

Thomas Dekker: Selections from Two Pamphlets

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Written by Shakespeare's fellow playwright Thomas Dekker (most famous for *The Shoemaker's Holiday* and for his contributions in the war of the theatres and to Thomas Middleton's *The Roaring Girl, or Moll Cutpurse*), these two pamphlets are superb examples of Jacobean prose. *The Wonderful Year* not only closely follows ordinary public reactions to Queen Elizabeth's sickness and death and the accession of King James—giving us a firsthand account attentive to how these events were received by the English people—but the pamphlet's description of the plague is one of the most harrowing accounts of the desolation, the shadow of death that haunted the populace during and after such an outbreak. The essay quite naturally breaks into two parts, the second presenting a change of tenor toward a satiric view of despair, in a series of anecdotes showing how those in the country received those fleeing the plague in London. *The Guls Horn-booke* is written in a very different vein; ostensibly a book advising those wealthy newcomers who wish to make an impression on Londoners, the booklet is a savage tongue-in-cheek send-up of the excesses of these "gulls." The sixth chapter is particularly interesting to those interested in the playhouse, giving, as it does, some feel for the raucous and lively atmosphere in which the plays were presented.

I put these selections online because no publisher has reprinted them in years, and they should be available to students in those colleges whose libraries can't get them; they are excellent resources for students researching the above-named subjects from the Shakespearean era. Despite the current fashion of printing editions in their original spelling, I have reproduced the selection from *The Wonderful Year* in modernized spelling, and have modernized the spelling of the selection from *The Gull's Hornbook*, primarily because these offerings are not for specialists, but for undergraduate students. Editions from which these selections are taken:

Dekker, Thomas. "The Wonderful Year: 1603." *Three Elizabethan Pamphlets*. Hibbard, G. R., ed. London and Toronto: George G. Harap; New York: Barnes and Noble, 1951.

----- "The Guls Hornbooke: or Fashions to please all sorts of Guls." *Elizabethan and Jacobean Pamphlets*. Ed. George Saintsbury. Freeport, New York: Books for Libraries, 1970

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from The Wonderful Year: 1603

The Queen's Sickness

But O the short lived felicity of man! O world, of what slight and thin stuff is thy happiness! Just in the midst of this jocund holiday, a storm arises in the west. Westward, from the top of a Richmount, descended a hideous tempest, that shook cedars, terrified the tallest pines, and cleft in sunder even the hardest hearts of oak. And if such great trees were shaken, what think you became of the tender eglantine, and humble hawthorn? They could not, doubtless, but droop, they could not choose but die with terror. The element, taking the Destinies' part, who indeed set abroad this mischief, scowled on the earth, and filling her high forehead full of black wrinkles, tumbling long up and down like a great-bellied wife, her sighs being whirlwinds, and her groans thunder, at length she fell in labour, and was delivered of a pale, meagre, weak child, named Sickness; whom Death (with a pestilence) would needs take upon him to nurse, and did so.

This starveling, being come to his full growth, had an office given him for nothing (and that's a wonder in this age). Death made him his herald, attired him like a courtier, and, in his name, charged him to go into the privy chamber of the English queen, to summon her to appear in the Star Chamber of heaven.

Her Death

The summons made her start, but, having an invincible spirit, did not amaze her; yet whom would not the certain news of parting from a kingdom amaze? But she knew where to find a richer, and therefore lightly regarded the loss of this, and thereupon made ready for that heavenly coronation, being (which was most strange) most dutiful to obey, that had so many years so powerfully commanded. She obeyed Death's messenger, and yielded her body to the hands of Death himself. She died, resigning her sceptre to posterity, and her soul to immortality.

The General Terror that her Death Bred

The report of her death like a thunderclap was able to kill thousands, it took away hearts from millions. For having brought up, even under her wing, a nation that was almost begotten and born under her; that never shouted any other *Ave* than for her name, never saw the face of any prince but herself, never understood what that strange outlandish word *Change* signified; how was it possible, but that her sickness should throw abroad an universal fear, and her death an astonishment? She was the courtier's treasure, therefore he had cause to mourn; the lawyer's sword of justice, he might well faint; the merchant's patroness, he had reason to look pale; the citizen's mother, he might best lament; the shepherd's goddess, and should not he droop?

Only the soldier, who had walked a long time upon wooden legs, and was not able to give arms though he were a gentleman, had bristled up the quills of his stiff porcupine mustachio, and swore by no beggars that now was the hour come for him to bestir his

stumps. Usurers and brokers, that are the devil's ingles and dwell in the Long Lane of Hell, quaked like aspen leaves at his oaths. Those that before were only the cutthroats of London, now stood in fear of no other death. But my *Signior Soldado* was deceived, the tragedy went not forward.

Never did the English nation behold so much black worn as there was at her funeral. It was then but put on to try if it were fit, for the great day of mourning was set down in the book of heaven to be held afterwards. That was but the dumb show, the tragical act hath been playing ever since. Her hearse as it was borne, seemed to be an island swimming in water, for round about it there rained showers of tears; about her death-bed none; for her departure was so sudden and so strange, that men knew not how to weep, because they had never been taught to shed tears of that making. They that durst not speak of their sorrows, whispered them; they that durst not whisper sent them forth in sighs.

O what an earth-quake is the alteration of a state! Look from the Chamber of Presence to the farmer's cottage, and you shall find nothing but distraction. The whole kingdom seems a wilderness, and the people in it are transformed to wild men. The map of a country so pitifully distracted by the horror of a change, if you desire perfectly to behold, cast your eyes then on this that follows, which being heretofore in private presented to the King, I think may very worthily shew itself before you. And because you shall see them attired in the same fashion that they wore before his Majesty, let these few lines, which stood then as prologue to the rest, enter first into your ears.

Not for applauses, shallow fools' adventure,
I plunge my verse into a sea of censure;
But with a liver drest in gall, to see
So many rooks, catch-poles of poesy,
That feed upon the fallings of high wit,
And put on cast inventions, most unfit;
For such am I pressed forth in shops and stalls,
Pasted in Paul's, and, on the lawyers' walls,
For every basilisk-eyed critics' bait,
To kill my verse, or poison my conceit;
Or some smoked gallant, who at wit repines,
To dry tobacco with my wholesome lines,
And in one paper sacrifice more brain,
Than all his ignorant skull could ere contain:
But merit dreads no martyrdom, nor stroke,
My lines shall live, when he shall be all smoke.

Thus far the prologue, who leaving the stage clear, the fears that are bred in the womb of this altering kingdom do next step up, acting thus:

The great impostume of the realm was drawn
Even to a head: the multitudinous spawn

Was the corruption, which did make it swell
With hop'd sedition, the burnt seed of hell.
Who did expect but Ruin, Blood, and Death,
To share our kingdom, and divide our breath?
Religions without religion
To let each other blood, Confusion
To be next queen of England, and this year
The civil wars of France to be play'd here
By Englishmen, ruffians, and pandering slaves,
That fain would did up gouty usurers' graves.
At such a time, villains their hopes do honey,
And rich men look as pale as their white money.
Now they remove, and make their silver sweat,
Casting themselves into a covetous heat;
And then, unseen, in the confederate dark,
Bury their gold, without or priest or clerk;
And say no prayers over that dead pelf,
True, Gold's no Christian, but an Indian elf.
Did not the very kingdom seem to shake
Her precious massy limbs? Did she not make
All English cities, like her pulses, beat
With people in their veins? The fear so great,
That had it not been physick'd with rare peace,
Our populous bower had lessen'd her increase.
The spring-time that was dry, had sprung in blood
A greater dearth of men, than e'er of food.
In such a panting time, and gasping year,
Victuals are cheapest, only men are dear.
Now each wise-acr'd landlord did despair,
Fearing some villain should become his heir;
Or that his son and heir before his time,
Should now turn villain and with violence climb
Up to his life, saying, "Father you have seen
King Henry, Edward, Mary, and the Queen,
I wonder you'll live longer!" Then he tells him
He's loath to see him kill'd, therefore he kills him.
And each vast landlord dies like a poor slave,
Their thousand acres makes them but a grave.
At such a time great men convey their treasure
Into the trusty city; wait the leisure
Of blood and insurrection, which war clips,
When every gate shuts up her iron lips.
Imagine now a mighty man of dust
Stands in a doubt what servant he may trust

With plate worth thousands, jewels worth far more,
 If he prove false, then his rich lord proves poor.
 He calls forth one by one to note their graces,
 Whilst they make legs, he copies out their faces,
 Examines their eye-brow, construes their beard,
 Singles their nose out, still he rests afar'd.
 The first that comes by no means he'll allow,
 'Had spied three hairs starting between his brow,
 Quite turns the word, names it celerity,
 For hares do run away and so may he.
 A second shewn; him he will scarce behold,
 His beard's too red, the colour of his gold.
 A third may please him, but 'tis hard to say
 A rich man's pleas'd when his goods part away.
 And now do chirrup the fine golden nests
 Of well hatch'd bowls, such as do breed in feasts,
 For war and death cupboards of plate down pulls,
 Then Bacchus drinks not in gilt bowls, but skulls.
 Let me descend and stoop my verse a while,
 To make the comic cheek of Poesy smile;
 Rank penny-fathers scud, with their half hams
 Shadowing their calves, to save their silver dams;
 At every gun they start, tilt from the ground,
 One drum can make a thousand usurers sound.
 In unsought alleys and unwholesome places,
 Back-ways and by-lanes, where appear few faces,
 In shamble-smelling rooms, loathsome prospects,
 And penny-lattice windows, which rejects
 All popularity, there the rich cubs lurk,
 When in great houses ruffians are at work,
 Not dreaming that such glorious booties lie
 Under those nasty roofs; such they pass by
 Without a search, crying, "There's nought for us,"
 And wealthy men deceive poor villains thus.
 Tongue-travelling lawyers faint at such a day,
 Lie speechless, for they have no words to say.
 Physicians turn to patients, their art's dry,
 For then our fat men without physic die.
 And to conclude, against all art and good,
 War taints the doctor, lets the surgeon blood.

Such was the fashion of this land, when the great landlady thereof left it. She came in with the fall of the leaf, and went away in the spring; her life, which was dedi-

cated to virginity, both beginning and closing up a miraculous maiden circle; for she was born upon a Lady Eve and died upon a Lady Eve, her nativity and death being memorable by this wonder; the first and last years of her reign by this, that a Lee was Lord Mayor when she came to the crown, and a Lee Lord Mayor when she departed from it. Three places are made famous by her for three things, Greenwich for her birth, Richmond for her death, and Whitehall for her funeral: upon her removing from whence (to lend our tiring prose a breathing time) stay and look upon these epigrams, being composed:

I. UPON THE QUEEN'S LAST REMOVE, BEING DEAD

The Queen's remov'd in solemn sort,
Yet this was strange and seldom seen,
The queen us'd to remove the Court,
But now the Court remov'd the Queen.

2. UPON HER BRINGING BY WATER TO WHITE HALL

The Queen was brought by water to White Hall,
At every stroke the oars tears let fall;
More clung about the barge, fish under water
Wept out their eyes of pearl, and swum blind after.
I think the barge-men might with easier thighs
Have row'd her thither in her people's eyes;
For howsoe'er, thus much my thoughts have scann'd,
S'had come by water, had she come by land.

3. UPON HER LYING DEAD AT WHITE HALL

The Queen now lies at White Hall dead,
And now at White Hall living;
To make this rough objection even,
Dead at White Hall at Westminster
But living at White Hall in Heaven

1603: A More Wonderful Year Than '88

Thus you see that both in her life and her death, she was appointed to be the mirror of her time. And surely, if, since the first stone that was laid for the foundation of this great house of the world, there was ever a year to be wondered at, it is only this. The Sybil's *Octogesimus octavus annus*, that terrible '88, which came sailing hither in the Spanish Armada, and made men's hearts colder than the frozen zone, when they heard but an inkling of it; that '88 by whose horrible predictions almanack-makers stood in bodily fear their trade would be utterly overthrown, and poor *Erra Pater* was threatened, be-

cause he was a Jew, to be put to baser offices than the stopping of mustard pots; that same '88 which had more prophecies waiting at his heels than ever Merlin, the magician, had in his head, was a year of jubilee to this. Plato's *mirabilis annus* (whether it be passed already, or to come within these four years) may throw Plato's cap at *mirabilis*, for that title of wonderful is bestowed upon 1603. If that sacred aromatically-perfumed fire of wit, out of whose flames Phoenix poesy doth arise, were burning in any breast, I would feel it with no other stuff for a twelve month and a day than with kindling papers full of lines, that should tell only of the chances, changes, and strange shapes that this Protean, climacterical year hath metamorphosed himself into. It is able to find ten chroniclers a competent living, and to set twenty printers to work.

You shall perceive I lie not, if, with Peter Bales, you will take the pains to draw the whole volume of it into the compass of a penny. At first, to begin with the Queen's death, then the kingdom's falling into an ague upon that. Next follows the curing of that fever by the wholesome receipt of a proclaimed king. That wonder begat more, for in an hour, two mighty nations were made one; wild Ireland became tame on the sudden; and some English great ones, that before seemed tame, on the sudden turned wild, the same park which great Julius Caesar enclosed to hold in the deer, whom they before hunted, being new circled by a second Caesar with stronger pales to keep them from leaping over. And last of all, if that wonder be the last and shut up the year, a most dreadful plague. This is the abstract, and yet, like Stowe's Chronicle of *decimo sexto* to huge Holinshed, these small pricks in this sea-card of ours represent mighty countries—whilst I have the quill in hand, let me blow them bigger.

The Queen being honoured with a diadem of stars, France, Spain, and Belgia lift up their heads, preparing to do as much for England by giving aim whist she shot arrows at her own breast (as they imagined), as she had done many a year together for them. And her own nation betted on their sides, looking with distracted countenance for no better guests than civil sedition, uproars, rapes, murders, and massacres. But the wheel of Fate turned, a better lottery was drawn, *Pro Troia stabat Apollo*, God stuck valiantly to us. For behold, up rises a comfortable sun out of the North, whose glorious beams, like a fan, dispersed all thick and contagious clouds. The loss of a queen was paid with the double interest of a king and queen. The cedar of her government, which stood alone and bore no fruit, is changed now to an olive, upon whose spreading branches grow both kings and queens.

King James Proclaimed

Oh it were able to fill a hundred pair of writing tables with notes, but to see the parts played in the compass of one hour on the stage of this new-found world! Upon Thursday it was treason to cry "God save King James, King of England," and, upon Friday, high treason not to cry so. In the morning no voice heard but murmurs and lamentation, at noon nothing but shouts of gladness and triumph. St. George and St. Andrew, that many hundred years had defied one another, were now sworn brothers. England and Scotland (being parted only with a narrow river, and the people of both empires speaking a language less differing than English within itself, as though providence had enacted that

one day those two nations should marry one another) are now made sure together, and King James his coronation is the solemn wedding day.

Happiest of all thy ancestors, thou mirror of all princes that ever were or are, that at seven of the clock wert a king but over a piece of a little island, and before eleven the greatest monarch in Christendom. Now:

Silver crowds

Of blissful angels and tried martyrs tread
On the star-ceiling over England's head;
Now heaven broke into a wonder, and brought forth
Our *omne bonum* from the wholesome North,
Our fruitful sovereign, *James*, at whose dread name,
Rebellion swounded, and e'er since became
Groveling and nerveless, wanting blood to nourish,
For Ruin gnaws herself when kingdoms flourish.
Now are our hopes planted in regal springs,
Never to wither, for our air breeds kings.
And in all ages from this sovereign time
England shall still be call'd the royal clime.
Most blissful monarch, of all earthen powers,
Serv'd with a mess of kingdoms; four such bowers,
For prosperous hives and rare industrious swarms,
The world contains not in her solid arms.
O thou, that art the meter of our days,
Poets' Apollo! deal thy Daphnean bays
To those whose wits are bay-trees, ever green,
Upon whose high tops Poesy chirps unseen;
Such are the most fit t'apparel kings in rhymes,
Whose silver numbers are the Muses' chimes,
Whose sprightly characters, being once wrought on,
Outlive the marble th'are insculpt upon.
Let such men chant thy virtue, then they fly
On Learning's wings up to eternity.
As for the rest that limp in cold desert,
Having small wit, less judgment, and least art,
Their verse 'tis almost heresy to hear,
Banish their lines some furlong from thine ear;
For 'tis held dangerous, by Apollo's sign,
To be infected with a leprous line.
O make some adamant act, ne'er to be worn,
That none may write but those that are true-born;
So when the world's old cheeks shall raze and peel,
Thy acts shall breathe in epitaphs of steel.

The Joys that Followed Upon His Proclaiming

By these comments it appears that by this time King James is proclaimed. Now does fresh blood leap into the cheeks of the courtier; the soldier now hangs up his armour, and is glad that he shall feed upon the blessed fruits of peace; the scholar sings hymns in honour of the Muses, assuring himself now that Helicon will be kept pure, because Apollo himself drinks of it. Now the thrifty citizen casts beyond the moon, and seeing the golden age returned into the world again, resolves to worship no saint but money. Trades that lay dead and rotten, and were in all men's opinion utterly damned, started out of their trance, as though they had drunk of *aqua caelestis*, or unicorn's horn, and swore to fall to their old occupation. Tailors meant no more to be called merchant-tailors, but merchants; for their shops were all led forth in leases to be turned into ships, and with their shears, instead of a rudder, would they have cut the seas, like Levant taffaty, and sailed to the West Indies for no worse stuff to make hose and doublets of than beaten gold. Or if the necessity of the time, which was likely to stand altogether upon bravery, should press them to serve with their iron and Spanish weapons upon their stalls, then was there a sharp law made amongst them, that no workman should handle any needle but that which had a pearl in his eye, nor any copper thimble, unless it were lined quite through, or bombasted with silver.

What mechanical hard-handed Vulcanist, seeing the dice of Fortune run so sweetly, and resolving to strike whilst the iron was hot, but persuaded himself to be a Master or Head Warden of his company ere half a year went about? The worst players' boy stood upon his good parts, swearing tragical and buskined oaths, that how villainously soever he ranted, or what bad and unlawful action soever he entered into, he would, in despite of his honest audience, be half a sharer at least at home; or else stroll, that's to say travel, with some notorious, wicked, floundering company abroad.

And good reason had these time-catchers to be led into this fools' paradise; for they saw mirth in every man's face, the streets were plumed with gallants, tobacconists filled up whole taverns, vintners hung out spick and span new ivy-bushes, because they wanted good wine, and their old rain-beaten lattices marched under other colours, having lost both company and colours before.

London was never in the high way to preferment till now. Now she resolved to stand upon her pantofles; now, and never till now, did she laugh to scorn that worm-eaten proverb of "Lincoln was, London is, and York shall be"; for she saw herself in better state than Jerusalem, she went more gallant than ever did Antwerp, was more courted by amorous and lusty suitors than Venice, the minion of Italy. More lofty towers stood, like a coronet or a spangled head-tire about her temples, than ever did about the beautiful forehead of Rome. Tyrus and Sidon to her were like two thatched houses to Theobalds: the grant Cayr was but a hogsty.

Hinc illae lachrymae, she wept her bellyful for all this. Whilst Troy was swilling sack and sugar, and mousing fat venison, the mad Greeks made bonfires of their houses. Old Priam was drinking a health to the wooden horse, and before it could be pledged had his throat cut. Corn is no sooner ripe, but for all the pricking up of his ears he is pared off

by the shins, and made to go upon stumps; flowers no sooner budded, but they are plucked up and die. Night walks at the heels of the day, and sorrow enters, like a tavern bill, at the tail of our pleasures. For in the Apennine height of this immoderate joy and security, that like Paul's steeple overlooked the whole city, behold, that miracle-worker, who in one minute turned our general mourning to a general mirth, does now again in a moment alter that gladness to shrieks and lamentation.

Excerpt from The Plague

Here would I fain make a full point, because posterity should not be frightened with those miserable tragedies, which now my Muse, as Chorus, stands ready to present. Time, would thou hadst never been made wretched by bringing them forth! Oblivion, would in all the graves and sepulchres, whose rank jaws thou hast already closed up, or shalt yet hereafter burst open, thou couldst likewise bury them for ever.

A stiff and freezing horror sucks up the rivers of my blood; my hair stands on end with the panting of my brains; mine eye balls are ready to start out, being beaten with the billows of my tears. Out of my weeping pen does the ink mournfully, and more bitterly than gall, drop on the pale-faced paper, even when I do but think how the bowels of my sick country have been torn. Apollo, therefore, and you bewitching silver-tongued Muses, get you gone. I invoke none of your names. Sorrow and Truth, sit you on each side of me, whilst I am delivered of this deadly burden. Prompt me that I may utter ruthless and passionate condolment. Arm my trembling hand, that it may boldly rip up and anatomize the ulcerous body of this anthropophagized plague. Lend me art, without any counterfeit shadowing, to paint and delineate to the life the whole story of this mortal and pestiferous battle. And you, the ghosts of those more (by many) than forty thousand, that with the virulent poison of infection have been driven out of your earthly dwellings; you desolate hand-wringing widows, that beat your bosoms over your departing husbands; you woefully distracted mothers, that with dishevelled hair are fallen into swoonds, while you lie kissing the insensible cold lips of your breathless infants; you outcast and down-trodden orphans, that shall many a year hence remember more freshly to mourn, when your mourning garments shall look old and be forgotten; and you the genii of all those emptied families, whose habitations are now among the Antipodes; join all your hands together, and with your bodies cast a ring about me. Let me behold your ghastly visages, that my paper may receive their true pictures. Echo forth your groans through the hollow trunk of my pen, and run down your gummy tears into mine ink, that even marble bosoms may be shaken with terror, and hearts of adamant melt into compassion.

What an unmatched torment were it for a man to be barred up every night in a vast silent charnel-house; hung (to make it more hideous) with lamps dimly and slowly burning in hollow and glimmering corners? Where all the pavement should, instead of green rushes, be strewed with blasted rosemary, withered hyacinths, fatal cypress, and yew, thickly mingled with heaps of dead men's bones. The bare ribs of a father that begat him, lying there; here the chapless hollow skull of a mother that bore him. Round about

him a thousand corpses; some standing bolt upright in their knotted winding sheets; others half mouldered in rotten coffins, that should suddenly yawn wide open, filling his nostrils with noisome stench, and his eyes with the sight of nothing but crawling worms. And to keep such a poor wretch waking, he should hear no noise but of toads croaking, screech-owls howling, mandrakes shrieking. Were not this an infernal prison? Would not the strongest-hearted man beset with such a ghastly horror look wild? and run mad? and die?

And even such a formidable shape did the diseased city appear in. For he that durst, in the dead hour of gloomy midnight, have been so valiant as to have walked through the still and melancholy streets, what think you should have been his music? Surely the loud groans of raving sick men; the struggling pangs of souls departing; in every house grief striking up an alarum; servants crying out for masters, wives for husbands, parents for children, children for their mothers. Here he should have met some frantically running to knock up sextons; there, others fearfully sweating with coffins to steal forth dead bodies, lest the fatal handwriting of death should seal up their doors. And to make this dismal consort more full, round about him bells heavily tolling in one place, and ringing out in another. The dreadfulness of such an hour is unutterable: let us go further.

If some poor man suddenly starting out of a sweet and golden slumber should behold his house flaming about his ears, all his family destroyed in their sleeps by the merciless fire—himself in the very midst of it, woefully and like a madman calling for help—would not the misery of such a distressed soul appear the greater, if the rich usurer dwelling next door to him, should not stir, though he felt part of the danger, but suffer him to perish, when the thrusting out of an arm might have saved him? Oh, how many thousands of wretched people have acted this poor man's part! How often hath the amazed husband waking, found the comfort of his bed lying breathless by his side! his children at the same instant gasping for life! and his servants, mortally wounded at the heart by sickness! The distracted creature beats at death's doors, exclaims at windows, his cries are sharp enough to pierce heaven, but on earth no ear is opened to receive them.

And in this manner do the tedious minutes of the night stretch out the sorrows of ten thousand. It is now day, let us look forth and try what consolation rises with the sun. Not any, not any; for before the jewel of the morning be fully set in silver, a hundred hungry graves stand gaping, and every one of them, as at a breakfast, hath swallowed down ten or eleven lifeless carcasses. Before dinner, in the same gulf are twice so many more devoured; and before the sun takes his rest, those numbers are doubled. Threescore, that not many hours before had every one several lodgings very delicately furnished, are now thrust together into one close room; a little noisome room, not fully ten foot square.

Doth not this strike coldly to the heart of a worldly miser? To some the very sound of death's name is instead of a passing bell. What shall become of such a coward, being told that the self-same body of his, which now is so pampered with superfluous fare, so perfumed and bathed in odoriferous waters, and so gaily apparelled in variety of fashions, must one day be thrown, like stinking carrion, into a rank and rotten grave;

where his goodly eyes, that did once shoot forth such amorous glances, must be beaten out of his head; his locks, that hang wantonly dangling, trodden in dirt underfoot? This doubtless, like thunder, must needs strike him into the earth. But, wretched man, when thou shalt see, and be assured by tokens sent thee from heaven, that tomorrow thou must be tumbled into a muck-pit, and suffer thy body to be bruised and pressed with threescore dead men lying slovenly about thee, and thou must be undermost of all! yea, and perhaps half of that number were thine enemies! and see how they may be revenged, for the worms that breed out of their putrefying carcasses, shall crawl in huge swarms from them, and quite devour thee; what agonies will this strange news drive thee into? If thou art in love with thyself, this cannot choose but possess thee with frenzy.

But thou art gotten safe out of the civil city Calamity to thy parks and palaces in the country, lading thy asses and thy mules with thy gold (thy god), thy plate, and thy jewels. And the fruits of thy womb thriftily growing up but in one only son, the young landlord of all thy careful labours, him also hast thou rescued from the arrows of infection. Now is thy soul jocund and thy senses merry. But open thine eyes, thou fool, and behold that darling of thine eye, thy son, turned suddenly into a lump of clay. The hand of pestilence hath smote him even under thy wing. Now does thou rend thine hair, blaspheme thy creator, cursest thy creation and basely descendest into brutish and unmanly passions, threatening in despite of death and his plague, to maintain the memory of thy child in the everlasting breast of marble. A tomb must now defend him from tempests. And for that purpose, the sweaty hind, that digs the rent he pays thee out of the entrails of the earth, he is sent for, to convey forth that burden of thy sorrow. But note how thy pride is disdained. That weather-beaten, sun-burnt drudge, that not a month since fawned upon thy Worship like a spaniel, and, like a bond-slave, would have stooped lower than thy feet, does now stop his nose at thy presence, and is ready to set his mastiff as high as thy throat, to drive thee from his door. All thy gold and silver cannot hire one of those, whom before thou didst scorn, to carry the dead body to his last home. The country round about thee shun thee, as a basilisk, and therefore to London, from whose arms thou cowardly fledst away, post upon post must be galloping, to fetch from thence those that may perform that funeral office. But there are they so full of grave-matters of their own, that they have no leisure to attend thine. Doth not this cut thy very heart-strings in sunder? If that do not, the shutting up of the tragical act, I am sure, will. For thou must be enforced with thine own hands to wind up that blasted flower of youth in the last linen that ever he shall wear. Upon thine own shoulders must thou bear part of him, thy amazed servant the other. With thine own hands must thou dig his grave, not in the church or common place of burial, thou has not favour, for all thy riches, to be so happy, but in thine orchard, or in the proud walks of thy garden, wringing thy palsy-shaking hands instead of bells, most miserable father, must thou search him out a sepulchre.

My spirit grows faint with rowing in this Stygian ferry, it can no longer endure the transportation of souls in this doleful manner; let us therefore shift a point of our compass, and, since there is no remedy, but that we must still be tossed up and down in this *mare mortuum*, hoist up all our sails, and on the merry wings of a lustier wind seek to arrive on some prosperous shore.

Imagine, then, that all this while, Death, like a Spanish leaguer, or rather like stalking Tamburlaine, hath pitched his tents (being nothing but a heap of winding-sheets tacked together) in the sinfully polluted suburbs. The Plague is muster-master and marshall of the field; burning fevers, boils, blains, and carbuncles, the leaders, lieutenants, sergeants, and corporals; the main army consisting, like Dunkirk, of a mingle-mangle, *viz*, dumpish mourners, merry sextons, hungry coffin-sellers, scrubbing bearers, and nasty grave-makers; but indeed they are the pioneers of the camp, that are employed only, like moles, in casting up of earth and digging of trenches. Fear and Trembling, the two catch-poles of Death, arrest everyone. No parley will be granted, no composition stood upon, but the alarum is struck up, the tocsin rings out for life, and no voice heard but "Tue, tue, kill, kill."

The little bells only, like small shot, do yet go off, and make no great work for worms, a hundred or two lost in every skirmish, or so. But, alas, that's nothing. Yet by those desperate sallies, what by open setting upon them by day, and secret ambuscadoes by night, the skirts of London were pitifully pared off, by little and little. Which they within the gates perceiving, it was no boot to bid them take their heels, for away they trudge, thick and threefold; some riding, some on foot; some without boots, some in their slippers; by water, by land; in shoals swum they westward. Marry, to Gravesend none went unless they be driven, for whosoever landed there never came back again. Hackneys, water-men, and wagons were not so terribly employed many a year; so that within a short time, there was not a good horse in Smithfield, nor a coach to be set eye on. For after the world had once run upon the wheels of the pest-cart, neither coach nor caroach durst appear in his likeness.

Let us pursue these runaways no longer, but leave them in the unmerciful hands of the country hard-hearted hobbinolls, who are ordained to be their tormentors, and return back to the siege of the city. For the enemy, taking advantage by their flight, planted his ordnance against the walls. Here the cannons, like their great bells, roared. The Plague took some pains for a breach; he laid about him cruelly, ere he could get it, but at length he and his tyrannous band entered. His purple colours were presently, with the sound of Bow-bell instead of a trumpet, advanced, and joined to the standard of the city. He marched even thorough Cheapside and the capital streets of Troynovant; the only blot of dishonour that stuck upon this invader being this, that he played the tyrant, not the conqueror, making havoc of all, when he had all lying at the foot of his mercy. Men, women, and children dropped down before him; houses were rifled, streets ransacked; beautiful maidens thrown on their beds and ravished by sickness; rich men's coffers broken open and shared amongst prodigal heirs and unthrifty servants; poor men used poorly but not pitifully; he did very much hurt, yet some say he did very much good.

Howsoever he behaved himself, this intelligence runs current, that every house looked like St. Bartholomew's Hospital, and every street like Bucklersbury, for poor mithridatum and dragon-water (being both of them in all the world scarce worth threepence) were boxed in every corner, and yet were both drunk every hour at other men's cost. Lazarus lay groaning at every man's door; marry, no Dives was within to

send him a crumb, for all your gold-finches were fled to the woods, nor a dog left to lick up his sores, for they, like curs, were knocked down like oxen, and fell thicker than acorns.

I am amazed to remember what dead marches were made of three thousand trooping together; husbands, wives, and children, being led as ordinarily to one grave, as if they had gone to one bed. And those that could shift for a time and shrink their heads out of the collar, as many did, yet went they most bitterly miching and muffled up and down with rue and wormwood stuffed in their ears and nostrils, looking like so many boars' heads stuck with branches of rosemary, to be served in for brawn at Christmas.

This was a rare world for the Church, who had wont to complain for want of living, and now had more living thrust upon her than she knew how to bestow. To have been clerk now to a parish clerk was better than to serve some foolish Justice of Peace, or than the year before to have had a benefice. Sextons gave out, if they might, as they hoped, continue these doings but a twelvemonth longer, they and their posterity would all ride upon foot-clothes to the end of the world. Amongst which worm-eaten generation, the three bald sextons of limping Saint Giles', Saint Sepulchre's, and Saint Olaf's, rule the roast more hotly than ever did the *Triumviri* of Rome; Jehochanan, Simeon, and Eleazar never kept such a plaguy coil in Jerusalem among the hunger-starved Jews, as these three sharkers did in their parishes among naked Christians. Cursed they were, I am sure, by some, to the pit of hell, for tearing money out of their throats, that had not a cross in their purses. But alas! they must have it, it is their fee, and therefore give the devil his due. Only herb-wives and gardeners, that never prayed before unless it were for rain or fair weather, were now day and night upon their marybones, that God would bless the labours of those mole-catchers, because they suck sweetness by this; for the price of flowers, herbs, and garlands, rose wonderfully insomuch that rosemary, which had wont to be sold for twelve pence an armful, went now for six shillings a handful.

A fourth sharer likewise of these winding-sheet weavers, deserves to have my pen give his lips a Jew's letter; but because he worships the bakers' good lord and master, charitable St. Clement, whereas none of the other three ever had to do with any saint, he shall scape the better. Only let him take heed that having all this year buried his prayers in the bellies of fat ones and plump capon-eaters (for no worse meat would down this sly fox's stomach) let him, I say, take heed lest, his flesh now falling away, his carcase be not plagued with lean ones, of whom, whilst the bill of *Lord have mercy upon us* was to be denied in no place, it was death for him to hear.

In this pitiful, or rather pitiless, perplexity, stood London, forsaken like a lover, forlorn like a widow, and disarmed of all comfort. Disarmed I may well say, for five rapiers were not stirring all this time, and those that were worn had never been seen if any money could have been lent upon them, so hungry is the ostrich disease that it will devour even iron. Let us therefore with bag and baggage march away from this dangerous sore city, and visit those that are fled into the country. But alas! *Decidis in Scyllam*, you are peppered if you visit them, for they are visited already. The broad arrow of Death, flies there up and down, as swiftly as it doth here. They that rode on the lustiest geldings could not out-gallop the plague, it overtook them, and overturned them too, horse and foot.

...

Too ripe a proof have we of this, in a pair of lovers. The maid was in the pride of fresh blood and beauty; she was that (which to be now is a wonder) young and yet chaste. The gifts of her mind were great, yet those which fortune bestowed upon her, as being well descended, were not much inferior. On this lovely creature did a young man so steadfastly fix his eye, that her looks kindled in his bosom a desire whose flames burnt the more brightly because they were fed with sweet and modest thoughts. Hymen was the god to whom he prayed day and night that he might marry her. His prayers were received and at length, after many tempests of her denial and frowns of kinsfolk, the element grew clear, and he saw the happy landing place where he had long sought to arrive. The prize of her youth was made his own, and the solemn day appointed when it should be delivered to him.

Glad of which blessedness (for to a lover it is a blessedness) he wrought by all the possible arts he could use to shorten the expected hour and bring it nearer; for, whether he feared the interception of parents, or that his own soul with excess of joy was drowned in strange passions, he would often, with sighs mingled with kisses, and kisses half sinking in tears, prophetically tell her that sure he should never live to enjoy her.

To discredit which opinion of his, behold, the sun has now made haste and wakened the bridal morning. Now does he call his heart traitor, that did so falsely conspire against him; lively blood leaps into his cheeks. He's got up, and gaily attired to play the bridegroom. She likewise does as cunningly turn herself into a bride. Kindred and friends are met together; sops and muscadine run sweating up and down till they drop again, to comfort their hearts. And, because so many coffins pestered London churches that there was no room left for weddings, coaches are provided, and away rides all the train into the country.

On a Monday morning are these lusty lovers on their journey, and before noon are they alighted, entering, instead of an inn, for more state into a church, where they no sooner appeared but the priest fell to his business. The holy knot was a tying, but he that should fasten it coming to this, "In sickness and in health," there he stopped, for suddenly the bride took hold of "in sickness," for "in health" all that stood by were in fear she should never be kept. The maiden blush, into which her cheeks were lately dyed, now began to lose colour; her voice, like a coward, would have shrunk away, but that her lover reaching her a hand, which he brought thither to give her (for he was not yet made a full husband) did with that touch somewhat revive her. On went they again so far, till they met with "For better, for worse," there was she worse than before, and had not the holy officer made haste the ground on which she stood to be married might easily have been broken up for her burial.

All ceremonies being finished, she was led between two, not like a bride, but rather like a corse, to her bed. That must now be the table, on which the wedding dinner is to be served up (being at this time, nothing but tears, and sighs, and lamentation) and Death is the chief waiter. Yet, at length, her weak heart, wrestling with the pangs, gave them a fall, so that up she stood again and in the fatal funeral coach that carried her forth, was she brought back, as upon a bier, to the city.

But see the malice of her enemy that had her in chase! Upon the Wednesday following being overtaken, was her life overcome. Death rudely lay with her, and spoiled her of a maidenhead in spite of her husband. Oh, the sorrow that did round beset him! Now was his divination true; she was a wife yet continued a maid; he was a husband and a widower, yet never knew his wife; she was his own, yet he had her not; she had him, yet never enjoyed him. Here is a strange alteration, for the rosemary that was washed in sweet water to set out the bridal is now wet in tears to furnish her burial; the music that was heard to sound forth dances cannot now be heard for the ringing of bells; all the comfort that happened to either side being this, that he lost her before she had time to be an ill wife, and she left him ere he was able to be a bad husband.

Better fortune had this bride, to fall into the hands of the Plague, than one other of that frail female sex, whose picture is next to be drawn, had to scape out of them.

An honest cobbler (if at least cobblers can be honest, that live altogether amongst wicked soles) had a wife, who, in time of health treading her shoe often awry, determined in the agony of a sickness, which this year had a saying to her, to fall to mending as well as her husband did. The bed that she lay upon being (as she thought, or rather feared) the last bed that ever should bear her (for many other beds had borne her, you must remember) and the worm of sin tickling her conscience, up she calls her very innocent and simple husband out of his virtuous shop, where, like Justice, he sat distributing amongst the poor, to some halfpenny pieces, penny pieces to some, and twopenny pieces to others, so long as they would last; his provident care being always that every man and woman should go upright.

To the bed's side of his plaguy wife approaches Monsieur Cobbler, to understand what deadly news she has to tell him and the rest of his kind neighbours that there were assembled, such thick tears standing in both the gutters of his eyes, to see his beloved life in such a pickle, that in their salt water all his utterance was drowned. Which she perceiving, wept as fast as he. But by the warm counsel that sat about the bed the shower ceased, she wiping her cheeks with the corner of one of the sheets, and he his sullied face with his leathern apron.

At last, two or three sighs, like a chorus to the tragedy ensuing, stepping out first, wringing her hands, which gave the better action, she told the pitiful *Actaeon*, her husband, that she had often done him wrong. He only shook his head at this, and cried, "Humh!" Which "humh" she taking as the watchword of his true patience, unravelled the bottom of her frailty at length, and concluded, that with such a man (and named him, but I hope you would not have me follow her steps and name him too) she practised the universal and common art of grafting, and that upon her goodman's head, they two had planted a monstrous pair of invisible horns.

At the sound of the horns my cobbler started up like a March hare and began to look wild. His awl never ran through the sides of a boot, as that word did through his heart. But being a politic cobbler, and remembering what piece of work he was to underlay, stroking his beard, like some grave headborough of the parish, and giving a nod, as who should say, "go on," bade her go on indeed, clapping to her sore soul this general salve, that "All are sinners, and we must forgive, etc.," for he hoped by such wholesome physic, as shoemaker's wax being laid to a boil, to draw out all the corruption of her secret villainies.

She, good heart, being tickled under gills with the finger of these kind speeches, turns up the white of her eye, and fetches out another. "Another, O thou that art trained up in nothing but to handle pieces! another hath discharged his artillery against thy castle of fortification." Here was passion predominant. Vulcan struck the cobbler's ghost, for he was now no cobbler, so hard upon his breast, that he cried, "Oh!"

His neighbours, taking pity to see what terrible stitches pulled him, rubbed his swelling temples with the juice of patience, which, by virtue of the blackish sweat that stood reeking on his brows and had made them supple, entered very easily into his now parlous-understanding skull: so that he left winching, and sat quiet as a lamb, falling to his old vomit of counsel, which he had cast up before, and swearing, because he was in strong hope this shoe should wring him no more, to seal her a general acquittance. Pricked forward with this gentle spur, her tongue mends his pace, so that in her confession she overtook others, whose boots had been set all night on the cobbler's last, bestowing upon him the posy of their names, the time and place, to the intent it might be put into his next wife's wedding ring. And although she had made all these blots in his tables, yet the bearing of one man false, whom she had not yet discovered, stuck more in her stomach than all the rest.

"Oh valiant cobbler," cries out one of the auditors, "how art thou set upon? how are thou tempted? Happy art thou, that thou art not in thy shop, for instead of cutting out pieces of leather thou wouldst doubtless now pare away thy heart; for I see, and so do all thy neighbours here, thy wife's ghostly fathers, see, that a small matter would now cause thee turn Turk, and to meddle with no more patches. But to live within the compass of thy wit, lift not up thy choler; be not horn mad; thank heaven that the murder is revealed; study thou Balthazar's part in *Jeronimo*, for thou hast more cause, though less reason, than he, to be glad and sad. Well, I see thou are worthy to have patient Griseld to thy wife, for thou bearest more than she. Thou shewst thyself to be a right cobbler, and no souter, that canst thus cleanly clout up the seam-rent sides of thy affection."

With this learned oration the cobbler was tutored, laid his finger on his mouth, and cried *paucos palabros*, he had sealed her pardon and therefore bid her not fear. Hereupon she named the malefactor (I could name him too but that he shall live to give more cobblers' heads the bastinado) and told that on such a night, when he supped there (for a lord may sup with a cobbler, that hath a pretty wench to his wife) when the cloth, O treacherous linen! was taken up, and Menelaus had for a parting blow, given the other his fist, down she lights, this half-sharer, opening the wicket, but not shutting him out of the wicket, but conveys him into a by-room, being the wardrobe of old shoes and leather; from whence—the unicorn cobbler, that dreamt of no such spirits, being over head and ears in sleep, his snorting giving the sign that he was cocksure—softly out steals Sir Paris, and to Helena's teeth proved himself a true Trojan.

This was the cream of her confession, which being skimmed off from the stomach of her conscience, she looked every minute to go thither, where she should be far enough out of the cobbler's reach. But the Fates, laying their heads together, sent a reprieve; the plague, that before meant to pepper her, by little and little left her company. Which news being blown abroad—oh lamentable!—never did the old buskined tragedy begin till now.

For the wives of those husbands, with whom she had played at fast and loose, came with nails sharpened for the nonce like cats, and tongues forkedly cut like the stings of adders, first to scratch out false Cressida's eyes, and then, which was worse, to worry her to death with scolding.

But the matter was took up in a tavern. The case was altered, and brought to a new recokoning (marry, the blood of the Bordeaux grape was first shed about it) but in the end, all anger on every side was poured into a pottle pot and there burnt to death.

Now whether this recantation was true, or whether the steam of infection, fuming up like wine into her brains, made her talk thus idly, I leave it to the jury.

And whilst they are canvassing her case, let us see what doings of the sexton of Stepney hath, whose warehouses being all full of dead commodities, saving one—that one he left open a whole night (yet it was half full too) knowing the thieves this year were too honest to break into such cellars; besides, those that were left there had such plaguy pates, that none durst meddle with them for their lives.

About twelve of the clock at midnight, when spirits walk and not a mouse dare stir, because cats go a caterwauling, Sin, that all day durst not shew his head, came reeling out of an ale-house, in the shape of a drunkard, who no sooner smelt the wind, but he thought the ground under him danced the Canaries. Houses seemed to turn on the toe, and all things went round, insomuch that his legs drew a pair of indentures between his body and the earth, the principal covenant being that he for his part would stand to nothing whatever he saw. Every tree that came in his way did he jostle, and yet challenge it the next day to fight with him. If he had clipped but a quarter so much of the King's silver, as he did of the King's English, his carcass had long ere this been carrion for crows. But he lived by gaming, and had excellent casting, yet seldom won, for he drew reasonable good hands but had very bad feet, that were not able to carry it away. This setter-up of malt-men, being troubled with the staggers, fell into the self-same grave that stood gaping wide open for a breakfast next morning. And imagining, when he was in, that he had stumbled into his own house, and that all his bedfellows (as they were indeed) were in their dead sleep, he, never complaining of cold, nor calling for more sheet, soundly takes a nap till he snorts again.

In the morning the sexton comes plodding along and casting upon his fingers' ends what he hopes the dead pay of that day will come to by that which he received the day before, for sextons now had better doings than either taverns or bawdy-houses. In that silver contemplation, shrugging his shoulders together, he steps ere he be aware on the brims of that pit, into which this worshipper of Bacchus had fallen. Where finding some dead men's bones, and a skull or two, that lay scattered here and there, before he looked into this coffer of worms, those he takes up and flings them in. One of the skulls battered the sconce of the sleeper, whilst the bones played with his nose, whose blows waking his musty worship, the first word that he cast up was an oath, and thinking that cans had flyen about, cried, "Zounds, what do you mean to crack my mazer?"

The sexton, smelling a voice, fear being stronger than his heart, believed verily some of the corses spake to him, upon which, feeling himself in a cold sweat, took his heels, whilst the goblin scrambled up and ran after him. But it appears the sexton had the

lighter foot, for he ran so fast, that he ran out of his wits which being left behind him, he died in a short time after, because he was not able to live without them.

...

You see, therefore, how dreadful a fellow Death is, making fools even of wise men, and cowards of the most valiant. Yea, in such a base slavery hath it bound men's senses that they have no power to look higher than their own roofs, but seem by their Turkish and barbarous actions to believe that there is no felicity after this life, and that, like beasts, their souls shall perish with their bodies. How many upon sight only of a letter sent from London have started back, and durst have laid their salvation upon it, that the plague might be folded in that empty paper, believing verily that the arm of omnipotence could never reach them unless it were with some weapon drawn out of the infected city; insomuch that even the western pugs receiving money there have tied it in a bag at the end of their barge, and so trailed it through the Thames, lest plague-sores sticking upon shillings, they should be nailed up for counterfeits when they were brought home?

More venturous than these blockheads was a certain Justice of Peace; to whose gate, being shut (for you must know that now there is no open house kept) a company of wild fellows rapped most courageously, and would have about with none but the Justice himself, who at last appeared in his likeness above at a window, inquiring why they summoned a parley. It was delivered why. The case was opened to his examining wisdom, and that the evil-doers were only Londoners. At the name of Londoners the Justice, clapping his hand on his breast, as who should say, "Lord have mercy upon us," started back, and, being wise enough to save one, held his nose hard between his forefinger and his thumb, and speaking in that wise (like the fellow that described the villainous motion of Julius Caesar and the Duke of Guise, who—as he gave it out—fought a combat together) pulling the casement close to him, cried out in that quail-pipe voice, that if they were Londoners, away with them to Limbo. Take only their names, they were sore fellows, and he would deal with them when time should serve; meaning, when the plague and they should not be so great together. And so they departed, the very name of Londoners being worse than ten whetstones to sharpen the sword of Justice against them.

I could fill a large volume, and call it the second part of "The Hundred Merry Tales," only with such ridiculous stuff as this of the Justice, but *Dii meliora*, I have better matters to set my wits about. Neither shall you wring out of my pen, though you lay it on the rack, the villainies of that damned keeper who killed all she kept. It had been good to have made her keeper of the common jail, and the holes of both Counters, for a number lie there, that wish to be rid out of this motley world. She would have tickled them, and turned them over the thumbs.

I will likewise let the churchwarden in Thames Street sleep, for he's now past waking, who, being requested by one of his neighbours to suffer his wife or child, that

was then dead, to lie in the churchyard, answered in a mocking sort he kept that lodging for himself and his household; and within three days after was driven to hide his head in a hole himself.

Neither will I speak a word of a poor boy, servant to a chandler, dwelling hereabouts, who being struck to the heart by sickness, was first carried away by water, to be left anywhere. But landing being denied by an army of brown-billmen that kept the shore, back again was he brought, and left in an out-cellar; where lying grovelling and groaning on his face amongst faggots, but not one of them set on fire to comfort him, there continued all night and died miserably for want of succour.

Nor of another poor wretch in the parish of St. Mary Overy's, who being in the morning thrown, as the fashion is, into a grave upon a heap of carcases, that stayed for their complement, was found in the afternoon, gasping and gaping for life.

But by these tricks imagining that many a thousand have been turned wrongfully off the ladder of life, and praying that Derrick and his executors may live to do those a good turn, that have done so to others; *Hic finis Priami*, here's an end of an old song.

Et iam tempus equum fumantia solvere colla.

FINIS

from THE GULL'S HORN-BOOK:

OR

Fashions to please all sorts of Gulls

Proemium

I sing (like the cuckoo in June) to be laught at: if therefore I make a scurvy noise, and that my tunes sound unmusically (the Ditty being altogether lame in respect of the bad feet, and unhandsome in regard of the worm-eaten fashion) you that have authority under the broad seal of moldy custom, to be called the *gentle Audience*, set your goodly great hands to my pardon: or else, because I scorn to be upbraided that I profess to instruct others in an Art, whereof I myself am ignorant, Do your worst; choose whether you will let my notes have you by the ears, or no: hiss or give plaudits, I care not a nut-shell which of either: you can neither shake our *Comic Theater* with your stinking breath of hisses, nor raise it with the thunder-claps of your hands: up it goes, *in dispetto del fato*. The motley is bought, and a coat with four elbows (for any one that will wear it) is put in making, in defiance of the seven wise masters: for I have smelt out of the musty sheets of an old Almanac, that (at one time or other) even he that lets upon the neatest and sprucest leather, even he that talks all *Adage* and *Apothegme*, even he that will not have a wrinkle in his new Satin suit, though his mind be uglier than his face, and his face so illfavorouredly made, that he looks at all times as if a tooth-drawer were fumbling about his gums with a thousand lame *Heteroclitites* more, that cozen the world with a guilt spur and a ruffled boot; will be all glad to fit themselves in *Will Sommer* his wardrobe, and be driven (like a Flemish Hoy in foul weather) to slip into our School, and take out a lesson. Tush, *Caelum petimus stultitia*, all that are chosen Constables for their wit go not to heaven.

A fig therefore for the new-found College of *Critics*. You Courtiers, that do nothing but sing the *gamuth-a-re* of complemental courtesy, and at the rustical behaviour of our Country Muse, will screw forth worse faces than those which God and the Painter has bestowed upon you, I defy your pefum'd scorn: and vow to poison your Musk cats, if their civet excrement do but once play with my nose. You *ordinary Gulls*, that through a poor and silly ambition to be thought you inherit the revenues of extraordinary wit, will spend your shallow censure upon the most elaborate Poem so lavishly, that all the painted table-men about you, take you to be heirs apparent to rich *Midas*, that had more skill in *alchemy* than *Kelly* with the Philosopher's stone; (for all that he could lay his fingers on, turned into beaten gold) dry Tobacco with my leaves (you good dry brained *polipragmonists*) till your pipe offices smoke with your pitifully stinking girds shot out against me. I conjure you (as you come of that right *goose-caps*) stain not your house; but when at a new play you take up the twelve-penny room next the stage; (because the Lords and you may seem to be hale fellow well-met) there draw forth this book, read aloud, laugh aloud, and play the *Antics*, that all the garlic mouth'd stinkards may cry out, *Away with the fool*. As for thee, *Zoylus*, go hang thy self: and for thee *Momus*, chew

nothing but hemlock, and spit nothing but the syrup of *Aloes* upon my papers, till thy very rotten lungs come forth for anger. I am Snake-proof: and, though, with *Hannibal*, you bring whole hogs-heads of vinegar-railings, it is impossible for you to quench or come over my *Alpine-resolution*: I will fall boldly and desperately amongst the shore of the Ile of *Gulls*; and in defiance of those terrible blockhouses, their loggerheads, make a true discovery of their wild (yet habitable) Country.

Sound an Alarum therefore (O thou my courageous Muse) and, like a Dutch crier, make proclamation with thy Drum: the effect of thine *O-yes* being, That if any man, woman or child, be he Lord, be he Lown, be he Courtier, be he Carter of the Inns of Court, or Inns of City, that, hating from the bottom of his heart, all good manners and generous education, is really in love, or rather dotes on that excellent country lady, *Innocent Simplicity*, being the first, fairest, and chiefest Chamber-maid that our great *grandame Eve* entertained into service: Or if any person aforesaid, longing to make a voyage in the Ship of Fools, would venture all the wit that his mother left him, to live in the country of *Gulls*, *cockneys*, and *coxcombs*; to the intent that, haunting *theaters*, he may sit there, like a popinjay, only to learn play-speeches, which afterward may furnish the necessity of his bare knowledge, to maintain table talk, or else, heating *taverns*, desires to take the *Bacchanalian* degrees, and to write himself *in arte bibendi magister*; that at ordinaries would sit like Bias, and in the streets walk like a braggart, that on foot longs to go like a French Lacque, and on horseback rides like an English Tailor, or that from seven years and upward, till his dying day, has a month's mind to have the *Gull's Hornbook* by heart; by which in time he may be promoted to serve any Lord in *Europe*, as his crafty fool, or his bawdy Jester, yea and to be so dear to his Lordship, as for the excellency of his fooling, to be admitted both to ride in Coach with him, and to lie at his very feet in a truckle-bed. Let all such (and I hope the world has not left her old fashions, but there are ten thousand such) repair hither. Never knock (you that strive to be Ninny-hammer), but with your feet spurn open the door, and enter into our School: you shall not need to buy books, no, scorn to distinguish a B from a battle door; only look that your ears be long enough to reach our *Rudiments*, and you are made forever. It is by heart that I would have you con my lessons, and therefore be sure to have most devouring stomachs. Nor be you terrified with an opinion, that our *rules* be hard and indigestible, or that you shall never be good *Graduates* in these rare sciences of *Barbarism* and Idiotism. Oh, fie, upon any man that carries that ungodly mind! Tush, tush; *Tarleton*, *Kemp*, nor *Singer*, nor all the litter of Fools that now come drawling behind them, never played the clowns more naturally than the arrantest Sot of you all shall if he will but boil my Instructions in his brain-pan.

And lest I myself, like some *pedantical Vicar* stammering out a most false and cracked latin oration to master Mayor of the town and his brethren, should cough and hem in my deliveries; by which means you (my Auditors) should be in danger to depart more like woodcocks than when you came to me: O thou venerable father of ancient (and therefore hoary) customs, *Sylvanus*, I invoke thy assistance; thou that first taughtest Carters to wear hob-nails, and Lobs to play Christmas gambols, and to show the most beastly horse-tricks: O do thou, or (if thou art not at leisure) let thy Mountebank, goat-

footed *Fauni*, inspire me with the knowledge of all those silly and ridiculous fashions, which the old dunstical world wore even out at elbows; draw for me the pictures of the most simple fellows then living, that by their patterns I may paint the like. Awake thou noblest drunkard *Bacchus*, thou must likewise stand to me (if at least thou canst for reeling), teach me (you sovereign skinker) how to take the *Germanies upsy freeze*, the Danish *Rowsa*, the Switzer's stoup of *Rhenish*, the *Italian's Parmizant*, the Englishman's healths, his hoops, cans, halfcans, Gloves, Frolics, and flapdragons, together with the most notorious qualities of the truest tospots, as when to cast, when to quarrel, when to fight, and where to sleep: hide not a drop of thy moist mystery from me (thou plumpest swill-bowl), but (like an honest red-nosed wine-bibber) lay open all thy secrets, and yet mystical *Hieroglyphic* of *Rashers* a' th' coals, *Modicums* and *shoeing-horns*, and why they were invented, for what occupations, and when to be used. Thirdly (because I will have more than two strings to my bow) *Comus*, thou Clerk of *Gluttony's* kitchen, do thou also bid me profess, and let me not rise from the table, till I am perfect in all the general rules of *Epicures* and *Cormorants*. Fatten thou my brains, that I may feed others, and teach them both how to squat down to their meat, and how to munch so like Loobies, that the wisest *Solon* in the world, shall not be able to take them for any other. If there be any strength in thee, thou beggarly Monarch of *Indians*, and setter-up of rotten-lung'd chimneysweepers (*Tobacco*), I beg it at thy smoky hands: make me thine adopted heir, that, inheriting the virtues of thy whiffs, I may distribute them amongst all nations, and make the phantastic *Englishmen* (above the rest) more cunning in the distinction of thy *Rowle Trinidado*, *Leaf*, and *Pudding*, than the whitest tooth'd Blackamoor in all *Asia*. After thy pipe, shall ten thousands be taught to dance, if thou wilt but discover to me the sweetness of thy snuffs, with the manner of spawling, slavering, spitting and driveling in all places, and before all persons. Oh what songs will I charm out, in praise of those valiantly-strong-stinking breaths, which are easily purchased at thy hands, if I can but get thee to travel through my nose. All the fohs in the fairest Lady's mouth, that ever kissed Lord, shall not fright me from thy brown presence: for thou art humble, and from the Courts of Princes hast vouchsafed to be acquainted with penny galleries, and (like a good-fellow) to be drunk for company, with Water-men, Carmen, and Colliers; whereas before, and so still, Knights and wise Gentlemen were, & are thy companions. Last of all, thou Lady of Clowns and Carters, Schoolmistress of fools and wiseacres, thou homely (but harmless) *Rusticity*, Oh breathe thy dull and dunstical spirit into our gander's quill; crown me thy Poet, not with a garland of Bays (Oh no! the number of those that steal *lawret* is too monstrous already) but swaddle thou my brows with those unhandsome boughs, which (like *Autumn's* rotten hair), hang dangling over thy dusty eye-lids. Help me (thou midwife of unmannerliness) to be delivered of this *Embryon* that lies tumbling in my brain: direct me in this hard and dangerous voyage, that being safely arrived on the desired shore, I may build up Altars to thy *Unmatcheable Rudeness*; the excellency whereof I know will be so great, that *Grout-nowls* and *Moams* will in swarms fly buzzing about thee. So *Herculean* a labour is this, that I undertake, that I am enforced to ball out for all your succours, to the intent I may aptly furnish this feast of *Fools*, unto which I solemnly invite all the world; for at it shall sit not only those whom *Fortune*

favours, but even those whose wits are naturally their own. Yet because your artificial fools bear away the bell, all our best workmanship (at this time) shall be spent to fashion such a Creature.

Chapter V How a young Gallant should behave himself in an Ordinary

First, having diligently enquired out an Ordinary of the largest reckoning, whither most of your Courtly Gallants do resort, let it be your use to repair thither some half hour after eleven; for then you shall find most of your fashionmongers planted in the room waiting for meat. Ride thither upon your galloway-nag, or your Spanish Jennet, a swift ambling pace, in your hose, and doublet (gilt rapier and poniard bestowed in their places), and your French Lackey carrying your cloak, and running before you; or rather in a coach, for that will both hide you from the basilisk-eyes of your creditors, and outrun a whole kennel of bitter-mouthed Sergeants.

Being arrived in the room, salute not any but those of your acquaintance: walk up and down by the rest as scornfully and as carelessly as a Gentleman-Usher: Select some friend (having first thrown off your cloak) to walk up and down the room with you, let him be suited if you can, worse by far than your self, he will be a foil to you: and this will be a means to publish your clothes better than Paul's, a Tennis-court, or a Playhouse: discourse as loud as you can, no matter to what purpose if you but make a noise, and laugh in fashion, and have a good sour face to promise quarreling, you shall be much observed.

If you be a soldier, talk how often you have been in action: as the *Portingale* voyage, *Cales* voyage, the *Iland* voyage, besides some eight or nine employments in Ireland, and the low Countries: then you may discourse how honorably your *Grave* used you; observe that you call your *Grave Maurice*, your *Grave*: How often you have drunk with Count such a one, and such a Count, on your knees to your *Graves* health: and let it be your virtue to give place neither to *S. Kynock*, nor to any *Dutchman* whatsoever in the seventeen *provinces*, for that Soldier's complement of drinking. And if you perceive that the untravelled company about you take this down well, ply them with more such stuff, as how you have interpreted between the French King and a great Lord of Barbary, when they have been drinking healths together, and that will be an excellent occasion to publish your languages, if you have them: if not, get some fragments of French, or small parcels of Italian, to fling about the table: but beware how you speak any Latin there: your Ordinary most commonly hath no more to do with Latin than a desparate town of Garison hath.

If you be a Courtier, discourse of the obtaining of Suits: of your mistress's favours, etc. Make inquiry, if any gentleman at board have any suit, to get which he would use good means of a great man's Interest with the King: and withall (if you have not so much grace left in you as to blush) in mighty credit, though in your own conscience you know, and are guilty to your self, that you dare not (but only upon the privileges of handsome clothes) presume to peep into the presence. Demand if there be any Gentleman (whom any there is acquainted with) that is troubled with two offices; or any Vicar with two Church-livings; which will politicly insinuate, that your inquiry after

them is because you have good means to obtain them; yea and rather than your tongue should not be heard in the room, but that you should sit (like an Ass) with your finger in your mouth, and speak nothing: discourse how often this Lady hath sent her Coach for you; and how often you have sweat in the Tennis-court with that great Lord: for indeed the sweating together in *France* (I mean the society of Tennis) is a great argument of most dear affection, even between noblemen and Peasants.

If you be a Poet, and come into the Ordinary (though it can be no great glory to be an ordinary Poet) order your self thus. Observe no man, doff not cap to that Gentleman today at dinner, to whom, not two nights since, you were beholden for a supper; but, after a turn or two in the room, take occasion (pulling out your gloves) to have some *Epigram*, or *Satire*, or *Sonnet* fastened to one of them, that may (as it were vomitingly to you) offer itself to the Gentlemen: they will presently desire it: but, without much conjuration from them, and a pretty kind of counterfeit loathness in your self, do not read it; and though it be none of your own, swear you made it. Mary, if you chance to get into your hands any witty thing of another man's, that is somewhat better, I would council you then, if demand be made who composed it, you may say: faith, a learned Gentleman, a very worthy friend. And this seeming to lay it on another man will be counted either modesty in you, or a sign that you are not ambitious of praise, or else that you dare not take it upon you, for fear of the sharpness it carries with it. Besides, it will add much to your fame to let your tongue walk faster than your teeth, though you be never so hungry, and, rather than you should sit like a dumb Coxcomb, to repeat by heart either some verses of your own, or of any other man's, stretching even very good lines upon the rack of the censure: though it be against all law, honesty, or conscience, it may chance save you the price of your Ordinary, and beget you other *Supplements*. Mary, I would further entreat our Poet to be in league with the Mistress of the Ordinary, because from her (upon condition that he will but rhyme knights and young gentlemen to her house and maintain the table in good fooling) he may easily make up his mouth at her cost, *Gratis*.

Thus much for particular men. But in general let all that are in *Ordinary*-pay, march after the sound of these directions. Before the meat come smoking to the board, our Gallant must draw out his Tobacco-box, the ladle for the cold snuff into the nostril, the tongs and the prining-Iron: All which artillery may be of gold or silver (if he can reach to the price of it), it will be a reasonable useful pawn at all times, when the current of his money falls out to run low. And here you must observe to know in what state Tobacco is in town, better than the Merchants, and to discourse of the Apothecaries where it is to be sold, and to be able to speak of their wines, as readily as the Apothecary himself reading the barbarous hand of a Doctor: then let him show his several tricks in taking it, As the *Whiff*, the *Ring*, etc. For these are complements that gain Gentlemen no mean respect and for which indeed they are more worthily noted, I ensure you, than for any skill that they have in learning.

When you are set down to dinner, you must eat as impudently as can be (for that's most Gentlemanlike) when your Knight is upon his stewed mutton, be presently, though you be but a captain, in the bosom of your goose: and when your Justice of peace is

knuckle-deep in goose, you may, without disparagement to your blood, though you have a Lady to your mother, fall very manfully to your woodcocks.

You may rise in dinner-time to ask for a close-stool, protesting to all the gentlemen that it costs you a hundred pounds a year in physic, besides the Annual pension which your wife allows her Doctor: and (if you please) you may (as your great French Lord doth) invite some special friend of yours, from the table, to hold discourse with you as you sit in that withdrawing chamber: from whence being returned again to the board, you shall sharpen the wits of all the eating Gallants about you, and do them great pleasure, to ask what Pamphlets or poems a man might think fittest to wipe his tail with (mary, this talk will be somewhat foul if you carry not a strong perfume with you) and, in propounding this question, you may abuse the works of any man; deprave his writings that you cannot equal, and purchase to your self in time the terrible name of a severe *Critic*; nay, and be one of the College, if you'll be liberal enough: and (when your turn comes) pay for their suppers.

After dinner, every man as his business leads him: some to dice, some to drabs, some to plays, some to take up friends in the Court, some to take up money in the City, some to lend testers in Paul's, others to borrow crowns upon the Exchange: and thus, as the people is said to be a beast of many heads (yet all those heads like *Hydra's*) ever growing, as various in their horns as wondrous in their budding and branching, so, in an Ordinary, you shall find the variety of a whole kingdom in a few Apes of the kingdom.

You must not swear in your dicing: for that Argues a violent impatience to depart from your money, and in time will betray a man's need. Take heed of it. No! whether you be at *Primer*, or *Hazard*, you shall sit as patiently (though you lose a whole half-year's exhibition) as a disarmed Gentleman does when he's in the unmerciful fingers of Sergeants. Mary, I will allow you to sweat privately, and tear six or seven score pair of cards, be the damnation of some dozen or twenty bail of dice, and foreswear play a thousand times in an hour, but not swear. Dice yourself into your shirt: and, if you have a beard that your friend will lend but an angel upon, shave it off, and pawn that, rather than to go home blind to your lodging. Further, it is to be remembered, He that is a great Gamester may be trusted for a quarter's board at all times, and apparel provided, if need be.

At your twelvepenny Ordinary, you may give any Justice of peace, or young Knight (if he sit but one degree towards the Equinoctial of the Saltseller) leave to pay for the wine: and he shall not refuse it, though it be a week before the receiving of his quarter's rent, which is a time albeit of good hope, yet of present necessity.

There is another Ordinary, to which your London Usurer, your stale Bachelor, and your thrifty Attorney do resort: the price three pence: the rooms as full of company as a Jail, and indeed, divided into several wards, like the beds of an Hospital. The complement between these is not much, their words few: for the belly hath no ears: every man's eye here is upon the other man's trencher, to note whether his fellow lurch him, or no: if they change to discourse, it is of nothing but of *Statutes, Bonds, Recognizances, Fines, Recoveries, Audits, Rents, Subsidies, Sureties, Inclosures, Liveries, Indictments, Outlaries, Feoffments, Judgments, Commissions, Bankrupts, Amercements*, and of such horrible matter, that when a Lieutenant dines with his punk in

the next room, he thinks verily the men are conjuring. I can find nothing at this Ordinary worth the sitting down for: therefore the cloth shall be taken away, and those that are thought good enough to be guests here, shall be too base to be waiters at your Grand Ordinary; at which your Gallant tastes these commodities. He shall fare well, enjoy good company, receive all the news ere the post can deliver his packet, be perfect where the best bawdy-houses stand, proclaim his good clothes, know this man to drink well, that to feed grossly, the other to swagger roughly: he shall, if he be minded to travel, put out money upon his return, and have hands enough to receive it upon any terms of repayment: And no question, if he be poor, he shall now and then light upon some *Gull* or other, whom he may skelder (after the gentile fashion) of money: By this time the parings of Fruit and Cheese are in the voider, Cards and dice lie stinking in the fire, the guests are all up, the gilt rapiers are ready to be hang'd, the French Lackquey, and Irish Footboy, shrugging at the doors, with their master's hobby-horses, to ride to the new play: that's the *Rendezvous*: thither they are gallop't in post. Let us take a pair of Oars, and now lustily after them.

Chapter VI How a Gallant Should behave himself in a Play-house.

The theater is your Poets Royal Exchange, upon which their Muses (that are now turned to Merchants) meeting, barter away that light commodity of words for a lighter ware than words, *Plaudits*, and the *breath* of the great *Beast*; which (like the threatenings of two Cowards) vanish all into air. *Players* and their *Factors*, who put away the stuff, and make the best of it they possibly can (as indeed 'tis their parts so to do), your Gallant, your Courtier, and your Captain, had wont to be the soundest paymasters; and I think are still the surest chapmen: and these, by means that their heads are well stocked, deal upon this comical freight by the gross: when your *Groundling*, and *gallery-Commoner* buys his sport by the penny, and, like a *Haggler*, is glad to utter it again by retailing.

Sitthence then the place is so free in entertainment, allowing a stool as well to the Famer's son as to your Templer: that your Stinkard has the self-same liberty to be there in his Tobacco-Fumes, which your sweet Courtier hath: and that your Car-man and Tinker claim as strong a voice in their sufferage, and sit to give judgment on the play's life and death, as well as the proudest *Momus* among the tribes of *Critic*: It is fit that he, whom the most tailors' bills do make room for, when he comes, should not be basely (like a viol) cas'd up in a corner.

Whether therefore the gatherers of the public or private Play-house stand to receive the afternoon's rent, let our Gallant (having paid it) presently advance himself up to the Throne of the Stage. I mean not into the Lord's room (which is now but the Stage's Suburbs): No, those boxes, by the iniquity of custom, conspiracy of waiting-women and Gentlemen-Ushers, that there sweat together, and the covetousness of Sharers, are contemptibly thrust into the rear, and much new Satin is there damned, by being smothered to death in darkness. But on the very Rushes where the Comedy is to daunce, yea, and under the state of *Cambises* himself must our feathered *Estridge*, like a piece of Ordnance, be planted, valiantly (because impudently) beating down the mews and hisses of the opposed rascality.

For do but cast up a reckoning, what large comings-in are purs'd up by sitting on the Stage. First a conspicuous *Eminence* is gotten; by which means, the best and most essential parts of a Gallant (good clothes, a proportionable leg, white hand, the Persian lock, and a tolerable beard) are perfectly revealed.

By sitting on the stage, you have a sign'd patent to engross the whole commodity of Censure; may lawfully presume to be a Girder; and stand at the helm to steer the passage of *scenes*; yet no man shall once offer to hinder you from obtaining the title of an insolent, over-weening Coxcomb.

By sitting on the stage, you may (without travelling for it) at the very next door ask whose play it is: and by that *Quest of Inquiry*, the law warrants you to avoid much mistaking: if you know not the author, you may rail against him: and peradventure so behave yourself, that you may enforce the Author to know you.

By sitting on the stage, if you be a Knight, you may happily get you a Mistress: if a mere *Fleet-street* Gentleman, a wife: but assure yourself, by continual residence, you are the first and principal man in election to begin the number of *We three*.

By spreading your body on the stage, and by being a Justice in examining of plays, you shall put yourself into such true *scenical* authority, that some Poet shall not dare to present his Muse rudely upon your eyes, without having first unmask'd her, rifled her, and discovered all her bare and most mystical parts before you at a tavern, when you most knightly shall, for his pains, pay for both their suppers.

By sitting on the stage, you may (with small cost) purchase the dear acquaintance of the boys: have a good stool for sixpence: at any time know what particular part any of the infants present: get your match lighted, examine the play-suit's lace, and perhaps win wagers upon laying 'tis copper, &c. And to conclude, whether you be a fool or a Justice of peace, a Cuckold, or a Captain, A Lord-Mayor's son, or a dawcock, a knave, or an under-Sherriff; of what stamp soever you be, current, or counterfeit, the Stage, like time, will bring you to most perfect light and lay you open: neither are you to be hunted from thence, though the Scarecrows in the yard hoot at you, hiss at you, spit at you, yea, throw dirt even in your teeth: 'tis most Gentlemanlike patience to endure all this, and to laugh at the silly Animals: but if the *Rabble*, with a full throat, cry, away with the fool, you were worse than a madman to tarry by it: for the Gentleman and the fool should never sit on the Stage together.

Mary, let this observation go hand in hand with the rest: or rather, like a country-serving-man, some five yards before them. Present not yourself on the Stage (especially at a new play) until the quaking prologue hath (by rubbing) got color into his cheeks, and is ready to give the trumpets their Cue, that he's upon point to enter: for then it is time, as though you were one of the *properties*, or that you drop'd out of the *Hangings*, to creep from behind the Arras, with your *Tripes* or three-footed stool in one hand, and a teston mounted between a forefinger and a thumb in the other: for if you should bestow your person upon the vulgar, when the belly of the house is but half full, your apparel is quite eaten up, the fashion lost, and the proportion in your body in more danger to be devoured than if it were served up in the Country amongst the Poultry: avoid that as you would the Bastome. It shall crown you with rich commendation to laugh aloud in the midst of the most serious and saddest scene of the terriblest Tragedy: and to let that clapper (your

tongue) be tossed so high, that all the house may ring of it: your Lords use it: your Knights are Apes to the Lords, and do so too: your Inn-a-court-man is Zany to the Knights, and (mary very scurvily) comes likewise limping after it: be thou a beagle to them all, and never lin snuffing, till you have scented them: for by talking and laughing (like a Plough-man in a Morris) you heap *Pelion* upon *Ossa*, glory upon glory: As first, all the eyes in the galleries will leave walking after the Players, and only follow you: the simplest dolt in the house snatches up your name, and when he meets you in the streets, or that you fall into his hands in the middle of a Watch, his word shall be taken for you: he'll cry *He's such a gallant*, and you pass. Secondly, you publish your temperance to the world, in that you seem not to resort thither to taste vain pleasures with a hungry appetite: but only as a Gentleman to spend a foolish hour or two, because you can do nothing else: Thirdly, you mightily disrelish the Audience, and disgrace the Author: marry, you take up (though it be at the worst hand) a strong opinion of your own judgment, and enforce the Poet to take pity of your weakness, and, by some dedicated sonnet, to bring you into a better paradise, only to stop your mouth.

If you can (either for love or money) provide yourself a lodging by the water-side: for above the convenience it brings to shun Shoulder-clapping and to ship away your Cockatrice betimes in the morning, it adds a kind of state unto you, to be carried from thence to the stairs of your Playhouse: hate a Sculler (remember that) worse than to be acquainted with one o' th' Scullery. No, your Oars are your only Sea-crabs, board them, and take heed you never go twice together in one pair: often shifting is a great credit to Gentlemen; and that dividing of your fare will make the poor watersnakes be ready to pull you in pieces to enjoy your custom: No matter whether upon landing, you have money or no: you may swim in twenty of their boats over the river upon *Ticket*: mary, when silver comes in, remember to pay treble their fare, and it will make your Flounder-catchers to send more thanks after you, when you do not draw, than when you do; for they know, It will be their own another day.

Before the Play begins, fall to cards: you may win or lose (as *Fencers* do in a prize) and beat one another in confederacy, yet share the money when you meet at supper: notwithstanding, to gull the *Ragga-muffins* that stand aloof gaping at you, throw the cards (having first torn four or five of them) round about the Stage, just upon the third sound, as though you had lost: it skills not if the four knaves lie on their backs, and outface the Audience; there's none such fools as dare take exceptions at them, because, ere the play go off, better knaves than they will fall into the company.

Now sir, if the writer be a fellow that hath either epigrammed you, or hath had a flirt at your mistress, or hath brought either your feather, or your red beard, or your little legs, &c. on the stage, you shall disgrace him worse than by tossing him in a blanket, or giving him the bastinado in a Tavern, if, in the middle of his play (be it Pastoral or Comedy, Moral or Tragedy), you rise with a screw'd and discontented face from your stool to be gone: no matter whether the Scenes be good or no; the better they are the worse do you distaste them: and, being on your feet, sneak not away like a coward, but salute all your gentle acquaintance, that are spread either on the rushes, or on stools about you, and draw what troop you can from the stage after you: the *Mimics* are beholden to

you, for allowing them elbow room: their Poet cries, perhaps, a pox go with you, but care not for that, there's no music without frets.

Mary, if either the company, or the indisposition of the weather bind you to sit it out, my council is then that you turn plain Ape, take up a rush, and tickle the earnest ears of your fellow gallants, to make other fools fall a laughing: mew at passionate speeches, blare at merry, find fault with the music, whew at the children's Action, whistle at the songs: and above all, curse the sharers, that whereas the same day you have bestowed forty shillings on an embroidered Felt and Feather (scotch-fashion) for your mistress in the Court, or your punk in the city, within two hours after, you encounter with the very same block on the stage, when the haberdasher swore to you the impression was extant but that morning.

To conclude, hoard up the finest play-scrapes you can get, upon which your lean wit may most savourly feed, for want of other stuff, when the *Arcadian* and *Euphuiz'd* gentlewoman have their tongues sharpened to set upon you: that quality (next to your shittlecock) is the only furniture to a Courtier that's but a new beginner, and is but in his A B C of complement. The next places that are fill'd, after the Playhouses be emptied, are (or ought to be) Taverns: into a Tavern then let us next march, where the brains of one Hogshead must be beaten out to make up another.