *Magnetes*, the *Carpeans*, which *Xenophon* mentions in the V. of his Expedition of *Cyrus*. There were besides, those call'd *Apochinos* or *Mastrismos*, which were danc'd by Women, and for that Reason call'd *Martyrie*. Others had greater Variety, and were more solemn ; as, the *Daëtil*, *Jambic*, *Emmelian*, *Molossic*, *Cordux*, *Sicinus*, *Persian*, *Phrygian*, *Thracian*, and *Telesias* ; the last so call'd from one *Tilenius*, who first danc'd it in Arms, in which Dance *Ptolemus* kill'd *Alexander* the Brother of *Philip*. Other Dances were call'd *Turning* or *Versatile*, because the Dancers turn'd round in a Ring.

There were other Dances call'd *Mad Dances* or *Cernophorus*, *Mongas*, *Thermaustris*, or the popular or plebeian *Anthema*, in which the Dancers moving themselves, sung to the Tune they danc'd, *Where are my Roses ? Where are my Violets ? Where are my Lillies ? Where are my beauteous Swarms of Bees ?* Some were ridiculous ; as, the *Sodis Matrisimos*, *Apodimas*, *Sobas*, *Morbasmus*, *Glaux*, and the *Lion*. There are besides, the *Scenic Dances*, as the *Tragic*, *Comic*, *Satyric*, and the *Lyric*, as the *Porrichian*,

rickian, *Gymnopædican*, and *Hyporchæmatican*, the manner of Dancing all which is not the Business of our present Discourse; it is sufficient to know, that in this third Division of Dancing were not only all these Kinds, we have mention'd, but many more, to which *Lucian* appropriated a whole Book, and that they likewise made use of a great Diversity of Motions both of the Hands and Feet. For since all Motion is compos'd of *impelling* and *drawing* according to *Aristotle*, so the Dancers either thrust on their Bodies, or drew them, either upwards or downwards, from the Right to the Left, and the contrary, backwards and forwards; from which Motions afterwards were compos'd simple Walking, Winding and Turning, Procurfion or Sal-lies, Leaping or Rising. Divarication or spreading of the Legs to a Distance, Claudication or halting, Ingeniculation or a bowing the Knee, or a Curtesying, Elation or bearing up haughtily, the shaking of the Feet, Permutation or *changing* or altering the Motion, &c. out of all which the whole Art of Dancing was perfected.

Tho this be but an imperfect Sketch of the Excellence of the Dancing of the Ancients, and gathered from such Fragments, as the Injury of Time has left us; yet it is plain, that they were all directed to express or imitate something, which was an Advantage, that few or none of our modern (especially *French*) Dances have.

But since there is no Man, who shall accurately consider the several Species of Dances in
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use among the Ancients, but will find, that they did not want the Order of Time, Reason, Proportion, and Musical Harmony, and therefore may be apt to think them not unlike the Hobby-Horse Dancing of our Days, which both Men and Women use for the promoting of Lust; but there is no body but may perceive this Difference between theirs and ours, that theirs were employ'd as Exercises often, and conducive to Health, ours after Supper, Feasts, and in the Night Time. Theirs were always directed to express some Passion or Action, or Story of the Gods or Men, ours to nothing but frisking about to shew a useless Activity. And yet how much greater Deference has been paid to *L'Abbe*, *Ballon*, *Subligniy*, and the rest, than to *Otway*, *Shakespeare*, or *Johnson*? And while our own Poets were neglected, the *French* Dancers got Estates; and this by the Influence of those, who at the same Expence might have made their own Names and their Country famous for the Encouragement of the politest Arts and Sciences, now neglected to a Degree of Barbarity, greater, than most Nations on this side *Lapland*.

I must own, that the Excuse of our Leaders seems greater and more reasonable in the Indulgence they shew to Music, in their Subscriptions for *Italian* Singers; tho so sensible a Man as Monsieur *St. Evremont* evidently gives the Palm of Singing to his own Nation—" *Solus gallus cantat*, says he, *none but the Frenchman sings*. " I will not be injurious to all other Nations
" in

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“ in maintaining what an Author has publish’d,
 “ the SPANIARD *weeps*, the ITALIAN *grieves*,
 “ the GERMAN *bol lows*, the FLANDERKIN
 “ *bowls*, and only the FRENCHMAN *sings*; I
 “ leave him to all these pretty Distinctions, and
 “ shall only back my Opinion with the Autho-
 “ rity of *Louigi*, who could not endure to hear
 “ an *Italian* sing *Airs*, after he had heard *Vyert*,
 “ *Hilaire*, and *La Petite Varenne* sing. Upon
 “ his Return to *Italy*, he made all the Musicians
 “ of that Nation his Enemies, saying openly
 “ at *Rome*, as he had at *Paris*, that to make
 “ pleasant Musick, *Italian* *Airs* should be in a
 “ *French* Man’s Mouth——It is very certain, he
 “ was much disgusted with the *Harshness* and
 “ *Rudeness* of the *greatest* Masters of *Italy*, when
 “ he had tasted the Sweetness of the *French*,
 “ the *Neatness* and *Manner* of the *French*.——
 “ The *Italians* with their Profoundness in Music,
 “ bring their Art to our Ears without any
 “ Sweetness, &c. Whether this Man of an
 acknowledged fine Taste be in the right or not,
 I leave to the Judges of the Art; but I am sure,
 if he has shewed himself but an indifferent Cri-
 tic in Music, he has shewn himself a good *Pa-*
triot, in preferring his own Country-men to a
 Company of *Strolling Foreigners*, who in my
 poor Opinion have little Advantage of either of
 us, but that of coming a great way, and requi-
 ring a great deal of Money, and the Witchery
 of being a *Foreigner*; when scarce any Nation
 has given us, for all our Money, better Singers,
 than

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than Mrs. *Tofis* and Mr. *Leveridge*, who yet be-
 ing of our own Growth, maintain but a se-
 cond or third Character among worse Voices.

But were these Foreigners as excellent, as
 they themselves would be thought, yet to be
 drawn wholly by Sound, tho the most harmo-
 nious, that Art and Nature can supply, is nei-
 ther the greatest nor the justest Praise.

It must, however, be allow’d, that Music
 discovers a wonderful Power, a Power not to
 be resisted; but I am afraid, that Power acts
 more on the Body, than the Mind, or by the
 Body on the Mind; the Ear has a pleasing Sen-
 sation at melodious Sounds, and that gratifies
 the Mind, which cannot naturally be uneasy
 when the Body is delighted with agreeable Sen-
 sations: But this proves Music as transporting,
 as it is to be but a sensual Pleasure, and deri-
 ving no part from Reason, nor directing any part
 to the Gratification of the rational Soul. But
 then this Power and Force of *Music* is heigh-
 ten’d by the Addition of Poetry, which among
 the Ancients even in Dancing (as we have seen)
 was very seldom left out; for passionate Words
 give a double Vigour to Harmony, and make
 for it a surer way to the Heart, than when the
 Soul is unconcern’d in the bare and solitary
 Notes. And Vocal Music is agreed by all to
 be the most noble, and most touching, that
 Tone being esteem’d the most excellent, which
 comes nearest to *Vocal Sounds*.

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Music therefore ought still, as originally it was, to be mingled with the *Drama*, where it is subservient to Poetry, and comes into the Relief of the Mind, when that has been long intense on some noble Scene of Passion, but ought never to be a separate Entertainment of any Length.

But tho we allow the Vocal the Preheminence of all other sorts of Music, yet we cannot without the greatest Absurdities receive even that on Subjects improper for it, or in a manner unnatural, that is, as it is offer'd to us in our *Opera's*, with which of late the Town (I mean the leading part of the Audience) has been perfectly intoxicated, and in that drunken Fit has thrown away more Thousands of Pounds for their Support, than would have furnish'd us with the best Poetry, and the best Music in the World, without declaring against common Sense. *Opera's* have been said to be the Invention of modern *Italy*, e'er the Return of Learning, and in the midst of that barbarous Ignorance, with which the Inundations of *Vandals*, *Goths*, *Huns* and *Lombards* had o'er-whelm'd it; but I think it is pretty plain, that the *Romans* were, before that, sunk as far from their ancient Learning and Sense, as Virtue and Warlike Glory; and *Lucian* puts it beyond Controversy, that the Entertainment, which we now call *Opera's*, was in use in his Time, when he says, after he had been ridiculing the Tragedies of his Age——

“ And also his Clamour from within, he breaks
“ open

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“ open, and unlocks himself, and most *ridiculously* SINGS his own Sufferings, and renders himself by the very Tone odious; yet as long, as he personates some *Andromache*, or *Hecuba*, his Singing is tolerable, but for a *HERCULES* to enter dolefully SINGING, and to forget himself, and neither regard his Lion's Skin or Club, must needs to a judging Man appear a *Solecism*.

But this, as I have said, was in the Corruption of the *Roman* State, under the Empire, when Learning was almost again engross'd by the *Greeks*, and scarce any else appear'd in Books of Note but that Nation, as those of *Plutarch*, *Sextus*, *Lucian*, &c. for it was never so in *Greece*, as is plain from the *Alcestis* of *Euripides*; where the Servants of *Admetus* are scandaliz'd at the Singing of *Hercules*, when *Alcestis* lay dead in the Palace, and the Family with its Lord were all in the extremest Grief and Sorrow; which is a plain Argument, that the rest of the Play was spoken, and not sung. Mr. *Barns* indeed, who is the Author of extraordinary Conjectures, fancies, that the *Greek* Tragedies were sung like our *Opera's*; whereas what we have here instanced, and the Constitution of the Chorus in its Division into *Strophe*, *Antistrophe*, and *E-pod*, prove the contrary. But this may pass from a Gentleman, who would fain persuade us, that *Solomon* was the Author of the *Ilias*.

What insinuated into him this Notion, was the Words he gives us, which imply no more but that Harmony of Speaking, which we have been endeavouring to recommend to the Study of our present *Players*. But if this were really true, (whereas it is directly contrary to Truth) yet I cannot imagine, that any Authority can justify that, which is absurd in it self. But because the Authority of a Man, that is receiv'd in the World, and allow'd to be a Man of a fine Taste, and admirable Sense, may be more prevalent with most Pretenders to Wit, than Reason it self, I shall here transcribe what Monsieur *St. Evremont* has deliver'd to the Public on this Head, both in regard of his Reputation, and for the Justness of his Reasoning, which is the best Confirmation of an Authority; and tho what he says be on the *French Opera's*, it will hold stronger against the *Italian*. He writes to the late Duke of *Buckingham* in the following manner.

" I have long, my Lord, had a Mind to give you my Thoughts, and deliver my Sentiments on the Difference betwixt the *Italian* and *French* way of Singing.

" The Discourse we had of it at the Dutches's of *Mazarine's* has rather added to, than satisfy'd that Desire, which I will now wholly gratify, by these few Thoughts I now send you upon it. I shall therefore begin with avowing freely to you, that I am no Admirer of those musical Plays or Tragedies, which

" we

" we see in our Time; I own indeed, that their Magnificence gives me some Pleasure, that their Machines have sometimes something surprizing, the Music in some Places may be charming, and the whole together seems wonderful; but then you must grant me on the other hand, that these Wonders are extremely tedious, for where the *Mind* has so very little to do, the Senses, after the first Pleasure, which the short-liv'd Surprise affords, must languish and die. The Eyes grow weary of being continually fixt upon the glaring Objects. In the Beginning of the Conforts, the Audience observe the Justness of the Conforts, and let none of the Varieties escape them, that join in the making up the Sweetness of the Harmony; soon after the Instruments stun us, and the Music seems no more to the Ears, but a confus'd and undistinguishable Sound. But who can support the dull Tedi-ousness of the *Recitativo*, which has neither the Charm of Song, nor the agreeable Force of good Speaking? The Soul tir'd out with a long Attention to that, in which it can find nothing affecting, retires into it self to find some secret Emotion, by which it may be touch'd; and the Mind, having in vain expected Impressions from without, has Recourse to empty Musings, or grows dissatisfy'd with it self for being so useless to its own Satisfaction. In a Word, the Fatigue is so great and so universal, that we only think how to

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" get out ; and all the Pleasure the tir'd Spectator can propose to himself, is the Hopes of a speedy End to the Show.

" * The Reason why generally I soon grow weary at an Opera, is, *That I never yet saw any OPERA, which did not appear to me most despicable, both in the † Disposition of the Subject, and in the Verses. Now 'tis in vain to charm the Ear, and flatter the Eye, if the Mind remain unsatisfy'd, my Soul being in better Intelligence with my Mind, than with my Senses, struggles against the Impressions it might receive, or at least fails in giving an agreeable Consent to them, without which e'en the most delightful Objects can never afford me any great Portion of Picaresure.*

" 'Tis true, a Foolery set off, and hautgout with Music, Dances, Machines, and Decorations, is a pompous and magnificent Foolery, but yet it is still but a FOOLERY : 'Tis an ugly Ground to beautiful Ornament, through which I yet discover the Ground with a great deal of Dissatisfaction.

" There is another thing in Opera's so contrary to Nature, that it always shocks my Imagination, and that is, *the singing the whole from one End to the other, as if the Persons*

* This Reason is worthy our Wits Consideration, who can value themselves on their Understanding, yet bear Nonsense in Music for four Hours together. nay, and extol it too.

† This is spoken of the French Opera's of Quinault, which as far excel all the Italian Opera's, in Disposition and Verse, as Dryden does Quarles.

" bad

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" *bad* ridiculously conspir'd to treat in Music both of the most common and most important Affairs of human Life. Can any Man persuade his Imagination, that a Master calls his Servant, or sends him of an Errand *singing* ? That one Friend communicates a Secret to another *singing* ? That Politicians deliberate in Council *singing* ? That Orders in Time of Battle are given *singing* ? And that Men are melodiously kill'd with Sword, Pike or Musket ? This is to lose the very Life and Soul of Representation, which no Man of Sense doubts, but is preferable to Harmony. For Harmony ought to be no more, than a bare Attendant on Poetry ; and the great Masters of the Stage have chose to add it, not as essential or necessary, but as pleasing, after they have regulated all that relates to the Subject and Discourse.

" In the mean time, by these means the Idea of the Master of Musick or Composer takes Place of the Heroe of the Opera, and justles him quite out of our Thoughts. *Louigi, Cavallo* and *Cesti* are represented to our Imagination ; for the Mind being unable to apprehend or conceive a *singing Hero*, comes directly on him, who made the Music ; nor can any one deny, but that *Baptiste* in the Opera's represented in the *Palace Royal* is a thousand times more thought on, than *Theseus* or *Cadmus*.

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" I pretend not, by what I have said, to exclude all manner of Singing from the Stage, for it must be allow'd, that there are some things there which ought to be sung, and others, which may be sung without sinning against Probability, Decency and Reason. Vows, Prayers, Praises, Sacrifices, and generally all, that relates to the Service of the Gods, are sung in all Nations, and in all Times; tender and mournful Passions express themselves naturally enough by a kind of Tone; the Expression of LOVE in its Birth, the Irresolution and Doubts of a Soul toss'd by the several Emotions of that Passion, are the Subject for Stanzas, or Lyric Poesy, and so is that for Music. Every Man knows, that the Greeks introduc'd the Chorus on their Stage, and I'm of Opinion, that we have the same Reason to follow their Example on ours.

" The Business of the Drama, in my Opinion, ought to be distributed in this manner. Whatever relates to Conversation, to the Intrigues and Affairs, to Counsel and Action, is only proper in the Mouth of the Actor, but highly ridiculous in that of a Singer. The Greeks made noble Tragedies, in which something was sung; the Italians and French make those, which are detestable, in which every thing is sung!

" Would you know what an Opera really is? I'll tell you, ——— It is a very ODD MEDLEY of POETRY and MUSIC, in which the

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" the Poet and Master of Music are equally on the Rack for one another, and take a great deal of Pains to compose a very Scurvy-Piece. Not but you may sometimes find agreeable * Words, and very fine Airs in them, but you will find with much more Certainty, before any one of them be done, a Dislike of the Verses, where the Poet's Genius has been stinted, and a perfect Satiety of the Singing, when too long a Service has jaded the Composer.

" Did I think my self Master of Capacity enough of advising those Persons of Consideration and good Breeding, who are pleas'd with this Entertainment of the Theatre, I would counsel them to recover their vitiated Palate, and relish again our good Plays, our Tragedies and Comedies, where Music may be introduc'd without wounding the Representation, there they might have a musical Prologue, and in the Interludes they might have the Music animated with † Words, that might be the Life of what had been repre-

* This is only in the French Opera's, neither the Italian nor ours can pretend to them.

† He means by this what Horace says of the Chorus, thus translated by the Lord Roscommon,

A Chorus should supply what Action wants,
And has a generous and manly Part;
Bridles wild Rage, loves rigid Honesty,
And strict Observance of impartial Laws,
Sobriety, Security, and Peace;
And begs the Gods to turn blind Fortune's Wheel,
To raise the Wretched, and pull down the Proud, &c.

“ sented. And after the Play is ended, an *Epilogue* might be sung, or some Reflections on
 “ the finest things in the Play. This would
 “ fortify the Idea, and rivet the Impressions
 “ they had made in the very Hearts of the Au-
 “ dience.

“ By this means you might supply enough
 “ to satisfy both the Senses and the Mind ; the
 “ Charm of Singing relieving the bare *Repre-*
 “ *sentation*, and the Force of Action the Length
 “ of the *Music*.

Thus far Monsieur St. Evremont ; and I forbear giving you his Discourse about the mutual Dislike the *French* and *Italians* have for the *Opera's* of each other, because that Controversy is not much to our Purpose ; and our *Italians* have not long ago publish'd a Book, call'd, *The Comparison of the French and Italian Music*, in which the *French* Author gives up the Cause to the *Italians*, in return of *Leuigi's* giving it up formerly to the *French*. Tho if I had any thing to do with this Controversy, I should very much doubt the Judgment of the *Frenchman* from one Instance of many, where he admires the *Italians* for Singing out of Tune, that they may give the better Relish to the fine Harmony, that succeeds ; as if a Man should admire it as a Perfection in another to speak Nonsense first, to give the better Taste to Sense afterwards.

I confess, I was a little surpriz'd, to hear of and see this Book with Notes by Seignior H— or some Creature of his ; for I thought they would

would never have ventur'd so far out of their Depth, as to launch from mere *Sound* into Sense, from pricking musical Notes, to Writing ; since that was the only effectual way they could take to convince the World, that we were impos'd on by those, who were not content to bubble us of our Money for *Airs* and *Recitativo's*, unless they told us to our Faces, that we knew nothing of the matter, and must, therefore, receive whatever Stuff they would be graciously pleas'd to bestow upon us.

But this Author puts a great Stress on the *Taking* of his Compositions, and the Miscarriage of those of others, when he had before deny'd, that we knew any thing of the Matter. But if he allow that, as a Test of the Excellence of his *Opera*, that will be much stronger for Mr. Henry Purcel, whose Music supported a Company of young raw Actors, against the best and most favour'd of that Time, and transported the Town for several Years together, as they do yet all true Lovers of Music. Let any Master compare *Twice ten hundred Deities*, the Music in the *Frost Scene*, several Parts of the *Indian Queen*, and twenty more Pieces of Henry Purcel, with all the *Arrieto's*, *Dacapo's*, *Recitativo's* of *Camilla*, *Pyrrhus*, *Clotilda*, &c. and then judge which excels. Purcel penetrates the Heart, makes the Blood dance through your Veins, and thrill with the agreeable Violence offer'd by his Heavenly Harmony ; the *Arietto's* are pretty light *Airs*, which tickle the Ear, but reach no farther ;

ther; *Purcel* moves the Passions as he pleases, nay, *Paints* in Sounds, and verifies all that is said of *Timotheus*. Music, as well as Verse, is subject to that Rule of *Horace*;

*He that would have Spectators share his Grief,
Must write not only well, but * movingly.*

This was *Henry Purcel's* Talent; and his MUSIC, as known as it is, and as often repeated as it has been, has to this Day the very same Effect. But all the *Airs* of these *Opera's*, as they touch nothing but the Ear, so they vanish as soon, as that is tyr'd with the Repetition; that is, they live but a Year at most; so that *Purcel's* being compos'd to penetrate the Soul, and make the Blood thrill through the Veins, live for ever; but those foreign Whims, which have cost us above twenty thousand Pounds, are lost before the Castratos have spent the Money they brought them in.

But it has by this very Book been said, that our Taste is improv'd, much amended since the Time of *Henry Purcel*, and that we should not now relish any of his Things. To this I answer, that I find the best Judges of Music, those who are Masters of the Composition, as well as

* Non satis est pulchra esse Poemata dulcia sunt & quocunq; volent animum Auditoris agunt. *It is not enough, that the Poem be beautiful, but it should be sweet, and turn the Mind where-ever it pleases.*

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Performance, prefer what he has done to all the *Opera's* we have had, on our Stage at least. I would therefore fain know how our Taste is mended? Do the promiscuous Audience know more of the Art of Harmony and Music? No—not one in a thousand understands one single Note. How shall these therefore give the Preference of this new *Music*, to that of *Henry Purcel's*? The Masters must decide it, you reply perhaps—that indeed would bring it into a small Compass, to the Decision of a very few, and yet not to be determin'd; for the *English* Masters have still a Veneration for *Purcel*; and the foreign Masters have too visible an Interest to be the Deciders. The only way is by the Rules of Art; for what goes beyond them is nothing but Extravagance, and no Beauty; and if the *Italians* sing out of Tune by way of Perfection, they must enjoy the Advantage, which all Men else in the World will condemn as no Harmony, and by Consequence can be no Beauty or Excellence in Music, the very Soul of which is *Harmony*.

But to return from this Digression, in Vindication of our *English Music*, to the Absurdities of *Opera's*; I think the Degeneracy of the Age is but too apparent, in the setting up and encouraging so paltry a Diversion, that has nothing in it either manly or noble.

But, says a certain Gentleman, the Business of the Stage is to *please*, and if this Pleasure be found in *Opera's*, what signify all the objected Absurdities? Tho this be a very ridiculous Defence,

fence, and will hold of the most scandalous and dullest things in Nature ; yet I have heard it urg'd by Men of allow'd Wit, and indeed, who had more of that, than of Reason, and Judgment, which is founded on that. But if this be really a good Argument, *Clinch of Barnet, Bartholomew-Fair Drolls*, nay a *Jack-pudding Entertainment in Moor-Fields* are noble Entertainments, for all these please, and have as good a Title to the Stage, as *Opera's*, nay, from Reason a better, as not subject to so many Absurdities. But this is consecrated by the Taste of Quality. — If the Taste of Quality sink to that of the *Canaille*, it is not the Persons can give it a Reputation, since their beloved *Cowley* has told us of a *great Vulgar*, as well as *small*.

Would therefore a Man of Sense be for a Diversion, which levels his Understanding with that of the Refuse of the *Mob* ? Yet the following of *Opera's* does this, and insisting in their Vindication, that what-ever pleases deserves Encouragement, since it is a Scandal to be pleas'd with some things, as proving but a weak Capacity, or a very unpolish'd Taste.

There are some Pleasures, which none but Men of fine Sense, and a Gust for the Art, can distinguish, as in Painting, Graving, &c. while the Vulgar look with an equal Eye on the best and the worst. A certain Country Squire of my Acquaintance was drinking in a Country Ale-house, in which seeing several notable Cuts, as of the *Prodigal*, *Robin Hood* and *Little John*,
and

and some other scurvy Prints, worse than ever *Overton* sold, he turn'd to the Gentleman, who sat next him, and said, — *Well ! this Painting is a noble Art* — And indeed a Graving of old *Vanbove's*, or worse, if any worse can be, would please the *Vulgar*, as well as one of *Edlinch, Audrand*, or any of the *Italian Cuts* ; and a Piece of a mere Sign-Dauber is as valuable in the Eye of a gross and common Understanding, as one of *Raphael's* or *Thornbill's*. And so in *Musick*, a *Taber* and *Pipe*, a *Cymbal* or *Horn-pipe*, will ravish the *Mob*, more than the admirable *Mr. Skoar* with his incomparable *Lute* ; and the Ballad Tune *Lilly Bullero* more, than a fine *Sonata* of *Corelli*. And thus in Poetry, the *Million* will prefer *Bunyan* and *Quarles* to *Milton* and *Dryden* ; yet sure no Gentleman of fine Taste and Genius in all these things, but would be asham'd to urge such an Argument as Pleasing, since all these, which are scandalous, please the most in Number.

It is therefore as scandalous to be pleas'd with any thing irrational and absurd on the Stage, in Comparison of the *Drama*, as with *Jack-pudding*, or a *Bartholomew Droll* off it ; or to prefer to *Edlinch, Audrand* a *Vanbove*, &c. or a Consort of Tongs and Keys, or Cymbal and Bagpipe to *Mr. Skoar's Lute*, or the Compositions of *Corelli*.

But, says another, if All that is absurd and irrational should be excluded the Theatre, you must banish a great many of the most celebrated
3 Pieces

Pieces of the Stage ; as, *Othello*, which is compos'd of Parts shocking to Reason, and full of Absurdities ; the *Maid's Tragedy*, which Mr. *Rhimer* has justly condemn'd, and several others, which no Man has been able to vindicate from Faults equal to those urg'd against *Opera's*. And since our Reason must be shock'd either with *Harmony*, or without it, pray let us have *Opera's*, where the Composer's pleasing Art makes Amends for the Poet's Fooleries. Nay, says another, I will undertake to prove, that there is scarce one Play, that has met tolerable Success, or is very much esteem'd, and call'd a Stock-Play, but what is as absurd, and shocking to Reason, as most *Opera's* ; and what is worse, the Authority, which they have obtain'd with the *Many* is so great, that when you attempt to speak against them, both your *Wits* and *Witlings* cry out, *That you're past Shame*.

If indeed, pursues he, you could advance the *British* Stage to the Excellence of that of *Athens*, it would want neither *Reason* nor *Musick*, but the happy Mixture would be admirable, and the Diversion divine ; but as the Stage is, both in Players and Plays, I cannot discover so mighty a Difference in the Merit of the two Diversions, but that a Man's Sense is as justifiable in the frequenting the one, as the other.

I must confess, this last Objection has too much Weight in it, but then if the Encouragers of this Folly had bestow'd half as much in the Reformation of the Stage, it would have rais'd it

it to an Equality with, if not above that of *Athens* it self, tho that State employ'd immense Sums in the Decorations of it, and the setting out of the Plays ; and if any one Man of Power and Interest would heartily engage on the Part of good Sense, Poetry, and the Honour of his Country, we should soon remove this Objection, and discard the Dregs of *Italy* with their harmonious Nonsense.

But there are others, who tell us, that it is the Illness of our present Plays, that excuses their Fondness of *Opera's*. But this is without the least Shadow of Reason or Truth ; nor can they in any point prove our Plays to be worse, than those of an hundred Years ago, since it would be too palpable an Instance of their profound Ignorance or extravagant Prejudice, which is below a Man of Sense and Judgment, as may easily be made appear in Tragedy only, of which we are scarce yet arriv'd to a just Notion. Nor was there much of Comedy known before the Learned *Ben Johnson*, for no Man can allow any of *Shakespeare's* Comedies, except the *Merry Wives of Windsor*. There are indeed excellent Humours scatter'd about, and interwoven in his other Plays ; but *Ben Johnson* was the first, that ever gave us one entire Comedy. Since him we have had *Etheridge*, *Wickerly*, *Shadwel*, and *Crown* in some of his Plays, with the Rest of King *Charles* the II'd's Reign. Add since the Revolution, Mr. *Congreve* in three Plays has merited great Praise, and very well distinguish'd his

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his Characters and hit true Humour. Mr. *Vanbrook* too has shewn Abundance of rude, un-conducted and unartful Nature ; his Dialogue is generally dramatic and easy. Nay, after these our very Farce Writers deserve more Esteem, than the taking Plays of an hundred Years ago, as having as much Nature, more Design and Conduct, and much more Wit.

From hence it appears, that this Objection of the Degeneracy of the present Stage, from what it was formerly, as an Excuse for frequenting *Opera's*, is nothing but a mere groundless Pretence ; and that if we met now with as much Encouragement from our dignify'd Audience, as that did from the Vulgar ; or if our Judges could distinguish betwixt *good* and *bad* so far, as to encourage the former, and explode the latter, they would soon have Plays more worthy the *English* Genius, and *Opera's* would retire beyond the *Alps*.

After this Discourse, we took our Leaves of Mr. BETTERTON, and return'd to *London*: I was pleas'd with his Story of the extravagant Actor, since it is a very pleasant Lesson for a great many of our modern Players, and which might it self cure them of Extravagances too much in vogue.

I subjoin here a Catalogue of the Plays, in which Mr. *Betterton* made some considerable Figure.

The Loyal Subject.
Maid in the Mill.

The Wild Goose Chase.
The Spanish Curate.

The

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| <i>The Mad Lower.</i> | ✓ <i>Richard the III'd.</i> |
| ✓ <i>Pericles Prince of Tyre.</i> | ✓ <i>Henry the Vth.</i> |
| <i>A Wife for a Month.</i> | <i>Sir Solomon Single.</i> |
| <i>Rule a Wife and have a Wife.</i> | <i>The Woman made a Justice.</i> |
| <i>The Tamer tam'd.</i> | <i>Amorous Widow.</i> |
| <i>The Unfortunate Lovers.</i> | <i>The Unjust Judge.</i> |
| <i>Aglaura,</i> | <i>Epsom Wells.</i> |
| <i>Changling.</i> | ✓ <i>Macbeth.</i> |
| <i>The Bodman.</i> | ✓ <i>King Lear.</i> |
| <i>The Wits.</i> | <i>The Rover.</i> |
| ✓ <i>Hamlet Prince of Denmark.</i> | <i>Don Carlos Prince of Spain.</i> |
| <i>Love and Honour.</i> | <i>Sir Fopling Flutter.</i> |
| ✓ <i>Romeo and Juliet.</i> | <i>Circe.</i> |
| <i>Adventures of Five Hours.</i> | <i>Siege of Troy.</i> |
| ✓ <i>Twelfth Night.</i> | <i>Anna Bulloin.</i> |
| <i>The Villain.</i> | <i>The Libertine.</i> |
| <i>The Rivals.</i> | <i>Virtuoso.</i> |
| ✓ <i>Henry VIIIth.</i> | <i>Spanish Fryar.</i> |
| <i>Love in a Tub.</i> | <i>Oedipus.</i> |
| <i>Cutter of Colemanstreet.</i> | <i>Orphan.</i> |
| <i>The Dutchess of Malfey.</i> | <i>Titus and Berenice.</i> |
| <i>Mustapha.</i> | <i>Theodosius.</i> |
| <i>Cambyfes.</i> | <i>Plain Dealer.</i> |
| <i>The grateful Servant.</i> | <i>Mock Astrologer.</i> |
| <i>The Witty Fair One.</i> | <i>Valentinian.</i> |
| <i>The School of Compliments.</i> | <i>Amphytrion.</i> |
| ✓ <i>The Warrior's a Weather-Cock.</i> | <i>Cleomenes.</i> |
| | ✓ <i>Troilus and Cressida.</i> |
| | <i>Cæsar Borgia.</i> |
| | <i>Old Batchelor.</i> |

Fatal

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Fatal Marriage. *The Way of the World.*
Double Dealer. *Ambitious Step-Mother.*
Prophets. *Fair Penitent.*
Love for Love. *All for Love.*
Mourning Bride. ✓ *Harry the IVth.*
Heroic Love. *The British Enchanters.*
And many others too long to insert.

F I N I S.

T H E
Amorous Widow:
O R, T H E
W A N T O N W I F E.
A
COMEDY.

As it is Perform'd by
Her MAJESTY's Servants.

Written by the late Famous
Mr. THOMAS BETTERTON.

Now first Printed from the Original Copy.

L O N D O N:
Printed in the Year 1710.

Dramatis Personæ.

- SIR Peter Pride.** A great Boaster of his Honour, his Valour, what a noble Family he is deriv'd from, and of their mighty Courage. } *Mr. Freeman.*
- Cunningham.** A Gentleman in love with *Philadelphia*, and is much courted by the Widow. } *Mr. Verbruggen.*
- Lovemore.** His Friend, in love with *Mr. Brittle's* Wife, and endeavours to have an Intrigue with her; but the Widow courts him too. } *Mr. Betterton.*
- Barnaby Brittle.** An old Citizen that keeps a Glass-shop, marry'd to *Sir Peter Pride's* Daughter. } *Mr. Dogget.*
- Jeffrey.** Servant to *Cunningham*, in love with *Prudence*. } *Mr. Fieldhouse.*
- Clodpole.** A simple Country Fellow that *Lovemore* employs in sending Letters to *Mrs. Brittle*. } *Mr. Bright.*
- Mettyman.** A Falconer to *Cunningham*, who takes upon him to represent the Viscount *Sans-Terre*, that is to marry the Widow. } *Mr. Underhill.*
- Lady Laycock.** An amorous old Widow, that courts every one she can for Marriage, fancying her self so engaging, that all that see her must love her. } *Mrs. Leigh.*
- Lady Pride.** Wife to *Sir Peter*, a formal old Lady that boasts much of her Gentility, and of her great Name and Family. } *Mrs. Willis.*
- Mrs. Brittle.** Their Daughter, Wife to *Barnaby Brittle*; a Cunning, Intriguing Coquet, that always over-reaches her Husband. } *Mrs. Bracegirdle.*
- Philadelphia.** Niece to the Widow, in love with *Cunningham*. } *Mrs. Porter.*
- Prudence.** Maid to the Widow. } *Mrs. Hunt.*
- Damaris.** Maid to *Mrs. Brittle*, that assists her in her Intrigues. } *Mrs. Prince.*

THE



THE Amorous Widow : OR, THE WANTON WIFE.

ACT I. SCENE a Room.

Enter Philadelphia with a Letter, follow'd by Jeffrey.

Phil.



Should believe *Mr. Cunningham* very constant, if I had Faith enough to credit this Letter, *Jeffry*. What Complaints are here? But 'tis the Scile, that all young Lovers write.

A 2

Jeff.

4 *The Amorous Widow : Or,*

Jeff. Pray, Madam, believe me; you know I am a Man of Integrity: I cannot dissemble. Let him write what he pleases, If he did not love you, do you think I'd tell you so?

Phil. When he has Opportunity, I must confess, he says kind things to me.

Jeff. Take my Word, Madam, my Master is not like other Men—— Unless he loves a Lady, and loves her passionately too, he never troubles himself to compliment her much.

Phil. Never? Yes, *Jeffry*; sometimes, you know, he compliments my Aunt.

Jeff. That's a convincing Proof of his Love to you; you cannot think him reduc'd to the Necessity of making Love to an antiquated Piece, with design to know her otherwise, than to obtain the Happiness of seeing you? But I shall tell him, Madam——

Phil. Tell him I have receiv'd and read his Letter.

Jeff. Is that all, Madam?

Phil. All! Yes. Are you not content with that?

Jeff. Any indifferent Person, that had Hands, and could but read, would have done, as much, as that.

Phil. Well; Tell him then, in time perhaps I may——

Jeff. My Master, Madam, can't endure to depend on a perhaps.

Enter Prudence.

Pru. Quick, quick, up to your Chamber, Madam.

Phil. What's the Matter? Is my Aunt coming hither?

Pru. She's at your Heels. Go up the Back-Stairs quickly.

Phil. Farewel, *Jeffry*; Commend me to thy Master.
Exit Phil.

Jeff. For what, I beseech you? Is not my Master bewitch'd, to court a Lady a whole Year, and she hardly tell him she loves him yet?

Pru.

The Wanton Wife. 5

Pru. Alas! She's but a Novice. Let me alone with her; I'll order the Business so, that if thy Master be discreet and passionate enough in his Expressions, he wins her Heart I'll warrant you.

Jeff. He can say nothing to her, but that damn'd Aunt of hers is harkning to't still. What Pleasure can she find in Love at Fifty?

Pru. Fie, *Jeffry*, you must say Five and twenty.

Jeff. I wonder any Woman can have the Impudence to live, and trouble Mankind after that Age.

Pru. There never was a Woman so old, but she retain'd a good Opinion of her self.

Jeff. Then she dresses her self so fantastically, that all may see she strives to appear Young in defiance of Nature. She is more gawdy in that she calls Half-Mourning, than a young Bride is on her Wedding-Night. The Devil's in her if she believes any one can love her: 'Tis jeering her, but to be commonly civil to her.

Pru. A little Flattery fires her. She believes all, that is said to her: And he that does not make love to her, and compliment her, shall not be twice admitted to her House.

Jeff. O reverend Beauty! on my Conscience, if I would grease her Chops with a few Compliments, she'd mump and smile upon me.

Pru. No doubt on't.

Jeff. When shall my Master have an Opportunity to speak freely to *Philadelphia*?

Pru. Mr. *Lovemore* is thy Master's Friend, and is better belov'd here, than he imagines. You must persuade him to amuse the Aunt, that Mr. *Cunningham* may have Convenience to court the Niece.

Jeff. Mr. *Lovemore*'s tir'd with playing that part so often; he is cloy'd with the Aunt, and swears he'll have no more of her.

A 3

Pru.

6 *The Amorous Widow : Or,*

Pru. I'm sure her Niece and I endure much more. Tell him, 'twill be Charity in him to relieve us.

Jeff. 'Twill be hard to persuade him to it.

Pru. This old Lady of mine has languish'd for a young Husband ever since Sir *Oliver Laycock* dy'd : She cares not what Estate he has, or what Religion he's of, so he be but young and luffy. Where is the great Viscount *Sans Terre*, thy Master told her of? Methinks he's long a coming.

Jeff. Some cross unlucky Business hinders him.

Pru. She has lately receiv'd some Letters, that have given a full Account of him.

Jeff. So much the worse. What is it?

Pru. They say his Fortune is not very much, but he is greatly born, and very pleasant; and that he is so great a Lover of Musick, he has not a Servant but can Sing or Dance, or Play upon some Instrument. You may know when he's come by the Noise; the Fiddlers will welcome him to Town; for all from *Westminster* to *Wapping* pay him Homage.

Jeff. Wou'd he were but marry'd to her, *Prudence*.

Pru. Whether he marries her or not, is not our Business, *Jeffry*. Let him but fool with us till thy Master has gain'd her Niece, and then our Work is done.

Jeff. Well, we have had enough of thy old Lady *Laycock*. Let us now talk of our own Affairs; speak, dost thou love me, *Prudence*?

Pru. A pleasant Question! Do you doubt it now?

Jeff. If you would have me credit you, swear it.

Pru. Sure you are jealous *Jeffry*?

Jeff. You're somewhat near the Matter. I know your Humour well enough; you love a bold audacious Fellow, that will say any thing, and such a one we have come to Town, one *Merryman* our Falconer; I fear you'll like him better than you do me.

Pru.

The Wanton Wife.

7

Pru. Oh Fool! why should you think so?

Jeff. I have some Honour in me; but he's a Fellow that has eaten Shame, and drank after it. He is more impudent than a Court Page, and will take no Denial.

Pru. Hold your Tongue, here's my Lady.

Enter Lady Laycock.

Lady. What Business has *Jeffry* with you?

Pru. His Master sent him to know, whether he might have leave to wait upon your Ladyship this Morning.

Lady. Yes; Tell him, I expect him.

Jeff. He durst not come, because Mr. *Lovemore's* with him.

Lady. Go tell 'em, if they please to come, they shall be welcome both.

Jeff. I shall, Madam.

(Exit Jeffrey.)

Pru. You see what Power your Beauty has. Neither can live a Moment without seeing you.

Lady. No, they have other Business with me, *Prudence*; they came from *Paris* lately, and brought me a Letter from my Brother; and I believe they come for my Answer now.

Pru. But does not one of 'em love you, Madam?

Lady. I have some Reason to believe he does; Mr. *Lovemore* has spar'd no Pains to persuade me to quit my Widow-hood.

Pru. I have been told, Madam, that Widow-hood is a Gift, Heaven seldom bestows but on its Favourites; you are rich, and know how troublesome Marriage is. For my part, I believe the fairest Hair, the beautifulst Curls do not become your Fore-head so well as *Bando* did; but every one, Madam, knows their own Necessities.

A 4

Lady

8 *The Amorous Widow : Or,*

Lady. I confess, Widow-hood has its Conveniencies; but if Marriage be a Trouble to some, 'tis a Pleasure to others, *Prudence.*

Pru. You had the Experience of it thirty Years, how did you like it, Madam? They say, Sir *Oliver Laycock* lov'd your Ladyship.

Lady. For all that he was jealous; and, what's worse, was Old.

Pru. Very well; therefore you resolve to have a young One now, Madam?

Lady. You cannot blame me for that? Can you, *Prudence?*

Pru. Oh no, 'tis well known Youth is comfortable. But, methinks, you should take one a little nearer your own Age, Madam. A very young Man may be too treacherous for you, Madam.

Lady. Why, is my Age so visible?

Pru. No, Madam; with a little Help of Art you have some Remains of Beauty still. You have something about your Eyes as pleasant now, as others have at Twenty.

Lady. 'Tis a very malicious World we live in, *Prudence*; they are so apt to censure, and speak of any single Woman, that one ought to marry to avoid that Scandal.

Pru. Some that are young are forc'd to marry, to avoid Detraction; others wou'd rather all that's ill should be said of them, than to have no Notice taken of 'em. I knew a young Lady that pin'd to a Consumption, because she liv'd three Years about the Court, and never had the Honour to be lampoon'd. The Truth is, none that are Beautiful and Young can avoid Envy, but few are so malicious, to speak against the Old.

Lady. There is no Age exempt from Scandal, *Prudence.* When we are Young, they say we sell our selves; when Old, we are forc'd to hire, to buy our Lovers.

Pru.

The Wanton Wife.

9

Pru. You know what they say, Madam, of the old Marchioness, your Friend, that was so admir'd, so courted in her Youth; who, when she found she was forsook by all, was forc'd to hire a Player by the Quarter: How soon the poor Fellow was tir'd too! How like a Sheep-biter he look'd after the first two Months!

Lady. This *London* is a very wicked Place, 'tis impossible to live without Scandal here.

Pru. I'm afraid they'll say as much of you, Madam, if you bargain for a Husband. To cover one, that is both Young and Rich, is too much in Conscience, Madam.

Lady. Thou know'st, *Prudence*, Wealth is not the thing I seek.

Pru. Then, Madam, the Business is done; the Viscount *Sans-Terre* shall be your Husband, Madam.

Lady. Ah *Prudence*! if he were but as handsome as —

Pru. Ah Madam, that's too much.

Lady. Why may not I wish for it?

Pru. Consider his Quality, Madam, and 'bate him something for that. One thing I must advise you; be not too prodigal of your Gold at first; to be liberal sometimes will be convenient, and make him kinder to you.

Lady. For all this, I should think my self very happy, if I were certain of Mr. *Cunningham* or Mr. *Love-more*.

Pru. A little Jealousy will inflame 'em. They'll be more pressing when the Viscount comes.

Lady. But yet methinks, *Cunningham* and my Neice—

Pru. What, Madam?

Lady. Are always whispering.

Pru. He only compliments her, Madam. She's too young to make Love seriously.

Lady.

10 *The Amorous Widow : Or,*

Lady. With your Favour, there's no trusting to that. To my Knowledge, there are those younger, than she, that understand what Love is but too well.

Pru. That's true, Madam; but *Philadelphia* is so innocent, that no Man can make Love to her, but to divert himself. Here she is, Madam.

Enter Philadelphia.

Lady. What does she come for? I'll send her packing quickly.

Pru. Consider what you do, Madam. How can Mr. *Lovemore* entertain your Ladyship, unless his Friend may divert himself the while with rallying with your Niece.

Lady. For all that I could wish——

Pru. Pray trouble not your self. Trust me, I'll watch her, Madam.

Phil. Will your Ladyship go to *Eaton's*? The Coach is at the Door.

Lady. No, I'll not go yet.

Phil. If you stay long, Madam, the best *Poynt* will be fold before you come.

Lady. No matter. Ha! what ails the Girl! How strangely she looks! Her Eyes are hardly open yet!

Phil. How, Madam?

Lady. Then her Head's dress'd awry. How it disguises her! Lord! how frightfully it looks!

Phil. Truly, Aunt, 'tis dress'd just as the Fashion is.

Lady. Fetch her Hood, *Prudence*; I'll have her put it on till it be mended.

Phil. I dress'd it to please no body but my self, Madam.

Lady. I'll have you dress your self now to please me: Come, put it on.

Pru.

The Wanton Wife.

11

Pru. My Lady's in the Right. Never was any thing more ridiculous. Here, put on the Hood; I am sure this is much handsomer.

Lady. Why don't you put it on?

Phil. I can't endure it, Madam—

Lady. Do, I say.

Pru. So; Now it is as it should be; all modest Maids should be dress'd so: But here's Mr. *Cunningham* and Mr. *Lovemore*.

Enter Cunningham, Lovemore and Jeffry.

Love. Your Servant, Madam; you see how we love your Company, by giving you this Trouble in a Morning.

Cun. 'Tis a Happiness we are much envy'd for.

Lady. You are welcome, Gentlemen. Pray command this House as freely as your own.

Love. Why does this Lady hide her Face? Pray, Madam, let us see you.

Lady. Forbear, Sir, I beseech you: She has had the Tooth-Ach lately. If she takes off her Hood, she'll catch cold, and bring the Pain again.

Phil. I thank your Ladyship for your Care of me. But the Pain has been gone so long, I don't fear it now.

Love. Nay then, we must have it off.

Phil. What say you, Madam, Shall I pull it off?

Lady. Yes, Impertinence; I see you have a Mind to shew your self.

Pru. 'Tis the Nature of all young Girls to do what they are forbidden.

Cun. I come not to trouble your Ladyship for your Letter to my Lawyer; your countenancing my Business will be of great Advantage to me.

Lady. This, Sir, is what my Brother commands me: You shall see I take delight to serve his Friends.

Love.

Love. Madam, You promis'd me that Honourable Title.

Lady. Do you pretend to it ?

Love. Yes, Madam, more, than any one.

Lady. I have not much Beauty to boast of ; but Virtue, Sir, makes some amends for the Defects of the other.

Love. Defects ? (*Cunningham Courts Philadelphia.*) Pray, Madam, wrong not your self so much.

Lady. There are few but know a little their own Value : And tho a Woman be not fam'd for a great Beauty, yet if she be agreeable, there are those, will like her well enough.

Love. You have that in Perfection, Madam.

Lady. In that, Sir, I know you do not flater.

Phil.—

Phil. Madam.

Cun. Then, Madam, you like my Choice of this Suit.

Phil. Extremely well : Was it your own Fancy, Sir.

Cun. I am not asham'd to own it, since you ask it, Madam.

[*They counterfeit to be talking about Fashions, whilst seemingly Lovemore Courts the Aunt.*]

Pru. I'll listen to 'em—

He talks to her of nothing but new Fashions. [*To the You may, Madam, venture to discourse Widow. without disturbance.*]

Lady. Pray, Sir, tell me freely ; how old do you think I am ?

Love. Faith, Madam, if you were not a Widow, I should think you a Girl scarce Twenty.

Lady. Now, Sir, you flater me : You might have said Thirty. I do not love to disguise my Age.

Love. How ! Thirty, Madam ! and look so youthful : I'll not believe it, 'tis impossible !

Lady.

Lady. You do not know what Misery I endur'd whilst my old Husband liv'd. The Grievs I had upon me would have distracted another Woman. Alas ! Sir, 'tis not Age but Sorrow has broke me.

Love. It makes me sad to hear you tell it, Madam, and vexes me to think, an old Man should enjoy such Happiness.

Lady. You do not know how many Tears I have shed.

Love. 'Tis some Comfort, Madam, to remember he did not live long with you.

Lady. Truly, Sir, Fifteen Years.

Pru. Yes, and Fifteen to that.

(*Aside.*)

Lady. Having been so unfortunate in a Husband, you may believe I have but little Encouragement to venture, Sir, again. For I am very happy now I am alone.

Love. You do wisely, Madam ; for she deserves not to be pity'd, that rashly runs into the same Misfortune ; and therefore you have, Madam—

Lady. Nay, Sir, I have not forsworn Marrying yet.

Love. Pray, Madam, where do you use to walk in the Evening ? Into St. James's Park ?

Lady. Not very often, Sir.

Love. Or into the Mulberry Garden ? Is not the Wilderness very pleasant ?

Lady. If I like my Company, Sir, I never dislike the Place.

Love. Have you seen the new Paradise, Madam ? 'Tis much superiour to the former.

Lady. I have heard as much : But, Sir—

Love. Let me have the Honour to wait upon you thither presently.

Lady. Not yet, Sir ; After Dinner, if you please. But tell me, Sir, do you think me such an Enemy to Marriage, that were I sure a young Gentleman lov'd me,

14 *The Amorous Widow: Or,*

me, and lov'd me truly, I would be so uncivil to refuse him?

Love. When I consider what you endur'd in Sir *Olivier Laycock's* time, I think you ought to do it, Madam; and that Man's unjust, that urges you to break your Resolution.

Lady. Pray do not mistake me, Sir; I have made no such Resolution yet.

Love. Nay, Madam, since you are displeas'd at what I said, we'll change the Discourse. Pray, Madam, do you think the young Lord *Lucky* has that Interest at Court, that Fame reports he has?

Lady. Lord, Sir, this is a strange wild Answer to my Question. Let me tell you, Sir, if I have any Merit, Wealth or Beauty, there's one in the World deserves 'em all.

Pru. Good! How she teazes him! *(Aside.)*

Love. But has that one no Fault, Madam?

Lady. You know him very well, Sir.

Love. I know him, Madam!

Lady. Yes, you, Sir. 'Tis your self.

Love. 'Sdeath! What will become of me now? *(Aside.)*

Enter a Servant.

Serv. Madam——

Lady. What now?

Serv. The Marchioness is come to visit you.

Lady. Troublesome Creature. Go one of you and entertain her quickly.

Pru. Which of us, Madam?

Lady. Go you, *Philadelphia*, and keep her Company till I come.

Phil. I shall, Madam. *(Exit Phil.)*

Cun. Pray, Madam, what is this Marchioness?

Lady. Oh, Sir! a most eternal Talker: Her Tongue goes like the Larum of a Clock, as fast, and to the same

The Wanton Wife. 15

same Tune still. She's almost Sixty, and yet pretends to Beauty, and loves Courtship most unreasonably. Say but a kind thing to her, and you win her Heart. The Truth is, she has not much Reputation; but the Respect I give her is to her Quality and to her Person. But she's an Original in her kind, Sir.

Love. Oh blind, blind Creature! she draws her own Picture, and laughs at it.

Cun. Sure, Madam, her Conversation must be very pleasant?

Lady. She has been much courted in her Youth; but 'twould make one die to hear her boast of her Lovers now. How this Knight sighs, and that Lord dies for her; when all the while I know what Necessity the poor Creature is reduc'd to. I would have brought her hither, but I know we never should have been rid of her. Excuse me a Moment, I'll send her away, and return presently. Your Servant, Gentlemen, *(Exit Lady.)*

Cun. How now, Friend——What's the Matter? Why dost look so sullenly?

Love. I play the Afs here any longer! No; if I do, may I turn Pudding to a Rope-Dancer, and shew Tricks next *Bartholomew Fair*.

Cun. Nay, but Friend, Dear Friend——

Love. Tell not me of Friendship. What Man would endure to be so plagued as I have been. I have parry'd with my best Skill the dangerous Thrusts that ever were made at me. To tug at an Oar, or dig in a Mine in *Peru*, is Recreation to it. But the first time to offer Marriage to me! I sweat to think on it. It made me tremble twice, for fear she should have forc'd my Neck into her muddy Noose of Matrimony.

Cun. We have no other way to blind her.

Love. 'Tis all one to me.

Cun.

Cun. If thou lov'st my Life, Friend, do not forsake me now.

Love. Pray live, if you please, and give me leave to do so too. Should I again be left alone with her, the best I can hope for is Distraction.

Pru. How do you like the Niece?

Cun. She's ail Perfection.

Pru. How do you thrive? Do you find her kind, Mr. *Cunningham*?

Cun. She has promis'd me a Meeting this Afternoon, if thou canst but remove the Aunt from us.

Pru. I'll try what I can do, but Mr. *Lovemore* is the only Man in her Favour.

Cun. Dear Friend, try but this one.

Love. I'll be hang'd, drawn, and quarter'd for a Traitor first, and have my Limbs hung up for the Birds to feed upon. No, no, I have my Belly full, I thank you, and some to spare.

Pru. But now I think on't, where's this Viscount all this while? His Arrival wou'd be of great use in this Affair.

Love. *Prudence* advises well: Methinks he's long a coming.

Cun. Why, you must know, there is one *Merryman* just come up out of the Country. He is my Falconer upon occasion, the Fellow is bold, and very apt, and has not been seen much in Town. What think you of him to act awhile, till some more lucky Occasion present it self?

Love. 'Tis a lucky Thought, and may be of use. Where is he?

Jeff. In the Pantry, a ramming down a Wedge of Roast-Beef to keep out the Town Air, and making Sport with a simple Country Fellow he has brought out of the Country with him to see the Town, one *Clodpole*; he calls him.

Love.

Love. 'Twould not be amiss to examine him, and instruct him how to behave himself, before he is too much known.

Jeff. No body of the Family has seen him yet, but the Butler; and he, I know, will be secret. I'll step and call him to you, Sir, if you please?

Cun. Do so.

(Exit *Jeff.*)

In the mean time, *Prudence*, there's something to buy thee a Pair of Gloves.

(Gives her Money.)

Pru. Oh, dear Sir! how long have I deserved this? Please to command me any thing within my Power, and conclude it done.

Enter *Jeffrey* with *Merryman* dress'd like a Falconer.

Jeff. Sir, I found him just passing by the Door, and have told him part of the Business.

Love. Well, Friend, dost think thou canst act the Part of a Viscount for a little while?

Merr. What sort of a Lord is he to be?

Cun. Oh! An Amorous Resolute sort of a Person, that's much given to love Musick. You shall have all things that's fitting for a Man of such Quality.

Merr. Well, Sir, let me be once set out with a good Equipage, and leave the rest to me.

Love. Come with us, Friend, and we'll instruct thee fully in thy Part.

Merr. Well, give me but my Cue of Entrance, and let me alone to act my Part.

Cun. Let's about it then. (Exit *Lovemore*, *Cunningham*)

Jeff. *Prudence*—— and *Merryman*.

Pru. What's your Will?

Jeff. One Kiss.

Pru. Pshaw! Is that all?

(He kisses her.)

Jeff. All! I say no more, but——
Ah *Prudence*, *Prudence*!

B

Pru.

Pru. What damnable whining Tone hast thou got, ha?

Jeff. I am afraid of this Viscount, *Prudence.*

Pru. Away, you Fool; I have other things to trouble my Head withal—— Farewel.

Jeff. Adieu. (Exeunt severally.)

A C T II.

Enter Cuningham and Philadelphia.

Cun. **W**Hy, Madam, are you so unwilling to credit what my constant Passion, so long in vain, has urg'd? Do you not believe I love you? Oh! Did you but know what I endure, when you refuse to hear me, you would in Charity have some Compassion on my wounded Soul.

Phil. I dare not hear this Language from you, Sir.

Cun. What are you afraid of, Madam?

Phil. All Men say the same things, Sir, till they have won our easy Hearts to pity and believe you; then straight you slight your Conquest, and leave us to pursue our Ruin.

Cun. Be not so cruel to censure all for those Faults, which some few commit; for all, I must confess, do not stand excus'd. But, Madam, you cannot be so great a Stranger to my Love, as not to think it real; or so great an Enemy to your own Worth, to believe it has not Power to enslave a Heart, that's guarded more securely than mine—— But no more——
Your Aunt——

Enter

Enter Lady Laycock.

Lady. So Niece, I see your squeamish Stomach can digest all sorts of Diet, tho ne'er so strictly charg'd to the contrary. Mr. *Cuningham*, What Business have you with her? I wonder you are not asham'd to be always following of her at this rate, and endeavouring to take Advantage of her foolish Youth; for she is but a Girl yet, and not fit for the Conversation of a Man, nay, or indeed to be trusted with her self.

Cun. Madam——

Lady. Go, go, indeed you are much to blame; What will the World judge, think you? Or what Excuse can I make, for suffering such Doings in my House? And you, Husbwife! how dare you disobey my Commands? Is this the Respect you pay to me, and to my Quality! I believe, in a little time I must make it my whole Employ to invite home young Gallants, forsooth, to pleasure you, whilst I, as if I were your Slave, must retire, and wait till you are serv'd first. 'Tis come to a fine pass indeed; but I'll put an End to it all, and keep you always lock'd up in your Chamber, I will so.

Phil. I told you, Sir, what would be the Event of your Projects, but you would not be said nay. I must be an Instrument to make your Passion known, and none so fit to be trusted with such an Affair as I; but henceforward if you can't speak for your self, you may hang or drown, as you pretend, for me, for I'll no more get Anger for you.

Cun. What does she mean?

Lady. What's that you say?

Phil. Mr. *Cuningham* here, Madam, is always urging me to tell your Ladyship the Passion he has for you.

Lady. Saucy Slut!

B 2

Phil.

20 *The Amorous Widow : Or,*

Phil. As if he could not speak for himself, but must be still plaguing me, and swearing how long, how well, and how tenderly he loves you; then sighs and cries, *Oh Philadelphia!* Can I live without her? But she, cruel as she is, has vow'd to die unmarried.

Cun. Oh the Devil! What will become of me now?

Phil. Then raves worse, than any one in *Bedlam*, crying, And must I then lose her so? Oh! Death to all my Hopes! I must not, cannot, will not! and a thousand such like things, which I'm resolv'd never to hear again. So, Sir, don't trouble me any more, but e'en speak what you have to say to her your self.

(Exit.)

Lady. Is this true, *Mr. Cuningham*? I did not think there was a Man living, which cou'd love at that rate, and with such Constancy.

Cun. Oh! Madam! what shall I say, since all is still in vain! Your Vow, your cruel Vow, has vanquish'd all my Hopes; then where should I seek for Peace, but in my last Retreat, the Grave. Farewell; I cannot bear to stay, for every Look adds new Poisons to my Soul. *(Is going.)*

Lady. Stay, Sir—— I have made no such Vow. If your Passion——

Cun. Oh, Madam! forbear. I know your Goodness to be such, that rather, than be the Instrument of what may happen, you would seemingly comply with any thing I can ask. Pardon me, Madam, I have been too much deceiv'd already.

Lady. Pray stay, Sir, do not mistake——

Enter Philadelphia with a Piece of Poynt.

Phil. Oh, Madam, here's the finest Piece of *Poynt* I ever saw, and the cheapest; pray, Madam, look at it.

4

Lady

The Wanton Wife.

21

Lady. Saucy Intrusion. How durst you come without being call'd? How often have I told you this, you Minx: Be gone, and leave it in the next Room, till I please to come and look on't.

Phil. Madam, the Woman, that brought it is in haste, she bid me tell your Ladyship.

Lady. Let her go about her Business, if she can't wait, for I'll not come yet. *(Exit Philadelphia.)* How horribly unlucky was this to disturb me, just as I was going to tell him of my Intentions, and of my Concern for his Passion. *(Aside.)*

Cun. I believe I am troublesome, Madam. *(Is going.)* Farewel.

Lady. No, pray stay, Sir, I have something to say to you, but that young Slut interrupted me.

Cun. Oh the Devil!

Lady. But as I was going to say, I did indeed resolve not to marry any more; and when you have heard me out, you'll say I had Reason.

You must know, in my Husband *Sir Oliver's* Days, I had not that Liberty, perhaps, as other Ladies of Quality took; for, to say Truth, my airy Temper and my Youth, at that time, made my Husband grows jealous, tho' without Cause, Heaven knows.

Cun. That I dare swear, if all were of my Mind. *(Aside.)*

Lady. Which made him lead me a very uneasy Life: So that it made me resolve on many things at that time, and one was this, That if ever *Sir Oliver* should die, I never would marry again; but I don't remember that I swore to it: Or if I had, you have such a way with you, 'twould be very hard to deny you any thing, *Mr. Cuningham.*

Cun. Oh, Madam!—— Your Charity comes now too late: I am past all Hope.

B 3

Lady.

Lady. Oh, dear Sir, 'say not so ! for since you say your Disease is grown to that Extremity, that unless your Love meet Reward——

Cun. Talk not of Impossibilities. I know how much you prize your Honour ; And since you have vow'd never to marry, I have nothing left to hope for else.

Lady. 'Tis true, Mr. *Cunningham*, I would not have my Honour suffer ; but what remains beside that I can do, to save you from what may be dangerous, shall not be wanting.

Enter Prudence and Philadelphia.

Pru. Oh, Madam ! Madam ! the rarest News—— The Viscount *Sans Terre*, whom you have so long expected, is just arriv'd, and is coming hither with a huge fine Equipage, Fiddles, and other Instruments.

Lady. Oh dear ! how I'm surpriz'd ! I would not have him see me thus for all the World. *Prudence*, Set my Curls right, and alter my Knots : Quickly, don't stand fumbling—— Look if the Paint be firm.

Pru. 'Tis pretty well, Madam ; There's here and there a small Crack, but 'twill not be discern'd at distance.

Lady. Quickly, good *Prudence* : Put me a little better in Order. You'll pardon me, Sir : You see what a Fright I'm in.

Cun. Pardon, quotha ! the Devil take me, if any thing could be more freely granted. (*Aside.*)

Enter

Enter the Viscount Sans Terre, with Musick, and a good Equipage, attended by Lovemore and several Gentlemen. The Viscount sings as he enters.

A CATCH.

From the North I came,
Where I heard of the Fame
Of the Lady Laycock's Beauty ;
I had pass'd for an Ass,
Had I stay'd where I was,
And not done a Viscount's Duty.

Visc. Oh ! are these the Ladies ?
By your Favour, Sweet Lady. (*Kisses Philadelphia.*)
A delicate Morfel, by this Hand.
Madam, I see that Fame has justly spoke your Praise.
You're indeed the Wonder of all your Sex.
How fair she is !

Lady. What does he mean ?

Visc. Pray, Madam, what young Gentlewoman is that, whose matchless Beauty seems to fill the Place with more, than common Brightness ? Sure 'tis some Goddess, dropt from Heaven for Men to worship !
Fair Angel, pardon this rude Attempt :
The Honour only of your fair Hand. (*Kisses it.*)
For till I touch it, I cannot think you mortal.

Lady. Oh, dear Sir ! You make me blush.

Visc. [*To Phil.*] Pray, Lady, is this pretty young Gentlewoman your Niece ?

Phil. [*Aside.*] This Fellow must be a Fool, or he could neer mistake so grossly.

Pru. [*To Phil.*] Now we shall have rare Sport.
Sure he's blind to mistake you for your Aunt.

Love. [*To Phil.*] Pray have a little Patience, Madam, and you'll see the Event.

Visc. Lady; I bless those Stars that have directed me to so happy a Choice; therefore few Words are best. If you like me as well as I do like you, e'en send for a Parson—— *To Phil.*

Lady. Hold, Sir, sure you mistake!

Love. Now—— Now it works. [*Aside to Phil.*

Visc. What say you, Lady? Shall we—— [*To Phil.*

Lady. I can hold no longer. [*Aside.*

Pray, Sir, are not you the Viscount *Sans Terre*?

Visc. Pretty Creature, I am.

Lady. And come with an Intention——

Visc. To make this Lady, your Aunt, happy in a Husband, if she pleases.

Lady. I tell you, Sir, I am that Lady you speak of; and that is, my Niece *Philadelphia*.

Visc. Ha, ha, ha; Your Niece, quotha!

Why sure you think to put some Trick upon me.

This motherly grave Lady your Niece!

No, No; I thank you, Madam, I am not to be perswaded out of my Reason.

Lady. He makes me almost mad. [*Aside.*

I say again, that I am call'd the Lady *Laycock*; And that pert Minx my Niece; who was left in Charge with me till she be of Age.

Visc. 'Sdheart, 'tis impossible! You look Twenty Years younger than that Lady you call your Niece.

Lady. Oh, dear Sir! That indeed may well be: A great many do allow, I appear to be something younger than I altogether am.

Visc. How could I be so much mistaken!

Sure, Madam, you but jest with me.

Lady. Indeed, Sir, these Gentlemen know I speak Truth.

Cun. 'Tis very true indeed, my Lord,

Visc.

Visc. Well, since it happens so, I like it the better; for to say Truth, I had fix'd my Eye on you at my first Entrance.

Ah! wou'd 'twere over once.

Methinks I long to have thee in my Arms.

Oh! How I would employ my Faculties,

And surfeit with delight.

What say you, Lady? Never stand to consider on't,

but send for a Parson to say Grace, that I may fall to.

Odds so, I'm very hungry—— Very sharp set,

I long to be doing.

Lady. Pray, my Lord, walk in, and refresh your self after your Journey. I was unmannerly not to ask you before.

Prudence. Come hither. See that all things are in readiness. Oh, *Prudence*! I am impatient to be alone with him. *Exit Pru.*

My Lord, you will excuse the Disorder you have found me in.

Visc. Never trouble your self about it. Join but your Forces with mine, and we'll beget a Race of People, that shall be immortal. A Race, that shall create a second War with *Jove*, and raise *Olympus* top equal with the Seat of him, that hurls the Thunder.

Lady. No more, my Lord. Pray walk in.

Visc. All your Commands are absolute.

[*Exit Viscount leading the Widow, who pushes out Phil.*

Love. Was there ever such a Piece of Fly-Flesh?

Cun. The Rogue acted it to the Life, and came very seasonably to my Rescue.

Had he staid a Moment longer, I had been forc'd to have given up the Ghost.

Love. That ever Nature should suffer such a Lump of Rubbish in the World for Men to stumble over.

Cun.

Cun. Pox on her old mouldy Chops :
 She's for engrossing all to her self.
 How she thrust her Niece in before her !
 I'll in, and try to beckon her into the Garden, if
 you'll interpose, shou'd the Aunt miss her, and fol-
 low us.

Love. 'Sdeath ! Would'st have me run into the
 Lion's Den, just when I have scap'd his Paw !
 No, I have hazarded too much already to venture
 more, I thank you. I now have better Game in
 Chace.

You know pretty Mrs. Brittle, Sir Peter Pride's
 Daughter ?

Cun. What of her ?

Love. Oh, 'tis the sweetest little Creature !
 So Fair, so Witty, so Kind, and so Promising !
 I'm just now sending this Letter, in order to appoint
 a Meeting with her. But her Husband is so jealous
 (as indeed I hope to give him Cause for't) his Eye
 is hardly ever off her. I am thinking what way it
 can be deliver'd without Suspicion, Let me see——

(*Studies.*)

Cun. I'll take my Leave ; for I find I interrupt your
 Meditations.

Love. Farewel, my Friend ; and may both our
 Wishes prosper. (*Exit Cuningham.*)

Jeffrey.

Enter Jeffrey.

Jeff. Sir.

Love. Can'st thou contrive to carry this Letter to a
 young Gentlewoman, and bring an Answer, without
 being suspected ? If thou dost, *Jeffrey*, thou shalt
 be well rewarded for thy Pains.

Jeff. Is she Widow, Wife, or Maid, pray Sir ?

Love. Why dost thou ask ?

Jeff. For a private Reason I have.

Love.

Love. Well then, to satisfy thy Curiosity, *Jeffrey*,
 know she's a Wife ; a Young, a Handsome, and a
 Melting one !

I am all Ecstasy, and impatient till I possess her.
 Good *Jeffrey*, look on the Superscription, and about
 it with all Speed.

Jeff. I dare not touch it :
 Don't trust me with it.

Love. Why so, good *Jeffrey* ?

Jeff. I say again, do not trust me.

Love. Your Reason, *Jeffrey* ?

Jeff. I don't care to meddle in a Cause, where
 there's a Process of Cuckoldom going forward.

Love. Prithee, why so ?

Jeff. Why, Sir, I'll tell you. You must know,
 Sir, I love *Prudence*, my Lady *Laycock's* Woman, and
 I believe there's no Love lost between us ; nor do I
 know how soon we may exchange our Persons for
 better and for worse. Now, Sir, if I should be the
 Instrument (by carrying this Letter) of your making
 this honest Man a Cuckold, who knows but, in return
 of such a monstrous Deed, it may be my own Case
 next ; therefore, Sir, I don't care to meddle in't.

Love. Give me the Letter again ; I did but try thee.
 Thy Master, indeed, has often told me, how scrupu-
 lous thou wert about these Matters, but I ne'er be-
 liev'd it till now. Stick to thy Principles, and be
 what thou deserv'st, thou mayst come to Good at last.
 I have no farther Service at present. Prithee leave
 me, I have Business of Moment. (*Exit Jeffrey.*)
 I had been finely serv'd if I had sent this conscientious
 Rogue. What shall I do ? The Viscount brought an
 ignorant Country Fellow up with him, that won't
 be suspected in the least. 'Tis well thought of ; I'll
 entrust him, and send it immediately. Soft——
 Who comes here ?—— Oh ! 'tis the Husband.

Enter

Enter Barnaby Brittle.

Your Servant, Mr. *Brittle* ; is the Lady *Laycock* at home, can you tell ?

Britt. Yes, yes, I believe she is.

Love. I have a little Business, and must needs speak with her. Sir, your Servant.

Britt. A little Business, quotha !

A fine Trade this doating old Widow drives ; my House is become as common for all Commers and Goers, as the *Mail* or *Spring-Garden* : But I shall put a stop to it in a little time, I believe.

Enter Mrs. Brittle in haste, dress'd very airy ; he stops her.

Britt. How now—— Whither away in such haste ?

Mrs. Britt. I'm going abroad, Husband. Good bye.

Britt. Hold, hold, by your Leave, I'll know for what, and whither your sweet Ladyship is going ?

Mrs. Britt. Why, to the Play, sweet Husband.

Britt. Hum ! to the Play.

Mrs. Britt. Well, Good bye, Husband—— I shall be too late, and then there'll be such crowding, I shan't get the first Row in the Box, for 'tis a new Play ; and I had as lief not go, as sit behind.

(Is going.)

Britt. Hold, hold, pray stay, if you please.

Mrs. Britt. Indeed but I can't.

Britt. Indeed but you must not go, Wife.

Mrs. Britt. Indeed, Husband, but I shall.

Britt. I say again, you must not.

Mrs. Britt. Must not ! Who shall hinder me ?

Britt. Why, that will I.

Mrs. Britt. I say, No.

Britt.

Britt. But I say, Yes.

Mrs. Britt. Don't you pretend to't.

Britt. Don't you provoke me, I say. Is this the Trade you always intend to drive ?

Mrs. Britt. Yes indeed is it.

Britt. I say, No.

Mrs. Britt. But I say, Yes. Do you think you shall keep me always stifling within Doors, where there's no body to be seen but your old fusty self ? No, I'll to the Play, where there's all sorts of Company and Diversion ; where the Actors represent all the Briskness and Gaiety of Life and Pleasure ; where one is entertain'd with airy Beaux, and fine Gallants, which ogle, sigh, and talk the prettiest things in the World. Methinks 'tis rare to hear a young brisk Fellow court a handsome young Lass, and she all the while making such pretty dumb Signs : first turns aside to see who observes, then spreads her Fan before her Face, heaves up her Breasts, and sighs—— at which he still swears he loves her above all the World—— and presses hard his Suit ; tells her, what Force her Beauty, her Wit, her Shape, her Mien, all join'd in one, are of. At which she blushing curtesies low, and to her self replies, What charming Words he speaks ! his Person's Heavenly, and his Voice Divine. By your Leave, Husband, you make me stay long.

(Is going.)

Britt. Not in the least—— there will be no great miss of you, if you don't go. And now you talk of Gallants, blest us ! —— What a Dress is there ! Do you think that fit for a Tradesman's Wife ?

Mrs. Britt. No ; —— but I think it fit for Sir *Peter Pride's* Daughter, such as I am. I warrant you'd have me go abroad like one, that sells Butter and Eggs—— Or like one that cries, Come buy my dainty fine pickled Cucumbers : No, no, I'm resolv'd to dress—— put on all the Airs I can—— go abroad

Brin. Not in the least — I'm not
 mits of you, if you don't go. — Well, what
 Gallons, shall we? — Do you think that for a Tatchell?
 Do you think that for a Tatchell? — but I think you
 Brin. Peter's Daughter, such as I am, I think
 you'd have me go ahead like one, that's
 and eggs — Or like one that cracks its
 my duty has kicked Cucumbers: No, no, I'm
 told to do — put on all the Ains I can — go
 away

Brin. I say, No.
 Brin. Why, that will I.
 Brin. Moll, not! Who shall hinder me?
 Brin. I say again, you must not.
 Brin. Indeed, Husband, but I shall.
 Brin. Indeed but you must not go, Willie.
 Brin. Indeed but I can't.
 Brin. Hold, hold, pray say, if you please.
 (It goes.)
 Brin. and I had as lief not go, as sit behind.
 I shall be too late, and then there'll be such crowding,
 Mr. Brin. Well, Good bye, Husband — I
 Brin. Hark! to the Play.
 Mr. Brin. Why, to the Play, (sweet Husband),
 what, and whether your sweet Ladyship is going
 Brin. Hold, hold, by your leave, I'll know her
 Mr. Brin. I'm going with you, Husband.
 Brin. How now — (It's a pity you're such a fellow)

I hop to it —
 Goats, as the
 Hounds is the
 A fine thing
 with her
 Look, I
 Brin. Yes
 You

30 *The Amorous Widow: Or,*

abroad—— see and be seen—— take my Fill of Pleasure, and not be shut up in a Nunnery, to pine and sigh, and waste my youthful Days in fruitless Wishes: No, I'm not so weary of my Life yet, tho' you do all you can to make me so. And I would have you to know, tho you have forc'd me to wed my self with old Age and ill Humours, I am not wedded to my Grave!——'tis time enough forty Years hence to think of that, and I have a great deal to do before that time comes; therefore I must, and I will go abroad.

Britt. Stir one Step if you dare (*Spits in his Fist.* If you go to that, I'll try who wears the Breeches, you or I. You shall stay at home, and keep me Company; I'll spoil your going to Plays, your Appointments, and your Intrigues—— I'll make you know, that I am your Husband, and that you shall do what I please. Slife, What's here to do! What, have you forgot your Marriage Vows already? Pray, who am I? Am I not your Husband? Are you not married to me?

Mrs. Britt. No—— You forc'd me; I never gave you my Consent in Word or in Deed. Could you think I was in Love with Avarice, with Age and Impotence?

Britt. Give me Patience! How! How!

Mrs. Britt. No, you basely bought me of my Father and Mother.

Britt. Would I could sell thee again.

Mrs. Britt. Like a Slave you bought me, and so you intend to use me, were I Fool enough, but I'll see you hang'd first.

Britt. Why, what will your sweet Ladyship do? I bought you, you say?

Mrs. Britt. Yes; Had you my Consent? or did you once ask it? Or if you had, my Affections were plac'd elsewhere, and so they shall remain.

The Wanton Wife.

In spight of all your Threats and boasted Power! I'll not be us'd at this Rate!

Britt. Good lack!

Mrs. Britt. I that am a Gentlewoman, descended from the worshipful Family of the *Pride's* by the Father's side——

Britt. Ay, so 'tis a sign by your Dress. *Pride's*, quotha!

Mrs. Britt. And a Gentlewoman descended from the Honourable Family of the *Laycock's* by the Mother's side.

(*She Cries.*

And to be us'd at this Rate by an old nasty Shop-keeper!

I might have married a Merchant, and have kept my Glas Coach, my tall Footmen in fine Liveries, have gone abroad when I pleas'd without Controul, visited Quality, nay, took Place of 'em at the Play-house, and met with Respect from the best; and is it come to this? But I'll to my honourable Father and Mother, and tell 'em all, who, I'm sure, won't suffer their Daughter to be thus abus'd. (*Cries still.*

I cannot, nor will not endure it any longer. (*Exit.*

Britt. This 'tis for a Tradesman to marry a Gentlewoman. A Curse on such Gentility! What shall I do? I shall be damnably plagu'd with her Father and Mother. Well, next Month I must take up in *Bedlam*; a Judgment, which every Citizen deserves, that marries above his Quality. (*Exit.*

A C T

A C T III.

SCENE, *A Street before a Glass-Shop.**Enter Brittle Solus.*

WELL ! What a Plague 'tis to be married !
 I must incorporate with one above my Quality too, and not be content with something in my own Sphere, like one that had a Mind to live in Peace and Quietness, but nothing would serve me but a Gentlewoman, altho I took her with never a Tatter to her Back, forsooth ; and now, I think, I'm fitted with a Vengeance. Would I were but fairly rid of her, and her Gentility once, the Devil should take all such Gentility before I'd ever concern my self with it again. But who have we here ?

Enter Clodpole as out of Brittle's House, looking about him as afraid to be seen.

Clod. Hush !—— Softly !—— Mum—— No body sees—— Ha, ha, ha—— No body sees ! Softly !—— Ods my Life, who's that ?—— Mum !—— Not a Word.—— *(Is stealing off.)*

Britt. Friend, hilt—— Friend—— Pray stay a little ; What Business might you have in that House ?

Clod. Wou'd you know now ? Softly !—— Not a Word. Ha, ha, ha, you understand me.

Britt. But you must know——

Clod. Yes, yes, I do know already, but am not such a Fool to tell you. You shan't get a Word out of me. You understand me.

Britt.

Britt. Yes, very well, but——

Clod. Softly !—— not a Word.

Britt. I know that ; but who was you to speak with in that House ?

Clod. Softly !—— Can no body hear ? For you must know, the old Cuckold of that House, they say, is damnably given to be jealous ; I would not for ne'er so much he should see me.

Britt. No, no, I'll warrant you.

Clod. You must not say any thing——

Britt. No, no, not a Word.

Clod. His Wife's a main pretty smirking Rogue, as a Man would wish to lay his Leg o'er.

Softly !—— Is no body coming ?

Britt. I'll warrant thee—— Prithee go on.

Clod. What ? you want to know all, do you ? But I'll not trust you. Mum ! not a Word. You understand me.

Britt. Yes, yes, I understand you well enough—— but you may trust me, I shan't say a Word.

Clod. Why luck now !—— Ha, ha, ha, Wou'd you, would you ? But you shall get nothing out of me.

I'll warrant you'd have me tell you now, that I brought a Letter to the Gentlewoman of that House——

Britt. Hum !

Clod. And that I deliver'd it to none but her self—— as I was order'd——

Britt. So.

Clod. You understand me ?

Britt. Yes, yes, perfectly well.

Clod. And that I stay'd for an Answer——

Britt. Well, and I hope you got one ?

Clod. Mum ! not a Syllable ! no body must know !—— If it should come to the Knowledge of the Cuckold her Husband, 'twill spoil all.

Britt. Oh never fear.

C

Clod.

34 *The Amorous Widow : Or,*

Clod. You'll say nothing of what I have told you?

Britt. No, no, not a Word.

Clod. For you must know, Mr. *Lovemore* charg'd me, when he sent me, to say never a Word.

Britt. Is the Gentleman's Name *Lovemore*, say you?

Clod. Why, do you know him?

Britt. Oh, very well; a tall, proper, handsome Man, and always very generous.

Clod. The same, the same.

Britt. And lives just——

Clod. At the lower end of this Street on t'other side of the way, over against the *Golden Ball*.
I find you do know him.

Britt. Know him! Why he's my very good Friend. A Pox of all such Friendship. (*Aside.*)

Clod. Odd, he's a fine Gentleman as ever I met with in all my Life.

Britt. Yes, yes, he's a very fine Gentleman indeed. I wou'd the Devil had him. (*Aside.*)

Clod. He gave me this Piece of Gold to carry a Letter for him, which I deliver'd to the Gentlewoman of that House but now.

Britt. Oh, he's a very civil Gentleman; I have been long acquainted with him.

Well, and what Answer did you get
A very pleasing one, I'll warrant you.

Clod. Softly, you must not tell a Syllable of this to the Husband, nor that she'll send my Master an Answer, as soon as ever she can get the Cuckold out of the way. But no body must know. You understand me.

Britt. Oh, I'll keep your Counsel, never fear.

Clod. She bad me tell him, she'd meet him this Evening, if she can.

Britt. Ay.

4

Clod.

The Wanton Wife.

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Clod. And that she's very sensibly ob—ob—obliged to him, for his Kindness to her.

Britt. Ay, no doubt on't.

Clod. And takes it mighty kind of him.

Britt. She does. -

Clod. Odd, she's a pretty Bit; and then there's a handsome Maid that waits upon her, and is Assistant to her in these Matters, one *Dam—Damaris*, I think they call her.

Britt. Ay, like enough.

Clod. And you must know I like her hugely. She gave me Two or Three such loving Looks, that I am half persuaded she likes me. So that if my Master gets acquainted with the Mistress, I intend to strike in with her Maid.

Britt. Oh, all but Reason.

Clod. But no body must know of it.
You understand me.

Well, good bye to you. My Master will wonder I stay so long. Be sure you say nothing now.
You understand me.

Britt. Yes, yes, I do so; farewell. (*Exit.*)

Well, *Barnaby Brittle*, now thou see'st what comes of marrying of a Gentlewoman. I believe thou wilt be married to something else in a little time, if thou art not so already.
(*Points to his Head.*)

Enter Sir Peter Pride and Lady Pride.

Sir Pet. You seem disorder'd, Son-in-law.

Britt. And I have Reason to be so, if ever any Man had.
(*Walks to and fro in a hurry.*)

Lady. Good lack! And why so short, Son-in-law?

Britt. I shall grow taller in a little time, Good Mother-in-law, if this Trade holds. (*Points to his Head.*)

Sir Peter. Explain your Meaning, Son-in-law.

Britt. 'Twill explain it self shortly. (*Walks up and down.*)
C 2
Lady

Lady. What, is that Hat of yours nail'd on? Do you know who we are? And the Respect due to Persons of our Quality, good Son-in-law?

Britt. Ah! wou'd I did not; but now I know to my Sorrow, since you will have me speak, good Mother-in-law.

Lady. Will you never leave that saucy Word, of calling me Mother-in-law?

Britt. Good Lord! Why what must I call you then?

Lady. You ought to say, Madam and Sir, when you speak to us; or when you speak of us, you should say, Sir *Peter*, and her Ladyship: For tho' you have married our Daughter, yet there is a great deal of distinction betwixt you and Persons of our Rank and Quality.

Sir Peter. Go to, it is enough for me to let him know his Duty, without your Instructions. Sure, I best know my self what to do. Son-in-law, you are an impudent Fellow to use us at this rate. How often must we put you in mind of your Duty and Respect, e'er you'll know it? Hence-forward learn to behave your self as you ought, or you shall hear on't in other sort of Terms. You must not think because you've married our Daughter, that we will be satisfied with such indifferent Ceremonies and Duty you might have paid, had you married one equal with your self; nor ought you indeed to say, your Wife, when you speak of our Daughter.

Britt. Good lack! — Is not your Daughter my Wife?

Sir Peter. She is. — But you ought not to call her so.

Britt. I know that too well, now 'tis too late. I'd give a thousand Pounds she were not my Wife.

Sir Peter. At it again? I tell you, tho' you have married her, yet as she is our Daughter, you must not treat her after that familiar way. *Britt*

Britt. You make me mad — Is not my Wife my Wife?

Sir Peter. I tell you, tho' she be your Wife, you must not call her so. When you speak of her, as being our Daughter, you must say, Madam.

Britt. Well, Madam, then since it must be Madam, I did not care if she were a Dutcheß, so I were but fairly rid of her.

Here's such a stir about your Gentility, and your Honour: But I believe if I had not married your Daughter, and with my good Money redeem'd your Estate, your Gentility had been left in the Mud — for all your great Families, and your nice Honour.

Sir Peter. Then do you think it no Honour to be ally'd to the Worshipful Family of the *Pride's*.

Lady. And to the Honourable Family of the *Laycock's*? Go, Clown. 'Tis a Shame our Daughter should be wedded to such a Brute. We have been told at what a rate you treat her. What is the Reason of it, Son-in-law?

Britt. Why, you shall know, good Mother-in-law.

Lady. Again at that affronting way!

How often have you been told to say, Madam?

Britt. Well, Madam, then: I always forget these fine Words. But, Madam, if you wou'd please, Madam, to hear me speak, you shall know, Madam, whether I have not Cause to wish, I never had seen my Wi — your Daughter, Madam, if I must call her nothing else.

Sir Peter. Well, Sir, proceed.

Britt. Why, in the first Place, I am in a fair way to be made a Cuckold, if I am not one already.

Sir Peter. How, Son-in-law? Have a Care what you say.

Britt. Believe me, what I say, I can make appear.

Sir Peter. Do it then presently.

Britt. Why, she has just now receiv'd a Letter from her Gallant, and made an Appointment to meet him this Evening ; and judge how small a time a Pair of Horns are a grafting.

Sir Peter. How came you to know this, Son-in-law ?

Britt. Why, just now—— I caught the Fellow, that brought her the Letter, coming out of my House, and not knowing who I was, I got out of him all the Business ; and that his Master, Mr. *Lovemore*——

Sir Peter. Is that the Gentleman's Name ?

Britt. Yes, so his Man told me. I have often seen him taking a View about my House, and looking up to the Windows ; and 'tis plain what his Designs were.

Lady. If this be true, I'll tear her Eyes out.

Sir Peter. Nay, if it be, this good Sword (never yet drawn in vain) shall do you Right.

Where is she, Son-in-law.

Britt. Within, I'll warrant, studying what Excuse to make, to get abroad, and meet her Gallant.

Lady. I'll call her to answer for her self.

Be sure you wrong her not, Son-in-law. (*Exit Lady.*)

Britt. Nay, nay, I make no doubt but she is to be believ'd before me ; and she ne'er wants Cunning to bring her self off, I'll say that for her, tho' the Case be ne'er so plain.

Sir Peter. By this good Light, if she dares be false to her Marriage Vows, she dies ; and that base Rascal of her Fame shall bear her Company.

Britt. Oh ! Here he comes ; that Spoiler of my Honour ; that's he.

Enter Lovemore. Sir Peter meets him. They stare each other i'th' Face.

Sir Peter. Do you know who I am, Sir ?

Love. I don't well remember I ever had much Acquaintance with you.

Sir

Sir Peter. I am call'd *Sir Peter Pride*.

Love. It may be so : I've heard of you, Sir.

Sir Peter. My Family, Sir, has stood these many Years with unblemish'd Fame and Honour.

Love. Very likely, Sir.

Sir Peter. How far you have endeavour'd to stain that spotless Fame, be judge your self.

Love. Pray, Sir, explain this Riddle.

Sir Peter. I have a Daughter young, fair, well-bred, has Sense ; she is indeed the Wonder of her Sex, and this Man, whom you see here, has the Honour to be married to her.

Britt. Ah ! 'Tis an Honour, that I cou'd have spar'd. (*Aside.*)

Sir Peter. Now, Sir, I'm told, that you endeavour to corrupt her Honour, and detile her Marriage-Bed. Sir, I have had the Honour to command abroad, and with Success, both to my King and my Country—— As have also the Chief Part of all our great Race ; even from *William the Conqueror*, to this present Reign, have our unquestion'd Glories stood a Pattern to our yet rising Fame : And he who dares presume to rob us of that precious Jewel, Honour, must not think to scape unpunish'd, tho' with the Hazard o'th' last Drop of Blood, that is left, to wash off the Stain. My Daughter's Honour, Sir, is as dear to me, as this vital Air, by which I breath and live.

Love. Pray Sir, who told you this ?

Sir Peter. Believe me, Sir, whate'er I say, I can quote my Author for it.

Love. Then who-ever told you is a Rascal ; and were he here, I'd ram the Lie down his Throat, or make him eat a Piece of my Sword.

Sir Peter. Why he told me—— This Man—— Her Husband here justified it to my Face, and said he had Proof.

C 4

Love,

Love. How, Sir! Did you frame this abominable Falshood? 'Tis well you have the Honour to be ally'd to this worthy Knight, Sir *Peter Pride*, here; or you should know what it is to father such a Lie upon a Man of my Reputation.

Sir *Peter.* Oh! Here comes my Daughter.

Enter Lady Pride, Mrs. Brittle, and Damaris.

Love. Did you, Madam, tell your Husband a strange Story, that I should make Love to you, and endeavour'd to corrupt your Honour?

Mrs. Britt. I tell him! Why, when did you make Love to me, Sir? I assure you, had you let me know of your Passion, it shou'd not have gone unrewarded. Pray, next time you send, let it be one that knows how to take more Care. However, you have no great Reason to despair; for since he complains without any manner of Reason, I am resolv'd he shall have Cause. Therefore if you do love me, Sir, pray let me know it, and I do assure you, you shall not want Encouragement. He shall not use me at this rate for nothing.

Love. Madam, believe me, 'tis all a Riddle to me; for, till this Hour, I never heard any thing mention'd like it: I am an absolute Stranger to it.

Lady. Do you hear that, you Clown? Are you not ashamed to abuse a Gentlewoman continually, without any Cause?

Sir *Peter.* What is the Meaning of this, Son-in-law?

Britt. Pray, do but hear me.

Sir *Peter.* Troth, Son-in-law, you are a very impudent Fellow.

Britt. Hear me but speak?

Sir *Peter.* You shall not speak. We have heard too much already.

Mrs.

Mrs. Britt. I am sure *Damaris* knows, I never have any body comes near me, but such as himself; nor ever receiv'd any Message, either by Letter, or otherwise——

I never committed any Crime against him, that I know of, unless sitting by my self all Day, and poring over two or three good Books be an Offence. Speak, *Damaris*, did I ever give him any Cause for these Suspicions, and this Usage? Thou know'st all I say or do.

Damaris. Madam, I know no Reason; nor can I bear to see the Hardship you endure! Like a barbarous Man as he is—— To abuse so good a Lady! so Virtuous, so Innocent, and so Pious a Lady! I am sure it makes me weep to think on't—— I am afraid he'll break her Heart in a little time, if——

(Weeps.)

Britt. Hold your Tongue, you Jade, or I'll make you feel my double Fist. You are not a Gentlewoman——

I may do what I please with you.

Mrs. Britt. Oh, my dear Father! *(Cries.)* I am not able to endure this any longer. Never was any Woman abus'd as I am. I beg you will do me Justice, for I can bear it no longer. *(Exit crying.)*

Lady. Damaris, let's follow her, and endeavour to comfort her. Oh, thou Clown, to use a Gentlewoman with so much Cruelty!

Dam. I fear he'll be the Death of her at one time or another. *(Exeunt Lady Pride and Damaris.)*

Sir *Peter.* What do you think of all this, Sir? Are not you a very pretty Fellow? Come hither, Son-in-law, ask this Gentleman Pardon, for the Affront you have put upon him in belying of him.

Britt. How! ask his Pardon, that would have made me a Cuckold?

Love

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Love. Sir Peter, pray——

Sir Peter. I say no more Words: He has wrong'd a Gentleman; and the least he can do, is begging Pardon.

Britt. 'Tis very well! He offends, and I must ask Pardon.

Sir Peter. No matter for that, you hear he denies it; and 'tis enough, if a Gentleman unfays what he has said.

Britt. So that if I catch him making me a Cuckold, and he denies it, I must not believe it, because a Gentleman said it.

Sir Peter. I say, you shall ask Pardon: Therefore no more Words, but do't.

Britt. I shall run mad.

Well, what must I do?

Sir Peter. Come hither: Take your Hat off—— Kneel down, and say after me.

Britt. Well, since it must be so—— (*Kneels.*)

This 'tis to be marry'd to a Gentlewoman, forsooth.

Sir Peter. Sir, I ask your Pardon.

Britt. Sir, I ask your Pardon. (*In the same Tone.*)

Sir Peter. For the Affront I have put upon you.

Britt. For the Affront I have put upon you.

Sir Peter. By falsely accusing you——

Britt. How! falsely accusing him!

Sir Peter. I say no more Words. Say after me.

Britt. Say after me.

Sir Peter. Accusing you, of having a Design to corrupt my Wife's Honour.

Britt. Accusing you of Truth—— And having a Design to corrupt my Wife's Honour.

Sir Peter. For which, knowing my self in the wrong, I do ask your Pardon.

Britt. For which, knowing my self not in the wrong, I'm forc'd to ask your Pardon.

Love.

Love. Well, Sir, upon Sir Peter Pride's Account, I am content to pass it by this time: But let me hear no more Complaints. (*Brittle rises, and runs off.*)

Sir Peter. Sir, now all is well, I humbly take my Leave. (*Exit Sir Peter.*)

Love. Was there ever such a lucky Rogue as I? For her to encourage me to make Love to her before her Husband's Face!

Nay, and before her Father and Mother too!

Oh, I am all on Fire till I have her in my Arms!

But soft! who comes here?

Enter Prudence.

Well, my little Scout, what News? How fares my Friend? Is *Philadelphia* kind? Where's thy Lady?

Pru. Where-e'er her Person is, I'm sure her best Thoughts are still employ'd on you. And however she may pretend a Passion for Mr. *Cunningham*, she loves none but you. Pray, Sir, do but try her.

Love. Oh racking Thought! I'd rather make Love to a Convocation of Cats at a Witch's Up-fitting, than but speak to her. Where's my Friend? Oh! here he comes, and his fair Comfort.

Enter Cunningham and Philadelphia.

Cun. Be not so cruel to say, you want the Power: If we neglect this Opportunity, which kindly presents it self, the next perhaps may not be ours.

Phil. Would you then have me dispose of my self without my Aunt's Consent? Do not urge me to that, since I have promised not to wed without it.

Cun. I ask not her Consent, but yours: Grant me but that, and leave the rest to Time and Chance.

Pru. Madam, how can you deny him that, since I know you love him?

Cun.

44 *The Amorous Widow : Or,*

Cun. Ha! Oh, the charming Sound!
And will you not consent to make me happy?
Or do you not believe I love you?
By all those Fires that burn within my Soul, I
swear——

Pru. Hold! Hold, Sir! You have sworn enough
already to corrupt a whole Nunnery of Sighing,
Praying and Wishing young Votaries. Why don't you
give him your Hand, since he has your Heart. I be-
lieve you love to hear him swear and—— Give him
your Hand, or, I'll discover all.

Phil. Well, there 'tis then; (*Gives her Hand to*
Cunningham.

But I promise nothing else. I fear I have given too
much already.

Cun. Oh, never! never! I'll pay thee back so vast
a store of Love and Constancy, as shall weary thee
with still receiving.

Pru. Madam, Madam, your Aunt's behind you.

Enter Widow.

Phil. Ha! My Aunt! What shall I do?

Cun. Fear nothing, Madam, but give me your
Hand.

I'll bring all off. (*Pretends to tell her Fortune.*
This Line seems to Point out some unexpected Cross:
And this Line thwarting the Line of Life, signifies a
retir'd Life; and this joining with it, shews you'll
be in Danger of ending the latter part of your Days
in a Nunnery. (*Widow behind them.*

Widow. How, Mr. *Cunningham*! Can you tell For-
tunes?

Cun. I understand a little Palmistry, Madam, and
can give a Ghess at Physiognomy.

Widow. 'Tis very well.
When I enter'd first, I thought you had been making
Love

The Wanton Wife. 45

Love to my Neice: I am glad to find it otherwise.
But where's the Viscount?

Pru. In the next Room, Madam.

Love. I'll wait upon him: I'd feign try whether
his Inside be answerable to his outward Appearance.
(*Is going.*

Cun. Nay, prithee stay; I can assure you, he is
not to be equall'd either in Person or Discourse.

Pru. He is indeed a fine proper Man, as one would
wish to see.

Widow. Why, really his Lordship has Parts.

Phil. You and *Prudence* go find him out, and
bear him Company awhile; I'll wait on him imme-
diately, tell him. You, Sir, may go with 'em, if
you please. (*To Lovemore.*

Love. Madam, most willingly.

Cun. 'Sdeath! You won't leave me? (*Aside to*
Lovemore.

Love. Faith, but I will; dost think I'll stay to en-
dure a second Hell? For if there be one upon Earth,
'tis being left alone with her.

Madam, Your Ladyship shall ever command me. (*To*
the Widow.

Come, Lady, if you please, the Honour of your fair
Hand. (*To Phil.*

(*Exit with Phil. and Pru.*

Cun. What will become of me now? (*Aside.*

Widow. Well, Mr. *Cunningham*, I have long'd for some
time to be alone with you, that I might speak more
freely to you.

Cun. Madam, 'tis too great an Honour.

Widow. I wonder, Sir, you never think of Mar-
rying?

Cun. Madam, as yet I dare not think on't.

Widow. Oh, dear Sir! Pray, why so?

Cun. Because I have not well consider'd it; and I
have been told, 'tis a dangerous Undertaking, without
having well thought before-hand. (*Widow.*

46 *The Amorous Widow: Or,*

Widow. Pray, Sir, why should you think so ?
I'll vow 'tis an odd Thought, Sir, for one of your Understanding : Why, Sir, I'll tell you.
I have had Three Husbands, and yet I have no great Reason to complain : Tho' in my last Husband's time, I had not altogether that real Satisfaction, as I had with the other Two; for to deal freely with you, Sir, my Husband Sir *Oliver Laycock*, though he was a very well-bred Man, yet he had his Humours sometimes, and would be a little given to Jealousy, so that I seldom led a quiet Hour when the Fit was upon him. But in my first Husband's Days, sure never Woman liv'd so happy ! I would not a-been unmarried to have had all the Riches of the Earth laid at my Feet : But when I married with Sir *Oliver*, and had once seen his Temper, nothing I had in the World but what I would a given to a been free again ; and indeed in my Passion I often vow'd never (if please Heav'n Sir *Oliver* died) to marry any more.

Cun. 'Twas rashly done.

But no doubt, were there that Man fitting to merit your Favour, and equally deserving your Person and your Estate, and one whom your Ladyship could like, you might perhaps be persuaded to break your Vow, and venture once again.

Widow. I'll swear I hardly think it, and yet one don't know how one may be tempted ; tho' if I were to be persuaded, (and I will not forswear any thing) I know not any one, that can so soon persuade me to it as you, Mr. *Cunningham*.

Cun. Death and the Devil ! What have I brought upon my self !

(*Aside.*)

Oh Madam ! You make me blush.

But Madam ! How cou'd you with Honour put off the Viscount, who you know loves you, and is come on purpose to marry you ?

Wid.

The Wanton Wife. 47

Wid. Why, I intend him for my Niece you must know, who no doubt will be much better pleas'd with the Change. For, to say Truth, Mr. *Cunningham*, I have always had more, than a common Esteem for you, and for your Behaviour ; and have long since resolv'd, that if I do alter my Condition, you are the Man alone I have plac'd my Thoughts upon.

Cun. You make me blush, Madam.

Wou'd I were a League under-ground, or in any Hell but this.

(*Aside.*)

You cannot sure.

(*To her.*)

Wid. I vow 'tis true, and yet——

Cun. Hear me but speak, Madam ?

Wid. 'Tis odd, that Love shou'd over-power People at so strange a rate.

Cun. But I should be unjust to my Friend, who I know loves you dearer, than his Life.

Wid. Oh dear ! Who's that I beseech you, Sir ?

Cun. Mr. *Lovemore*, Madam.

Widow. Mr. *Lovemore* ! I'll swear I don't believe it.

Cun. Oh Madam ! 'tis but too true, as will appear I'm afraid, when he knows you place your Affections on any other Man.

Widow. I'll vow you much surprize me, Mr. *Cunningham* ; but how came you to know it ?

Cun. Oft has he begg'd me to bear him Company in some lonely Place, where he wou'd sigh, and tell such things of his distressed Passion, as wou'd have mov'd the most obdurate Heart ; and when I ask'd him, why he did not acquaint your Ladyship with his Love, he would sigh, with Arms a-crofs, as if his Heart would force its way through his Breast, and cry, Oh that's my Grief, my Friend, I cannot—— dare not tell her ! for should I attempt it once, and meet her scorn, (for oh ! thou know'st her Vow) I shou'd be for ever lost.

Then

48 *The Amorous Widow : Or,*

Then ran o'er a thousand Tales of Love, so soft, so moving, and how he priz'd you, that cannot be express'd by any, except one, who loves like him.

Widow. Truly, Sir, if it be so——

Cun. If it be so ! were your Ladyship to observe his distracted Throes, you'd pity him.

Widow. But why should he not declare it to me ?

Cun. That's what I tell him, Madam ; Urging that your Ladyship—— But mum ! who have we here ?

Enter Viscount, Philadelphia and Prudence.

Visc. Ha ! Whispering ! And so close ! I like it not.

Widow. The Viscount ! this is unlucky. He looks disturb'd ! Good Sir, some other time we'll end this Discourse. *(to Cuningham.)*

Visc. Ha ! What are you, Sir ? that thus dares to encroach upon my Territories, and invade my Right ?

Widow. Nay, pray my Lord, be not displeas'd. This Gentleman, you must know, has a Law-suit depending, and is come to entreat a Line of Commendation from me to my Lawyer.

Visc. Enough ; I do believe all you can say. Ah ! those Eyes of yours ! What Looks are there ! they enflame my very Soul.

Widow. Ah, *Prudence*, how I long to be alone with him.

Visc. I am impatient of this Delay, when shall we be married ?

Widow. Pray moderate your Passion, Sir.

Visc. What, you are afraid of that melancholy Gentleman, that stands so silently there.

Widow. Speak softly, I am afraid he hears you, Sir.

Visc. What care I if he does.

4

Enter.

The Wanton Wife.

49

Enter a Servant.

Serv. My Lord, the Dancers you spoke for, wait without.

Visc. Let 'em enter. Will you please to sit, Ladies ?

A DANCE.

Widow. *Prudence*, go tell Mr. Lovemore, I'd speak with him this Evening. *(Exit Prudence.)*

Phil.— you may take a Turn in the Garden. And, Sir, if you think it no Trouble, you may bear her Company. *(To Cuningham.)*

Cun. Madam, most willingly. *(Exit with Phil.)*

Widow. Why are you so melancholy, my Lord ?

Visc. Nothing that's worth the naming. But if you'll walk into the next Room, I'll tell you.

Widow. My Lord, you are a Man of Honour, and I dare trust my self with you.

Visc. Madam, if I deserve it not, may you always keep a Whip and a Bell, to scourge me from you like a Cur.

A C T IV.

Enter Clodpole and Damaris: He gives her a Letter.

Dam. YOU are a fine Spark, are you not, to discover all the Business, and let it come to my Master's Hearing ?

Clod. Why ay, that's true, as you say ; but who would have thought that he could have known it ! But now to our own Business, *Damaris*——

D

Doſt

50 *The Amorous Widow : Or,*

Dost thou not love me, *Damaris*?
Thou know'st I love thee with all my Heart.
Good lack! How it beats!— Odd, you may hear it
thump all over the House.

Damaris— How can'st thou be so hard-hearted?

Dam. Pshaw! Prithee leave fooling.

Clod. One Kiss, *Damaris*, to revive me.

(Kisses her.)

Dam. Pray, *Clodpole*, be civil.

Clod. *Damaris*!— Canst thou not spare a little
Bit afore-hand?

Dam. Of what, Fool?

Clod. Why, of— Odd, you know well enough.
What, I need not name it to thee.

Dam. I know nothing of the Matter.

Clod. Ay, but you do. Why, I ask but a little
tiney, tiney Bit. Do, prithee now do.

Dam. I'll see you at the Devil first.

Clod. Do, *Damaris*— Spare but a Bit now; and
bate me as much on the Wedding-Night.

Dam. No, I thank you, good *Clodpole*: I have too
often been snapt that way already. *(Aside.)*

But see— yonder comes my Lady and my Master—
Step with me into the next Room, he must not see you.

Clod. Ay, any where, any where: Quickly, good
Damaris. *(Exit.)*

Enter Barnaby Brittle and Mrs. Brittle.

Britt. I tell you again, that Marriage is a very
sacred Thing, and ought not to be profan'd at this
Rate.

Mrs. Britt. What do you tell me of Marriage, I
have other things to mind.

Britt. Truly, I do believe as much; that's the
truest Word you ever spoke: But I think you ought
to mind what I say. Am I not your Husband? And
are

The Wanton Wife.

51

are not you bound in Duty by that Tye, to be obedient
and just in all your Ways?

*Enter Lovemore on the other side bowing. She sees
him, and Curtesies to him.*

What's that for? What, do you banter me?

Mrs. Britt. Keep your Instructions for those that
want 'em, my Thoughts are other ways employ'd.

*(She Curtesies, Lovemore bows. Brittle sees him
not, and thinks she does it in scorn to him.)*

Britt. What, you are practising your Airs against
you meet your Gallant, are you? And trying how to
behave your self to him? But I shall spoil your De-
sign, I shall. *(He Bows, she Curtesies again.)*

Leave off your Tricks with a Vengeance, and mind
what I say to you. *(Lovemore keeps Bowing to her.)*
Again, don't provoke me; I say, don't; if you do,
you may chance to repent it. I say, that Mar-
riage—

Mrs. Britt. I know it, Dear; you need say no
more.

*(She takes Brittle round the Neck, and beckons
Lovemore, who comes and kisses her Hand over
her Husband's Shoulders all the while.)*

You know I love you dearly, by this I do. *(Kisses him.)*
Why will you not be satisfied? Had I the World to
give, it cou'd not make me more happy than this
Minute. *(Lovemore still kisses her Hand.)*

Britt. Ah dissembling Crocodile?

What, now you think to wheedle me.

Mrs. Britt. Be satisfied with this: Hence forward,
if you deserve it, I give you my Heart for ever,
which, till this Minute, I did not think to do.

(She speaks to Lovemore.)
Britt. Ah, would 'twere in your Power to keep your
Word.

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52 *The Amorous Widow : Or,*

Mrs. Britt. Indeed I will, let that content you ; and learn to merit that rich Jewel, which this Moment I put within your Power.

(Beckons Lovemore, who bows, and Exit.)

Britt. If thou would'st be thus kind always, how happy should I be ! But that's impossible ! Would you but think sometimes upon the Vow you made in Church, that solemn Vow of Marriage, 'twould put you in Mind of your Duty.

Mrs. Britt. How can I think of any thing, when you will not give me leave so much as to peep abroad for Air ? Do you think a Woman can ever be in a good Humour, that is lock'd up, and kept from what she likes ? But I'm resolv'd to bear it no longer.

(She walks backward and forward.)

Britt. Good luck ! What's your Mind chang'd already ? I thought 'twas too good to last long.

Mrs. Britt. But hence-forward you shan't think to make a Fool of me at this rate. I'll find a way to get out, for all your Spies ; and then look to't— I'll use you as you deserve.

Britt. Tempt me no farther, I beseech you ; if you do, I shall use you as you deserve. Patience ! and I have need enough of it at this time.

Mrs. Britt. I'm resolv'd to encourage every Man, that makes Love to me. I'll kiss and be wanton, since you provoke me to't. Love, and be belov'd—— and not be subject to the nasty Humours of an old Jealous—— I can't find a Name bad enough for thee.

(He spits in his Hand.)

Britt. Odd, I've a great Mind to spoil that handsome Face. The Devil tempts me strangely : I must be gone, ; for if I stay, I shall certainly be provok'd to do her a Mischief.

(Runs off.)

Enter.

The Wanton Wife.

53

Enter Damaris with a Letter.

Dam. I waited till my Master was gone, to deliver you this Letter ; Madam, Mr. Lovemore's Man is within, and waits for an Answer.

Mrs. Britt. Give it me, *Damaris*, quickly.

Dam. I need not bid you read it, since you know from whom it comes.

Mrs. Britt. Oh ! 'tis extremely pretty, *Damaris*. I'll in, and write an Answer presently. *(Exit.)*

Dam. So she has snapt the Bait at the first Angling ; how she'll get clear of the Hook, I know not. Ha ! he's here himself !

Enter Lovemore and Clodpole.

Love. Pretty Mrs. *Damaris*, I'm glad to see you. Is your Lady within ?

Dam. Yes, Sir, writing an Answer to your Letter, I suppose. You see, I deliver'd it with Care.

Love. Oh, I understand you ; there's for thy Pains. *(Gives her Money, she puts her Hand behind her, and takes it.)*

Dam. Oh, dear Sir, by no means. But since you will have it so, pray command me.

Love. Can't thou contrive to let me speak with thy Mistress ?

Dam. If you please, Sir, I'll shew you to her.

Love. Thou wilt oblige me for ever.

(Exit Love. and Dam.)

Clod. Hift ! *Damaris* !—— Odd, I shall have a rare Wife of her, if she gets Money so fast. Here's a piece of Gold got without the least Trouble, as they say. But softly !—— Who have we here ?

D 3

Enter

Enter Brittle.

Oh! are you there, Mr. *Babbler*? You are a pretty Fellow indeed; you have made fine Work! You cannot be told a Secret, but you must tell the Husband presently. You understand me.

Britt. Who, I tell the Husband, Friend!

Clod. Yes, you; but I'll see you hang'd before you shall get any thing more out of me. You have made fine Work! All's discover'd!—The Cuckold, her Husband, knows all the Business.

Britt. Well, but—

Clod. You may as well hold your Tongue, for you shan't get a Word out of me.

No, no, I have found you out, P'faith.

Britt. This Fellow may be useful to affirm it to her Father and Mother. I'll try to bribe him. (*Aside.*

(*Puts his Hand in his Pocket to give him Money.* Why look you, Friend, I'm sorry this Matter is—

Clod. Mum! You understand me.

I know what you'd say now, but 'twill not do. You'd have me to tell you what I know, but Mum!—Softly!—Not a Word. I'll warrant, you'd have me tell you what Answer she gave to the Letter.

Britt. No, no, Friend; but—

Clod. Softly!—You shall get nothing out of me. You think I'll tell you now, that the Wife promis'd to meet him, and that they are together now in that Room; but I'm not such a Fool. No, no, you'll tell the Husband again; you cannot be secret, and so good bye to you. You shall get nothing out of me. You understand me. (*Exit.*

Britt. I'm sorry I can't make that use of him as I intended; but however, he has discover'd something to me, that may do as well. He said her Gallant is with her now; I'll listen. (*Goes to the Door.*

Oh

Oh Sadness! 'tis but too true. Here's fine Doings. But I'll send for her Parents. Now they shall see who's in the wrong, and who's in the right. She can't scape me now, unless the Devil assist her; and see where they come in a lucky Hour.

Enter Sir Peter Pride and Lady P.

Father-in-law, you're welcome; and you, Madam. I'm glad you are come, I was just going to send for you.

Sir Peter. Why, what's the Matter, Son-in-law?

Britt. Now you see what a fine Daughter you have.

Sir Peter. What! more Complaints! What is the Reason of all this?

Britt. Do but hear me, and you shall know.

Here has been her Gallant, and—

Sir Peter. Son-in-law, I'll not believe it. Will you never leave this fooling? We'll hear no more.

Britt. No, no; I knew you wou'd never believe a Word I say; but she can be credited, because she's a Gentlewoman, forsooth. Now you shall see what a Gentlewoman I have got for a Wife. I have her fast now, fast in that Room with her Gallant, and that I hope will convince you.

Lady. 'Tis false, thou base Villain. I know she scorns to do so base a thing.

Britt. Pray now don't believe me, but walk in: If you find it not true, never mind any thing I say, as long as I live.

Sir Peter. Lead, Son-in-law. If I find 'em together, by this good Sword they both shall die.

Lady. But if 'tis not so, which I do believe 'tis only your Jealousy again, look to your self; Son-in-law, I'll suffer these Affronts no longer.

D 4

Britt.

56 *The Amorous Widow : Or,*

Britt. If they are not there now, I am a very Villain.
Come along—— Softly—— (*They all go in.*)

SCENE Changes to a Chamber, and discovers Lovemore, Mrs. Brittle, and Damaris.

Love. You question your own Power, when you mistrust my Honour, Madam. Such Charms can never want Force to allay all Thoughts of wronging so much Goodness.

Mrs. Britt. Well, Sir, I do believe you to be a Man of Honour, and hope you will not wrong my good Opinion.

Enter Sir Peter, Lady Pride and Brittle, behind them.
They grow enrag'd to see 'em together, and make Signs of Revenge. Sir Peter lays his Hand upon his Sword.

Therefore meet me this Evening at the Garden-Door about Nine, and there we'll discourse farther: If I find what you say be real, perhaps I may be prevail'd upon to venture farther.

Love. Madam, you bless me! (*Kisses her Hand.*)

Britt. Have a little Patience——
Let's draw nearer, and hear what they say.

(*They go nearer.*)
Dam. Oh Madam! Madam! my Master, Sir Peter, and my Lady, are just behind you.

Mrs. Britt. Ha! undone for ever!

Love. What will become of me then?

Mrs. Britt. Let me alone to bring it off.

(*To Love. Aside.*)
Be not you surpriz'd at any thing I say, but seem to humour it. I'll

The Wanton Wife. 57

I'll hear no more. (*Seems to be angry with Lovemore.*)
What do you tell me of your being amaz'd! Did you ever see any thing in me, that cou'd encourage you to believe I was that Woman you took me for? I'll warrant you thought, because I seem'd to give you Encouragement before my Husband Yesterday, when he had enrag'd me, that I was in earnest?

(*They over-hear, seem angry, and to threaten Brittle, who pretends by Signs to excuse himself.*)

Love. What mean you, Madam? (*Confusedly.*)

Mrs. Britt. But you will find your self deceiv'd: For tho' my Husband gives me Provocations to use him at any rate, yet, Sir, I'd have you to know, I scorn Revenge; and will not be brib'd to stain my Honour, tho' all the Wealth of the whole World were laid at my Feet.

Lady. Do you hear that, Son-in-law?

(*They still threaten, he looks sneakingly.*)

Mrs. Britt. No, Sir, my honourable Parents brought me up with the strictest Care; taught me the nice Paths that lead to Everlasting Fame and Glory: And he, who dares attempt to make me lose my Way, deserves to be us'd thus, thus, and thus, Sir.

(*Gets near Sir Peter, snatches his Cane, and runs at Lovemore, who gets behind Brittle. She beats Brittle unmercifully, while Lovemore gets off.*)

Britt. Oh, Hold! Hold! What, will you murder me? (*Brittle rubs his Shoulders.*)

Sir Peter. Troth, Son-in-law, she serv'd you right.

Lady. You have not half what you deserve; And I cou'd find in my Heart to——

Sir Peter. Let him alone: I'll correct him.
Son-in-law, You are a very impudent Fellow to use your Wife thus. What can you say for your self? (*Feels his Arms and Head.*)

Britt. Say for my self! Why, I say, 'tis all a Trick—
And a Contrivance to blind the Matter.

Sir

And a Conscience to blind the Master

Why, I say, 'tis all a Trick —

(Feels but does not know)

What can you say for this?

Non-indeed, You are a very impudent Fellow

Sir Peter, let him alone: I'll control him

And I could bid in my heart to —

Lady, You have not half what you should have

Sir Peter, Trust, Sir Andrew, I'll control him

me:

But, Oh, Hold! Hold! What's that?

Brish name, you know, I'll control him

we have not half what you should have

(You must be a Fool)

Let's see what you can do

who has not half what you should have

Let's see what you can do

Let's see what you can do

Let's see what you can do

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Let's see what you can do

Let's see what you can do

He not you surpris'd at any thing I say, but seem to

(To love, Adieu)

What Brisk, let me alone to bring it off

I am, What will become of me then?

What Brisk, Ha! undone for ever!

and my Lady, are just behind you

Down, Oh Madam! Madam! my Master, Sir Peter

(They go aside)

Let's draw nearer, and hear what they say

Brisk, Have a little Patience —

Lady, Madam, you bid's me!

(Kisses her hand)

upon to venture farther

And what you say be true, perhaps I may be prevail'd

about Nine, and there we'll discourse further: If I

Therefore meet me this Evening at the Golden Lion

Stead

Sir Peter, Sir Peter, Sir Peter, Sir Peter, Sir Peter

They grow weary'd to see her repeat the same

Enter Sir Peter, Lady, Sir Peter, Sir Peter, Sir Peter

good Opinion

Mist of Honour, and hope you will be pleas'd to

much Goodness

My Brisk, Well, Sir, I'll be pleas'd to

for want Force to bring it off

without my Honour

Lady, You shall see

Damian

over, Lovemore

Scene's Change

some along —

William

Brisk, If you will

26

58 *The Amorous Widow: Or,*

Sir Peter. Is it not plain, you have wrong'd her?
Do you not see she is a virtuous and a good Wife?

Lady. Too good for him, a Clown.

Britt. Well, well, I am over-reach'd, I see.

Sir Peter. Son-in-law, I charge you let me hear
no more of this. And instantly ask your Wife's
Pardon.

Britt. How, Sir!

Mrs. Britt. Oh! let him alone; 'twill be to no
purpose.

I'm a little out of Order.

Damaris, Lead me to my Chamber.

(Exeunt with Damaris.)

Sir Peter. I say follow her, and ask her Pardon.

Britt. If I do, the Curse of Cuckoldom fall upon
me.

(Runs out another way.)

Lady. Ah, graceless Clown.

Come, Sir Peter, let's follow, and see how she does.
(Are going.)

Enter Prudence.

Pru. Madam, my Lady presents her Service to
your Ladyship and Sir Peter; and would desire your
good Company at a Ball the Viscount treats her with.

Lady. Our humble Thanks to her Ladyship.
We will not fail to wait upon her.

(Exeunt Sir Peter and Lady.)

Enter Widow, meeting Lovemore.

Widow. Oh, Mr. Lovemore! I have expected you;
I am glad you're come.

Love. Madam, Your Ladyship does me too much
Honour.

Pray, Madam, when saw you Mr. Cuningham?

Widow. Oh, Sir! He has told me all.

And now you talk of Mr. Cuningham— Prudence,
go

The Wanton Wife.

59

go find out my Niece, and have an Eye over her.

(Exit Pru.)

Well, Sir, I am sorry you shou'd make your self so
great a Stranger to me. In such Cafes I am not un-
grateful. And where Love is real, there's a double
Obligation.

Love. Ha! What does she mean by Love and dou-
ble Obligations?

(Aside.)

Widow. I see indeed you seem to be in some Disor-
der, that I should know it; but had you let me know
it sooner, I shou'd perhaps have sav'd you a great
many Sighs and Heart-Akings, which your Bashful-
ness has caus'd.

Love. Sure she's mad! *[Aside.]* Madam—

Widow. And yet 'tis never too late to serve a Friend,
and one that loves so dearly: Nor am I yet so far
engag'd, but I can pity, nay make Return, when Love
is sincere, and so constant.

Love. Madam, you much amaze me!
Nor can I guess what you drive at!

Widow. Ah, dear Sir! I know you are unwilling
to let me know it: But shall I be sincere in asking
you one Question?

Love. Most freely; so it be not any thing that
leads me farther into the dark.

Widow. Do you not love me, Sir?

Love. Love you, Madam! Why truly I hate no
body.

Widow. Well, but love me so, that it much disturbs
you, and that you fear I am engag'd to another.

Love. The Devil take me if I ever lov'd you, or
can think what you wou'd be at.

Widow. Nay, I was told you would deny it,
But pray, Sir, tell me truly; for indeed, Sir, I am
sorry you should suffer for my Sake. And should
you do otherwise than well, I vow it would be a
Means of giving me disquiet as long as I live.

Love

60 *The Amorous Widow : Or,*

Love. Pray, Madam, who told you this?

Widow. Your Friend Mr. *Cunningham*, who is much concern'd for you, Sir. And since you find it is discover'd, you need not be asham'd to own the Truth.

Enters Prudence, and listens.

Love. Faith, Madam, to deal freely with you, you're abus'd; for hang me if ever I had a thought that way, nor do I love you, or ever can.

Widow. You're pleas'd to be merry, Sir; but I must tell you, I have observ'd it in your Looks; and since it is so, own it boldly to the World, and I promise you, I'll not be asham'd, nor disown mine. Come, come, Mr. *Lovemore*, you must not deny me that, for since I dare own it, why should you think it still amiss?

Love. Well! Since all must out, prepare to hear me.

Mr. *Cunningham* has begun, and I must make an End. You must know, Madam, Mr. *Cunningham* loves you to that degree himself, that he's asham'd, knowing how near a-kin he is to you, to let you know it, and so has form'd this Story upon me, the better to make for him.

Widow. Mr. *Cunningham* a-kin to me, Sir!

Love. Ay, Madam, your Nephew, your Brother's Son, whom he had in *Paris* by Madam *D'Olone*, but for some Reason he since has chang'd his Name.

Widow. Truly, Sir, you surprize me much! My Brother in *Paris* I heard had a Son, but what became of him I know not.

Love. Madam, this *Cunningham*, my Friend, has the Misfortune (Misfortune I think it, and he thinks so too, because he loves so dearly) to be related to you.

Widow.

The Wanton Wife. 61

Widow. I'm sorry, if he does love so well, that he shou'd be so near a-kin.

Pru. Madam, Mr. *Cunningham* is just come in.

Love. I'll leave you, Madam, for I have a little Business that I must dispatch— Besides, 'twou'd not be convenient for me to interrupt what Disputes you two may have.

Widow. Sir, your Servant.

(*As he goes out, meets Cunningham entering.*)

Love. Had you no body to put your Tricks on, but me?

But I think I have been even with you. (*Exit Love.*)

Cun. What can he mean?

Widow. Mr. *Cunningham*, you do not deal like a Friend by me; you might have trusted me with a Secret of greater weight.

Cun. I do not understand you, Madam! What has he been saying to her? (*Aside.*)

Widow. You knew one Mrs. *D'Olone*, I suppose?

Cun. What shall I say now? (*Aside.*)

Pru. Was your Brother then Mrs. *D'Olone's* Husband, Madam, and Mr. *Cunningham's* Father?

Widow. Who bid you speak? Yes he was. What then?

Cun. Oh, I begin to smoke it. (*Aside.*)

Pru. Nothing, Madam, but then Mr. *Cunningham* is your Nephew.

Widow. Indeed, I wish he were not; but since it is so, we must be satisfied with our Fate, Mr. *Cunningham*: Tho' you are much to blame, Sir, you did not let me know it sooner before Matters went so far.

Cun. Madam, I confess my Fault, and do ask your Ladyship's Forgiveness.

Enter

Enter Philadelphia.

Widow. Well, Mr. *Cunningham*, since you are my Nephew, we may venture to embrace without a Blush.

(She embraces him.)

Phil. Is Mr. *Cunningham* your Nephew, Madam?

Widow. Yes, Mistress Pert, what then?

Phil. Then he's my Cousin, and I may embrace him too.

(Runs and embraces each other.)

Cun. Ay, my dear, dear Cousin.

Widow. Why how now saucy, impertinent Slut. How dare you take this Liberty?

Phil. Why, is there any Harm in embracing one's own Cousin?

Widow. Get you in, Hussy, and dare not to come but when I call you.

Pru. He's none of your Cousin, Madam.

(Aside to Phil. as she goes out.)

Phil. I know it. I met Mr. *Lovemore* laughing by the way, who told me all. Adieu, my dear Cousin

(Exit.)

Cun. My charming Cousin, farewell.

Widow. I'll swear, Mr. *Cunningham*, you'll spoil that Girl.

Methinks you embrac'd her something of the hardest.

(Seems disturb'd.)

I call her Girl, and yet she's near five and twenty— But as I was going to tell you, Sir, You must know, this Brother was not indeed my own Brother, but something a kin afar off: He was my first Husband's first Wife's Brother, and no kin to me. But because my Husband us'd to call him Brother, I would sometimes do so too; and by this Means was thought, by those that knew no other, to be my Brother.

Pru. Then he is not so near a-kin, but he may marry your Ladyship?

*Cun.**Cun.* Oh!——*(Sighs.)**Widow.* Why, truly, Mr. *Cunningham*——*Enter Jeffrey in haste.*

Jeff. Sir, your Lawyer bid me tell you, your Cause is just now coming on; and if you do not appear, you'll be non-suited.

Widow. Dear Sir, do not neglect your Business, nor let your being a-kin trouble you.

When next I see you.

Cun. Oh, Madam! Wou'd I had never seen you, then I'd been happy; but where the Tye of Blood bars our Hopes, there's nothing but Despair in view. Madam, farewell.

Find some way to excuse me, you Dog, or I'll cut your Throat.

(To Jeffrey as he goes out.)

Jeff. What shall I say?

(Aside.)

My Master has begun a Lie, and I must end it.

Widow. Come hither, *Jeffrey*. Dost think thy Master loves me so well as he says?

Jeff. Faith, Madam, I believe he loves your Ladyship but too well! But Mr. *Lovemore* dies, unless you take pity on him.

Widow. Dost think he loves me better, than thy Master?

Jeff. Oh, Madam! They ought not to be nam'd together. Mr. *Lovemore*, poor Gentleman, is perfectly beside himself about it.

Widow. Didst ever hear 'em talk about me?

Jeff. A thousand times. Mr. *Lovemore* can talk of nothing else.

Widow. 'Tis strange he should deny it to me.

Jeff. You must know, Madam, my Master was in Love else-where.

Widow. How *Jeffrey*.

Jeff.

64 *The Amorous Widow : Or,*

Jeff. If your Ladyship will have Patience to hear me out, you shall know the whole Story.

Widow. With all my Heart, *Jeffrey.*

Jeff. Why, you must know, Madam, my Master had the Misfortune to quarrel with a Gentleman, who urg'd him to fight; my Master kill'd him: Upon which he was forc'd to change his Habit and his Name—— From *Cunningham* to *Boutefeu*. But thinking it not safe to stay here, fled; and in his Journey happen'd into a Viscount's Castle, but the Viscount was gone a Journey. However, this Viscount had a very beautiful Sister, that had the Command in her Brother's Absence; she entertain'd my Master very splendidly: At last he fell in love with her, and she with him.

Widow. Methinks she was very forward, *Jeffrey.*

Jeff. She was so indeed, Madam; for before my Master left her, she prov'd with Child.

Widow. How! with Child, and not married, *Jeffrey!*

Jeff. My Master had promis'd her Marriage, Madam.

Widow. Oh, the impudent Creature! And thy Master was to blame, not to keep his Word, *Jeffrey.*

Jeff. Not at all, Madam, when you have heard all. You must know, my Master grew jealous of one of the Servants, as indeed he had Reason: And one Day pretended to ride out, and he shou'd not return that Night, but left me to let him in, when the Servants were all a-bed, which I did. Going up to this Lady's Bed-Chamber, and not being expected that Night, found the Servant in Bed with her.

Widow. Unheard-of Impudence!
At first I was going to condemn thy Master, for deceiving a young Creature; but 'tis likely he was not the first, that had to do with her.

Jeff.

The Wanton Wife. 65

Jeff. Very likely so, Madam. Next Day my Master was for packing up his Awls, and for going; she cry'd, and urg'd his stay, and his Vows to marry her.

Widow. He had been more to blame to have done that.

Jeff. In the mean time the Viscount return'd, found his Sister in Tears, wou'd know the Reason, was told all. He swore, if ever he could get hold of him, he'd hang him at his Castle Gate, but my Master was got off safe. What it will come to, if they should ever meet, I know not, but fear the Event.

Pru. A well invented Lye the Rogue has told. (*Aside!*) What was this Viscount's Name?

Jeff. The Viscount *Sans-Terre*, I think he was call'd.

Pru. The Viscount *Sans-Terre!*

Widow. Why, he's in this House.

Jeff. What, in this very House?

Pru. In this very House; in the next Room.

Jeff. Ah, my poor Master! he's but a dead Man; if he's found; for he'll certainly be hang'd.

Pru. Here he comes. Hold your Peace!

Enter Viscount.

Widow. My Lord, your Servant. I have a Question to ask of you.

Jeff. What shall I do to make him understand?
(*Aside!*)

Humour her in all she says, my Lord.

Visc. Ask what thou wilt, I'll deny thee nothing.

Widow. You had a Sister.

Visc. I had so. Go on.

Widow. And she was unfortunately wrong'd by a base Fellow.

Visc. What must I say next?

E.

Pru.

66 *The Amorous Widow : Or,*

Pru. 'Twas not well done to debauch her, and then to leave her ; but Woe be to him, if your Lordship catch him.

Visc. If ever I do find the Son of a Whore, I'll hang him at my Castle Gate.

Widow. He was very much to blame indeed ; but yet, all things consider'd, he was not in all the Blame neither, counting what a Trick she play'd him. He had reason to question, whether the Child was his, or not.

Visc. I'm quite at a Loss. Oh ! tell me what I must say next? *(Faints into Jeffrey's Arms, who instructs him.)*

Jeff. Take it in your Ear, my Lord. *(Aside.)*

Widow. Help, Prudence, my Lord faints.

Pru. Pray, Madam, don't come too near, but give him Air. *(Prudence and Jeffrey tell him what to say.)*

Widow. Oh ! he recovers.

Visc. Give me a little Air. I beg your Pardon, I never hear my Sister's Wrongs mention'd, but it puts me in Disorder ; but if ever I do light upon the Villain, Woe be to him.

Widow. I'll try to get his Pardon. *(Aside.)* My Lord, methinks her Crime being the greatest, you might pardon him.

Visc. What ! Pardon him, that has deflower'd my Sister, got her with Child of a Bastard, and stain'd the Honour of our great Family ! No, tho' all the World should plead for him, I'll not forgive it ; he dies.

Widow. Good, my Lord, for my Sake.

Visc. 'Tis all in vain, Lady. I'm told he's now in this House, and has chang'd his Name. But if I find him—— *(Draws.)*

Widow. Oh hold, my Lord, I must save him. *(Aside.)* My Lord, I have but one Request more.

Visc. 'Twill be in vain : I'll have Revenge.

Pru.

The Wanton Wife. 67

Pru. Tell him you'll marry him, Madam, and try what that will do. *(Aside to the Widow.)*

Widow. Give me this Gentleman's Life, and I am content to be your Wife ; otherwise——

Visc. 'Tis a hard Request ; but to shew how much I love you, upon that Condition I grant it.

(Puts up his Sword.)

Widow. Or, if you think fit, you shall have my Niece *Philadelphia*, and with her I'll give you ten thousand Pounds.

Visc. Do you think my Love so poor, that 'twill be brib'd ? Nay, then I recal my Promise. He dies this Hour. *(Draws and searches about.)*

Pru. Oh, pray my Lord, forbear ; my Lady did it but to try you ! See, you fright her.

Widow. Well, my Lord, since it must be so, my Chaplain is within, I'm contented he shou'd make us one, make good but your Promise.

Visc. I confirm it here. *(Kisses her.)*

Pru. My Lord, the Dancers are ready to begin, and all the Company stay for you.

Visc. Let 'em enter, and begin when they please.

Enter Sir Peter Pride, Lady Pride, Lovemore, Mrs. Brittle, Cuningham and Philadelphia.

Love. Well, Madam, I rely upon your Promise.

(To Mrs. Brittle.)

Visc. Come, Gentlemen and Ladies, pray sit.

(They Sit.)

A D A N C E.

E 2

After

After the Dance, Enter Barnaby Brittle, who runs after his Wife; they get between, he gets hold of her, and carries her off after Speaking.

Britt. Here's fine Doings! But I'll spoil your Sport: What! my House is become a Music-house, is it? But, Gentlewoman, I have something to say to you within.

Omnes. How now! What's the Meaning of this?

Britt. I say, my Wife——

Om. What of your Wife?

Britt. Shall keep me Company, if you please.

Om. You Company!

Cun. What's the matter with the Fellow? ha!

Britt. Come along, I say. What's here to do! Is not a Man's Wife his Wife? And may he not do what he will with her? *(Carries her off.)*

Sir Peter. He's at his old Tricks again.

Widow. Come, let's in, and endeavour to appease him, and then end our Mirth with a Banquet.

Cun. We attend your Ladyship.

Widow. Pray, my Lord, do me the favour to lead my Sister in.

Come, Gentlemen.

Visc. Hold there, I will not part with you; I have two Hands, Madam, and can lead you both.

(Exeunt Omnes.)

A C T

A C T V.

Enter Cuningham, Philadelphia and Jeffrey.

Jeff. FEAR nothing; by what I could learn, by this time the old Lady is gone to her Chamber, or near being a bed.

Cun. Then we may have Time to talk more freely.

Phil. All is not so safe as you imagine. I fear another Storm before we yet can land. I know not by what means, but the Viscount is discover'd to be a Counterfeit, which I have all along suspected; but whether 'tis come to the Knowledge of my Aunt yet, I know not.

Cun. Therefore let's lose no time, but tie that Knot, which joins our Hearts and Hands for ever: That once over, we have no farther need of the Viscount.

Enter Lovemore, and the Viscount enrag'd, with Lights before 'em.

Visc. Never persuade me; I'll not stay to be fool'd at this rate any longer.— Go lead, Sirrah.

(Exit with Links.)

Cun. What's the Matter now?

Love. Matter! Why there's Matter enough in hand. We are all undone; the Match is broke off again, and you are like to lose your Mistress. The Widow will not consent you shall marry her Niece, upon which, the Viscount enrag'd, (as indeed he has Cause) is resolv'd to stay no longer. What 'twill come to, I know not.

70 *The Amorous Widow : Or,*

Cun. This is most unlucky. What's to be thought on next?

Love. I left *Prudence* reasoning the Case with her; what will be the Conclusion, is most uncertain. Oh! here she comes.

Enter Prudence.

Pru. Oh, Madam! the saddest News!

Phil. Why? What's the Matter?

Pru. All the Business is over. Poor Mr. *Cuning-*
bam—

Phil. Ha! What of him? Speak.

Pru. After a thousand Arguments, which I us'd to persuade her, she has at last resolv'd—— I can't speak it.

Phil. On what? Prithee out with it.

Pru. Why, to marry the Viscount her self, and give you and your ten thousand Pounds to Mr. *Cuning-*
bam.

Cun. Oh the bless'd News! What say you now, Madam?

Phil. I'll swear I was in a Fright at first. But art thou sure she'll hold in this Mind?

Love. For fear of the worst, get all things ready, and let it be done this Moment.

Pru. Here she comes. Seem concern'd to part with her, Sir, and try how she stands resolv'd.

Enter Widow.

Cun. And must I then lose her, *Prudence*! Oh, the racking Thought! Hard! Hard! Decree of Fate! To part with all I hold most dear! I cannot bear it.

(Walks about.)

Widow. Yes, Mr. *Cuningbam*, our Stars will have it so.

'Tis

The Wanton Wife.

71

'Tis hard indeed to part: But since there is no way left to save your Life, (which more than all the World I prize) but this only, I have at last resolv'd (tho' much against my Will) to give my self to the Viscount.

Cun. Oh! do not name it, Madam, the very Thought is worse, than Death.

Widow. I'm sorry we are so near a kin, but that's not the chief Reason; your Vow to marry another, and yet when I consider she was false, and had to do with more, than one, and that the Child might as well not be yours, I think you were in the right to part: So I am content (since my Hopes are lost) that you shou'd marry with my Niece. But believe me, you do not know how much I'm troubled, to see another take what I so much desir'd. But we must endeavour to be satisfied.

Cun. Never! Never! for since I lose you, farewell to Love and Joy: The rest of Life I'll waste in Sor-

Enter Clodpole, whispers Lovemore.

Clod. Softly! *Damaris* bad me tell you, that her Mistress stays for you at the Garden Door.

Love. Oh, very well. I'll go this Moment.

Pru. But what will you do to recal the Viscount, Madam, who left the House in Anger, nor told any one what his Designs were?

Love. I heard him bid the Link-boy lead to the Devil Tavern. If you please, thither we'll go, and conclude upon the Matter. A Glass or two of Wine may fetch him about again.

Widow. Truly, Mr. *Lovemore*, I'm much oblig'd to you, and shall endeavour to return your friendly Advice. I hope we shall live as loving Neighbours ought, but now we lose time. The Viscount may perhaps be gone, should we stay longer.

E 4

Love.

Love. I'll but give some Directions to my Man, and be there almost as soon as you.

Widow. You will oblige us, Sir.

(Exit all but Love. and Clod.)

Clod. 'Tis main dark, nothing to be seen but the Sky and Stars. What can this Darknefs portend ! The Almanicks this Year say, That many things will be huddled in the dark.

Love. Why, thou art an Astrologer, *Clodpole*, thou talk'st so learnedly.

Clod. Why, truly I am but a Piece of one ; but had I been a great Schollard, I believe I shou'd have thought on things, that never had been thought on before.

Love. Very likely, truly. But hark ! What Noise is that ? There's *Brittle's* House ; may be she is coming out.

Enter Mrs. Brittle and Damaris.

Mrs. Britt. Softly *Damaris*, just shut the Door, we'll not be far from it.

Dam. Is your Husband fast, Madam ?

Mrs. Britt. I would not stir till I saw him asleep ; he's snoring like one that's drunk.

Love. That's her Voice. Madam, where are you ?

Dam. There they are, Madam.

Mrs. Britt. You find, Sir, I am as good as my Word. I hope you are a Man of Honour, as you say ; yet were it to do again, I should hardly venture such another bold Attempt.

Love. Fear nothing, Madam. Your Person and your Honour both are safe, whilst I am your Guard. Can none over-hear us ?

Mrs. Britt. All the Family, but *Damaris* and I, are gone to Bed ; nor dare we be long from thence, lest my Husband should wake, and miss me.

Love,

Love. Talk not of parting e'er we well are met ; that were unkind, Madam.

If you please, Madam, to walk a little farther this way, here's a Place more private, than the rest, and will best besit our Discourse.

Mrs. Britt. Well, Sir, I'll not question your Honour any more, but trust my self with you ; as you behave your self now, expect a greater Liberty another time.

Love. I'll warrant you : This way, my Charmer.
(He leads her out ; she takes hold of Damaris, who follows.)

Mrs. Britt. *Damaris !*

Dam. I'm here, Madam.

(Clodpole feels with his Stick for Damaris.)

Clod. *Damaris !*—— Softly !—— *Damaris !*——
Damaris !

Enter Brittle, groping in the dark in a Cap and a Night-Gown.

Britt. Where can she be gone at this time of Night ? I heard her steal down ; I'll listen.

Clod. *Damaris*, Where art thou, *Damaris !*——
Odd, 'tis main dark.

Britt. Who have we here ? Here's something more than ordinary. But I'll draw nearer.

(Goes towards him.)

Clod. *Damaris*, Where art thou ?

Britt. Here. *(In a low Voice : Clodpole feels him with his Stick, thinks 'tis Damaris.)*

Clod. Oh ! art thou there ?

Well, *Damaris*, must not thee and I follow the Example of thy Mistress, and my Master ? I'll warrant they'll be hugeous kind to one another ; for my Master, you must know, has a mighty Love for her, and so belike she has for him ; or else she wou'd ne'er a left her Husband a-bed to a come to him. *Britt.*

74 *The Amorous Widow : Or,*

Britt. Oh horrid ! 'tis so. (*Aside.*)

Clod. How he snores now, if a Body were to hear him ! Poor Cuckold ! He little dreams what his Wife and my Master are doing. Ha, ha, ha.

Britt. Oh ! this is my Country Chap again. (*Aside.*)

Clod. Poor Cuckold, 'tis good enough for him. For as they say, he uses her mighty ill. But, *Damaris*, must thee and I part thus ? One little Bit to stay my Stomach, *Damaris* : 'Tis fit, we should follow our Leaders.

(*Goes to Kiss.*)

Britt. I can hold no longer. Who goes there ?

(*Hits him a Box.*)

Clod. Odd so ! Oh ! Oh ! Who's that ? Oh !

Puts his Stick a-cross, and in running out-stops against the Scenes ; at last gets off.

Britt. So—— He's gone. Here's a Discovery at last ! Here's a fine Virtuous Wife for you ! But now all will out in spite of her. I'll send instantly for her Parents ; they shall see now who's in the right. Oh bless us ! What, make her Husband a Cuckold ! Oh ! Monstrous !

(*Goes to the Door, and calls.*)

Jeremy ! the Varlet's a-sleep, I'll warrant. Jeremy, I say.

(*Jer. above*) Do you call, Sir ?

Britt. Yes, I do call. Come down quickly, I must send you to my Father-in-law's.

Jer. I come, Sir. (*Puts a Rope out, and slides down.*)

Britt. Make haste, Sirrah. How long you are coming. Ah ! Villain !

(*Jeremy treads upon his Toes, and gets from him.*) You have trod upon my Corns, and lam'd me.

Come hither, and be hang'd.

Jer. I dare not, Sir ; you'll beat me.

Britt. Ah ! 'tis well I stand in need of thee.

(*Comes to him.*)

Run to my Father and Mother-in-Law, and tell 'em, I intreat to speak with 'em this Moment ; tell 'em I'll never

The Wanton Wife. 75

never trouble 'em again as long as I live ; beg 'em by all means to come.

Jer. Yes, Sir. (*Exit.*)

Britt. Now they shall see what a Daughter they have.

Now I shall sure convince 'em of their Error !

But I hear some body coming !

May be I shall make a farther Discovery. (*Stands aside.*)

Enter Lovemore, Mrs. Brittle, Damaris, and Clodpole.

Mrs. Britt. Nay, Sir, I've stay'd long enough for one time : Should my Husband wake, and miss me, I were undone.

I must be gone.

Love. Stay one Minute longer, I beseech you, Madam.

I have not told you yet——

Mrs. Britt. No more, Sir, if you love me. Farewel.

Love. Oh, stay ! How can you go, and leave me so soon ?

You will have time enough to lie by that dull, stupid Clod, your Husband, e'er the Morning : Methinks I grudge him the least Look of you, since he knows not how to value so rich a Jewel. Let him live, and pore o'er his Bags, his Dross, and worldly Gains, whilst we know better how to waste our youthful Hours in softest Kisses, and everlasting Joys.

Britt. Oh, blasting Sound ! But I have heard enough.

Now to my Post.

(*Exit.*)

Mrs. Britt. Good Night, Sir : Now I must be gone.

Love. When shall I be thus bless'd again ?

Mrs.

76 *The Amorous Widow : Or,*

Mrs. Britt. To Morrow I'll send for you ; and, if possible, appoint another Meeting.

Love. Till then, ten thousand Angels wait on thee. One Kiss e'er we part. *(Kisses her.)*

Oh, I could dwell for ever on thy Lips !

Sure, there's Enchantment on 'em.

Mrs. Britt. Farewell !

Love. Adieu, my lovely Charmer. *(Exit with Clod.)*

Mrs. Britt. Now, *Damaris*, let's steal in : Softly ! Softly !

Dam. O Lord, Madam ! We are undone ! The Door is fast since we have been out.

(Pushes against it.)

Mrs. Britt. What shall we do now, *Damaris* ?

Dam. I wish my Master has not been down.

Mrs. Britt. Let's call *Jeremy* softly.

Both. *Jeremy ! Jeremy !*

(They both call up to the Window in a soft Tone.)

Brittle at the Window above.

Britt. *Jeremy ! Jeremy !* *(In their Tone.)*

Dam. Oh, Madam, my Master !

Mrs. Britt. Lost ! Undone for ever !

Britt. Ah ! Ha ! my sweet Lady ! Have I caught you at last !

Jeremy ! Jeremy !

Where has your sweet Ladyship been, I pray, that you are so afraid of being discover'd ? Come, I know you have a Lie in readiness : Let's have it.

Mrs. Britt. No where but just with *Damaris*, to take a little of the fresh Air ; that's all, indeed, sweet Husband.

Britt. To take the fresh Air, quotha !

Ah, I rather believe 'twas to take a Heat, you Witch you.

Mrs.

The Wanton Wife. 77

Mrs. Britt. Pray, Husband, let the Door be open'd ?

Britt. No : You shall stay there till your Parents come.

I have sent for them : They shall see what Hours you keep. And know of your Gallant you just parted from, your vigorous Lover.

Dam. Madam, he over heard all,

And we are undone. *(Aside to her.)*

Britt. What, have you no Excuse ready ? No Invention ? You and your wicked Instrument there, that stands like the Serpent at *Eve's* Elbow, to tempt her to Sin.

What, is your Prompter to Wickedness dumb ? I'd fain hear how you intend to excuse it.

Mrs. Britt. I don't go about to excuse it, Husband——

Britt. No ; That's because you don't know how.

Mrs. Britt. I do confess, I have been to meet a Gentleman, but not alone ; *Damaris* was with me. And sure there was no Crime in a little harmless Chat.

Britt. No, no, not in the least, making me a Cuckold is no harm at all.

Mrs. Britt. Pray, Husband, let me in, and I'll never do the like again, as long as I live ; but you shall hence-forward find me the most dutiful Wife, that you could wish for. Pray, Husband, trust me but this once.

Britt. No.

Mrs. Britt. Do not disgrace me to my Parents, by exposing me at this unseasonable Hour, in which I do confess I am much to blame——

Britt. Oh ! Do you so ?

Mrs. Britt. But forgive me now, I'll never do it again.

Britt.

78 *The Amorous Widow: Or,*

Britt. Hang them that believes you, I say.

Mrs. Britt. I am sure I never injur'd you in all my Life; but am as innocent as the Child unborn, from doing the Ill, which you suspect.

Britt. It may be so: 'Twas not your Fault then.

Mrs. Britt. Pray, dear Husband, believe me, and let me in.

Britt. No.

Mrs. Britt. On my Knees I ask your Pardon, do but open the Door.

Britt. No.

Mrs. Britt. If you let me in this time, 'twill work upon me more, than all the Liberty in the World cou'd do beside.

Britt. I care not.

Mrs. Britt. Indeed, Husband, I love you dearly, and love you only: How can you then be so cruel to refuse me?

Britt. Ah, cunning Crocodile?

Now you are caught, 'tis dear Husband, sweet Husband, 'tis only you I love: But at another time, 'tis good for nothing old Fool. No, no, I know you well enough, and so shall your Parents now.

Mrs. Britt. Pray, Husband, let the Door be open'd.

Britt. No.

Mrs. Britt. Try me but this once.

Britt. I tell you, no.

Mrs. Britt. Not once more?

Britt. No.

Mrs. Britt. If you provoke me, I may despair, grow desperate, and do a Deed, which you may repent.

Britt. Good lack! What will your sweet Ladyship do?

Mrs. Britt. I'll kill my self with this Knife here.
(*Shows her Fan.*)

Britt. Oh, very well!

4

Mrs.

The Wanton Wife. 79

Mrs. Britt. Nay, 'twill not be so well as you imagine neither. Every body knows how ill we have liv'd, and when I'm dead, People will think you murder'd me.

Britt. Ay!

Mrs. Britt. Therefore I'll kill my self, to have my Death reveng'd upon you.

Britt. Odd, I'll trust to that.

Besides, killing ones self has been a great while out of fashion. But why don't you dispatch? Methinks you are long about it.

Mrs. Britt. You may believe me, for I'll certainly do it, if you persist.

Britt. Odd, I'll venture it.

Mrs. Britt. Besides, when I am dead, my Ghost shall haunt you.

Britt. Ah, if I cou'd but once get rid of your Person here, I should not fear your Ghost hereafter.

Mrs. Britt. Have you no Pity left?
I am just going to do it.

Britt. And yet you are long about it.

Mrs. Britt. Since nothing but my Death can satisfy you—

There and there!

(*Pretends to stab her self with her Fan, and falls.*)

Dam. Oh, she has don't! She has don't!

Oh cruel, barbarous Monster, to make her kill her self!

Mrs. Britt. Now, *Damaris*, you find too late I did not jest—

I know thou'lt see my Death reveng'd upon my cruel Husband, who has accus'd me falsely; for I affirm with my dying Breath, I never wrong'd him. Farewel!

Death beckons me into a dark and gloomy Vale, where I must follow.

Dam.

80 *The Amorous Widow : Or,*

Dam. She's gone ! She's gone !

Oh, thou worse than Savage ! To murder so sweet a Lady, so innocent and so good : Nay, I'll swear you did it. *(Cries over her.)*

Britt. I hear no Noise ! *(Looks frighten'd.)*
Is't possible the Devil shou'd be so great with her, that she cou'd kill her self to be reveng'd on me ! But I'll light a Candle, and go see.

(Goes from the Window.)

Mrs. Britt. Now, *Damaris*, stand close in this Corner :
Close, Close. *(They stand aside.)*

Enter Brittle with a Light ; they slip by him, go in, and lock the Door : He looks about.

Britt. Ha, ha, ha ! I thought indeed how well she'd do it : Here's none of her ! She made me believe she kill'd her self, and the mean while ran away. Well, e'en let her go, I shall have this Satisfaction, her Parents shall be Witnesses of her Hours. I'll in, and wait their coming.

(Goes to the Door, and finds it lock'd. Knocks.)

Mrs. Britt. and *Damaris* above at the Window, where he was.

Mrs. Britt. Away, you idle Sot ; is this a time of Night for an honest Man to come home in ?

Dam. Go, go, you may be asham'd !

Britt. Why, have you the Impudence——
(Looks up, and sees 'em above.)

Mrs. Britt. How many Nights am I forc'd to sit up to wait for his coming in ? And he tells the World, 'tis I am to blame. But now it shall be seen who's to blame, and who not. My Father and Mother are coming, they shall see what Hours you keep——
Britt.

The Wanton Wife. 81

Britt. I confess, I stand amaz'd at this Impudence.

Mrs. Britt. They shall know all.

Britt. Why, have you the Face to deny——

Mrs. Britt. Go, go, I'll hear none of your impudent Excuses ; you are drunk, you Sot, you Swine. But here comes my honourable Father and Mother.

Enter Sir Peter and Lady Pride.

I'm glad you are come to be Witnesses of what I still suffer, by this ungrateful Usage of a cruel Husband. You see what Hours he keeps ; every Night at the Tavern roaring with his Companions, whilst I am forc'd to sit at home alone, waiting for his coming ; and when he does come, he strait raves and abuses me at such a rate, that I am not able to endure it.

Britt. Why, was there ever such Impudence !

I wish this Candle were in my Belly, if——

Mrs. Britt. I know what he'll say now, if you'll believe him ; he'll tell you, that I am still in the wrong, and 'tis I that have been out at this late Hour, and as for his part, he has been within all this Evening, and knows nothing of all this Matter, not he : But I'll leave your selves to judge, if this is an Hour for an honest Husband to come home at.

Britt. Why then may I never——

Mrs. Britt. You see he's so drunk, he can hardly stand.

Lady. Faugh !—— I smell him hither. He stinks of Liquors and Tobacco like a Tarpaulin, that has not been sober whilst his Twelve-Months Pay wou'd last.

Britt. I tell you, that I am not drunk, nor have I been out of my House.

Sir Peter. Stand farther off, I cannot bear the Scent of a Drunkard.

F

Mrs.

82 *The Amorous Widow : Or,*

Mrs. Britt. I told you he wou'd deny it.

Britt. I say, that 'tis she that has been out just now, and with her Gallant, and therefore I sent for you ; and that I have not been out of my Doors.

Mrs. Britt. Do you hear him ? But *Damaris* can justify, I have not set my Foot over the Threshold since Day-light.

Dam. If she has, never believe me more. I can assure your Honours 'tis true ; for I have not been out of her Company since he went out to the Tavern.

Mrs. Britt. Therefore I do beseech you, good Father and Mother, to revenge my Cause, for I am not able to endure it any longer : If I do, you'll never see me alive another Week.

Britt. 'Tis a strange thing, that she must be believed, and I not.

I tell you——

Lady. Stand farther off.

Faugh ! What a Smell there's about him.

(She goes cross the Stage.)

Britt. Well then ; I'll stand farther off, if you will but hear me speak. *(Goes backward.)*

I shall say nothing but the Truth, and what I can prove.

Sir Peter. Again at your Proofs, and your idle Jealousies !

Be dumb, Coxcomb ; it were a good deed to break your Head, for sending thus for us out of our Beds, and making Fools of us still. If you ever dare to do the like again, we'll find a Means to handle you——

If there be no Law (but cutting of Throats) to revenge these Affronts—— I say no more—— But remember you are warn'd.

Britt. If you wou'd but let me tell why I sent for you——

Sir

The Wanton Wife. 83

Sir Peter. We have heard and seen too much already.

Therefore dare not to speak a Word more.

Mrs. Britt. And is this all his Punishment ?

Sir Peter. No ; Come down, and he shall ask your Pardon. 'Tis the least he can do.

Mrs. Britt. 'Twill be to no purpose ; when your Backs are turn'd, he'll be as bad again.

Sir Peter. I say no more Disputes, but do as I command. *(They come down from the Window.)* Now, Son-in-law, kneel down, and ask your Wife Forgiveness.

Mrs. Britt. Shall I forgive him ; no, I desire to be divorc'd.

Lady. Come, Daughter, I say you must pardon him.

Mrs. Britt. Well, Madam, I'll endeavour to obey you.

Sir Peter. Why don't you kneel, and do as I command ?

Britt. Well, I find there's no Remedy, she has over-reach'd me again, and I must submit : But I am resolv'd I'll get rid of this Nooze, tho' I tuck my self up in another.

(Sir Peter makes him kneel to his Wife.)

Sir Peter. Come, say after me. Madam, I ask your Pardon.

Britt. Madam, I ask your Pardon.

Sir Peter. For the Folly I have committed——

Britt. For the Folly I have committed in marrying you.

Sir Peter. In my wild Suspicions.

Britt. In my wild Suspicions.

Sir Peter. Which I do declare were utterly false.

Britt. Which I do declare were utterly false.

F 2

Sir

84 *The Amorous Widow : Or,*

Sir Peter. And that I swear never to do the like again.

Britt. And that I swear never to do the like again, if I were once unmarried.

Mrs. Britt. Here—Kiss the Book. (*Gives her Hand.* But if ever you do't again—

You see 'tis to no purpose to turn Hagard; if you do, I'll tame you. (*Aside to him.*

Lady. Look if the Noise has not brought all the Company hither.

Enter Viscount, Widow, Lovemore, Cuningam, Philadelphia, Prudence, Clodpole, and Jeffrey, with Lights before 'em.

Love. Your Servant, Sir Peter. Sir, I hope you will not take it ill; we saw a Light in your House, and so made bold: We are resolv'd to spend an Hour or two in Mirth, and hope you will all join with us. (*To Britt.*

Widow. Your Ladyship I know will pardon it upon this Occasion. (*To Lady Pride.*

Lady Pride. Is your Ladyship marry'd? May we give you Joy?

Widow. My Niece and Mr. Cuningham are.

Mrs. Britt. Give you Joy then.

Cun. and Phil. We thank you, Madam.

Phil. Now, Sir, since our Hands are join'd, and all is reconcil'd, I have a Boon to ask.

Cun. Whate'er it be, conclude it done.

Phil. I have observ'd some Sparks of Love between *Jeffrey* and *Prudence*; and I believe they wou'd be glad to follow our Example.

Cun. What say'st thou, *Jeffrey*? If thou hast a Mind to marry, speak freely.

Jeff.

The Wanton Wife.

85

Jeff. Sir, I have debated much about the Matter, and am at last resolv'd to venture.

Cun. Then if you, Madam, give your Consent, and *Prudence* be willing, we'll put 'em together.

(*To the Widow.*

Widow. With all my Heart; *Prudence* has been always a good Servant, I'll say that for her.

Jeff. There's my Hand then; the rest of my Body shall be forth coming.

Pru. A Match.

Love. Then let me speak. *Clodpole* loves *Damaris*, and I believe wou'd be glad to make up the Chorus; now if *Mrs. Britt.* please to part with her—

Britt. You shall have my Consent with all my Heart; and I'll give a Sum of Money to be rid of her.

Love. And I'll give *Clodpole* something to set him up in a little Farm in the Country.

Clod. *Damaris*!—Dost hear that?

Mrs. Britt. What say you, *Damaris*?

Dam. If I thought he'd make a good Husband, and not be jealous—

Love. That I dare answer for him.

Clod. Well, then 'tis agreed, and there's my Hand.

Dam. For better for worse.

Clod. To have and to hold; a Tenement for Life.

Cun. And now all things being thus happily concluded—

Widow. No, Mr. Cuningham, not while your Friend is unprovided. Methinks 'twere pity he shou'd be no Actor in this Comedy.

Love. Oh, Madam, my Thoughts are not yet fix'd so much upon any Object, but the next I encounter can retrieve the past.

Cun.

100

86 *The Amorous Widow : Or,*

Cun. My Friend never wants a Mistress (I'll say that for him) in any Place, if he has but an Opportunity, which he seldom wants. I have often wonder'd at his Luck.

Mrs. Britt. Say you so ? I find he makes it his Business to ensnare and deceive Women at this rate.

(Aside.

I'm glad I know it in time, whilst I have Power to make my Retreat. I had like to have been finely caught. Well, Husband, seeing so many join'd in Happiness, if you'll promise never to be jealous, I'll promise from this Moment never to give you Cause, and endeavour to make you as happy as I can.

Britt. Won'd you'd give me Cause once to believe you.

Visc. Well then, if you are all agreed, the Parson that marry'd Mr. *Cunningham* is but just by ; e'en send for him, and let him end the Work he has begun.

For my part, I intend to put off mine for some time longer.

Widow. How ! My Lord ! Have you serv'd me thus ? Did I forsake all for you, and do you pretend to—

Visc. No Words now, 'twill spoil Company ; another time we'll discourse it farther. Come, let's have a Dance, and then to Bed.

Om. With all our Hearts.

A DANCE.

Visc.

The Wanton Wife.

87

Visc. 'Tis well : So now, you that are ready to taste the Sweets of Matrimony, fall to ; for my part, I have no great Stomach to it yet.

*And none I hope will blame me if I tarry,
Since those that wed in haste, as fast miscarry.*

(Exeunt Omnes.

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