

*The Project Gutenberg eBook of Essays on the Stage, by  
Thomas D'Urfey*

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Both original texts labeled the recto (odd) pages of the first leaves of each  
signature. These will appear in the right margin as A, A2, A3...

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Series Three:  
*Essays on the Stage*

No. 4

Thomas D'Urfey, Preface to *The Campaigners* (1698)  
and  
Anonymous, Preface to the Translation of Bossuet's  
*Maxims and Reflections upon Plays* (1699)

With an Introduction by  
Joseph Wood Krutch

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[Editor's Introduction](#)  
[D'Urfey, Preface to \*The Campaigners\*](#)  
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[Preface to the Translation of Bossuet's \*Maxims...\*](#)  
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1

Introduction

The three parts of D'Urfey's "The Comical History of Don Quixote" were performed between 1694 and (probably) the end of 1696. Some of the songs included were conspicuously "smutty"--to use a word which D'Urfey ridiculed--but the fact that the plays were fresh in the public mind was probably the most effective reason for Jeremy Collier's decision to include the not very highly respected author among the still living playwrights to be singled out for attack in "A Short View of the Immorality and Profaneness of the English Stage", which appeared at Easter time 1698. In July of the same year D'Urfey replied with the preface to his "smutty" play "The Campaigners". It is this preface which is given as the first item of the present reprint.

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Pope's contemptuous prologue, written many years later and apparently for a benefit performance of one of D'Urfey's plays, is sufficient evidence that the playwright was not highly regarded; but he was reputed to be a good natured man and, by the standards of the time, his twitting of Collier--whom he accused of having a better nose for smut than a clergyman should have--is not conspicuously vituperative. Even his attack on the political character of the notorious Non-Juror is bitter without being really scurrilous. But like his betters Congreve and Vanbrugh, D'Urfey both missed the opportunity to grapple with the real issues of the controversy and misjudged the temper of the public. Had that public been, as all the playwrights seem to have assumed, ready to side with them against Collier, there might have been some justification in resting content as he and Congreve did with the scoring of a few debater's points. But the public, even "the town", was less interested in mere sally and rejoinder than it was in the serious question of the relation of comedy to morality, and hence Collier was allowed to win the victory almost by default.

Collier's own argument was either confused or deliberately disingenuous, since he shifts his ground several times. On occasion he argues merely in the role of a moderate man who is shocked by the extravagances of the playwrights, and on other occasions as an ascetic to whom all worldly diversion, however innocent of any obvious offence, is wicked. At one time, moreover, he accuses the playwrights of recommending the vices which they should satirize and at other times denies that even the most sincere satiric intention can justify the lively representation of wickedness. But none of his opponents actually seized the opportunity to completely clarify the issues. Vanbrugh, it is true, makes some real points in his "A Short Vindication of The Relapse and The Provok'd Wife", and John Dennis, in his heavy handed way, showed some realization of what the issues were both in "The Usefulness of the Stage to the Happiness of Mankind, to Government and to Religion" (1698) and, much later, in "The Stage Defended" (1726). But, Vanbrugh is casual, Dennis is slow witted, and it is only by comparison with the triviality of

D'Urfey or the contemptuous disingenuity of Congreve's "Amendments of Mr. Collier's False and Imperfect Citations" (1698) that they seem effective.

3 At least forty books and pamphlets published between 1698 and 1725 are definitely part of the Collier controversy, but the fact that none of them really discusses adequately fundamental premises concerning the nature, method, and function of comedy had serious consequences for the English stage. The situation was further complicated by the rise of sentimental comedy and the fact that the theories supposed to justify it were expounded with all the completeness and clarity which were so conspicuously lacking in the case of those who undertook halfheartedly to defend what we call "high" or "pure", as opposed to both sentimental and satiric comedy. Steele's epilogue to "The Lying Lover", which versified Hobbes' comments on laughter and then rejected laughter itself as unworthy of a refined human being, is a triumphant epitaph inscribed over the grave of the comic spirit.

The second item included in the present reprint, namely the anonymous preface to a translation of Bossuet's "Maxims and Reflections Upon Plays", belongs to a different phase of the Collier controversy. It serves as an illustration of the fact that Collier was soon joined by men who were, somewhat more frankly than he had himself admitted he was, open enemies of the stage as such. He had begun with arguments supported by citations from literary critics and he called in the support of ascetic religious writers after his discourse was well under way. But the direct approach by way of religion was soon taken up by others, of whom Arthur Bedford was probably the most redoubtable as he was certainly the most long winded, since his "Evil and Danger of Stage Plays" (1706) crowds into its two hundred and twenty-seven pages some two thousand instances of alleged profaneness and immorality with specific references to the texts of scripture which condemn each one. But Bedford had not been the first to treat the issue as one to be decoded by theologians rather than playwrights or critics. Somewhat unwisely, perhaps, Motteux had printed before his comedy "Beauty in Distress" a discourse "Of the Lawfulness and Unlawfulness of Plays" (1698), written by the Italian monk Father Caffaro, who was professor of divinity at the Sorbonne. Unfortunately Caffaro had, some years before this English translation appeared, already retracted his mild opinion that stage plays were not, *per se*, unlawful, and it was possible not only to cite his retraction but also to offer the opinions of the Bishop of Meux, who was better known to English readers than Father Caffaro. The anonymous author of the preface to "Maxims and Reflections" grants that dramatic poetry might, under certain circumstances, be theoretically permissible, but rather more frankly than Collier he makes it clear that his real intention is to urge the outlawing of the theater itself, since all efforts to reform it are foredoomed to failure. "But if", he writes, "the Reformation of the Stage be no longer practicable, reason good that the incurable Evil should be cut off". That lets the cat out of the bag.

4

Both pieces reprinted here are from copies owned by the University of Michigan.

Joseph Wood Krutch  
Columbia University

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The Campaigners:  
OR, THE  
*Pleasant Adventures at Brussels.*  
A  
COMEDY  
As it is Acted at the *Theatre-Royal.*  
WITH A  
FAMILIAR PREFACE  
UPON  
*A Late Reformer of the STAGE.*  
Ending with a Satyrical Fable  
OF

Written by Mr. D'urfey.

LONDON,

Printed for A. Baldwin, near the Oxford Arms Inn  
in Warwick lane. MDCXCVIII.

1

a

## PREFACE.

I Must necessarily inform the Partial, as well as Impartial Reader, that I had once design'd another kind of Preface to my Comedy than what will appear in the following sheets; but having in the interim been entertain'd with a Book lately Printed, full of Abuses on all our Antient as well as Modern Poets, call'd *A view of the Immorality and Prophaness of the English Stage*; and finding the Author, who, no doubt, extreamly values himself upon his Talent of *Stage-reforming*, not only (to use his own Ironical words) *particular in his Genius and Civilities*, but indecently, unmanner'd, and scurrilous in his unjust Remarks on me, and two of my Plays, *viz.* the first and second parts of the *Comical History of Don Quixote*; I thought I cou'd not do better, first as a Diversion to the Town, and next to do a little Iustice to my self, than (instead of the other) to print a short Answer to this very Severe and Critical Gentleman; and at the same time give him occasion to descant upon the following Comick Papers, and my self the opportunity of vindicating the other; with some familiar Returns (*en Raillere*) upon his own Extraordinary *Integrity*, and Justness of the *Censure*.

Collier, p. 196.

But first, lest I should plunge my self out of my depth, or like an unskilful Swimmer, endanger my self by a too precipitate Rashness, let me warily consider the Office and Habit of this unchristianlike Critick before I Attack him: He has, or had the honour to wear the Robe of a Clergyman of the Church of *England*: A Church, which for its Purity, Principles, and most Incomparable Doctrines, surpasses without objection all others in the world, which with a number of its pious, virtuous and learned Rulers and Ministers, I admire and acknowledge with all the faculties of my soul, heart and understanding; and on which I never seriously reflect, but I feel a secret shame for my remissness of duty, and my neglect, in not living hitherto up to its Admirable Principles. This reflection would indeed have been enough to awe any one in my circumstances from proceeding to answer his bold Censures, had I not Courage to consider that the rest of the worthy Gentlemen of that Robe are so good, that they will not excuse or defend our aforesaid Critick's Injustice or Mistakes in some places, tho they are pleas'd with his Truths in others; or be angry at me for endeavouring to gain their good opinion, by defending my self from most of his black Aspersions (how fair soever as yet they seem) and by unfolding him be judg'd by their impartial reason, start a question, whither he, tho a happy member of the aforesaid Adorable Church, does not come in for his share of *Immorality*, and other frailties; and consequently is not as fit to be detected, by the Wit of a Satyrical Poet; as the Poet by the positive Authority of an Angry Malecontent, tho in the garb of an humble Churchman.

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The *Vates*, or Poets in antient times were held in special veneration, even their Kings, and other chief Rulers, often submitted to the virtue of their Inspiration: Amongst which, the never enough admir'd Mr *Cowley*, in his noble version of the *Dauididos*, gives the *Royal David* this Title, *Rex olim & Vates duo Maxima munera Coeli*; and numbers of others might be inserted to prove Poetical Authority, and the respect it bore in past Ages; which, tho I have not capacity to parallel, I hope I may be allow'd to imitate on another subject; and in this have leave to acquit my self of several heinous Accusations, which this Tyrannical Critick has Impos'd upon me.

I am not at all Ignorant of his eminent parts, Learning, and other qualifications; nor am I insensible, as well as the rest of his Readers, that his Book has a very fair and engaging Title-page, and is no less Illustrated with many weighty and just censures upon the *Immorality of the Stage*, and our licentious Writings for many years past; and tho this has been proved by the late Ingenious Author of *the Vindication of the Stage* to be occasion'd by the vices of the Times, and not those of the Poets; yet thus for we can endure the Scourge, and kiss his Rod with patience enough: And for my own part, I declare if I had found his Severity had been moral, and had ended in the good design of cleansing the Stage from its Impurities, and had been only a kind

Instruction to my Brethren and my self, to reform our Immoral errors, I had, as the rest of us, with all humility imaginable, thank'd him for his wit and good reproof; and had been so far from answering in this manner, that I should have been proud to have my name before his Book, with a Copy of Verses in applause of his Admirable Design. But when, instead of this, I find he strikes at the root of our Dramatick Labours, and the Town's diversion, for some sly and selfish ends; and instead of reproving us with a Pastorly Mildness, Charity and Good Nature, gives us the basest language, and with the most scurrilous expression, sometimes raging and even foaming at mouth, taxing the little liberty has always been us'd, with horrid horrid Blasphemy, Prophaneness, and Damnable Impiety; when Reason must inform every one we intend nothing of the matter, besides the poor priviledge *Poetica Licentia*: and pretending to prove this with false Quotations, unnatural Mistakes, and Hypocritical Hypotheses, I resolv'd to controvert him, and endeavour to prove that 'tis meerly his malice that has abus'd me and the rest, without Reason or Provocation; and that his own Wit and Morals are not so Infallible, but they lye also open to the censure of any Poetical Critick, who has Courage and Sense enough to attack 'em.

I once more therefore address my self to the Reverend of the Gown, from highest to the lowest, and humbly desire that they will not appear Interested against me, because I defend myself against one that has abus'd me, and has the honour to wear one, (to what purpose the Judgment and Clemency of our Government knows best) I assure 'em my design is only to turn, like the Worm that is trod upon, complain being hurt, vindicate my self from abusive malice, and at the same time am heartily sorry that ever I had the occasion.

3 'Tis a pleasure to me however to know that I have for many years, as well as now, the honour of the Conversation of several eminent men of the Church; and I dare say, upon occasion, I could easily gain their good words to prove my good behaviour. I do declare I never abus'd the sacred order in my life, but have always had, and still have, all the veneration for 'em that's possible; nor have any of my printed Writings contradicted this, unless when spoken in the person of Atheists, Libertines, and Ignorants, where 'tis natural in Comedy; nay, in my Book of Poems you will find a *Satyr against Atheists*, and in another Book, call'd *Colin's walk thro' London and Westminster*, a Moral through the whole, and design'd in the honour of the Church of *England*, to shew the stubbornness of *Romanists*, Grumblers, and other dissenting Sects; but this my partial Antagonist never read, nor heard of; nay, tho by his Book we may suppose he has read a thousand, yet amongst twenty of my Comedies Acted and Printed, he never heard of the *Royalist*, the *Boarding School*, the *Marriage Hater Match'd*, the *Richmond Heiress*, the *Virtuous Wife*, and others, all whose whole Plots and designs I dare affirm, tend to that principal instance, which he proposes, and which we allow, viz. the depression of Vice and encouragement of Virtue. Not he, he has not had leisure since his last *holding forth in the late Reign*, to do me this Justice, 'tis enough for him that he has encounter'd *Don Quixot*: And truly, I must own, was a most proper Combatant for him; for if he had not been mad with the Wind-mill that was in his pate, or had ever perus'd that *Giant* of an Author, upon whom I am the *Pigmy*, as he wittily observes, he would have found the Blockheaded Chaplain had been greazing his old Cassock there long before I new rigg'd him: But that's all one, I, poor I, must be denounc'd as Criminal; I brought him upon the Stage, I wash'd his Face, put on a new Crape Vest, and a clean Band, which, oh, fatal accident, made him look so like somebody, that I, in his opinion, and condemn'd by his infallibility, have been no body ever since, *vox & præterea nihil*. Well, however this is determin'd, let me beg of my impartial Readers, to give me leave to try what I can be, I have had good fortune I am told by others in Lyrical Verse, which I am sure is one principal part of Poetry, I'll see now if I can match my Antagonist in Rallying Prose. Several ingenious Authors have already, I think, so well confuted his Assertions against the Stage, by proofs from the Antient Poets, the Primitive Fathers, and their Authorities, that they have far excell'd what I can pretend to do there; only, I could have wish'd one who is best able, and whose admirable Genius and Skill in Poetry would have been remarkably serviceable, had drawn his Pen to defend the Rights of the Stage, tho he had own'd the loosenesses of it, and had ventured the being presented for it; but since we, the forlorn, are not so happy to have that Aid, let my Antagonist, the Reformer, who, for all the gravity in some part of his Book, and the solid Piety he would insinuate in his Arguments, I perceive to be a Joker, and as full of Puns, Conundrums, Quibbles, Longinquipetites, and Tipiti-witchets, as the rest of us mortals, be pleas'd to take the length of my Weapon at that sport, for now I cannot help telling my Audience, which is the Town, that he has laid his reforming Cudgel upon me so severely, and it smarts so damnably, that I can't forbear smiting again if I were to be hang'd, desiring only, as the usual method is, a clear Stage, and from him no favour.

a2

Collier, p. ....

To begin then, I shall illustrate my first Scene with a comical hint upon some part of his Character; and that the Jest may be worthy of making you laugh, you are to know, that the first view I ever had of this extraordinary Person, was neither better nor worse than under the *Gallows*. Well, but think you, I warrant, 'twas about some Charitable Duty that his sacred Function and Piety oblig'd him to, such as Exhorting the poor Souls to confess their Crimes, in order to be sav'd, or the like; no, faith, but quite contrary, for he was rather hardning them, and infusing a strong Portion of his own obstinacy, to fortifie 'em for their dubious Journey; and in few minutes after, possess'd with a stronger Spirit of Priesthood than e'er, for some past Ages there has been Example for, pronounc'd the *Absolution*, the extremest and most mysterious Grace the Church can possibly give to the most repentant Sinner, to wretches Justly condemn'd by Law to die, for the most horrible Crimes in nature, *viz.* the intended Murder of the King, and Subversion of the Protestant Religion and Government. Now that such a Person should set up for a Protestant Example, and a Teacher of Morality, is somewhat new, for upon my veracity, this Gentleman may insinuate as he pleases, that our Church, and its Doctrines govern his heart; but as to that matter what may be in his heart I can't tell, but if a Pope is not crept into his belly, very near it, I am very much mistaken.

*Pliny* indeed, in his Natural History, *Lib. 28, Cap. 10.* tells ye, He that is bitten by a Scorpion may have relief, if immediately he go and whisper his grief into the Ear of an Ass. This Historian, perhaps, had so great credit with these Malefactors that they thought the remedy, by Auricular Confession, might serve too in their Concerns. But we are confirm'd, they were enough mistaken in the rest of their Opinions, and so 'tis very likely were in this. If this Parallel be found a little gross, I hope the Reader will excuse it, when he examines the bold Critick's Stile relating to the Poets. Besides, how wise soever he may be in other things, I'm sure all those that are so, and true Sons of the Church, when they reflect on that Action of his, will own that he deserves that, or a worse Title. And so to proceed.

But before we inspect further, or touch upon the Moralists's Immorality, for I dare engage it is not altogether impossible to prove, the *Pulpiteer* may be tainted a little as well as the *Poetaster*; let us see whether we can find him guilty of the first Charge against us, which is *Immodesty*; and upon this subject indeed, if our Learn'd Reformer did not impose upon us with a Fallacy, I should (to shew my good Nature walk hand in hand with my resentment) once more admire him for his Character of Modesty in the 11th page of his Book, which is, to do him Justice, very fine; but then he only tells us of one kind of Modesty, when he knows there are two, and therein he is Falacious, in not exposing the other, which is decency of Speech and Behaviour; and truly, meerly, I believe, through a conscious reflection of his own frequent miscarriages in that case. If therefore, these Papers differ a little from that Civility which is proper, I beg the Readers pardon, and assure him 'tis only in imitation of his Stile to me, as all those that read his Book may find.

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For, in the first place, he does not shew his own, nor, indeed, any part of decent modesty, in exposing any Gentlemans Name in print, when the subject matter is Satyr, Reflection, Scandal, &c. and in which case I believe the Law might do Justice, if apply'd to; but if not, I am sure good Manners, and civil Education, ought to tie the Cassock as close as the Sash or Sursingle; but this our Divine helper, most Bully-like, disallows; for he, puff'd with his Priestly Authority, calls us boldly to the Bar of his Injustice by our own Names, the same minute that he is roaringly accusing us of Blasphemy, Smuttery, Foolery, and a thousand Monstrosities besides, as he'd make you believe; unless for variety, he picks out one amongst the rest, now and then, to abuse a little more civilly, and then, rubbing up his old College Wit, he Nicknames 'em, as you may find elegantly made out at the latter end of his Book, (for he shall see that I have read it quite through, and can hop over pages as fast as he for the life of him) where he can find no other Name or Character for two Gentlemen of Honour and Merit, *viz.* Mr. *Congreve* and Captain *Vanbrooke*, who have written several excellent Plays, and who are only scandalous to our Critick, by being good Poets, yet these he can give no other Names or Characters, but what are Abusive and Ridiculous. The first, for only making *Jeremy*, in *Love for Love*, call the Natural inclinations to eating and drinking, *Whorson Appetites*, he tells, That the *Manicheans*, who made Creation the Work of the Devil, scarcely spoke any thing so coarse. And then very modestly proceeding onwards says, *The Poet was Jeremy's Tutor*. The t'other Gentleman he dignifies by a new Coin'd name of his own, *viz.* *The Relapser*, and much like an humble Son of the Church, a Man of Morals and Manners tells us, *This Poet is fit to Ride a Match with Witches: And, that Juliana Cox* (a Non-juring Hag, I suppose, of his Acquaintance) *never switch'd a Broom-stick with more expedition*. Faith, such sentences as these, may be taking enough amongst his Party; but if this be his way of Reproving the Stage, and Teaching the Town Modesty, he will

Collier, p. 74.

Collier, p. 230.

have fewer Pupils, I believe, than he imagines.

But to do that Gentleman Broom-stick Rider some Justice, and because we shall want a Name hereafter to Christen the t'other, as he has given the Name of *Relapser*, so I think that of the *Absolver* will be a very proper one to distinguish our Switcher, by which the Reader may observe, that we are civiller to him than he to us however. And first then, I desire all Persons to observe, that in other places of the same Chapter of his Book, our *Absolver*, for all his detestation of the Stage, and of Poetry in general, yet takes a huge deal of pains in taking to pieces, and mending the Comedy of the *Relapse*; nay, and to shew how transcendent his own Skill in these things is, he has help'd the Author to a better Name for his Play, and says, *The Younger Brother*, or, *The Fortunate Cheat*, had been much properer. This shews some good will he has to the Comick Trade however; and I doubt not, but if his Closet were Ransack'd, we might find a divertive Scene or two, effects of his idle Non-preaching hours, where Modesty, Wit, and good Behaviour, would be shewn in perfection.

Collier, p. 210.

- 6 And yet, as to his own humour, we find it to be, by his Book, more fickle than even the Wind, or Feminine frailty in its highest Inconstancy. One while he's for Instructing our Stage, Modelling our Plays, Correcting the Drama, the Unity, Time and Place, and acts as very a Poet as ever writ an ill Play, or slept at an ill Sermon; and then, presently after, wheiw, in the twinkling of an Ejaculation, as Parson *Say-grace* has it, he's summoning together a Convocation of old Fathers, to prove the Stage in past Ages exploded, and all Plays horrible, abominable Debauchers of youth, and not to be encourag'd in a Civil Government. What can we think of this, especialiy when I find him in this Paragraph of his Book \* raving on at this rate, and quoting to us, That St. *Cyprian*, or the Author *de Spectaculis*, argues thus against those who thought the Play-House no unlawful diversion; 'tis too tedious to recite all, but enough of St. *Cyprian* for my purpose runs thus: *What business has a Christian at such Places as these? A Christian who has not the liberty so much as to think of an ill thing, why does he entertain himself with lewd Representations? Has he a mind to discharge his Modesty, and be flesh'd for the Practice? Yes, this is the consequence, by using to see these things, he'll learn to do them; what need I mention the Levities and Impertinencies in Comedies, or the Ranting distractions of Tragedy, were these things unconcern'd with Idolatry, Christians ought not to be at them, for were they not highly Criminal, the foolery of them is Egregious, and unbecoming the gravity of Believers.* And then again, before he is out of breath, *A Christian has much better Sights than these to look at, he has solid Satisfactions in his power, which will please and improve him at the same time. Would a Christian be agreeably refresh'd, let him read the Scriptures, here the Entertainment will suit his Character, and be big enough for his quality. Ah, Beloved, how noble, how moving, how profitable a thing is it, to be thus employ'd, to have our expectations always in prospect, and be intent on the glories of Heaven!* Very good, and who is he so reprobat, that will not allow this to be devout, and admirable good Counsel? But now let us see how the *Absolver*, for all Pious quotation, has follow'd St. *Cyprian's* Advice; that holy Father charges him not to entertain himself with such lewd things as Plays, and he very dutifully reads a thousand as fast as he can; nay, scans and weighs 'em, and, no doubt, not without tickling satisfaction, at the present, for all his Saturnine Remarks at last. Now if his Answer to this is, That it belongs to his Office, as a Church-man, and that he could not reprehend the Vices in 'em without reading the Books themselves, I must tell him, That St. *Cyprian*, nor the rest of the Fathers, did not allow that, neither do we find they did it themselves, for all their inveighing against the Stage; so that he makes his own Quotation altogether invalid, *He not being to do ill that good might come of it.*

And therefore, why may not a Poet now, who, perhaps, is a greater Votary to St. *Cyprian* in other Matters than the *Absolver* is in this, rally him thus, and turn his Quotation upon himself, Phrase by Phrase? "What business has a Parson with such Books as these? A Parson who has not the liberty so much as to think of an ill thing? Why does he entertain himself with lewd Comedies? Has he a mind to discharge his Priestcraft, and flesh himself up for a Poet? Yes, this is the consequence, by using to see these *smutty* things, he'll learn to write 'em. What need I mention the Sham-Oaths, and looseness of Farce, or the Fustian raving against the Gods in Tragedy, were these things really unconcern'd with Idolatry, a Parson, of all Mankind, should not be known to ogle them, for were they not highly Criminal, the foolery of them is Egregious, and unbecoming the gravity of all that thump the Cushion, or intend to thump a true Belief into the Pates of an incorrigible Congregation."

- 7

And now methinks I see the Spiritual Critick, with a certain sallow Male-contented Phiz, poring upon this Page, and sucking his Ring-finger, gives

himself an unpleasurable minute to Judge whether I have paraphras'd right or no; well, all's one, fall back fall edge, I'm resolv'd to bait him with St. *Cyprian* a little more. "A Parson has, or should have, much better Books than Plays to look in; he has many Authors of Pious and Solid Authorities to please, and improve himself with, at the same time. Would a Parson be agreeably refresh'd, let him read the Scriptures, let him find out Treatises of Morality, Meekness, Charity, and holy Life, there the Entertainment will suit his Character. Ah, Beloved, how noble, how moving, how profitable a pleasure would it be to us, to see a Parson thus employ'd, to let the Stage's diversions be too little for his grave Consideration, and be intent himself on the glories of Heaven!" And here now, I do not at all question but the *Absolver*, a little nettled at this last Parallel, will fall to biting of his fingers again, his Righteous Spirit being offended at my Insolence, in scribbling the Word *Parson* so oft, it being a Nickname, and only invented by some idle fellow, who resolv'd to use the Order with no more respect. Why truly, I confess, in this Case, Modesty is a little gravell'd, but then she may thank him for it, for he has dignify'd the Poets with so many *Hell-defying, deep-mouth'd Swearing, Relapsing, Witch-riding Titles*, that the worthy Ministry cannot reasonably be angry, especially when the Word is only meant to him, whom I shall prove has lessen'd the true Title, by his *Immorality* and *Hypocrisie*, more than ever the Poets did the Reputation of the Stage, by their Time-serving Loosenesses and Licentious Diversions.

It is, no doubt, a considerable Maim to us, in some Peoples opinions, who never digested the benefits arising from the Stage in its Moral Representations, that this smarting Lash is given us by a Clergy-man of the Church of *England*, that is, good friends, if he be so, for some Judicious Heads are not resolv'd in that Affirmative—but let that be *discuss'd* in another place, I'm sure, if he is, *Obedience to Government, in the first place, should be his principal Tenet*; and whether that is a part of the *Absolver's* Character, I think has sufficiently appear'd. But let him be what he will, I shall now take the pleasure to inform those People, that but few years since, we had a Man of Wit and Learning, that wore the Gown, and as true a Son of the Church as she could possibly breed; that was intirely devoted a Champion in our Cause, and Asserted the Rights of the Stage with Success and Applause; and whoever will but look back a little, and incline his Eyes towards the delectable River *Cam*, may Encounter the fam'd Wit of that University, the Ingenious Mr. *Thomas Randolph*, who in one of his great many admirable Pieces, call'd the *Muses Looking-glass*, makes his whole Moral to be the Vindication of the Stage, and its usefulness, and by shewing the passions in their Kinds, contrives to confute some canting prejudic'd Zealots, whose ignorance and frenzy had conspir'd before to run it down; I will treat the Reader here with some of it.

8

A Country Lass, for such she was, tho here  
 In th' City may be Sluts as well as there;  
 Kept her hands clean, for those being always seen,  
 Had told her else how sluttish she had been;  
 Yet was her Face, as dirty as the Stall  
 Of a Fish-monger, or a Usurer's Hall  
 Begrin'd with filth, that you might boldly say,  
 She was a true piece of *Prometheus's* Clay.  
 At last, within a Pail, for Country Lasses  
 Have oft you know, no other Looking-glasses,  
 She view'd her dirty Face, and doubtless would  
 Have blush'd, if through so much dirt she could.  
 At last, within that Water, that I say,  
 That shew'd the Dirt, she wash'd the Dirt away.

*Muses Looking-  
Glass.*

*So, Comedies, as Poets still intend 'em,  
 Serve first to shew your faults, and then to mend 'em.*

Here was a pretty Compliment to our Art now, a good Moral with good Manners into the bargain; and yet 'tis certain the times then were as Licentious as now, and the Poets took as little care of their Writings; but Mr *Randolph* always made his good Nature agree with his Wit, and put as favourable construction upon Scenes of Diversion, as reason would allow, tho he perhaps had as much occasion for 50 *l.* as the *Absolver* when he writ his Book. He knew that if there was so stupid a Temper, that the Moral of a Play could not reform, the looseness that was in it could not prejudice; nor if a wild Town-Fellow, or a baffl'd Bully, or passionate Lover, being characters in a Play, spoke some extravagances proper for 'em, would he roar it out for Blasphemy, Profaneness, &c. and make a malicious scrutiny, and unreasonable interpretation of words, which had no other intention but to make the Character natural by customary manner of Speech, as he has shewn examples by two of his own, in the extremes of Vain-glory and Hypocrisie: And yet this Gentleman was as Learned, as good a Critick, and as Consciencious a man, as our *Absolver* can pretend to be; and if I say, I had somewhat a better Title to



Modesty and good Manners, I think it may be made out, he having a civil regard to the Poets, defended their Cause, and excus'd some failings for the sake of some other Merits, when this treats 'em all like fools, tho he has only rak'd up a few of their errors, which he has made a huge heap of Rubbish, by peering through his own Magnifying Glass, without any allowance to their qualifications, or any modest care to do 'em justice, which ought to have been one way as well as another.

9 So much then for his *Modesty* in one of its kinds, which is decency of behaviour and expression; as for the other, he has plaid such a Game at Hide and Seek with us, that we have been long in a Mist, not knowing how to discover it: But the Air clears, and 'tis time for us now to take the right end of the perspective, tho he would give us the Wrong, and then try if we cannot discern, in the midst of his Garden of Divinity, a neat friend of his call'd Immorality, tho he would subtly insinuate him into the world as a stranger, leading his darling daughter dear Hypocrisie into an Arbor; where, after they had been some time alone, our Critick knowing how to be civil to his own creature, and to give 'em time enough to beget a right understanding, he is very glad at last to be a third in the company.

I should not have put him upon this warm Office, if I had not found him too hot and bold with our Famous Ancient Truth-telling Poet *Juvenal*, when in his Book he tells us, *he teaches those vices he would correct, and writes more like a Pimp than a Poet*—But upon just consideration, I believe if the Absolver taught the Art of Rebellion no more than *Juvenal* the Art of Pimping, the one would be respected in after Ages, as much as we know the other has in the former: But every one is Fool or Knave that is not of this Gentlemans kidney. A little while after, at the usual rate of his own accustom'd civility, he falls upon the *Renown'd Shakespear*, and says, he is so guilty, that he is not fit to make an Evidence. Why now it 'twere possible for his Complexion to blush, there's ne're a Robe of any Friend Cardinal the Absolver has at *Rome*, that can be redder than his would be for such a Position: Nor does it end here, but is mixt with some more foolish and insolent Remarks in another place, upon the admirable Tragedy of *Hamlet*. And here he has no other way to shew his malice, but by ridiculously quibbling upon the prettiest Character in it, the innocent young Virgin *Ophelia*, who, because the Poet makes her run mad for the death of her Father, and loss of her Lover, and consequently makes her sing and speak some idle extravagant things, as on such an occasion is natural, and at last drown her self, he very masterly tells us, the Poet, *since he was resolv'd to drown her like a Kitten, should have set her a swimming a little sooner; to keep her alive, only to sully her Reputation, is very cruel*. Yes, but I would fain ask Doctor Absolution in what she has sullied her Reputation, I am sure five hundred Audiences that have view'd her could never find it out, tho he has; but the Absolver can't help being positive and partial to his own humour, tho he were to be hang'd, as the Lady was drown'd, for he is very angry in another place with the aforesaid Author, for making *Sir Hugh Evens in the Merry Wives of Windsor*, a silly, eating, chattering *Welch* Priest, but vindicates and speaks well, of *Sir John, Parson of Wrotham, in the History of Sir John Oldcastle*; tho he swears, games, wenches, pads, tilts and drinks, and does things which our Reformers Guts are ready to come up at another time, only, forsooth, because he is stout; but 'tis indeed only *because he is a Parson*, and sullen, which he thinks wise, for he cannot endure that Copyhold should be touch'd, as you may see more plainly a little further, where he says in *Loves Labour Lost*, the Curate plays the fool egregiously; and so does the Poet too: there he clenches the Nail, there he gives *Shakespear* a bold stroke, there obstinacy and malice appear in true colours: And yet if a parcel of the ones Plays, were set up by way of Auction against t'others *Sermons and Essays*; nay, tho the Loyal and Politick *Desertion discussd* was thrown in to boot, I know not what the Grave would do, but I am sure the Wise would quickly find difference. And yet to Remark him nicely, this humour of railing is only where the Poets do not suit with his design; for in another place you'll find this same *Shakespear*, that was before too guilty to make an Evidence, a very civil person now; for the Reformer is troubl'd with Fits, you must know, disturbances i th' brain, which makes him forget one hour what he rails at another, for here now *Shakespear's Falstaff* is call'd the admir'd, because he is to serve his turn. And that the Poet was not so partial as to let his humour compound for his lewdness; but punishes him at last, tho he makes him all his life time a damnable, *smutty* fellow. And now, I think, having said enough of his modest behaviour, 'twon't be amiss to have a touch or two at his Hypocrisy. And first, concerning the word Smutt.

"Smutt, Smutt"! Why does this tarmagant Correcter of our Lives and Manners pretend to make us believe that his Mouth or Conscience is so streight, that the t'other word can't get passage, or did his Mistress (honourable I mean) sit knotting under his Nose when he was writing, and so gave occasion for the

Collier, p. 70, 71.

Collier, p. 50.

Collier, p. 10.

Collier, p. 125.

changing it instead of Bawdy, that that odious word might not offend her, tho the Phrase was made Nonsense by it—hum—No faith, the case seems to me now to be quite otherwise, and really the effect of downright *Hypocrisy*, unless done as I said for the last reason; for those that have read his Book, may find sprinkling up and down the other words extreamly plain upon occasion, *Ribaldry* and *Bawdy*, and *Whores*, and *Whoring*, and *Strumpets*, and *Cuckoldmakers*, with as fat a signification as any of the last nam'd could wish for their hearts; for example, by way of Tract, first, he says, *Euripides* in his *Hipolitus*, calls *Whoring* stupidity and playing the fool; and secondly, does *Ribaldry*, (not Smut) and Nonsense become the dignity of their station. Again, *Berinthia* encourages *Amanda* to play the *Whore*; and then sows upon *Don Quixot*, when there is not so much as one little tiny todpol of *Smut*, that I know of, unless he creates it—Yet I am Crambo'd with, *who, with low, nauseous Bawdry fills his Plays*. Again speaking of *Jupiter* and *Alcmena*—but her Lover—*that is her Whore-master*. And at last with a Rowzer upon Mr *Congreeve's Double Dealer*, where he particularly Remarks, *that there are but four Ladies in his Play, and three of em are Whores*; adding, withal, that 'tis a great *Compliment to Quality, to tell em there is but a quarter of 'em honest*. Why who, in the name of *Diana*, and all the rest of the Maiden *Goddesses*, does tell 'em so, unless it be Doctor *Crambo* here—If any one calls 'em *Whores* 'tis he, he that by an assum'd Authority thinks he may say any thing; the Ladies, I dare say for the Poet, were drest in such clean Linnen, and were so far from being Tawdry, that no Scrutineer but our severe Master of Art but wou'd have thought Charitably of 'em. Well, but huge Rampant *Whores* they must be with him tho, and through that very mouth that simper'd and primm'd before, as if such a filthy word cou'd not possibly break through: It comes out now in sound and emphasis, and the modest Pen is as prone and ready to write it. So that I once more affirm, that if it were not done in respect to his Lady, who, no doubt, peruses him extreamly, it must naturally be the effect of *Hypocrisie*, for, to be squeamish in one place and not in another is Ridiculous, especially when one word is Innocent in its kind, and makes the sense, and the other when us'd makes it wretched Affectation, and almost Nonsense.

Collier, p. 30,  
32.

p. 74.

p. 208.  
p. 178.

p. 12.

11 Now if the *Absolver* thought Affectation would appear a vertue in him, he ought to have squeamified the before-mention'd Ladies with some title that was new, and if *Smutt* was chosen to be his fine darling word (and the course one of *Whores* slipt out of his Mouth, or from his Pen, by misfortune or chance) he should, in my opinion, have given 'em the title of *Smutters*: a primming neat word extremely proper for the occasion: And I hope I shall live to see the Master of Art have Modesty enough to thank me for't; or else (for my fancy wou'd fain oblige him if it cou'd) to make it yet more *German* to the matter, as *Shakespear* has it, to call em *Colliers* would be as significant as any thing; for there's allusion enough to *Smutt*, or the Devil's in't: For, to deal sincerely, and without *Hypocrisie*, I cannot imagine what this learned Gentleman can mean by all that *Smutt*, *Smutt*, when the other word is as decent and more significant, unless he banters, or dissembles, or fear'd the Ladies peeping, or is so full of his own name, that he goes along quibbling upon't through his Book, with design that way to make himself more famous.

b2

In another part of his Treatise too I fancy I find the *Hypocrite* a great deal more than the *Moralist*, and that is, in his kecking at a word in one place, and gobbling it up in another. To prove this, I find him very like a Ghostly Father of the old *Roman* Kidney, condemning even to the Inquisition: One *Carlos* in Mr *Dryden's Love Triumphant*, for blundering out this horrible Expression, as he calls it, *Nature has given me my portion of Sense, with a Pox to her*. Now pray observe, the *Absolvers* Stomach is so horribly squeamish, at this he belches, turns pale, and is so very sick, that a quartern of Cherry is administered in vain, to set him to rights; he prints instead of the word only a great P— and tells the gentle Reader, (that he is intending to lead by the Nose) that the *Hellish syllable* may be found there at length if he pleases. Would not any one think now, that did not know that the Small Pox is a common Disease, that this word had been *Blasphemy* in the extremity, the renouncing the Deity, or something beyond pardon, and would not one lay a Scholars Egg against a Tost and Ale, that the Doctor would ne're be concern'd with it as long as he was able to eat or drink either of 'em. Why see now how an honest man may be cheated; do but turn to the one hundred seventy second page of his Book, and you will find this horrible, this hellish, syllable, in its Pontificallibus, at length, sitting almost a straddle upon the top of the Page, and us'd familiarly and friendly, without so much as once kacking at it, or one invective near it, tho the sense of the Curse is as broad as t'other, and has rather the worse signification.

Collier, p. 82.

Collier, p. 172.

And pray what can this be else but Hypocrisy; if the word were really terrifying and horrible to him, it would certainly be so in one place as well as another. No, no, these are only flights and amusements, tricks of his own studied

Legerdemain, to make the bubbled ignorants believe him a Saint, and admire his Divinity, when, if they could dive to the bottom of the secret, 'tis solemnly believ'd by many of the dutiful Sons of the Church, that our Sham-reformer is a much fitter man to win Money by his skill at a game of Whisk and Swabbers, than as the case of Allegiance, and Morality, stand with him, to win Souls from Reprobation by the Integrity of his Principles.

I must treat ye with one instance more of his *Hypocrisie*, and then I pass on to another Head. This instance I find Mr *Vanbrook* has taken particular notice of at the latter end of his Book, where, 'tis true, every one may see the *Absolvers* Foible is very plain, but that Author has not made the Case parallel with the others Remark upon *Mr. Congreve's* Comedy the *Old Batchelor*, which shews his contradiction of himself, and his fallacy undeniable, for there he seems to roar at young *Belmour* for his forgetfulness of Religion, at a minute when he is desiring *Letitia* to give him leave to swear by her Lips and Eyes, when he is kissing and telling her, *Eternity was in that moment*. In short, when he has got her fast in his Arms, and intends to go through stitch with the matter; for which he calls the Lady Strumpet, and raves at the smuttiness of the Action; and yet, a little while after, in another page, rallies, jokes upon, and banters young *Worthy* in the *Relapse*, for letting his Lady slip through his fingers, and calls him a *Town-Spark*, and a *Platonick Fool* for't. Hey Jingo, here's Riddling for ye! what would this whimsical Gentleman be at? first he rails at a Lover for holding a pretty Woman fast, and then he jokes upon him for letting her go; this runs almost parallel with the Fable of the Satyr and the Traveller; but if the Doctor is observ'd to have the faculty of blowing hot and cold thus, I believe he may keep his breath either to cool his Porridge, or to warm his fingers, and be much better employ'd, than by using it to make any Proselytes to his Doctrine; and so much for this Head. Now let us try if we can scratch another, and find it out under his Night-cap of

Collier, p. 63.

Collier, p. 127.

## IMMORALITY.

It is not enough to prove a Man is a Moralist, only because he is noted for a Regular Life; that may be one good instance indeed; but it can never arrive to a proof of the whole, for his living Soberly, and by Rule, may as well be caus'd by the defect of his Constitution, as by the effect of his Inclination, but 'tis the Spirit and Will, by the fire of whose other Virtues, this of Morality is kindled and illustrated. Now I will not be so byass'd by other Peoples opinions that know him, to say, That our devout Critick owes him seeming Piety, and good life, to his ill habit of Body; nor will I load him with Abuse, *right or wrong, as he has done me, particularly through a whole Chapter*, but leave that charitably to natural Conscience, or studied Artifice, which he pleases, and only reflect a little on the temper of his Mind, as I have found it blazing in this last, as well as others of his Books. In the first place, if Stubbornness, which causes wrong opinion of the present Regal Authority and Government, is an Immoral Vice, if he is not tainted, I know not who is; for let any one, who is not blinded with Partiality, but read his *Desertion Discuss'd*, with the admirable Answer to it, and I am satisfied he cannot help joining with me in this opinion, That what he would insinuate to be the effect of Right in others, and of Conscience in himself, is nothing but the effect of Error in one, and Obstinacy and Stubborn Will in t'other, a humour resolv'd to defend and carry on a hot Argument, tho it has been never so plain and reasonably confuted: the Positions and Answers on this subject I shall not insert here, but leave the Reader, whose curiosity obliges him, to the Papers themselves, only I wish the *Absolver* had made *Newgate* the last Scene of that part of his *Immorality*, and by an humble acknowledgment to his Patron that redeemed him, (I hope the word will bear in this place) have spar'd his Office of *Absolution* in another Scene, and consequently given no occasion to believe that his disobedient humour, and turbulent nature, still proceeds daily, to cultivate his Party with the same Principles as far as he can.

Another spice of *Immorality* I believe I can make appear by his Pride, and tho' in other places it is to be found, yet is most fairly instanc'd in his *Book of Essays*, where, tho' we find one Chapter wholly upon that Vice, which, to shew his Justice, begins with a Compliment upon the same *Juvenal*, now he has use for him whom he call'd Pimp before, yet it has not bulk enough to Skreen from us his haughtiness in another, which he calls the *Office of a Chaplain*, for there you shall find he has collected the Spirit of them all, and blended them into one Character; I mean the ill Spirits of the ill *Chaplains, those that are good I honour*. Here you may find his Likeness in *Don Quixot, Roger* in the *Scornful Lady, Bull* in the *Relapse, Say-grace, Cuff-cushion*, and others, all learning their Lessons of their stubborn Superior our Reformer, and all tending to governing, brow-beating, snubbing, commanding Families, and the like, but not one word of *humility* tack'd to't, for fear of spoiling the Character; there

you may find 24 pages, one after another, all written to prove most gloriously, that 'tis impossible for a *Chaplain* to be a Servant; that tho' you find a poor fellow in a tatter'd Excommunicated Gown with one sleeve, Shoes without heels, miserable Antichristian breeches, with some two dozen of creepers brooding in the seams; and tho' you take him charitably to your House, feed, clothe, and give him your wages, yet he belongs only *to God*, and not you, and you must not think him your *Domestick*, but your *Superior*. Why, what a Scheme is here laid for Vanity and Folly, add how much more shining and beautiful does gratitude and humility appear in such a Depender, than such a bloated opinion as this? Would any honest Gentleman, that has his sences, shew his Indulgence and Generosity to Wit or Learning, on such terms as these? And does not this Chapter shew more the Spirit of Pride in our *Absolver*, relating to his own humour, than the veneration he has for the Clergy, or the Justice he would seem to do them in it? I dare affirm, most of them are against this Opinion, at least I'm sure all the modest part are, who cannot but own themselves subservient to their Patrons that maintain them, tho' at the same time they are Ministers of *Gods holy Words and Sacraments*. Yet he buffly goes on, *He is Gods Minister, not Mans Servant*. And a little way further, he clenches this admirable Notion through and through; therefore, says he, *for a Patron to account such a Consecrated Person, as if he belong'd to him as a Servant, is in effect to challenge Divine Honours, and set himself up for a God*. Here's Ambition, here's Perfection, here's old *Bonner* for ye. Now by his *Hollidame*, for I can't forbear that Oath now, what can a squeamish Critick, that would make *Remarks* upon the *Remarker* call this? But stay, he's at it again, *Dolopion*, says he, *was Priest to Scamander, and regarded like the God he belong'd to*. Pray mind him, the Priest was worshipp'd equal with the God—oh rare Moralist—if he were, 'twas an *Ægyptian* Worship, where only *Calves* and *Apes*, and *Carrots* and *Onions*, were *Gods*. But pray let us see a little, has not this Divine quotation a tang of *Blasphemy* in't? Oh fie, no; what, the *Moralist!* *Reformer of Vices!* Speak *Blasphemy!* Impossible! he can't sure! Yes, yes, he may, when he thinks no body can find him out: and faith, to my sence now, this smells as rank of *Pandemonium*, of fire and brimstone, to the full, if not worse, than Mr. *Dryden's* Verse, *Whether inspir'd with a Diviner Lust his father got him*, &c. which is spoken only in the figurative Person of *David*; yet he says 'tis downright defiance of the Living God, and the very Essence and Spirit of *Blasphemy*. And here now his Stomach wambled more terribly than before; so that if his Friend were by, he must of necessity hold the Bason. Oh me! he reaches and reaches, and first up comes—egh—I question whether—egh—the *torments and despair of the Damn'd*—egh—*dare venture at such flights as these*. And now the Head being held by the same hand, at two reaches more it comes all up, mix'd with a Tincture of old *Bonner* again—egh—I can't forbear saying, that the next bad thing to writing these *Impieties*—egh—is to suffer them. And now the Fit's over, leaving us to imagine what rare Church Discipline we should have, if this Gentleman, and his Cat with nine Tails, were in Power; I think a Couplet or two here, by way of Advice to him, is not improper.

*Office of a  
Chaplain*, p.  
178.

Ib. p. 185.

Collier, p. 113.

*Absalom and  
Achit*.

Collier p. 184.

Your Tribe should all be in Opinion steady,  
Not turn or wind for Power or for Place,  
Nor covet Wealth but in Spiritual Grace.  
The Gifts of *Mammon* you should ne'r implore,  
Nor wish for Gold, unless to give the Poor;  
It makes your Art contemptible appear,  
Less follow'd too, and look'd into more near;  
For if all those that preach up Paradise,  
Will have their shares of every human Vice,  
They shall Cant long enough e're I believe,  
Or pin my Soul's Salvation on their sleeve.

*Weesils*, p. 11.

Here now, ten to one, but I shall make our Reformer fall into another fit, by pretending to Counsel him, or take his Office of Ordinary upon my self; for in page 138, he will not give up that leave, *What, is the Pulpit under the Discipline of the Stage? And are those fit to correct the Church, that are not fit to come into it?* Ah! Doctor, rub your eyes a little, and see what the Vindicator of the Stage says, quoting Divine *Herbert*:

Collier, p. 138.

*A Verse may find him who a Sermon flies,  
And turn delight into a Sacrifice.*

Besides I do assure you, spite of your Ghostly Authority, and Uncharitable Position, that we are not fit, we will come in, and not only imbibe the Mystery of *Divinity* from the Pulpit, but unriddle the Mystery of *Iniquity*, if we can find any there. *Ben Johnson* found out *Ananias* and *Rabby Buisy*; *Fletcher*, *Hypocritical Roger*; *Shakespear*, *Sir John of Wrotham*; *Congreve*, *Say-grace*; *Vanbrook*, *Bull*; *Shadwell*, *Smirk*; and if *Durfey* can find out a proud, stubborn,

immoral *Bernard*, one, that when he was a Country Curate, *would not let the Children be brought to Church to be Christned for some odd Jesuitical Reasons* best known to himself, he shall presume to draw his Picture, tho the *Absolver* drop another Chapter of Abuse upon him for so doing.

*The Chaplains  
Name in Don  
Quixot.*

We find, for many Ages past, Poets have enjoy'd this Priviledge; our Prince of Poets, *Chaucer*, had so much to do in this kind, that we find him weary himself, and loth to weary others with.

Of Freers I have told before,  
In a making of a Crede,  
And yet I cold tell worse, or more,  
But Men would werien it to read.

Chaucer \*

This I think is pithy, but here again I think his Counsel to them is much better.

Fly fro the Prease and dwell with soothfastness,  
Suffice unto thy good, tho it be small,  
For horde hath, and climbing tickleness,  
Prease hath Envy, and wele is blent ore all;  
Savour no more then thee behove shall,  
Rede wele thy self that other folk canst rede,  
And trouth thee shall deliver it is no drede.

Now if he be Moral enough to take old *Chaucer's* Advice I shall be glad; and so much for that subject. There is nothing now remains, before I come to vindicate *Don Quixot*, but a large Remark of his, upon the little or no swearing in Plays, which commonly is only a kind of an Interjection, as gad, I cod, oonz, &c. which I don't defend neither, and if any others have carelesly past the Press I'm sorry for't, for I hate them as much as he, yet because the Doctor has quoted the Statute Law against it and Players, to slander on one side, tho to reform on t'other, I will in return quote another piece of Law relating to Oaths, extremely for his advantage, for there is only this quibbling difference between us, 'Tis a fault in us in swearing when we should not, and in him for not swearing when he should; but that now he may have occasion to say my Civilities are particular to him, I will make him do't.

*I J.C. do sincerely promise and swear, that I will be faithful, and bear true Allegiance to His Majesty King William: And I do swear that I do, from my heart, abhor, detest and abjure, as Impious and Heretical, that damnable Doctrine and Position, that Princes excommunicated, or depriv'd by the Pope, or any Authority of the See of Rome, may be Depos'd or Murther'd by their Subjects, or any other whatsoever.*

*And I do declare that no Foreign Prince, Person, Prelate, State or Potentate, hath, or aught to have, any Jurisdiction, Power, Superiority, Preeminence or Authority, Ecclesiastical or Spiritual, within this Realm. So help me God.*

- 16 This now, with a sincerity proper, and coming to Church to hear our Divine Service, with the *Prayer* for the *King* in't, would give one a little satisfaction as to the Doctors present opinion, for what he has been, if you will but examine and scan it by his Book, tho it be a Reforming Book, is I am sure very disputable; in one Page of it he seems very zealous for the Protestant Reformation, and says, being very much piqu'd at *Sir John Brute's* putting on a Clergy-man's Habit in the *Provok'd Wife*, that the Church of England, he means the Men in her, is the only communion in the world, that will endure such insolencies as these; and this, tho it be somewhat *Bonnerish* again, and *Switcher-like*, yet however seems to leer of our side; but then presently in another place he's as zealous for the *Roman* Sect, and Jesuitically condemns a little wholesom Satyr in the Character of a pamper'd hypocritical covetous *Spanish Fryer*, for incivility in making him a Pimp to *Lorenzo*, and is very angry at the Author for calling this virtuous person a parcel of holy Guts and Garbidge, and telling him that he has room in his Belly for his Church-steeple; and here his Lash is up again for abusing them—oh—if *Doctor Absolution* were Inquisitor general, and a Satyrist against Priests came under his hand, mercy upon us, how that poor Rascal would be flaug'd, for I find 'tis only the person of the Priest that he would have reverenc'd, let his opinion be what it will; nay, tho he were a *Priest of Baal*, as may be prov'd a little further, for here his Zeal shews itself not only for Christians, but the very *Turks* too; and cavils again with *Jacinta*, in the *Mock Astrologer*, for jesting with *Alla*, and honest *Mahomet*, for he was a Brother Priest too: But stay, what's worst of all, have but patience to walk to another Page, and here you will find him just sinking into a downright doze and despondency, whither he had best set up for any Religion at all, or at least for one very indifferent.

Collier, p. 108.

Collier, p. 98.

Collier, p. 61.

*Our Poets, I suppose, would call this Preaching, and think it a dull business;*

however, I can't forbear saying, an honest Heathen is none of the worst men, a very indifferent Religion well believ'd, will go a great way—Will it so, pray friends de'e not think our hot reforming Gentleman is very Luke-warm here, or not a little craz'd when he writ this, or, as the vulgar have it, was not his mighty Wit run a Wool-gathering; for if he be for *Protestantism*, and *Popery*, and then whip—amongst the *Bens of the Arabians for Alla and Mahomet*, and at last for little or no Religion at all, I'm afraid I shall never bring my self to be reform'd by him. And so at him agen Weesil.

Collier, p. 28.

For who with Reason, if this be your way,  
Will ever value what you Preach or Pray.

*Weesils.*

But now I think I have said enough for the Plays, whose Authors are much better able to speak for themselves; and therefore will fall off to vindicate my self a little, and my Acquaintance *Don Quixot*; in which I will endeavour to prove another Immoral Vice in our Stage-Reformer, which is

## *Injustice and Error in Criticism.*

17 And first, his *Injustice* appears by his ungentlemanlike exposing me and others by name, upon a scandalous occasion (as he endeavours to make it) without any Injury done by me to him, or ever giving him any provocation, or the Play's any way deserving it. Oh, but he'll say his Conscience urg'd him to do it—No—not a jot; 'twas dear darling Interest, in good faith, as shall hereafter appear; but in the mean time I am planted upon the shoulders of a Gyant, which is the Ingenious Author of the History of *Don Quixote*; and there indeed he guesses right, tho he knows nothing of him or of his History, as I will prove by and by, yet confidently, and Absolver-like, he ranges his objections under three heads, which are every one malicious and false, viz.

c

First, *The Prophaneness, with respect to Religion and the Holy Scriptures.*

Secondly, *The Abuse of the Clergy.*

Thirdly, *The want of Modesty, and Regard to the Audience.*

Well, to prove the Prophaneness, he first instances a bold Song of mine, as he calls it, against Providence; four of the last lines of which he is only pleas'd to shew ye.

*But Providence, that form'd the fair  
In such a charming skin,  
Their outside made its only care,  
And never look'd within.*

D. Quix. p. 1.  
p. 20.

Here, says he, the Poet tells ye Providence makes Mankind by halves, huddles up the Soul, and takes the least care of the better Moyety; this is direct blaspheming the Creation, and a Satyr upon God Almighty. Why, now this, I confess, is enough to provoke some heat in a fellow of my Constitution, to hear this Religious Raving; but yet it looks so like *Oliver's Porter's in Bedlam*, that I will be calm, and patiently holding up my hand, plead *Not Guilty*—to all of these objections. But first, pray why does he foyst in the word Mankind here to express the Female Sex, when t'other word is so much more proper. I did intend indeed a small Satyr upon *Womankind*, pursuant to *Marcella's* Character, and he has vary'd from that word, I suppose, to amuse the Reader—I'll give ye the whole Stanza.

Collier p. 97.

Did coy *Marcella* own a Soul  
As beauteous as her Eyes,  
Her Judgment wou'd her Sence controul,  
And teach her how to prize.  
But Providence, that form'd the fair  
In such a charming Skin,  
Their outside made its only care,  
And never look'd within.

I only rally a pretty coy wench here for her sullen ill nature, without any Satyr on the Deity, or any thing like it; for as to the *Blasphemy*, as he calls it, by naming the word *Providence*, 'tis generally intended in Lyrical Poetry for *Goddess Nature*, or *Fortune*, as Mr *Vanbrooke* notes; but never apply'd seriously to the true Deity, but only by Dr *Crambo*. How often have we this phrase in Poetry, *Nature has made her Body charming; see her bright Eyes, the charming gifts of Nature*, &c. making use still of the second cause instead of the first, which we yet know to be the original of all. And 'tis no more Blasphemy to say that Providence took more care of a perverse beautiful

Womans Body than her Soul, than 'tis to say that the Sun made a gay Tulip flourish in a Garden to delight the Eye, not caring three-pence tho it never smelt so sweet as a Province rose.

But I have a Rigid Critick and a Severe Inquisitor to deal with—He will have a Satyr upon the true Deity, tho I intend nothing of it. And to go on, my next advance he says is to Droll upon the *Resurrection*; and to prove it, squirts out these two lines, which are pick'd out of twenty—which he thinks are fit for his purpose—

*Sleep and Indulge thy self with rest,  
Nor dream thou e're shalt rise again.*

Ibid.

Now you must know this Song was design'd a solemn piece of morality, and sung as a Requiem or Dirge at the Funeral of *Ambrosio*—A young Gentleman that dy'd for Love of the aforesaid *Marcella*—You shall have it all, that you may judge what Drolling is in't.

(1.)

Sleep, sleep, poor Youth, sleep, sleep in Peace,  
Reliev'd from Love, and mortal care,  
Whilst we that pine in Life's disease,  
Uncertain blest, less happy are.

D. Quix. p 20.

(2.)

Couch'd in the dark and silent Grave,  
No ills of Fate thou now canst fear;  
No more shall Tyrant Power inslave,  
Or scornful Beauty be severe.

(3.)

Wars, that do fatal storms disperse,  
Far from thy happy Mansion keep;  
Earthquakes, that shake the Universe,  
Can't rock thee into sounder sleep.

(4.)

With all the Charms of Peace possest,  
Secur'd from Life's tormentor, Pain:  
Sleep and indulge thy self with rest,  
Nor dream thou e're shall rise again.

(5.)

Past are the Pangs of fear and doubt,  
The Sun is from the Dial gone,  
The Sands are sunk, the Glass is out,  
The folly of the Farce is done.

Now will I be judg'd by any reasonable Man, if these words comparatively are not fitter for an *Anthem* than a Droll, but the Reformers way of doing me Justice, is to take bits and morsels out of things, that for want of the connexion, they may consequently appear ridiculous, as here he does. Again, in his third objection against my third Song, where he says— *I*, (that is in my own person) *make a jest of the Fall, rail at Adam and Eve*; and then *Oliver's Porter*, raving again, says, *I burlesque the Conduct of God Almighty*; now, pray judge whether it ought to be Constru'd so or no. This Song is suppos'd to be made and sung by *Gines de Passamonte*, a most notorious Atheistical Villain, who, as he is going Chain'd to the Galleys, is redeem'd from them by *Don Quixot* in his frantick fit; after which, being extremely pleas'd at the success, he, to make his deliverer merry, entertains him with this Vindication of a Rogue, which is indeed a Satyr upon Humanity in general. I will add agen to our Criticks morsel, for he notes but the four first lines in a place, and give ye one whole Stanza.

Ibid.

When the World first knew Creation,  
A Rogue was a Top profession;  
When there were no more  
In all Nature but four,  
There were two of 'em in Transgression.  
And the seeds are no less  
Since that we may guess,  
But have in all Ages bin growing apace;  
And Lying and Thieving,  
Craft, Pride and Deceiving,  
Rage, Murder and Roaring,  
Rape, Incest and Whoring,  
Branch out from Stock, the rank Vices in vogue,  
And make all Mankind one Gigantical Rogue.

And so on: Now tho I grant this might be look'd on as prophane in it self, without application, yet when spoken by one of his character, whom I design to expose, it is no more than natural Character, and has so little the quality of Prophaneness, that my impartial Reader will find a very good Moral in it, by the odious representation of such Atheistical impudence; yet our good natur'd Critick makes me the Prophaner. He, cramm'd full of wonderful Justice, makes me the *Vice* my self, that only act the true duty of a Poet, and hold up the Glass for others to see their *Vices* in, but his Malice will not be Authentick with every one, no more than his next Addle Criticism, upon my using the word *Redeemer* will bear the Test; for he that will argue that that word may not be innocently spoken in Temporal Matters, because it is sometimes us'd as a *Divine Attribute*, will prove himself rather a Coxcomb than a Casuist: And yet for only this poor word the Cat with Nine Tails are up again, and the Inquisitor in a rage cries out, *these insolencies are too big for the Correction of a Pen*. Very fine, what horrible correction this deserves, is easily judg'd, and I believe 'twill be own'd too, that if Doctor Absolution (when the charitable Prelates good Nature and Purse got him out of his Stone Apartment yonder, into which *his bigotted obstinacy and not his tender Conscience* had thrown him) did not think him his *Redeemer*, and thank him as his *Redeemer*, he does not only deserve Correction for his wicked ingratitude, (which *especially in one of his Coat, is an immoral Cheat upon Heaven*) but to have the same punishment that another of his Coat and Kidney lately had, for a Cheat upon the Government and People.

Collier, p. 198.

But to go on: In the next place he finds fault with my making sport with Hell, and recites six Lines, which are made of Dogril Stuff, on purpose by the Duke's Servants, who, for his diversion, Acting a kind of Farce are to fright *Sancho* with Goblins and Furies—but to shew his own Wit in the first Onset here, he has notably made the two first Lines half nonsense.

20

*Appear ye fat Fiends that in Limbo do groan,  
That were, when in flesh, the same Souls as his own.*

Collier, p. 198.

Instead of ——*that wore when in flesh, &c.*

*You that always in Lucifer's Kitchin reside,  
'Mongst Sea-coal and Kettles, and grease newly Try'd,  
That pamper'd each day with the Garbidge of Souls,  
Broil Rashers of Fools for a Break-fast on Coals.*

Words adapted only to *Sancho's* Clownship, course Breeding, and Kitchin Profession, and with no more intent of Impiety in them, than if one should put on a Devils Vizard to play with a Child, does he note again as horrible Prophaneness, and says he does me no wrong in't; now if he insists that Hell is too serious a thing to ridicule, why, perhaps, I think so too, in its Intense quality; but to act a Goblin, a Ghost, a Frog, or a Fury, and to sing to a Country Clown of such Bugbear matters, only to cause a little Diversion in a Noblemans House, has always been very customary, especially at Festivals, and far from being thought to ridicule the main matter. The *Absolver*, to turn back a little, affirms indeed, That *those that bring Devils upon the stage, can hardly believe them any where else*; but I can give an instance, that our famous *Ben Johnson*, who I will believe had a Conscience as good as the Doctors, and who liv'd in as Pious an Age, in his Comedy call'd the *Devil's an Ass*, makes his first Scene a Solemn Hell, where *Lucifer* sits in State with all his Privy-Council about him: and when he makes an under Pug there beaten and fool'd by a Clod-pated Squire and his wanton Wife, the Audience took the Representation morally, and never keck'd at the matter. Nay, *Milton*, tho' upon his secret Subject, comes very near the same thing too; but we must not laugh at silly *Sancho*, nor put on a Devils face to fright him, but we must be disciplin'd; nay, more, Presented for it. Here, tho' I digress a little, I cannot forbear telling some, that were too busie in doing that Office, that 'tis more easie to accuse our Writings for Blasphemous, than to prove them to be so. To detect us indeed fairly, and prove it upon us, would deserve severe Chastisement; but if it be mistake, and our reputations are injur'd by Rashness and Injustice, or Ignorance, reflection upon it is at least reasonable, and just reproof I think not improper. But to go on; my next fault is the Ass that's brought upon the Stage in the Epilogue, with two lines alluding to *Balaam's*.

Collier, p. 189.

Vid. *Devil's an Ass*, p. 9.

*And as 'tis said a Parlous Ass once spoke,  
When Crab-tree Cudgel did his rage provoke, &c.*

Here he says, *I brought the Ass in only to laugh at the Miracle*: Not I, truly, I had no such intention upon my word; I brought the Ass in, and *Dogget* upon him, only to make the Audience laugh at his figure at the end of the Play, as well as they had at the beginning; but I believe if I had put an *Absolver* upon his back, giving him a Blessing, it would have been more divertive by half; but let him alone, the next horrible Crime is, I meddle with Churchmen, and there

Collier, p. 199.



my *malice makes me*, he says, *lay about me like a Knight Errant*; but I believe I shall prove, for all the modesty he pretends to, that his malice is more in reference to Poets, than ever mine was to Churchmen. Well, my Second Part begins, he says, with *Devil's being brought upon the Stage*, who cries, *As he hopes to be sav'd; and Sancho warrants him a good Christian*. Now this is a ridiculous mistake, for this Devil is only a Butler, and a Jest of his *Giants*, the witty Author of the History of *Don Quixot*, where one of the Duke's Servants acting a Devils Part to fright the Knight and Squire, blunders it out before he is aware, and *Sancho* hearing it, as foolishly replies. This would be humorously witty now with any one but our Critick; but he's resolv'd to see double, as he does presently again with my *deep-mouth'd swearing* which he says is frequent, tho he has quoted none on't, and therefore the Reader is not oblig'd to believe him. But then I have made the *Curate Perez assist at the ridiculous Ceremony of Don Quixot*; I have so—what then?—but I have made him *have wit enough*, however, to know *Don Quixot* for a Madman; but then *Sancho*, by way of Proverb, tells him, *Ah—Consider dear Sir, no Man is born wise: to which briskly replies the Doctor, What if he were born wise, he might be bred a Fool*. Faith, no Doctor: and to be free with ye, (*en Raillere*) as you have been with me, must beg leave to tell ye, If you had been born wise enough to be a Reformer, your Breeding could never have made ye Fool enough to be an Absolver; I mean in a Case like you know what; but let us proceed. The next is a swinger, and his Lash cuts even to the blood: for here *Sancho*, full of innocent simplicity, says, *A Bishop is no more than another Man, without Grace and good Breeding*. To which he presently darts out, *I must needs say, if the Poet had any share of either of these Qualities, he would be less bold with his Superiors, and not give his Clowns the liberty to Droll thus heavily upon a solemn Character*. Why, faith, now this is very hard, I have known a Country Wench name a *Bishop* in the Burning-too of a Hasty-Pudding, and never heard that any of the Reverend took it ill, because it was a Common Saying, and below their notice. But poor *Sancho*, or rather indeed *Sancho's* Poet, my self, must be corrected for it, tho the Phrase be Moral, and no more than an honest truth: But come, since it must be so, let me ask the doctor why he does not shew me an example for this himself, and Practice better before he Accuses; for let the Reader look into his *Desertion Discuss'd* (for he shall find that I have trac'd him through all his Writings) and page the 3d you will find him, I think, somewhat more guilty of this fault than I have been, for there you'll see he

Collier, p. 200.

Collier, Ibid.

Ibid.

be so, let me ask the doctor why he does not shew me an example for this himself, and Practice better before he Accuses; for let the Reader look into his *Desertion Discuss'd* (for he shall find that I have trac'd him through all his Writings) and page the 3d you will find him, I think, somewhat more guilty of this fault than I have been, for there you'll

insolently affirms, *That the Succession cannot be interrupted by an Act of Parliament, especially when the Royal Assent is given*

*Desertion Discuss'd*, Anno 1688.

by a King de Facto, and not de Jure. And again; tho this next is hinted covertly, with the meaning disguis'd, yet Sir *William Temple* in his Memoirs, page 295, and the aforesaid Vindicater of the Stage, as well as my self, have observed, that the *Absolver* in the first Volume of his Essays, page 120, in his Chapter of the *A* tells us, *Whether the honesty or dishonesty are discernable in the face, is a question which admits of dispute; King Charles the Second thought he could depend upon these Observations, but with submission, I believe an instance might be given, in which his Rules of Physiognomy fail'd*. Now I'm

Essays, p.120.

observed, that the *Absolver* in the first Volume of his Essays, page 120, in his Chapter of the *A* tells us, *Whether the honesty or dishonesty are discernable in the face, is a question which admits of dispute; King Charles the Second thought he could depend upon these Observations, but, with submission, I believe an instance might be given, in which his Rules of Physiog-*

sure the first is insolently plain, and the next shews enough to let us into his meaning; which granted, I think I may

say, he ought to be less bold with his Superiors too, and not give himself the liberty to treat at this rate, not only a Solemn, but a *Royal Character*. Well, the next is, I, (naming me) take care to tell ye, that *Sancho* is a *dry shrewd Countryfellow* in his Character, *because he blunders out Proverbs upon all occasions, tho never so far from the purpose*—and merrily drolls upon me for making blundering and talking nothing to the purpose, an argument of shrewdness—Why truly, I must confess to the Doctor, there is no great matter in that Argument, and not much whither there be or no—But, as unperforming as I am, I fancy I shall find as great a Blunder in his performance presently—*We ought to be just in our Looks, as well as in our Actions*, says he in his Essays, *for the mind may be declar'd one way no less than the other: A man might as good break his Word as his Face, especially upon some Critical occasions*. Now what he means by a mans breaking his Face there, unless he is to run his Nose against a Post, I can't imagine; and therefore will set it down for a Blunder—And so there's Tit for Tat, and the Dice in my hand still. But poor *Sancho* is horribly unfortunate agen, for by and by he catches him answering the Curate, who threatens him for calling him Finisher of Fornication, and Conjunction Copulative, with Excommunication, *I care not if you do, says Sancho, I shall lose nothing by it but my Nap in an afternoon*. Why

Essays p. 118.

Collier, p. 201.

truly this might be thought a little sawcy from one in Trowsers, to one in a Cassock, especially as the Reformer would have him reverenc'd. But perhaps this Pragmatical Curate *Perez* was some *Non-Juror*, and poor *Sancho* did not think he should profit by his Doctrine; and then the honest fellow was much in the right. This puts me in mind of a passage in one of Mr *Crown's* Comedies, where a surly Joyner is rallying with a Doctor of no very good Reputation too; *Sirrah, Sirrah, says the Doctor, I shall have your Ears—No, No, says Chizzel, never when you preach, Doctor.* Our Absolver may apply this now as he pleases.

And here are a bundle of faults together—*Jodolet*, another Priest, is call'd holy Cormorant, only because he eats a Turkey, and drinks a Bottle or two of Malaga for his Breakfast; and the Poet is jerk'd because a gormandizing *Romish* Priest is call'd a Pimp agen; and the Duke's Steward, *Manuel*, is no witty pleasant fellow, because he calls the Chaplain, whom I mentioned in the beginning of my Preface, and who is, no doubt, the sole occasion of this Gentleman's Pique to me—Mr *Cuff-cushion*; and because having an insight into his Character, he tells him, *a Whore is a Pulpit he loves*; but my hope is, that my Reader will think him no fool for this, tho the Carper does, who then tells the Chaplain *Saygrace, and he supposes prays to God to bless the entertainment of the Devil*, tho there is not a word of a Grace spoke at all; and after, when he grows hot, positive, and impertinent, which the Duke his patron being at Table, only bears with, to divert himself, he insolently calls *Don Quixot*, Don Coxcomb, who justly enrag'd, returns him in this Language: *Oh thou vile black Fox, with a Firebrand in thy Tail, thou very priest, thou kindler of all Mischiefs in all Nations, de'e hear, Homily, did not the reverence I bear these Nobles—I would so thrum your Cassock, you Church Vermin*—Here now, to shew his Justice he slyly stops and gives a dash, so makes it Nonsense, but I shall make bold to piece it out again. *Did not the reverence I bear these Nobles, tye up my hands from doing myself Justice, I would so thrum your Cassock you Church Vermin*—Now, because my Reader shall find that I have naturally pursu'd the character of this Chaplain, as *Don Quixot's* Historian has presented him to me, you shall hear what account he gives of him. Here is, says he, *a good Character of a poor Pedant; one of them that govern great men's Houses, one of those, that as they are not born Noble, so they know not how to instruct those that are; one of those, that would have great men's Liberality measur'd by the streightness of their own Minds; one of those, that teaching those they govern to be frugal, would make 'em miserable.* Now this considerable person as you find him here, who was indeed for his senseless humour of designing to govern—us'd no otherwise than as the Buffoon of the Family—takes upon him to call *Don Quixot* (whom the Authour imbellishes, with all manner of learning and good sense, bating his whimsical Chimæra of Knight Errantry,) *Goodman Dulpate* and *Don Coxcomb*. Well, however the *Switcher* here has escap'd for his usage of a Gentleman in or near this manner, I believe my Judges will agree, that my Knight was so far from injuring the sawcy Trencherfly, by the reply he give him, that if he had not known and practic'd good breeding, better than the other, he would have broke his head into the bargain. As for his bidding him adieu in Language too prophane and scandalous for our Reformer to relate, is impossible, for he has prov'd often enough the contrary of that in his Book already. But for the Song in the Fourth Act, where the Country Fellow says, *Folks never mind now what those black Cattle say*: He is only suppos'd for another Bumpkin, that amongst the rest of the Parishioners, had found out the Parsons blind side, and so behind his back took occasion to put a joke upon him, as well as the rest in that Satyr mention'd.

And now his third place is to prove my want of Modesty, and regard to the Audience—And here he's chewing his savoury word *Smutt* agen, and says *Sancho* and *Teresa* talk it broad; but since his Modesty has not quoted it, I hope my Reader will believe so well of mine, to think I have not written it; I assure him I don't know of any. And I have prov'd our Reformer can mistake, as he does of *Marcellas* Epilogue, who Raves, he says, with Raptures of Indecency, when the poor Creature is so cold, after her hot fit, that she rather wants a dram of the Bottle—But now, Bounce, for a full charge of Small Shot; here he has gather'd up a heap of Epithets together, without any words between, or connexion to make 'em sense; and this he says I divert the Ladies with—*Snotty nose, filthy vermin in the Beard, Nitty Jerkin, and Louse snapper, with the Letter in the Chamber-pot, and natural evacuation.* Why truly this is pretty stuff indeed, as his Ingenuity has put it together—but I hope every one will own, that each of these singly, when they are tagg'd to their sensible phrases, may be proper enough in Farce or Low Comedy; but as he has modell'd 'em, 'tis true they are very frightful—And if I had nothing to sing or say to divert Ladies better than this, I should think my self so despicable, that I would e'en get into the next Plot, amongst his Brother Grumblers—then despairing, do some doughty thing to deserve hanging, and depend upon no

Ibid.

Ibid.

Collier, p. 202.

Shelton's  
Translation of  
the History of  
D. Quix. Chap.  
31. p. 152.

Ibid.

Collier, p. 203.

other comfort but his Absolution.

24

I remember, being lately at St. *James's*, this very part of the Doctors Book was read or rather spelt out to me, with tickling satisfaction, by one whose Wit and good Manners are known to be just of the same weight, who, since he can be merry so easily, he shall laugh at some of the Reformers Hotch-potch too, as I have mingled it for him. *Jewish Tetragramaton, Stigian Frogs, reeking Pandæmoniums, Debauch'd Protagonists, Nauseous Ribaldry, Ranting Smutt, Abominable Stench, Venus and St George Juliana, the Witch and the Parson of Wrotham, with the admirable Popish story of the Woman that went to the Play-House and brought home the Devil with her*—And the Devil's in't indeed, if this charming Rhetorick of his, (since he calls mine so) especially joyn'd with that fine story from *Tertullian*, don't divert the Ladies as well as t'other; for 'tis very like a Catholick miracle you must know, and the top wit of it is, that when the Parson is Conjuring, *he asks the Devil how he durst attack a Christian?* who, like an admirable Joker as he was, answers, *I have done nothing but what I can justify, for I seiz'd her upon my own ground.* Now let the Devil be as witty as he can, I am sure the story, maugre *Tertullian's* Authority, or the Doctor's either, is confounded silly, and downright nonsense, what credit soever it has with him for its likeness to Jesuiticism. And now I think I have prov'd too, that *a Clergy man can speak nonsense, pass it for humour too, and gratify his ease and his malice at once, without a Poet's putting his into his Mouth.* And since we have been speaking of quibbling, I shall digress a little to entertain the Reader on that subject. Our Critick rallies Mr *Dryden's Sancho in Love Triumphant*, for saying, *don't provoke me, I'm mischievously bent*, to which *Carlos* a man of sense replys, *nay you are bent enough in conscience, but I have a bent Fist for Boxing; Here* says he (smartly) *you have a brace of quibbles started in a line and a half*—Very true, you have so—But suppose quibbling or punning—but I think this is call'd punning—Is this Gentlemans humour—if so, being a Soldier, I don't see it calls his sense in question at all—but now pray let's see, how our Critick manages a quibble, with a blunder tack'd to the Tail on't, in the page before, there, in the aforesaid Play, *Celidea* in a passion cries,

Collier's Epithetes.

Collier, p. 257.

Collier, p. 170.

*Great Nature break thy Chain that links together  
The Fabrick of this Globe, and make a Chaos,  
Like that within my Soul—*

Collier, p. 68.

Now, says the Doctor, keen as a Razor, *if she had call'd for a Chair, instead of a Chaos, tripp'd off, and kept her folly to herself, the woman had been wiser.* Calling for a Chair instead of a Chaos is an extreme pretty Quibble truly—but if the Critick had let the Chair-men have tripp'd off with her, instead of doing it herself as she sat in a Chair, I'm sure the blunder had been sav'd, and I think he had exprest himself a little wiser than he has—And come, now my hand's in, let's parallel Mr *Dryden* with our Reformer a little longer—*Church-men* (says *Benducar* in *Don Sebastian*,

*Tho they Itch to govern all,  
Are silly, woful awkward Politicians,  
They make lame mischiefs, tho they meant it well.*

Collier, p.104.

*So much the better*, says he, *for tis a sign they are not beaten to the trade*—Oh, that's a mistake, Doctor, they may be beaten to the Trade, and yet be bunglers—And proceeding:

*Their Interest is not finely drawn, and hid,  
But Seams are coarsely bungled up, and seen.*

Ibid.

25

*These Lines*, says he, *are an Illustration taken from a Taylor.* They are so, but what Justice is it in him to lessen 'em, whose own flights are ten times more ridiculous: For example, talking just before of tumbling the Elements together, he says, *and since we have shewn our skill of Vaulting on the High Ropes, a little Tumbling on the Stage may not do amiss for variety.* And now I will refer my self to the severest Critick of his party, whether an Illustration taken from a Taylor is not better than one taken from a Vagabond Rope-dancer, or Tumbler, forty times over; but his sense and way of Writing he thinks will infallibly overcome censure; not with me I assure him, to confirm it I must remark him once more, and then my digression shall end. He tells ye *Cleora*, in the Tragedy of *Cleomenes*, *is not very charming, her part is to tell you, her Child suck'd to no purpose.*

Collier, p. 158.

d

*It pull'd and pull'd but now, but nothing came;  
At last it drew so hard that the Blood follow'd,  
And that red Milk I found upon its Lips,  
Which made me swoon for fear.*

Cleomenes.

There, says he, is a description of sucking for ye: And then like another Devil of a Joker runs on, truly *one would think the Muse on't were scarcely wean'd*—Very likely; and here I warrant he thinks his Witty Criticism, as safely hous'd now as a Thief in a Mill, as the old Saw has it, did not his plaguee want of Memory now and then contrive to disgrace him; or if you turn to the thirty fourth page of his Lampon, as Mr *Vanbrooke* calls it, after he has been comparing a fine young Lady to a *Setting-bitch-teacher*.

*Lower yet—down, down*, and after he has been bringing forth a Litter of Mr. *Congreeves* Epithetes, as he calls them, *soothing softness, sinking Ease, wafting Air, thrilling Fears, and incessant scalding Rain*, all Crude, just as he did mine before, without any connexion of sense to 'em: He tells ye more plain in troth than wittily, that *they make the Poem look like a Bitch overstock'd with Puppies, and suck the sense almost to Skin and Bone*. For a Child to suck the Mother till the Blood follows, I think is not unreasonable, but for a Litter of Epithetes to suck the sense of a Poem to the Skin and Bone, is such Fustian stuff that nothing but a Creature, only fit for a Sucking-bottle, could be Author of—And now I think if he has given me any *Crocus Metallorum*, I am even with him with a Dose of *Jollop*, and can whisk too from one Play to another

Collier, p. 34.

Ibid, ...

*Lower yet—down, down*, and after he has been bringing forth a Litter of Mr *Congreeves* Epithetes, as he calls them, *soothing softness, sinking Ease, wafting Air, thrilling Fears, and incessant scalding Rain*, all Crude, just as he did mine before, without any connexion of sense to 'em: He tells ye more plain in troth than wittily, that *they make the Poem look like a Bitch overstock'd with Puppies, and suck the sense almost to Skin and Bone*. For a Child to suck the Mother till the Blood follows, I think is not unreasonable, but for a Litter of Epithetes to suck the sense of a Poem to the Skin and Bone, is such Fustian stuff that nothing but a Creature, only fit for a Sucking-bottle, could be Author of—And now I think if he has given me any *Crocus Metallorum*, I am even with him with a Dose of *Jollop*, and can whisk too from one Play to another

indifferently well, tho not so fast as he; for when I perus'd him first, I could compare him to nothing but an Humble Bee in a Meadow, Buz upon this Daizy, Hum upon that Clover, then upon that Butter-

flower—sucking of Honey, as he is of Sense—or as if upon the hunt for knowledge, he could fly from hence to the Colledge at *Downy*, then to St. *Peter's* at *Rome*, then to *Mahomet* at *Mecha*, then to the Inquisition at *Goa*—And then buz home again to his own dormitory in *Shooe-lane*: And so much for his injustice, now to his error in Criticism again, and to proceed in defence of *Don Quixot*.

26

*Mary* the Buxom, he says now swears faster 'tis false, and I deny it, she is so far from swearing fast, that she does not (rude as her character is) swear at all, unless the poor interjection I'cod—by his Authority can be made an Oath; and then if you'll peruse him on, here is a whole page and half upon this hint, That the Ladies must have left their Wits and Modesties behind them that came, and lik'd her Words or Actions; and that her Nastiness, and dirty Conversation, is a Midnight Cart, or a Dunghil, instead of an Ornamental Scene. Now you don't find out our Gentlemans malicious meaning by this, but I shall inform ye. He says, I'm sorry the Ladies brought their Wits and Modesties with them, that came to see this Character; and yet all the whole Town can witness, that as many of the Ladies as could get into the Play-House came thither, to wait upon Her late *Majesty of Sacred Memory*, who did me that honour only for my benefit; and who was of so nice a Temper, relating to Modesty, that if so much as a hint had been given her by those had seen it before, of such a thing as Immodesty, she had never came, much less had been diverted, as she was, when she did come; but this I take as striking at *her* through my sides; and I think, to use his own words, *is above the Correction of the Pen*. The next is such senseless malice, or ignorance, that it deserves a hoot; he finds *Manuel* in *Don Quixot* (playing in his Farce for the Dukes diversion) addressing to the Dutchess in this manner, in a Jargon of Phrase made ridiculous on purpose: *Illustrious beauty, I must desire to know whether the most purifidiferous Don Quixot of the Manchissima, and the Squireiferous Pancha, be in this Company or no*. To whom *Sancho* replies, imitating, as he thinks this fine stile, *Why lookee, forsooth, without any more flourishes, the Governor Pancha is here, and Don Quixotissimo too, therefore, most Afflictedissimous Matronissima, speak what you Willissimus, for we are all ready to be your Servitorissimus*. And this now he inserts as my own Invention and manner of Stile, which is taken *verbatim* from the History of *Don Quixot*, and is by all those that can judge of humour, very pleasant and fit for that purpose. Now if he has never read that History, his ignorance has abus'd me; and if he has, his impudence has, of which us perceiv'd he has Stock enough, for presently he worries me for saying, in my Epistle Dedicatory to the Duchess of *Ormond*, That *I date my good fortune from her prosperous influence*, and says 'tis *Astrological*. I don't know whether it has that sort of Learning in't or no, but 'tis as good sense as when he says, like a Wag as he is, that the Ladies fancy is just *slip-stocking high, and she seems to want sense more than her Break-fast*. Fancy slip-stocking high? no, no, the merry Grig must mean her pretty Leg was seen so

Collier, p. 204.

Collier, p. 206.

Vid. Shelton's Translation of Don Quixot, p. 205.

Collier, p. 207.

Collier, p. 92.

high, for the Master of Art, I beg pardon of the rest that their Title is scandaliz'd, could never mean such Nonsense as t'other sure.

And now drawing near to an end, his malice grows more plainly to a head, by endeavouring to lessen my Credit with my Patron Mr. *Montague*, whose generous Candor and good Nature to me, and indeed to us all, he perhaps has heard of, for here our modest and moral Critick, has either mistaken the words, or found out a slip of the Press, which because it happens to be Nonsense, he has very gladly exposed for mine; 'tis in my Epistle to my aforesaid Patron, thus: *Had your Eyes shot the haughty Austerity upon me of a right Courtier, your valued minutes had never been disturbed with dilatory Trifles of this nature; but my heart, on dull Consideration of your Merit, had supinely wish'd you Prosperity at a distance.* Mine in my Copy was written [*dull Consideration*] but Doctor Crambo will have you believe, I consider'd so little to write the t'other; but now I will hold twenty Stubble Geese to the same number of Tithe Pigs, whenever he is preferr'd to be a Curate again, that I make my Patron smile more at my Entertainment of him at his own Cost, than ever he did at his quoting my *dull Consideration*, which no body but the *dull Absolver* could imagine a Man with any Brains could write. And to prove I have yet a few, I will try to Paraphrase upon his Farewel to me, the Translation in Verse, but the Reader shall have his first.

Collier, p. 207.

27

d2

*I like an Author that Reforms the Age,  
And keeps the right Decorum of the Stage;  
That always pleases by Just Reason's Rule;  
But for a tedious Droll, a quibbling Fool,  
Who with low nauseous Bawdry fills his Plays,  
Let him be gone, and on two Tressels raise  
Some Smithfield Stage, where he may act his Pranks,  
And make Jack Puddings speak to Mountebanks.*

Collier,

Your humble Servant good Doctor—Well, now for me.

I like a Parson, that no Souls does Lurch,  
And keeps the true Decorum of the Church;  
That always preaches by Just Reason's Rule;  
But for a Hypocrite, a Canting Fool,  
Who, cramm'd with Malice, takes the Rebels side,  
And would, for Conscience, palm on us his Pride,  
Let him, for Stipend, to the \**Gubbins* sail,  
And there Hold-forth for Crusts and Juggs of Ale.

\* *A Savage kind of People in the West of England.*

And so much by way of Prose, I shall only now give the Reformer a little further Advice, in return of his, in my Lyrical way, which is in a Fable of *A Dog and an Otter*; and to turn his own words upon him, the Citation may possibly be of some service to him, for if not concern'd in the Application, he may at least be precaution'd by the Moral. I find he knows I can sing to other Peoples sense, I'll try now if I can make him sing to mine: And when he Diverts, or is Diverted with *Vox*, then, *Preterea nihil*.

---

\*\_Transcriber's Footnote: "Chaucer"

Neither of the quoted passages is by Chaucer. The first is from *The Plowman's Tale*, written about 1380 and traditionally attributed to Chaucer:

Of freres I have tolde before,  
In a makyng of a Crede.  
And yet I coulde tell worse and more,  
But men wolde weryen it to rede.

The second was printed in "Tottel's Miscellany" (Richard Tottel, *Songes and Sonettes...*), 1557:

Flee frō the prese & dwell with sothfastnes  
Suffise to thee thy good though it be small,  
For horde hath hate and climyng ticklenesse  
Praise hath enuy, and weall is blinde in all  
Fauour no more, then thee behoue shall.  
Rede well thy self that others well canst rede,  
And trouth shall the deliuer it is no drede.

UPON

P L A Y S

(*In Answer to a Discourse, Of the Lawfulness  
and Vnlawfulness of PLAYS. Printed  
Before a late P L A Y Entituled,  
BEAVTY in DISTRESS.*)

---

Written in *F R E N C H* by  
the Bp. of *M E A V X*.

And now made *ENGLISH*.

---

The PREFACE By another *HAND*.

---

*LONDON,*  
Printed for **R. Sare**, at *Grays-Inn Gate*, in  
*Holborne*. 1699.

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## THE PREFACE

A2

*The Charge drawn up by Mr. Collier, against the English Stage hath obliged the Persons concerned in it, to use all possible methods for their own Vindication. But their Endeavours of this kind have been such as seem to have done no great Service to their Cause. The natural Reflection, arising upon the present State of the Controversy, is, that, when Persons so nearly concerned and so well qualified, to say all that the case will bear, have yet been able to say so little to the main points of the Accusation brought against them, the only effectual Reply would be either to write no more for the Stage, or to write for it after quite another manner, than of late hath been done. They that have attempted to answer the View are in good hands already. But since other Succours are called in from abroad, 'tis fit the World should know, that this Reserve too hath been already defeated in it's own Countrey. And that we ought not to be imposed upon here in England, with an Adversary, whose Arguments have been not only confuted and Scorned by Others, but also retracted by Himself, at home.*

*That Moroseness of humour, which Some in great good manners have of late been pleased to fix upon the English as their peculiar Character, might possibly be thought to dispose us to a blameable Extreme of Rigor in these matters. And therefore a Forreign Authority was artificially enough brought in, to reproach our pretended Niceness and Austerity. But when the Arguments of this Reply are observed to carry the Point as high, as even the so much upbraided View it self; All but the Willfully blind must see, that even the Gayeties of France could not endure the Corruptions of the Modern Theatres. And that the Complaints against such detestable Abuses are not due to any Quality of the Climate, or particular turn of Temper; but to the common and uniform Principles of Christianity and Virtue, which are the same in every Nation, professing to be governed by them.*

*To give that Discourse a better face, it is introduced by way of Letter from a Worthy Divine of the Church of England; and published before a late Play called Beauty in Distress. Tis said to be approved, and recommended by that Reverend Person, for the satisfying some Scruples, whether a man may Lawfully write for the Stage. For a full Resolution whereof the doubting Poet is referred to this Discourse, as that which is presumed to come fully up to his purpose. But we are not told, whether the Divine or the Poet, or who else was the Translator of this Discourse: Or whether that Worthy Friend perused it in French, or in English only. Which yet in the present Case are Material Circumstances, and such as ought not to have been concealed, for Two Reasons particularly, which I hold myself obliged to give the Reader Intimation of.*

P. IX. X. XXVI.

A3

*The First is, That the following Reply produces and answers some Passages of the French Discourse, not to be found in the English. And these not only Expressions or single Sentences, but entire Arguments. Such is that of Plays being a Diversion suitable to the Design of instituting the Sabbath. Such again*

*That which justifies the Acting them the whole Lent throughout. Now this manner of dealing is not exactly agreeable with that Impartiality and Freedom promised in the beginning of the Worthy Divines Letter. And therefore I can very hardly be perswaded, that One of that Character and Function, had the Forming of the Discourse, in the manner it now appears before Mr. M's. Play.*

P. IX.

*The other Reason, why I Suspect the Discourse not to be translated, or indeed so thoroughly approved, by a Divine of the Church of England, is, that, even in what does appear there, he speaks very favourably of acting Plays upon Sundays. Now admitting, that all the Profession are not such sower Criticks as Mr. Collier, yet this is a Liberty, which I do not remember to have heard, that any Modern Divines of that Church allow. And whatever the Poet's Friend may be in His esteem, I shrewdly suspect, that He would hardly pass for a very Worthy Divine, who should so far Countenance these Diversions, as to let them into a share of that Holy day, dedicated to the Worship and more immediate Service of Almighty God,*

*One would not hastily question Testimonies in matters of Fact, where there appears any probable Arguments to support them. And therefore I am far from objecting against the Knowledge and Integrity of the Booksellers called in to vouch for that Letter, But withall I must beg leave to think it strange, that a Person of Learning and Character should so incautiously espouse a Discourse, and recommend it for the direction of a Gentleman's Conscience, who consulted him for Advice; the Reasoning whereof is not only so weak and Superficial, but grounded upon Misconstruction in some, and Misrepresentation in Other Authorities cited by it. Methinks these ought to have been well examined, before a man had so perfectly gone into the Consequences drawn from them: such of them at least as are exceeding obvious, and might have been detected by recurring to Books, which almost every Divine hath ready at hand.*

*In this translated Reply the Reader will not have cause to complain of such Neglect. The Passages out of Thom: Aquinas, St. Jerom, and some others, have been diligently compared, and the Originals faithfully inserted in most material points. And I cannot but wish, that this Book, extant at Paris ever since 1694, had fallen into the hands of this Doubting Gentleman, instead of that Discourse, which it was intended to confute: That neither the Translator, nor his Friend the Worthy Divine, might have given themselves the Trouble of a Vindication of Plays; so reproachfully treated, and so substantially answered, that one would wonder it should have the confidence to appear in English afterwards, to tempt the same Scorn here, when followed cross the Seas by the Bishop of Meaux.*

*By some expressions, I confess one might be apt to think, that the Author of the Discourse was not perfectly known. But of that no reasonable Doubt can remain, when we find the Replier to have retracted: and Submitted to the Censure of the Church, Why the Author expresses himself in Terms so soft and general I undertake not to determine. He might in Tenderness forbear his Adversarys Name; He might be content to look upon him as an unwary Publisher, rather than the Writer; and, after Submission made, might charitably desire, as far as might be, to cover his Reproach. It Suffices, that the Opinions in the Book be confuted, and exposed to shame; and when this is done in the Punishment of the Reputed Author, the matter is not great, if the Name from thenceforth be forgotten. If Mons'r Caffaro had the Hardiness to assert a Tract so unworthy his Character, his Answerer would not add perhaps to the Scandall, when that Shame had been taken to himself, with a Remorse becoming the Fact. But be this how it will, Censures, we know, are not inflicted upon Indefinite Some-bodies; that such were inflicted, and a Retracting made, the very first period is peremptory: And I hope the Bp. of Meaux, and his manner of writing, are at least as credible an Evidence of this, as the Booksellers can be Allowed to be, of that Letter being genuine, which refers Mr. M's Conscience to the Discourse for Satisfaction.*

A4

*I am heartily glad, if the Plays written by that ingenious Gentleman are so chaste and inoffensive, as he declares them to be. The rather, because the Success he mentions overthrows that frivolous Pretence, of the Poets lying under a Necessity of writing lewdly in order to please the Town. And if this Gentleman do yet retain the same tenderness of doing nothing for Gain or Glory, which does not strictly become him: If he be still as desirous to be satisfied what does, or does not, become him to do, with regard to the matter in hand, as I ought to presume he was, when he consulted his Friend, I would make it my request, that this Reply may be Seriously and impartially considered. And I cannot but hope, that it may disabuse him of the Errours the Discourse might lead him into, and I am much mistaken, if, upon these Terms, he ever writes for the Stage any more. Prejudice and Passion, Vainglory and*

*Profit, not Reason, and Virtue, and the Common Good, seem but too plainly, to support this Practice, and the Defence of it, as the matter is at present managed among us. And a Person of Mr. M's Parts and Attainments cannot be at a loss, for much nobler subjects to employ them upon.*

*A Popular one perhaps it may be, but sure a wilder Suggestion, never was offered to men of Common sense, than, that if the Stage be damned, the Art used by Moses, and David, and Solomon, must be no more. Are we fallen into an Age so incapable of distinguishing, that there should be no visible difference left between, the Excellencies and the Abuse of any Art? No. Mr: Dryden himself hath taught us better. We will have all due regard for the Author of Absalom and Achitophel, and several other pieces of just renown, and should admire him for a rich Vein of Poetry, though he had never written a Play in his whole Life. Nor shall we think our selves obliged to burn the Translation of Virgil by vertue of that sentence, which seems here to be pronounced upon that of the Fourth Book of Lucretius. The World, I Suppose, are not all agreed, that then is but One Sort of Poetry, and as far from allowing, that the Dramatick, is that One. They who write after those Divine, Patterns of Moses &c: will be no whit the less Poets, though there were not a Theatre left upon the Face of the Earth; Their Honours will be more deserved, Their Laurels more verdant and lasting, when blemished with none of those Reproaches from Others, or their own breasts, which are due to the Corrupters of Mankind, And such are all They, who soften men's abhorrence of Vice, and cherish their dangerous Passions. To tell us then, that All, even Divine, Poetry must be silenced and for ever lost, when the Play-houses are once shut up, is to impose too grossely upon our Understandings. And their Sophistry bears hard, methinks, upon Profaneness, which insinuates the Hymns dictated by the Holy Spirit, of God, to be so nearly related to the Modern Compositions for the Stage, that both must of necessity stand and fall together.*

*See Mr. D's verses before Beauty, in Distress.*

*If Poetry have of late sunk in its credit, that misfortune is owing to the degenerate and Mercenary Pens, of some who have set up for the great Masters of it. No man I presume, is for exterminating that noble Art, no not even in the Dramatick part; provided it can be effectually reformed. But if the Reformation of the Stage be no longer practicable, reason good that the incurable Evil should be cut off: If it be practicable, let the Persons concerned give Evidence of it to the World, by tempering their Wit so, as to render it Serviceable to Virtuous purposes, without giving just offence to wise, and Good men. For it is not the Pretence of a good Design which can free the Undertakers from Blame, unless the Goodness of the end and Intention be Seconded with a Prudent Management of the Means. And if Matters once should come to that Extremity, better and much more becoming of the Two, no doubt it were, that our Maker's Praises should be sunk into Prose (as this Ingenious Person phrases it) than that in the midst of a Christian City, that Maker should be six days in seven publickly insulted and blasphemed in poetry.*

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