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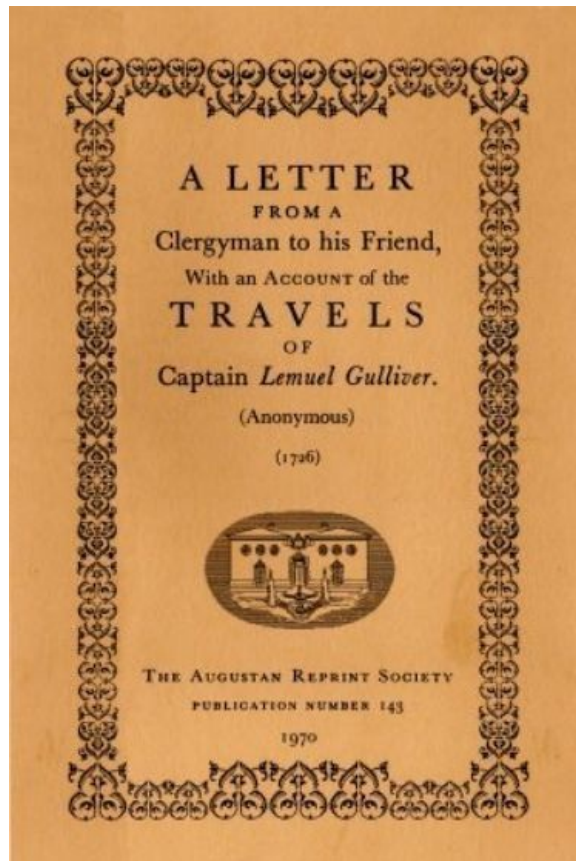
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THE AUGUSTAN REPRINT SOCIETY

A

LETTER

FROM A

Clergyman to his Friend,

WITH AN ACCOUNT OF
THE TRAVELS
OF
Captain *LEMUEL GULLIVER*.

(Anonymous)

(1726)

Introduction by

MARTIN KALLICH

PUBLICATION NUMBER 143

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We have a Book lately publish'd here which hath of late taken up the whole conversation of the town. Tis said to be writ by Swift. It is called, The travells of Lemuell Gulliver in two Volumes. It hath had a very great sale. People differ vastly in their opinions of it, for some think it hath a great deal of wit, but others say, it hath none at all.

John Gay to James Dormer (22 November 1726)

As Gay's letter suggests, details concerning the contemporary reception of *Gulliver's Travels* exhibit two sides of Jonathan Swift's character—the pleasant (that is, merry, witty, amusing) and the unpleasant (that is, sarcastic, envious, disaffected). A person with a powerful ego and astringent sense of humor, Swift must have been a delightful friend, if somewhat difficult, but also a dangerous enemy. *A Letter from a Clergyman* (1726), here reproduced in a facsimile of its first and only edition, is a reaction typical of those who regard Swift and the sharp edge of his satire with great suspicion and revulsion. It displays the dangerously Satanic aspect of Swift—that side of his character which for some people represented the whole man since the allegedly blasphemous satire in *A Tale of a Tub*, published and misunderstood early in his career, critically affected, even by his own admission, his employment in the Church. It is this evil character of the author, the priest with an indecorous and politically suspect humor, that offended some contemporary readers. To them, the engraved frontispiece of Jonathan Smedley's scurrilous *Gulliveriana* (1728) is the proper image of the author of the *Travels*. It portrays Swift in a priest's vestments that barely conceal a cloven hoof.

In the following pages, we shall define the historical context of the clergyman's *Letter* and illuminate the nature of the literary warfare in which Swift was an energetic if not particularly cheerful antagonist when *Gulliver's Travels* was published late in 1726.

In another letter, Gay remarked to Swift (17 November 1726) that "The Politicians to a man agree, that it [the *Travels*] is free from particular reflections"; nevertheless some "people of greater perspicuity" would "search for particular applications in every leaf." He also predicted that "we shall have keys publish'd to give light into Gulliver's design." His prediction was correct, for it was not long before four *Keys*, the earliest commentary in pamphlet form on the *Travels*, were published by a Signor Corolini, undoubtedly a pseudonym for Edmund Curll, the London printer and bookseller. But surprisingly, the observations do not exhibit Swift in a harsh factional light. As a matter of fact, in his introduction to the *Keys*, which are entitled *Lemuel Gulliver's Travels into Several Remote Nations of the World. Compendiously Methodized, For Publick Benefit: With Observations and Explanatory Notes Throughout* (1726), Curll flatters Swift as possessing "the true Vein of Humour and polite Conversation" (I, 4). Regarding the *Travels*, he observes, "The Town are infinitely more eager after them than they were after *Robinson Crusoe*" (I, 5).

[Pg ii]

In general, the *Keys* are pleasantly written, including no nasty innuendoes critical of Swift's high-church sectarian zeal or his high-flying Tory political sympathies. They may be considered a frankly commercial venture meant to exploit the popularity of the *Travels*. Curll merely summarizes the narratives, occasionally providing substantial extracts or sprinkling explanatory comments on some allusions that attract him. Some of the annotations are ridiculous, or curious, like the equations of Blefuscu with Scotland, of the storm Gulliver passes through before reaching Brobdingnag with "the *South-Sea and Mississippi Confusion*," and of the giants with inflated South Sea stock (II, 4). Some remarks, however, appear convincing, such as his belief that "the *trifling Transactions of the present English Royal Society*" on insects and fossils are "finely rallied" (II, 11-12). Curll also notes about the third voyage that "besides the political Allegory, Mr. *Gulliver* has many shrewd Remarks upon Men and Books, Sects, Parties, and Opinions" (III, 10-11). Concerning the fourth, he equates the good Portuguese Captain Don Pedro with the Dean's "good Friend the Earl of *P[eterborough]*" (IV, 26). The Roman Catholic Peterborough, we recall, fought in Spain and was also Pope's good friend.

Other more suggestive comments on Swift's political meaning may be cited. For example, the "*ancient Temple*" in which Gulliver is housed in Lilliput, a structure "*polluted ... by an unnatural Murder*," he identifies as "the *Banquetting-House at White-Hall*, before which Structure, King CHARLES I was Beheaded" (I, 7-8). This allusion to "the *Royal-Martyr*" (III, 32) may be considered a modest clue to Swift's Toryism, and it is associated with the Jacobitism of which his Whiggish enemies accused him. Yet an unusual reading of the *Struldbruggs* in the third voyage (particularly the controls imposed on the senile creatures in order to prevent their engrossing the civil power) as an attack on the religious dissenters demonstrates that Curll and Swift agreed on the issue of an established church. The clergy who wished to separate state from church, or as Curll describes the situation,

[Pg iii]

that implacable Spirit and Rancour ... [of] those *English Ecclesiasticks*, who have asserted the *Independency of the Church upon the State* ... ought to the latest Posterity in *England*, to be called *Struldbruggs*. For it will be found ... that, *whenever they assume the Civil Power, their want of Abilities to manage, must end in the Ruin of the Publick*. (III, 32)

Indeed, among the most interesting of Curll's annotations are those which suggest that a religious reading of the *Travels* was by no means unappreciated by Swift's contemporaries. Thus, again, besides his unusual politico-religious comment on the Struldbruggs, Curll is fairly sharp in his annotation of the passage on religious differences in Chapter V of the fourth voyage, concerning "*Transubstantiation* as believed by the *Papists*," "Cathedral-worship," kissing the Crucifix, vestments,—and resulting furious religious wars (IV, 12-13). All in all, however, the *Keys* are singularly shallow and agreeably bland. Curll simply agrees with Gulliver-Swift, and reinforces the meaning by practically repeating the text, as he does at this point when deploring inessential differences in ritual as needless causes of cruel conflict. Although Curll was aware of the presence of politics and religion in Swift's allegories, his annotations do not reflect unfavorably on Swift's character.

But it was not long before an attack on Swift was mounted. It began with *A Letter from a Clergyman to His Friend, With an Account of the Travels of Capt. Lemuel Gulliver: And a Character of the Author. To Which is Added, The True Reasons Why a Certain Doctor Was Made a Dean* (1726)—the first substantial attack on Swift resulting from the publication of his most celebrated work. The identity of the author is unknown. Steele, Swift's implacable political enemy, had retired to the country at this time and was soon to die. Because of the numerous references to Swift's treacherous disloyalty to Steele's friendship, we could speculate on a connection between the anonymous author and Steele and infer that it was a friendly relationship.

[Pg iv]

The long and breathless title underlines the malicious content of this polemical pamphlet, a pungent libel on Swift's character that includes cutting observations on Swift's chief fiction as well. Obviously, the author's intent is to vilify Swift in retaliation for attacks on the writer's friends. Inspired by the publication of the *Travels*, he presents a crudely defamatory "Character of the Author." He claims an acquaintance with Swift "in publick and private Life" (p. 4) but offers no evidence to substantiate this claim. Drawing from common knowledge, he simply cites the well-known negative evidence of *A Tale of a Tub*, in which Swift, he indignantly asserts like Swift's former enemy William Wotton, "levelled his Jests at Almighty God; banter'd and ridiculed Religion," thereby offending Queen Anne and blocking his own church preferment (p. 19). Except for "some gross Words, and lewd Descriptions, and had the Inventor's Intention been innocent" (p. 6 [note the suspicion of Swift's political and religious bias]), the author is mildly pleased with the first three voyages. But he finds intolerable the satire on human nature in the last, here echoing Addison's criticism of the demoralizing effect of a satire on mankind (*Spectator* 249, 5 December 1711).

However, Swift's "Intention" in the first three voyages is, he angrily declares, tainted by his poisonous malice and envy, the result of twelve years of exile. He is positive of the identity of the vicious person behind the mask of the imaginary memoirist:

Here, Sir, you may see a reverend Divine, a dignify'd Member of the Church unbosoming himself, unloading his Breast, discovering the true Temper of his Soul, drawing his own Picture to the Life; here's no Disguise, none could have done it so well as himself.... (p. 8)

He detects envy in what he believes is the incendiary narrator of the *Travels*, and insists that by siding with the enemies of the nation, meaning France, Swift was "endeavouring to ruin the *British* Constitution, set aside the *Hanover* Succession, and bring in a [tyrannical] Popish Pretender," and, of course, "destroy our Church Establishment" (pp. 14, 8-9). Thereupon, he furiously threatens Swift with punishment for his pernicious attack on the government, that is, the present political administration. Clearly motivated by politico-religious fears, this Whig militantly defends not only the Protestant succession but also the ministry of Sir Robert Walpole—which the numerous allusions to the "*Great Man*" and "the greatest Man this Nation ever produced" (p. 15) confirm. Swift's mean character of Flimnap, the Lilliputian Prime Minister, stung badly: "With what Indignation must every one that has had the Honour to be admitted to this *Great Man*, review the Doctor's charging him with being morose" (p. 15). He counters Swift's insulting reduction of the Great Man to a petty little man with an egregiously fulsome panegyric that magnifies the virtues of Sir Robert's public and private character, and concludes with abuse of Swift's character as an Irish dean disaffected from the government—hence deserving of permanent exile in Ireland.[1]

[Pg v]

The author of the fiery *Letter* focuses on Swift's impiety—pointing to his wickedness, the sneering tone of his sacrilegious satire, his indiscreet joking about religion, all of which Swift's enemies were quick to emphasize as the outstanding features of *A Tale of a Tub*, as well as portions of the *Travels*. For example, even Gay, in the letter to Swift quoted above (17 November 1726) also noted that those "who frequent the Church, say his [Gulliver's] design is impious, and that it is an insult on Providence, by depreciating the works of the Creator,"—a line of attack soon to be pursued by Edward Young, James Beattie, and others who were not in the least charmed by Swift's satire. But Swift's friends were not idle; for it was precisely this bitter onslaught on Swift's religion in the *Letter* that brought another writer to the defense in the ironically entitled *Gulliver Decypher'd: or Remarks on a Late Book, Intituled, Travels Into Several Remote Nations of the World, Vindicating the Reverend Dean on Whom it is Maliciously Father'd, With Some Conjectures Concerning the Real Author* (1726).[2]

[Pg vi]

This writer, probably John Arbuthnot, may be considered one of the earliest defenders of the religious orthodoxy of the *Travels*. He extracts passages from Swift's work, such as the Lilliputian quarrel over breaking eggs, the satire on corrupt bishops, and the affirmation of the principle of limited toleration for religious dissent in Brobdingnag as evidences of his belief, presented ironically, that "the Reverend Dean" could not possibly have fathered the work because the author of the *Travels* did not have religious ideals in mind. One of the passages that this defender cites demonstrates that only a person like the religious dean could have made this observation about the concern for religious instruction by the Lilliputians before their fall from original perfection:

... we cannot think, but that the courteous Reader is fully satisfied, that the Reverend D— we are vindicating, cannot possibly be the Author of this part of the Book that is maliciously ascrib'd to him; which is so very trifling, that it is not to be imagined that a *serious* D—n, who has Religion, and the good of Souls so *much* at heart, could act so contrary to the Dignity of his Character merely to gratify a little Party Malice, or to oblige a Set of People who are never likely to have it in their Power to serve him or any of their Adherents. Doubtless he, *good Man*, employs his Time to more sacred Purposes than in writing Satyrs and Libels upon his Superiors, or in composing *Grub-street* Pamphlets to divert the Vulgar of all Denominations.[3]

Consider also his defense of Swift's exposure of the corrupt bishops, the "holy Persons" in the House of Lords (*Travels*, II, vi). Believing that Swift's pungent satire on the church hierarchy is good and true, he makes the dean himself the target of a playful bit of raillery, a type of irony for which Swift and Arbuthnot were both notorious:

Being *slavish prostitute Chaplains* is certainly a good step *towards becoming an Holy Lord*; but it does not always succeed, as *some Folks* very well know by Experience; for the same Degree of Iniquity that can raise one Man to an *Archbishoprick*, cannot lift another above a *Deanery*.[4]

[Pg vii]

Such commentary suggests that at least one very early reader of the *Travels* sensed the possibility of Swift's use of certain portions of his narrative to vent disappointment at his failure to receive the church preferment he thought he deserved and to carry on his personal vendetta against obstructive bishops like the "crazy Prelate" Sharpe, Archbishop of York, one of the detestable and "dull Divines" pilloried in the autobiographical poem "The Author Upon Himself" (1714).

Concerning Swift's religious uniformitarianism, the author of *Gulliver Decypher'd* defends Swift's understandable bias for the established Anglican Church as a vested interest, which in the *Travels* is expressed through the giant king's strictures against civil liberty for religious dissenters (II, vi). He recommends this passage as a proper explanation of the principle restricting the civil liberty of potentially subversive dissidents, adding, furthermore, that "the Sectararies" themselves were "averse to all the Modes" of religion and opposed religious diversity.[5]

All these remarks figured prominently in what may be considered the earliest debate on the religious meaning of the *Travels*. Certainly, some contemporary readers of Swift's major work were not insensitive to its religious significance, as even the commentary on the religious instruction of the upper classes—a relatively minor part of the satire which twentieth-century readers would easily overlook, as well as the more serious observations on the Endian dispute between Catholics and Protestants over the Eucharist demonstrate. Yet like all the early critics of the *Travels*, this author has nothing to say about this episode of central importance in the narrative about Lilliput, the reason probably being that its meaning was taken for granted by the Protestants of Swift's England. Thus the author of *Gulliver Decypher'd* merely says the obvious: "The Reflections that will accrue to every Reader, upon this Conference [with Reldresal], is [*sic*] so obvious, that we shall not so much as hint at them." [6] Thus it is also not strange for the antagonistic clergyman to say nothing in his *Letter* about the heart of the Lilliputian narrative—the profound allegory on the religious wars over the Eucharist and the serious issues raised by Swift. No doubt, however, he probably read Swift's interpretation of Gulliver's role in this conflict as a Tory version of history, and resented it accordingly. That is, like the Whigs of the day, he would object to an easy peace for Catholic France and would conclude that the Treaty of Utrecht concluding the War of the Spanish Succession, was not sufficiently punitive.

[Pg viii]

Among the works that capitalized on the popularity of the *Travels* were the imitative *Memoirs of Lilliput* (1727) and *A Voyage to Cacklogallinia* (1727). The author of the *Memoirs* emphasizes the evil character of the Lilliputians, particularly their lecherous clergy, and concludes with an account of the sufferings of Big-Endian exiles and extensive observations on the dangers of political factionalism. But he is most attracted by prurient sexual adventures. A vulgar work obviously meant to appeal to a neurotic taste for sexuality, it includes no attack on Swift as it explores at length some topics to which Gulliver in his memoirs only tangentially alludes. The second abortive effort, an animal satire of exotic talking fowl, also resembles Swift's satire as it touches on several similar topics—the hypocrisy of the people, the scepticism of their nobility, the love of luxury of the higher clergy—but again because it includes no comment on Swift's personal or public

character, it is not relevant to a discussion of the angry *Letter from a Clergyman*. We can therefore pass quickly from these two works to perhaps the best, in the sense of the most stinging and most comprehensive, assault on Swift at the time of the publication of his *Travels*, that entitled *Gulliveriana* (1728), by the Irish Dean of Clogher, Jonathan Smedley.

"That rascall Smedley," about whom Swift once wrote in vexation (to Archdeacon Walls, 19 December 1716), is the very same hack who carried on the subsidized *Baker's News; or the Whitehall Journal* (1722-23) on behalf of Sir Robert Walpole's government. He is also immortalized in Pope's *Dunciad* (1728) as "a person dipp'd in scandal, and deeply immers'd in dirty work" (*Dunciad* A, II, 279ff; B, II, 291ff). His *Gulliveriana* (including the satires on Pope, the *Alexandriana*), a scurrilous anthology of abuse in the form of jingles, ballads, parodies in prose, and other satirical essays, was inspired by the recent publication of the Pope-Swift *Miscellany*. In his preface Smedley indicts Swift for an almost endless series of misdemeanors—for shifting his allegiance from the Whigs to the Tories; for restricting his verse to the burlesque style and its groveling doggerel manner; for failing in eloquence and oratory, theology and mathematics; and for being a pedant, poetaster, hack-politician, jockey, gardener, punster, and skilful swearer. In short Smedley insists that Swift is accomplished in the art of sinking according to the prescription which he and Pope wrote in the *Peri Bathos*, the first part of the *Miscellany* that aroused Smedley's ire. Swift is, to sum up, "ludicrous, dull, and profane; and ... an Instance of *that Decay of Delicacy and Refinement* which he mentions" (p. xxvii). As for the recently published *Gulliver's Travels*, Smedley shows it no mercy:

An abominable Piece! by being *quite out of Life!* The *Fable* is entirely ridiculous; the *Moral* but ludicrous; the *Satire* trite and worn out, and the *Instructions* much better perform'd by many other Pens. I call on his *Lilliputian Art of Government*, and *Education of Children* for Proof. (p. xix)

It comes as no surprise to see that Smedley's Whiggish bias encourages him to detect "hints" in the *Travels* of Swift's "Zeal for High Church and Toryism" (p. 280), so that obviously the work is "*Trifling*" and "*Nothing*."

The pious Dean has done what in him lies to render *Religion, Reason*, and *common Sense* ridiculous, and to set up in their stead, *Buffoonry, Grimace*, and *Impertinence*, and, like *Harlequin*, carries it off all with a *Grin*. (p. 267)
[7]

Among Smedley's clever parodies of Swift's writings are those of *A Tale of a Tub*, *Against Abolishing Christianity*, and *Gulliver's Travels*. The comprehensiveness of abuse is demonstrated in the nasty Gulliverian allegory, in which Swift is accused of being an ignorant, hypocritical, atheistical Irishman, high-flying Tory, and Jacobite Papist. Even Swift's sex life—his relationship with Stella and Vanessa—is made ugly (pp. 1-10). Indeed, Smedley believes that it is his duty to keep his readers well-informed about Swift's "odd" conduct; thus with evident relish he advises the poet to

Tell us what *Swift* is now a doing:
Or whineing Politicks or Wooing;
With Sentence grave, or Mirth uncommon,
Pois'ning the Clergy, and the Women. (p. 41)

Among the ballads, one will see the infamous "Verses, fix'd on the Cathedral Door, the Day of Dean Gulliver's Installment," which begins with the following delectable quatrain:

Today, this Temple gets a *Dean*,
Of Parts and Fame, uncommon;
Us'd, both to Pray, and to Prophane,
To serve both *God* and *Mammon*.

Then the poem proceeds with the usual diatribe of Swift's desertion of the Whigs, his atheism, high-church sympathies, and sacrilegious humor (pp. 77-79).

In almost every conceivable literary style Smedley takes exception to Swift's divinity and politics and attempts to blacken Swift's character. As we should expect, differences over politics and religion were determining causes. Thus Smedley adores the outstanding literary Whig Addison, contrasting the polish and beauty of Addison's style with Swift's failures, ugliness, ineptitude, vulgarity, intolerable filthiness. Likewise, following the author of the *Letter*, he writes favorably of Steele, castigating Swift for his treacherous betrayal of Steele's friendship. But his catalogue of Swift's vices is far more intriguing than that of our clergyman, his gossip far more detailed and malicious. Clearly, Swift could not possibly do anything to please some of his readers. If their hostile reactions have any meaning, they prove that Swift's political connections and high-church sympathies prevented many of his contemporaries from responding to the virtues of *Gulliver's Travels*; and that, on the contrary, his chief work was tapped for evidence of the author's suspected impiety and partisan politics.

That this hostility persisted far into the eighteenth century may be seen in the illuminating anecdote told in the 1780's by Horace Walpole, son of the "Great Man" so glowingly

praised in the *Letter from a Clergyman*:

Swift was a good writer, but had a bad heart. Even to the last he was devoured by ambition, which he pretended to despise. Would you believe that, after finding his opposition to the ministry fruitless, and, what galled him still more, contemned, he summoned up resolution to wait on Sir Robert Walpole? Sir Robert seeing Swift look pale and ill, inquired the state of his health, with his usual old English good humour and urbanity. They were standing by a window that looked into the court-yard, where was an ancient ivy dropping towards the ground. "Sir," said Swift, with an emphatic look, "I am like that ivy; I want support." Sir Robert answered, "Why then, doctor, did you attach yourself to a falling wall?" Swift took the hint, made his bow, and retired.[8]

Northern Illinois University

NOTES TO THE INTRODUCTION

[Pg xii]

[1] In *The Intelligencer*, No. III (1728), Swift defends Gay's satire on the "Great Man," *The Beggar's Opera* (1728), and continues his offensive against Sir Robert Walpole. Here it may be mentioned that in his apology for the irony used by persecuted dissenters, Anthony Collins [*A Discourse Concerning Ridicule and Irony* (1729)] remarks that "High-Church" overlooked Swift's "drolling upon Christianity," and was unwilling to punish him because of his "Drollery upon the Whigs, Dissenters, and the War with France." Collins interprets the effect of Swift's wit on his church career as follows: "And his Usefulness in *Drollery* and *Ridicule* was deem'd sufficient by the Pious Queen Anne, and her pious Ministry, to intitle him to a Church Preferment of several hundred Pounds *per Ann.* ... notwithstanding [the objections of] a fanatick High-Churchman, who weakly thought *Seriousness* in Religion of more use to High-Church than *Drollery*" (pp. 39-40).

[2] G. A. Aitken, *The Life and Works of John Arbuthnot* (Oxford, 1892), pp. 123-124; and H. Teerink-Arthur H. Scouten, *A Bibliography of the Writings of Jonathan Swift* (Philadelphia, 1963), No. 1216, consider it an uncomplimentary attack on Swift and his friends—but mistakenly, I believe. Lester M. Beattie, *John Arbuthnot: Mathematician and Satirist* (Cambridge, Mass., 1935), p. 311, unqualifiedly rejects Arbuthnot's authorship of this work. But a correspondent to *Notes and Queries*, Sixth Series, VII (1883), 451-452, argues convincingly for the attribution to Arbuthnot.

[3] *Gulliver Decypher'd* (London, 1726), pp. 29-30; reprinted in Arbuthnot's *Miscellaneous Works* (Glasgow, 1751), I, 100.

[4] *Gulliver Decypher'd*, pp. 26n, 35; *Misc. Works*, I, 97n, 104.

[5] *Gulliver Decypher'd*, p. 38; *Misc. Works*, I, 106.

[6] *Gulliver Decypher'd*, p. 25; *Misc. Works*, I, 97.

[7] John Oldmixon, another Whig writer, repeats some of these slanders against Swift, even using some of the same words like "Trifling and Grimace"—in his reactions to the Swift-Pope *Miscellanies* and *Gulliver's Travels*. He too finds the tales in the *Travels* frivolous because lacking a moral and the satire a debasing of "the Dignity of human Nature" (*The Arts of Logick and Rhetorick* [London, 1728], pp. 416-418).

[8] John Pinkerton, *Walpoliana* (London, n.d.), I, 126-127. For additional typical evidences of Horace Walpole's antipathy, see his angry assaults on Swift's insolence, arrogance, vanity, and hypocrisy (including sexuality), in his letters to Montagu, 20 June 1766 and to Horace Mann, 13 January 1780; and a remark in his *Anecdotes of Painting, Works* (London, 1798), III, 438.

BIBLIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

This facsimile of *A Letter from a Clergyman* (1726) is reproduced from a copy in the British Museum.

A

LETTER

FROM A

Clergyman to his Friend,

WITH AN ACCOUNT OF

THE TRAVELS

OF

Captain *LEMUEL GULLIVER.*

AND A

Character of the Author.

To which is added,

**The True REASONS why a
certain DOCTOR was made
a DEAN.*****LONDON:*****Printed for *A. MOORE* near *St. Paul's.******MDCCXXVI. Price 3d.***

[Pg 2]

[Pg 3]

**A LETTER FROM A CLERGYMAN TO HIS FRIEND.***Sir,*

To let the Town into the chief Motives for this Publication, I am obliged to acquaint them, that it is my Love of Truth and Justice, enforc'd by my Inclination to please my Friend; the Motive, all will undoubtedly allow to be a laudable one; and I could, if required, give so many unanswerable Reason for being influenc'd by the Latter, that to an impartial Reader it would appear almost as sufficient, for my proceeding thus, as the Former. Your Desires, Sir, shall always be comply'd with by me to the utmost of my Power; I ever have, and ever shall look upon your Requests as Commands; and as such esteem them my Honour.

[Pg 4]

'Tis hardly to be imagined that an Objection will so readily be made to my Undertaking on any Account, as that of my Inequality to it; therefore I shall only hint, that as every Man in the like Case, unless totally incapable, may if requir'd, give his Judgment, provided he does

it with Impartiality and Candour, so I shall be regardless what others say, while I strictly adhere to these Principles, and meet with your Approbation.

You was pleased to say at our last Conversation, that you look'd upon me to be rather more capable of giving a just Character of the reputed Author of these Travels, than most Men in Town, from my having been Conversant with him in publick and private Life; in his early Days, as well as since; when he first appear'd in the World; at home and abroad; in the Camp and Cabinet; a little when he was in Favour, more since in Disgrace; and thus, Sir, your Expectations seem to enlarge. But here for the sake of our Cloth I must beg Leave to draw a Viel, and to keep it on, as much, and as long, as the Nature of my Design will admit: Was I indeed to follow the Captain's Example, what vile, what cruel Things might I not suggest of him? What hard Things could I not prove? Which many would recollect as well as my self, and more would believe: How might I justly turn his Artillery upon himself, and stifle him with that Filth he has so injuriously loaded others with; if the greatest Heap that ever was scraped together would stifle him who is entitled to it all; But I forbear now, and am resolved to do so, unless oblig'd to break this Determination to preserve, as I hinted before, the Consistency of my Undertaking.

[Pg 5]

I began a little to hesitate at my Design, upon being informed, that the Captain was not here to answer for himself; thinking it something Dishonourable to attack a Man in this Method that was obliged to abscond; but when I considered that if these Enormities were not to be taken notice of, till the Author should venture to come into *Great Britain*, they might wholly pass with Impunity, my Dilemma was no more: No, the Captain is certainly gone for Life; he has now taken a Voyage from whence he never can, never dares return; this he'll find the longest he ever made, and the last from hence he can make.

Besides when a Performance of this Nature is once publick, I conceive it submitted to the Judgment of all, and of Course to be approved, receiv'd or rejected, and in a Word, treated as various Opinions, Inclinations, Interests or Apprehensions influence those who peruse it: Some will undoubtedly approve of the Captain's Production because 'tis scandalous and malicious; others will disapprove of it for the very same Reasons; for the Tasts of Mankind being as different as their Constitutions, they must of Consequence be often as opposite as the most absolute Contraries in Nature: A Knave loves and delights in Scandal, Detraction, Infamy, in blasting, ruining his Neighbour's Character, because these are consonant to the Depravity of humane Nature, and in themselves vile: Upon the very same Account an honest Man abominates them all, with the utmost Abhorrence of Soul.

[Pg 6]

Thus having said as much as I think needful by way of Introduction; I would turn my Thoughts more immediately to the Work before me; I have, as you directed me, Sir, read it over with the greatest Distinction, and Exactness I was able; I've enter'd as much, as was possible for me, into the Spirit and Design of the Author: By the strictest Examination I've endeavour'd to sift every material Passage; and I persuade my self the Drift of the Author has appear'd plain to me thro' the whole. From all which I conclude, that had Care been taken to have adapted them to modest virtuous Minds, by leaving out some gross Words, and lewd Descriptions, and had the Inventor's Intention been innocent, the first three Parts of these Travels would undoubtedly have proved diverting, agreeable, and acceptable to all; there is a great deal of Wit and more Invention in them; though, as is pretty usual in so large a Work of this Sort, there are some unnatural Incidents, and here and there an Inconsistency with it self.

[Pg 7]

In the fourth Part, which is more than half of the second Volume, the Author flags, he loses his Vivacity, and in my Opinion, maintains little of his former Spirit, but the Rancour. This indeed appears most plentifully in this Part; and the Captain seems so wholly influenced by it, that he makes a sort of Recapitulation of Invectives he had vented before; and having receiv'd a fresh supply of Gall, appears resolv'd to discharge it, though he has no Way than by varying the Phrase, to express in other Words, the unjust Sentiments he had disclosed before: In this long tedious Part the Reader loses all that might have been engaging to him in the three former; the Capacity and Character given there of Brutes, are so unnatural; and especially the great Preheminence asserted of them, to the most virtuous and noble of humane Nature, is so monstrously absurd and unjust, that 'tis with the utmost Pain a generous Mind must indure the Recital; a Man grows sick at the shocking Things inserted there; his Gorge rises; he is not able to conceal his Resentment; and closes the Book with Detestation and Disappointment.

But to return to the three former Parts, as I have said all I can with Justice say, on their Behalf; allow me now to shew a little of the great Malignity, and evil Tendency of their Nature: Here I might be abundantly prolix, had I not absolutely determin'd to be otherwise, the Field is large, the Matter very copious: Here, Sir, you may see a reverend Divine, a dignify'd Member of the Church unbosoming himself, unloading his Breast, discovering the true Temper of his Soul, drawing his own Picture to the Life; here's no Disguise, none could have done it so well as himself: Here's the most inveterate Rancour of his Mind, and a hoard of Malice, twelve Years collecting, discharged at once: Here's ENVY, the worst of all Passions, in Perfection; ENVY, the most beloved Darling of Hell; the greatest Abhorrence of Heaven; ENVY, the Crime Mankind should be the most ashamed of, having the least to say in Excuse for it; the Canker of the Soul, most uneasy to the Possessor; a Passion not to be gratify'd, not possible of Pleasure; the peculiar one would imagine of infernal Beings, and much of their Punishment. ENVY, is ever levell'd at Merit,

[Pg 8]

and superior Excellence; and the most deserving are, for being such, the properest Objects of ENVY.

View now, Sir, the Doctor, as I shall henceforward call him; and upon examination, I fear 'twill be found, that his Conduct too fully answers the Description of this detestable Passion: I shall be very plain and expressive; an honest Man will no more conceal the Truth, than deny it, when the Former may prove prejudicial to the Innocent: Whether the Government may ever think proper publickly to chastise the Doctor for his Insolence, I know nothing of; perhaps such snarling may be thought too low to engage such a Resentment: However this I am fully persuaded of, that as no good Government ought to be so insulted and male-treated; so there is no honest Man among us but would contribute the utmost in his Power to bring the Author, and those concerned with him to exemplary Punishment, in order to deter others from the like pernicious Practices for the future.

[Pg 9]

What can be viler in the Intention? What may be worse in the Consequence, than an Attempt to interrupt the Harmony and good Understanding between his Majesty and his Subjects, and to create a Dislike in the People to those in the Administration; and especially to endeavour at this, in such a Juncture as the present? what could in all Probability be the Issue of bringing such Matters to bear, but the throwing ourselves and all *Europe* into a Flame? ruining our Credit, destroying our Trade, beggaring of private Families, setting us a cutting one another's Throats; by which we should become an easy Prey to the common Enemy, who would at once subvert our Constitution, the happiest, the best in the World; destroy our Church Establishment; and subject us to all the Cruelty and Sufferings the unbounded Lust of Tyrants, and the insatiable Avarice of Priests could load us with.

[Pg 10]

'Tis true, praised be Almighty God, and Thanks to the Wisdom of those in the Ministry, 'tis not in the Power of an Incendiary to do this; but the Attempt is not for that, at all the less criminal; we are too sensible of our Happiness to be either banter'd or frightned out of it; and 'tis therefore with the utmost Indignation all honest Minds, every True *Englishman* treats the Persons who would disturb their Felicity. All are sensible of his Majesty's Wisdom, Goodness, Justice and Clemency. He is indeed the Father of his People who love and fear him as such; under his auspicious Reign we enjoy all the Happiness a Nation can enjoy: We have Religion and Liberty, Wealth, Trade, Peace, and the greatest Plenty at home; we are loved by our Friends, dreaded by our Enemies, and in the utmost Reputation abroad; so that in his Majesty's Reign and under the present Administration we have nothing so much to desire as the Continuance of both, being the Source under God, whence all our Felicity flows.

But whatever the Doctor deserves, 'tis given out that he has been so much upon his Guard, that no Forms of Law can touch him; in this, Sir, I beg Leave to differ from his Abbettors; for as I take it, that Point has been settled for some Time; and seems by the geral Consent, the Determination has met with, to be rightly settled. So that his imaginary Cautions would be in vain; 'twas the Opinion of a late learned Chief Justice of the King's Bench, that the universal Notion of the People in these Cases, notwithstanding the artful Disguises of an Author, ought much to influence the Determinations of a Jury; for as he very judiciously added; how absurd was it to imagine that all the World should understand his Meaning but just that particular Judge and Jury, by whom he was to be try'd; thus far his Lordship. Besides, I conceive it, Sir, the Peoples Judgment ought to be regarded; or an ill designing Man may do much harm, with great Impunity: If in Order to it, he should pretend only to amuse, and deliver himself in obstruse Terms, such as may naturally enough be apply'd to the Disadvantage of the Publick, and are so apply'd; surely in this Case he ought to be punish'd for the Detriment that ensues and for not speaking the Truth, if he meant the Truth, in plain Terms.

[Pg 11]

But leaving this Point to those who are more capable to determine it; I go forward: The Doctor divests himself of the Gentleman and Christian entirely; and in their stead assumes, or if my Instructions are right, I should rather have said, discloses the reverse to them both; a Character too gross to be describ'd here and is better conceiv'd than express'd; he makes a Collection of all the meanest, basest, Terms the Rabble use in their Contests with one another in the Streets, and these he discharges without any other Distinction than only, that they who are Persons of the greatest Worth and Desert are loaded with the greatest Number of 'em.

[Pg 12]

He spares neither Age or Sex, neither the Living or the Dead; neither the Rich, the Great, or the Good; the best of Characters is no Fence, the Innocent are the least secure; even his Majesty's Person is not sacred, the Royal Blood affords no Protection here; he equally endeavours to bring into Contempt with the People, his Majesty, the Royal Family, and the Ministry.

The next great Attack, as all People understand it, is no less than upon a *British* Parliament; this August Assembly, the Wisest, the Noblest, the most Awful in the World, he treats with Words of the utmost Scurrility, with *Billingsgate* Terms of the lowest Sort; this Body of the best Gentlemen in the Kingdom he calls Pedlars, Pickpockets, Highway-men, and Bullies; Words never spoke of a *British* Parliament before, and 'twould be a National Reproach they should now pass unpunished: This is beyond all Bounds; who that are *English* Men can with Temper think of such an Insult upon the Body of their Representatives; the Centre of the National Power; the great Preserver of our Laws,

Religion and Liberties, and of all, that as Men and Christians we ought to hold dear and valuable.

I wish I could keep in better Terms with my old Companion, my Inclination's good t'wards it, but notwithstanding that, and all my Resolutions, I find it impracticable; his Conduct is so enormously bad, 'tis insufferable; humane Nature must be worse than he has represented it, and I never saw it look so ghastly before, to bear with him.

[Pg 13]

All that have read these Travels must be convinc'd I do the Doctor no Injustice by my Assertions: His Method of forming his Characters seems to be new, it looks as if he first drew up a Set of ill Names and reproachful Epithets, and then apply'd them as he thought proper, without regarding at all, whether the Persons they were so apply'd to, deserv'd such Treatment or not; and in this, tho' the concurrent Testimony of Thousands or Millions was against him, it seems to have signify'd nothing; tho' daily Experience and universal Consent prov'd the contrary, they appear to have been of no Weight with the Doctor; he knew very well t'would sufficiently answer his End if by boldly and roundly asserting whatever he thought proper, and sticking at no Method of Defamation he should make the whole appear plausible and gain Adherents; and therefore with the utmost Assurance he affirms this Woman to be a Whore, that a Bawd, this Man a Pimp, that a Pathick tho' neither of them ever gave any Reason to be thought such, or were ever thought such, before.

Whether the Doctor would like to be serv'd thus himself let the World determine, and that they may the better do it I shall give them one Instance, using almost the Doctor's own Words, and applying them to himself as thus; Doctor COPPER-FARTHING, was by Pimping, Swearing, For-swearing, Flattering, Suborning, Forging, Gaming, Lying, Fawning, Hectoring, Voting, Scribbling, Whoring, Canting, Libeling, Free-thinking, endeavouring to ruin the *British* Constitution, set aside the *Hanover* Succession, and bring in a Popish Pretender; by prostituting his Wife, his Sister, his Daughter, advanced to be a DEAN: Now, Sir, this Character being form'd, as I observ'd, before I had concluded who to bestow it on, I am oblig'd to make some little Alteration, and to do the Doctor no injustice, I take away that whole Sentence, *by Prostituting his Wife, his Sister, his Daughter*; because being well assur'd he never had any of his own; if such have been used so by him they must have belong'd to other People: If I had not pitch'd upon the Doctor you can't but be sensible, like him, I could have made this Character have serv'd with some small Curtailings or Additions an Admiral, a General, a Bishop, a Minister of State, or any other Person I had a mind to be angry with, and was I set upon abusing an hundred of each, by the Power of Transformation, t'would be sufficient for them all.

[Pg 14]

Don't look upon this, Sir, as my Invention, I assure you 'tis wholly the Doctor's; may the Reputation of it be all his own: 'Tis thus he treats the wisest, the greatest Men in this Nation; Nobility, Ladies and Gentlemen of the best Families and brightest Characters in the Kingdom; and his Malice is greatest where Worth and Virtue are most conspicuous; this of Course must engage him to vent a very large Portion of his Rage against the Family and Person of the greatest Man this Nation ever produced. But how vain is the Attempt here? How impotent, as well as base the Malice? There is no immediate Fence indeed against an infamous Tongue, and must often be for some Time submitted to; but in this Case 'tis otherwise; what the Doctor asserts of this Person and his Family is so universally known to be false, and condemned as such by the Voice of the whole Nation; that the Doctor has the Mortification to find his Aspersions here, do not take in the least.

[Pg 15]

With what Indignation must every one that has had the Honour to be admitted to this *Great Man*, review the Doctor's charging him with being morose; and what Contempt must they have of the Doctor's Veracity, who to satisfy the vilest Passion will thus sacrifice his Judgment: What a Cloud of Witnesses might I have, if required, to set in Opposition to this single Assertion of the Doctor's, he is indeed the only Person that ever was known to have thought such a Thing. The great Condescension and Kindness, the good Nature and Complacency with which that Person treats all Mankind, render him amiable to all; he has been so particularly remarkable for this, that as he does the best the kindest Things in the most agreeable Way, which inhances their Value, so when he is obliged from the Nature of a Request to deny it, he so qualifies the Refusal, that the Person concerned is not immediately sensible of a Disappointment; and from the Excess of his good Nature, when convinc'd of the Difficulties and Distresses of Families he'll out of his private Purse remove those Uneasiness's, which he could not in honour have done out of the Nation's Money; and thus Multitudes hourly bless his Name and Family, who subsist by his Bounty alone: He daily feeds the Hungry, cloaths the Naked, delivers the Prisoner; and what I look upon a thousand Degrees beyond the other, he saves and raises many a Family just sinking into Ruine; delivers them from Infamy, Imprisonment, and Want; which to those that never felt either, and have the Appearance of all in View, must be Circumstances more dreadful than 'tis possible can be rightly conceived of by any, but those who have themselves been in them: To help these has been his peculiar Care. Here's one of the best Acts can be done by Man in private Life; these Things will, they must, they ought to endear him; I could carry this, if necessary, to an almost boundless Length; was I to trace this great Man thro' every Scene of private Life, you'd find the whole a noble Record, of which this is an Epitome; such as ne'er was exceeded, or perhaps equal'd.

[Pg 16]

I look upon what I have hitherto said as necessary to my Undertaking; indulge me now, Sir,

in a Digression that seems naturally enough to present it self, and may be better made here than afterwards; the Transition is easy, from the private, allow me to pass to the publick Life, of the Person I have been speaking: Here I might make a general Challenge and say; who can charge him with want of Wisdom, Judgment, Knowledge, Integrity, Uprightness, Justice, or Clemency, and a long &c. But this would be but faint to the Latitude I may with Justice take the other Way: This great Man, is the wise Director of the publick Affairs; he is the Delight of his Royal Master, and the Darling of the People; he is an Honour to his Nation, adds a Lustre to the Crown, and is deservedly valued by us and all *Europe*, as a general publick Blessing; born for the Good, the Happiness of Mankind; and arrived to a Capacity of serving his Country best, when his Country stands most in Need of his Service; and if his Life's continued, which may the great God grant, so that he compleat his Designs for the Publick Good; *Great Britain* will undoubtedly be led to espouse her true Interest; her Commerce will be extended and established; and we shall become a more flourishing, united, powerful People, than we are, even at present; and we are now so, in all Respects beyond whatever we were before.

[Pg 17]

Might I be allow'd to enter upon his Conduct during the late, and still critical situation of Affairs in *Europe*, what a noble Scene might I open; how has the Honour and Interest of the Nation been persu'd and maintain'd, notwithstanding all the various Turns in Affairs? How has the Ambition of Princes been baulkt? their Councils over-rul'd, their Measures broke, and their greatest Designs brought to nothing by him? How by one Turn of his Hand has he preserv'd the Peace of *Europe*, prevented the Effusion of Blood, and Treasure, kept us from War abroad, from Invasions at home, tho' most apparently threaten'd with both? How, in a word, has he, by a Management, peculiar to himself secur'd that Tranquility in *Europe*, which if broke in upon, might have cost the Lives of a million of Men, an immense Treasure, and many Years to have restor'd? and all this without any Expence but what is an Advantage to us. How will a future Ministry become wise from this great Pattern. How easy will it be for a Man to make a Figure at the Head of Affairs when in all Difficulties he has nothing else to do but to act in Conformity to his Measures? Measures, that have been try'd and found to answer; Measures, that as they have done, in the like Cases will always do; but I find, Sir, I must put a Restraint upon my Inclination, or this agreeable Subject would run me much beyond the Limits of a Letter; and indeed, it is a very great Restraint I put upon myself to break off without saying much more, for how can an honest true-hearted *Englishman* bear to have the Person insulted, who is so much the Cause of his Prosperity and Happiness; whose ONE general intention is the Good of his Country; who is indefatigable in his Endeavours to procure it; who is the Glory of the present Age, and will be admir'd and imitated while good or great Men continue upon Earth.

[Pg 18]

I can't conclude without observing to you, Sir, that this Work is so far a finishing Stroke with the Doctor, that he seems by it to have compleated his Character: In a former Performance, he levelled his Jest at Almighty God; banter'd and ridiculed Religion and all that's good and adorable above: By this, he has abused and insulted those, who are justly valued by us, as the best, the greatest below: How his present Conduct may be relished, Time, I say, will best discover; his former, had a Resentment attending it, and her late Majesty would not be prevailed upon to admit him a Prebendary of *Windsor*, notwithstanding very powerful and pressing Instances were made on his Behalf: Her Majesty was most highly displeas'd, she would not allow him to come near her Person; her Majesty said, she had been but too credibly inform'd of the Immorality of his Life; and as for his Writings, she knew them to be profane and impious; that he was the Scandal of his Cloth, a Reproach to Religion; and therefore she could not in Conscience give him any Preferment in the Church. This Answer ruffled the Doctor, and made his Friends uneasy; however, they set down with it for the present, and gave over their Sollicitations; but the Doctor having been the Minion of a great Minister, and deeply engaged in the dirty Work of the Day, his Patron thought himself oblig'd to take Care of him; and upon a D—y in *Ireland* becoming vacant, he prevailed with the Queen to grant it him; which her Majesty did not at last without much Reluctancy; nor would have done it at all, as 'twas then thought, but to remove the Doctor further from her, and get rid of the Sollicitations, upon his Account, that were become very uneasy to her.

[Pg 19]

[Pg 20]

One might have imagined, that when the Doctor had got thus into snug, warm Quarters, he would have been easy; and at least not have flown in the Face, and broke out, as it were, into open Acts of Hostility with those by whom he is protected and defended there; those that secure to him all the Happiness, that Ease, Indolence, and Fulness can furnish out to him: What Pretence has he more than any other Man, to a Thousand a Year for doing nothing, or little more than strutting behind a Verger, and Lording it ever Men honest, and more deserving, than himself, and yet can't he be contented? How scandalous wou'd Conduct like this be in a Soldier; was an Officer, one that eats his Majesty's Bread, and wears his Cloth, to behave thus, what would he deserve? I ought, indeed, to offer some Apology for only making the Supposition; the Comparison won't hold, 'tis not just; the Officers are all Men of Honour, they not only abhor all such Conduct, but they look upon it their Duty, in which they are certainly right, to do whatever is in their Power for promoting the Honour and Interest of their Royal Master, and those intrusted by him with the Administration; and for furthering their Reputation and Welfare: This ought, indeed, to be the Temper of the Doctor; Is he not paid, and well paid too, to preach up Charity and Benevolence; to teach People their Duty to the superior Powers; to tell them of their Obligations to good Governors; to inculcate a Love and a Reverence for these in the Minds

[Pg 21]

of all; to engage them to Peace and a dutiful Behaviour; in a Word, to fear God and honour the King; and obey those for Conscience Sake who are by his Majesty placed with Authority over them. This is the Sum of what the Doctor has in Charge, and what he is under the most solemn Obligations to comply with. Only a bare Neglect of these Things would be sufficiently Criminal; what then must the Man deserve, who could be found so hardy, in Breach of his Oath and Honour, to act the Reverse of all these? And such is the Doctor: He contemns the Power he should revere; he strives to undermine that Government he ought to uphold; he endeavours at Reflexions upon those he should have in the highest Honour and Esteem; he is leading People into Disaffection and Disloyalty who are committed to his Care for right Information; he poisons those he is paid to feed; he receives the Nation's Money, but sides with its Enemies; with those whose Desires and constant Endeavours are to enslave and ruin us: What the Doctor deserves is easy to determine; but what he may meet with must be left to others; I shall but say, a Soldier for Neglect of Duty only, is discarded, never fails to meet with Disgrace, and often Death; here is what's much worse than the utmost such a Charge can amount to; that the Cloth should make such a Difference that he who ought to have the severest Treatment, finds the most favourable is no great Encomium upon our national Justice.

[Pg 22]

I cannot but be a little surpris'd at the impolitick Method of the Doctor's proceeding; who should attack Mankind in a Way he is himself the most to be exposed in of almost any Man breathing; I have given you a small Sketch of it here, Sir; but no further than was absolutely necessary; if I find it requisite you may hereafter expect from me a full and true Account of the Doctor's Life, and Conversation for upwards of thirty Years past; which will disclose such Scenes that all Mankind must look upon it a Piece of great Assurance in the Doctor to offer at the private characters of others, when his own has been so very defective.

I shall trespass no longer upon your Patience, than to do myself the Honour to assure you, and all the World, that I am,

Sir, Your most obedient,

Devoted humble Servant, &c:

Dec. 7. 1726.

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3. *The Empress of Morocco and Its Critics* (Elkanah Settle, *The Empress of Morocco* [1673] with five plates; *Notes and Observations on the Empress of Morocco* [1674] by John Dryden, John Crowne and Thomas Snadwell; *Notes and Observations on the Empress of Morocco Revised* [1674] by Elkanah Settle; and *The Empress of Morocco. A Farce* [1674] by Thomas Duffett), with an Introduction by Maximillian E. Novak. 348 pages.
4. *After THE TEMPEST* (the Dryden-Davenant version of *The Tempest* [1670]; the "operatic" *Tempest* [1674]; Thomas Duffett's *Mock-Tempest* [1675]; and the "Garrick" *Tempest* [1756]), with an Introduction by George Robert Guffey. 332 pages.

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Transcriber's Notes:

Long "s" has been modernized.

Extra line spacing in the Introduction is intentional to represent both the end of a quote and the beginning of a new paragraph.

*** END OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK A LETTER FROM A CLERGYMAN TO HIS FRIEND, ***

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