

THE  
STAGE-PRETEENDERS:

OR, THE  
*ACTOR* turn'd *POET*.

A  
F A R C E.

As it is acted at both THEATRES  
with universal Applause.

To which is annex'd,

A SESSIONS of the POETS on the Death  
of Mr. ROWE.

---

Written by Sir HARRY WILDAIR.

---

*Deprav'd these Times when senseless Actors write,  
Procure Applauses and a crowded Night;  
Whilst humble Merit in Disgrace, unknown,  
Is still abandon'd by th' ungrateful Town:  
The Muse's Friend obscur'd this tasteless Age,  
When Wit's Buffoonry, and low Farce the Stage;  
With Vaniey, Conceit, and Nonsense fir'd,  
He writes the best as is the least inspir'd.*

---

L O N D O N :

Printed for T. BICKERTON, at the Crown in  
Pater-noster Row. 1720.



VERSES design'd either for the  
PROLOGUE OR EPILOGUE, at  
the Reader's Election.

**I**F any Persons are desirous to be agree-  
ably entertain'd with *inimitable Acting*,  
and *incomparable Poetry*, let them re-  
pair to the Theatre in *L——nc——n's I——n*  
*I——ds* any Evening, and they'll see,

*Such Scenes display'd as ne'er in ancient Time,  
The British Theatre could match in Rhime,  
Or Strains Heroick; which a Genius show,  
Our Poets now beyond a SHAKESPEAR know;  
That Folly most delights an Audience prone  
T'admire those Fools as are in publick shewn;  
And 'tis to such our MUSE Obedience pays,  
Nor doubts to merit their superior Praise.*



# P E R S O N S.

**C** *Apricio*, a Fop, Wit, Poet, and Player.

*Brainless*, a pretended Wit, Actor, and Fatherer of Poetry.

*Ludovicus*, an imperious Actor and Poet.

*Grimaldo*, a Poetaster and Player.

*Spill-wit*, a Stage Buffoon, and Mock-Prologue Writer.

*Sir Andrew Artless*, a Pretender to Dramatic Poetry.

*Fiddles, Strums, Bagpipe Players, Scaramouches, Owls, Tumblers, Vaulters, Orange Wenches, &c.*




THE  
STAGE-PRETENDERS:  
OR, THE  
Actor turn'd Poet.



SCENE *Lincoln's Inn Theatre.*

*Enter Capricio and Brainless.*

*Cap.*  Y dear Brother *Brainless*, how dost do?  
*Brain.* As well as you'll let me, Sir, and the good natur'd Town, who are so extravagant-ly fond of my excellent Performances,

ces, both as a Poet and an Actor, that I am necessitated to write whether I will or no, and to repeat the acting ny *W---n's a R---dle* almost every Week, or I am so harras'd by the busy Impertinents, that I am hardly my self.

*Cap.* This is to me a Riddle indeed --- I suppose your meaning is, that you're oblig'd to write whether you can or no; and to Ape me in your Occupation, to make your Farces go down.

*Brain.* I'll have ye to know, Sir, I'm no Ape, but as much a Gentleman as any of our illustrious Brotherhood.

*Cap.* Ha, ha, a Gentleman Baboon ---

*Brain.* Dem ye, Sir, I am a Man of Honour, and I'm never concern'd in the Part of a Person of Quality, but the Ladies tell me I do it as natural as if I were a P---r of their own.

*Cap.*

*Cap.* That's when you hang by the Waste, Brother, at the Window in your Comedy --- and then you really look like your self.

*Brain.* What, you vainly imagine, because I hang by the middle as a Monkey, therefore I am one of consequence.

*Cap.* I should perhaps wrong my Judgment, did I compare Mr. *Brainless* to a Monkey ---- Ye know Monkeys have a great deal of Cunning and Design; are excellent Politicians; and only want a Capacity of Speaking to pronounce the Race of Mankind Fools and Ideots.

*Brain.* Nay, I don't know which are of the elder Family, they or we: I must own we bear so great a Resemblance of each other, that one wou'd swear they either begot us, or we them.

*Cap.* It may be the Original of your Family perhaps.

B

*Brain.*

*Brain.* Pox take ye; you are so full of your Applications and Witicisms, that there's no speaking t'ye----This is the *Fop's Fortune*.

*Cap.* Not the *Match in Newgate*, Brother, I dare say.

*Brain.* No worse----*The Fop's Fortune* is to go without his Mistress, but my Champion gains his point even in *Newgate*.

*Cap.* And so I suppose as Matrimony and Hanging go by Destiny, you prudently chose *Newgate* as the fittest spot of Ground to accomplish your Scene.

*Brain.* Truly I did so, and e'en risk'd Execution----And if *Fools* must be *in Fashion*, my Hero makes a very agreeable *Careless Husband*.

*Cap.* Very pretty----so you pun upon the Titles to my Plays.

*Brain.* Your Plays!----You've not the Assurance to tell me they are yours, I know better.

*Cap.*

*Cap.* Sir, they are the Offspring of my own Brain, without any Art or Assistance from the *C--ler of P---ston*, or the least *Slip* in the Composure.

*Brain.* Your Plays are indeed written without Art. [*Aside.*] This is your *Last Stake*, tho' you had the Courage of a *Xerxes*--- I must tell ye, Brother, you are by no means the Author of any part of the celebrated Pieces which bear your Name--- but I cannot deny that you had some hand in the *D--ble G---t*, *W---n's Wit*, *P---la and Iz--ra*, *The N---nj---*, and some other Pieces, where whole Scenes are stol'n, and the rest mere Farce and Nonsense.

*Cap.* You audacious Younker, do you presume to reproach me with Nonsense? I can with great Truth and Assurance tell ye, there's no Person in this Age has equal'd my Dramatick Performances, for Sense, Learning, Raillery, Wit, Repartee, and what not, in my Comedies; and then in

Tragedy, I'm like a high Hill in a barren Country, admir'd and unequal'd.

*Brain.* In your own Opinion.

*Cap.* And in others too ---- I don't do as you do, Brother, father other Peoples Plays, while they are living and can speak ---- Do you know one Mr. S---ge?

*Brain.* Not I, upon my honest Word ---- I never saw him in my Life.

*Cap.* Unless it was when you had *W---n's a R---dle* from him in Manuscript --- Your Memory is treacherous, Brother.

*Brain.* I affirm t'ye I don't know any such Person ---- If he has any Demands upon me, my Sword will let him know ---

*Cap.* What ---- that its Wearer is a Coward.

*Brain.* 'Oons, no, that I am a Man of Valour ---- and have Assurance enough to draw it even in a bad Cause. If I have been in some measure oblig'd  
to

to him for two or three of the best Acts, I can bully him out of it, and like a Statesman, who robs the Projector of his Scheme, with a lordly Air assume the whole Reputation to my self.

*Cap.* You have muster'd up a severe *Simile*.

*Brain.* It is just, Sir, and I have as good a Right to it as any superior *Don Quixote* in the State in *Christendom*.

*Cap.* I thought it would end in a *Don Quixote*.

*Brain.* Two, you mean --- and you the Chief---

*Cap.* I never wrote any thing Romantick in my Life, nor stole any Lines from an Author, but what were so obvious to the Reader, that it was discoverable with half an Eye by a Person of the least Sense and Penetration.

*Brain.* You've now spoke the Truth, for the Sense you have stoll'n is so  
prefe-

preferable to the Product of your own Genius, that it shines like sparkling Diamonds added to the Dress of a Cook-Wench, or *Billingsgate* --- Your own genuine Works, Brother, are very well, but they want something of *English*, Grammar, Wit, &c.

*Cap.* Tho' I had all these Defects, I can compile, Sir, which is more than you can do; and it is not only lawful but honourable to compile from other Mens Labours.

*Brain.* As lawful and honourable as it is to Rob on the Highway; nay worse; for in taking of the Purse you only deprive the Owner of his Pelf; but in the other case, you rob an Author of his Soul, his Thoughts, Genius, Life, and Spirit.

*Cap.* Why, I give the whole World the liberty of borrowing from me.

*Brain.* I believe so --- but do you conceitedly imagine any one will be so mad as to take it? If they do,  
they'll

they'll be like a Man putting a Bucket into an empty Well, draw up nothing but Filth and Mire.

*Cap.* You mean a Well full of clear transparent Water, where the Borrower would find such an inexhaustible Treasure of Wit and Raillery, that it would sink the Bucket with its prodigious Weight.

*Brain.* And so be lost---

*Cap.* Yes, inevitably lost, to me--

*Brain.* I thought so. Ha, ha, ha. And whoever finds any of your Wit, may keep it as a certain *Nostrum* for all Diseases. I dare say the Possessor of it might get barren Women with Child, and restore the greatest Age to Vigour of Youth.

*Cap.* While yours will only arrive to a Quack Medicine at best.

*Brain.* Brother Quack, for so you must give me leave to stile my dear *Capriccio* in Poetry, it is to no purpose for us to abuse one another; let us pre-  
pare

pare to enter on the Stage and expose the Town.

*Cap.* Agreed --- Pray avoid this Impertinence for the future; it illy becomes a younger Brother of the Stage.

*Enter Ludovicus.*

*Lud.* Ha! the *Rival Fools*: How they strut like two emulating Cocks in their Approaches to their feather'd Mistrefs. [*Aside.*] But I must speak to 'em --- My renowned Brothers your most obedient.

*Cap.* My dearest Brother, I'm glad to see you.

*Brain.* And so am I without Reserve --- This worthy, handsome, witty, ingenious Gentleman is the Prop of my Stage, Brother C---

*Lud.* Not so, Sir, I do you some Service by the Appearance of this angelick Person of mine on the Theatre --- 'Tis enough for me to look and  
be

be admir'd. I cou'd every Night make some Lady happy with my'Embraces; but'tis beneath my seeking, they may die and be damn'd.

*Cap.* Can't you make your own Sex happy, Brother; you've a pretty smooth Chin, and a fine blooming Complexion.

*Lud.* I've wrote indeed a little that way.

*Brain.* Have ye not acted too, Brother?

*Lud.* On the Stage I have. If you mean any thing else, I'll draw my Weapon instantly.

*Brain.* Ha, ha, I thought so ---- and run me in behind I'll warrant ye.

*Lud.* 'Oons, Sir, run ye through the Lungs.

*Cap.* Or stick a Lady a little lower.

*Lud.* Dem me, Gentlemen, what d'ye mean by these Affronts? I must have Satisfaction: These Insults are not to be born. Dem ye, draw C---

*(Drawing his Sword.*

C

*Cap.*

*Cap.* You shall soon see the Instrument of Death and Vengeance.

*(Pulls out his Sword.*

*Lud.* I'll push home.

*Cap.* Agreed; come on.

*(They make one or two Passes at each other, and then both turn their Backs and run away.)*

*Brain.* A Duel manfully fought; this is agreeable to C---'s former Exploits; but I thought my Brother L-- was a better Knight Errant.

*Lud.* I've the best on't.

*Cap.* That's false, I've the best on't; ask your Life, Sir.

*Brain.* Phò, you've both the worst on't: I never saw such a Duel in my Life--- a Battel without Bloodshed.

*Cap.* Have a care you're not too free, Brother, good Nature and Courage must not be abus'd.

*Brain.* Ha, ha, Courage--- so the *French* ran away courageously from the renown'd *English* Hero, the Duke of *Marlbrough*.

*Cap.*

*Cap.* This is intolerable ---- Sir, there's Battle with Bloodshed.

[*Breaking his Head.*

*Brain.* This is kindly done, Brother; I'm oblig'd t'ye--- I'll call the Constable to protect my Valour: You shall see what I'll do when he comes, you egregious Coward. [Exit.

*Cap.* I'll follow ye--- but not to make a Trial of this Valour you pretend to be Master of. [Exit.

*Lud.* Away, ye Scoundrels: Now I've time to admire my glorious self. Was ever any Man so handsome, so extremely beautiful as I am? My Face has all the Blooms and Charms that our Sex can afford. My Eyes like moving Planets protract the Sight of the most numerous Audience. My Lips so soft; what Female would not wish to live and die in these Arms! My exact Proportion, strong, handsome Limbs, the Ladies view with a languishing Eye; then I tread the Stage like a God. My Gait and Air ravish

all Spectators: And now I'm become  
a Poet I am compleat.

*Enter Grimaldo listening.*

*Grim.* A compleat what?

*Lud.* A compleat Gentleman, Sir.

*Grim.* A compleat Idiot. [*Aside.*] What, a compleat Wit, Poet, and Actor?

*Lud.* Yes, I'm every way accomplish'd. I have Lines sufficient of my own composing agreeably to entertain a *Congreve* or a *Pope* for a Month together, and can repeat them with a Grace.

*Grim.* But that's against the Manners, Brother, and the Modesty with which every Person but an Actor ought to be endow'd.

*Lud.* I am glad you allow your Fraternity a Liberty beyond other People, otherwise I don't know what wou'd become of poor *Colly*.

*Grim.*

*Grim.* But this Liberty even in us Latitudinarians may be pursu'd too far, and be censur'd Presumption and Impertinence by the Criticks.

*Lud.* Dem the Criticks: Let them find fault with my inimitable Comedy if they can --- I've by one Essay made my self immortal.

*Grim.* I must own your Comedy is inimitable.

*Lud.* You are right; you speak like a Judge of Wit.

*Grim.* It is not to be imitated by any Person of Wit, Sense, Modesty, &c.

*Lud.* Ha! Why not?

*Grim.* Because they would abuse their Talents: And for your Immortality, I dare say 'tis not for your Poetry.

*Lud.* What then?

*Grim.* Your Nonsense and Prophaneness.

*Lud.* Ha, am I prophane, Brother? impossible --- And then for its Sense, I  
am

am sure it is very superior to your notable Performance, which has a Title only to support it; the Play it self is the Excrement of Wit, and Quintessence of Nonsense ---- Nonsense not equal'd on this or any other Theatre, in this or any other part of the World.

*Grim.* You're in a Passion, Brother. --- To be plain with ye in return, your Play subsists by a Character (tho' abominably wrote) which would not be permitted to appear on any Stage in *Europe* but that of *Great Britain* ---- Tho' indeed we can very well bear a Scene we are perhaps too well acquainted with.

*Lud.* Sir, Nature is at all times permitted to be represented on the Theatre, tho' depriv'd and vitiated.

*Grim.* It seems to be natural in the Author, I confess; but contrary to Nature with all others.

*Lud.* To what purpose is it to talk with a Fool?

*Grim.*

*Grim.* I am no Fool, Brother, --- but as compleat as your self. --- I can Plot and Design.

*Lud.* So can a Monkey.

*Grim.* Equal to *Ludovicus*, who fancies himself above Mankind; and would fain succeed in damning the Stage by Writing, as well as in acting. Farewel. [Exit.

*Lud.* I can Act like a Gentleman, you only Burlesque the Comedian; and I can write, Sir.

*Enter Spill-wit.*

*Spill.* You can write your Name, I suppose.

*Lud.* I can write a Play, Sir. What Business have you here? Do you think your Buffoonry will be approv'd by Men of Wit.

*Spill.* Well plaid Sir *Ludovicus Vain-wit* --- I'll warrant no body must presume to write, now you have taken up the Cudgels, but your mighty self. ---  
I'll

I'll have ye to know, Sir; I have a Genius to write; and, to convince ye that I'm no *Pretender*, I'll read ye a Prologue of my composing to *W---n's W---*.

True Wit to Night you see expos'd to View,  
 O Wonder strange, that in a Woman too;  
 But what is Wit?— why Wit is only this,  
 Not Life and Spirit, Froth and Emptiness;  
 A Blast of Wind let loose, so void of Art,  
 One wou'd e'en take it for a harmless Fart;  
 From Bawd descended, as some Authors tell,  
 For Wit Obscenity now passes well:  
 What did times past proceed from deepest Sense,  
 With us is Folly and Impertinence;  
 And all ye Females, tho' this Wit ye taste,  
 Your Sense is quickest still below the Waste:  
 Then draw the Curtain, with Applause begin,  
 And teach both Sexes here the way to sin.

*Laud.* This Prologue is excellent; who could have thought the honest *Spill-wit* Author of so fine a Composition? but you might have omitted the Woman's Waste.

*Spill.*

*Spill.* If I had done so, I don't doubt but you would have soon been about it.

*Lud.* Not I, upon my Word.

*Spill.* By your Motto to your Play you shou'd:

*Errors like Straws upon the Surface flow,  
They that wou'd seek for Gems must dive  
below.*

An excellent Motto ---- which I thus expound. A Woman's Face may be faulty, but if you would find the alluring Jewel, a Hair Ring, or so, you must examine below, below, Brother, is not this your Meaning?

*Lud.* Abominable Construction --- my Meaning is plain --- Errors are light and appear to View more than what is really good, and meritorious; as Filth moves upon the top of the Sea, and the Pearls are found at the bottom.

D

*Spill.*

*Spill.* I find there's a Water Course still in the Case, and either with your or my Construction a Man would be in great Danger of being cast away.

*Lud.* I thought by your Prologue you endeavour'd to bring this low Wit into Disgrace.

*Spill.* You mistook me, Brother, I am for it, for a very good Reason.

*Lud.* What is that, pray?

*Spill.* Very substantial, upon my Word.

*Lud.* Prithee out with it.

*Spill.* 'Tis because you and I, and the rest of our Brothers here and in *Drury Lane* are Masters of no other.

*Lud.* You speak well for your self, but pray don't bring us Writers in for your Justification.

*Spill.* Bring you in to justify me! I scorn your Words, Sir; I am justify'd by the whole Town ---- 'Tis I alone which support this Play-House --- My Wit, Sir, is so refin'd, that it makes the whole Audience, Pit, Boxes, and  
Gallery

Gallery laugh and clap me extravagantly.

*Lud.* Some laugh at your Wit as they imagine, but most of 'em at your Folly; and for the Girls in the Pit, you know 'tis their business to clap.

*Spill.* Wou'd any thing but the lowest Pretender to Poetry be guilty of such a vile Pun?

*Lud.* Punning, low Punning, Sir, is in Vogue with Men of Wit.

*Spill.* By Men who've lost their Wit you mean, who for want of it descend to the lowest Quibbles and Conundrums; and oftentimes come off by the *Lee*,

*Lud.* We've had enough of this at present. ----- Here comes Sir *Andrew Artless*; I leave ye to entertain your worthy Friend with the Rules of the Stage, for I hear he has begun upon a Play. Adieu. [Exit,

D 2

*Enter*

A B

*Enter Sir Andrew Artlefs.*

*Sir And.* Dear *Spill-wit* I rejoice to see thee.

*Spill.* I humbly thank you, Sir.

*Sir And.* Well, have ye read thro' my Play?

*Spill.* Yes, Sir, I have with a great deal of Care and Circumspection.

*Sir And.* How d'ye like it?

*Spill.* I don't know. [*Aside.*] Admirable well, Sir. ---- But what d'ye call it, a Tragedy or Comedy?

*Sir And.* Neither.

*Spill.* A Tragi-Comedy, I suppose.

*Sir And.* No.

*Spill.* What then, *Sir Andrew*?

*Sir And.* An Entertainment for the Whimsical.

*Spill.* Why not a Whimsical Entertainment?

*Sir And.* By no means; that quite alters my Design.

*Spill.*

*Spill.* Have ye any Design in it then?

*Sir And.* Pugh, what a Question that is? Why I design you to act the principal Part.

*Spill.* I thought so: What am I to be then?

*Sir And.* You're to be the Powder Monkey, my Dear.

*Spill.* A glorious Hero truly. ----- To be plain, *Sir Andrew*, I'd have ye write a new Play, and I'll give ye some Rules for your Assistance in the Composition.

*Sir And.* Do then, proceed.

*Spill.* If you write a Comedy you must begin in a Hurry, and end Calmly; and if a Tragedy, begin Calmly and end in a Hurry. You ought to have a fine Gentleman for your Hero in Comedy, and a great Warrior in Tragedy. ----- The Plot is to be finely laid and surprizing; the Incidents well work'd up, and every Character inter-

interwoven in the Plot. A Unity of Time and Place is to be observ'd; there must be no strain upon Reason, every thing ought to be probable; and there should be no Obscenity.

*Sir And.* But may I not write a Play either with or without a Plot? --- I can make a Plot without a Play, and pray why not a Play without a Plot?

*Spill.* A late Writer has done it, I confess.

*Sir And.* I'll lay the Scene of a Comedy. --- Let me see --- Scene the Devil's Arse in Peak, opening with Thunder, Lightning, Canons roaring, Fire, Smoke, &c. and two Dragons fighting.

*Spill.* O Lord, Sir, that's Tragical.

*Sir And.* No, I mean Whirlwinds, Tempests, Storms, Shipwrecks.

*Spill.* Both wrong, *Sir Andrew.*

*Sir And.* The Devil's in't if this ben't a beginning with a Hurry, and more than commonly entertaining.

*Spill.*

*Spill.* You should introduce your Hero in a Hurry of Business, Sir, laying his Plot; concerting Measures to effect his Intrigues.

*Sir. And.* Now I have it----Scene *Lincoln's Inn Theatre.* ---- Enter *Belzebub* with a dark Lanthorn, and a Match in his Hand, just going to set Fire to a Train of Gunpowder.

*Spill.* You're wrong still, Sir.

*Sir And.* Why certainly this is Plotting, or I don't know what is.

*Spill.* It is plotting too deep, *Sir Andrew.* --- You talk more like a Soldier than a Poet.

*Sir And.* I'll begin once more ---- Scene a Chamber ---- Enter four Porters and toss the Hero in a Blanket; they set his Mistress on her Head, and run down Stairs.

*Spill.* Worse and worse.

*Sir And.* I think this is setting out in a Hurry, and very fairly for the Gallant to be Master of the cloven Spot.

*Spill.*

*Spill.* What when he has seen it?  
 ---- This will not do, Sir *Andrew*  
 ---- Begin thus ----- Scene an Anti-  
 chamber, enter Lord *Amorous*. Lord  
*Am.* Here; *Tom*, buckle my Shoes;  
 air my Shirt; button up my Breeches;  
 dress me; comb out my Peruke;  
 brush my Clothes; carry this Let-  
 ter to Lady *Amelia*; run with all  
 Speed; tell her I'm coming to *Gray's*  
*Inn* Walks as quick as the Wind; call  
 me a Coach; make haste, make haste,  
 Slave.

Sir *And.* This is the Hurry you  
 mean; well, I understand ye----I'll  
 go home and contrive my Plot; and  
 the Scene I think shall be *in Terra in-*  
*cognita*.

*Spill.* Very good; 'tis a pleasant  
 Country, and you may take great Li-  
 berty in your Adventures.

Sir *And.* When will ye call on me,  
 at my House?

*Spill.*

*Spill.* To morrow , Sir: By that time you'll have design'd your *Dramatis Personæ*.

*Sir And.* Do so: I'll expect ye.

[*Exit.*

*Enter* Capricio, Brainless, Ludovicus,  
and Grimaldo.

*Cap.* Pox on't, I've had a damn'd unlucky Stroke across my Pate. ----- That sad Dog, *Sir Harry Careless*, whom I've portraited in my Play, has laid his Cudgel upon me unmercifully.

*Brain.* Did you shew no Resentment?

*Cap.* No, none at all, my Dear. ----- I was above it. ---- But I resolve to handle him, at a distance, upon the Stage.

*Lud.* A distant Argument is never so good as a close one, Brother, especially where there's a Cudgel in the Case.

E

*Spill.*

*Spill.* Allow me the close one and stand clear. ---- But, Brother Whimsical, I'm afraid amongst us we shall disgrace the Theatre, which in Times past has been equally renowned for producing Men of Valour, as in representing the glorious Actions of the greatest Heroes of Antiquity.

*Cap.* The Times are alter'd: It is now most fashionable to turn one's *Back*----

*Grim.* Ay, so it is, Brother. ----- Preservation is to be valu'd at any rate.

*Cap.* Right ---- But now we are assembled together, let us agree to write a Comedy in Conjunction. ---- We're capable of doing great things, Gentlemen; If we exert our Talents, we can sufficiently supply the *English* Theatre with our own excellent Productions.

*Lad.* Ha! he talks like a Man of sense.

*Brain.*

*Brain.* He does so ---- and I have now by me a Tragedy, a Comedy, a Farce, and a Mock-Opera, all ready for the Stage of my own Authorship and contriving.

*Cap.* Wonderful Industry.

*Brain.* They have only one small Fault.

*Cap.* What is that, pray?

*Brain.* Why they won't act --- they read admirable.

*Spill.* Yes, they read admirably indeed; and so do the Productions of *Merry Andrew in Moorfields.* [*Aside.*

*Cap.* This is a melancholy Story.

*Grim.* Not like your *Bulls and Bears,* Brother.

*Cap.* Pugh, a Man can never write one silly thing, but he's for ever after the Subject of Ridicule.

*Lud.* Wave this Discourse ---- and let us to the Business in hand --- some notable Performance which shall surprize the World, and gain us all immortal Honour.

*Spill.* Then four eminent Bl---ck-heads will be immortaliz'd. [*Aside.*

*Cap.* Agreed ----- What shall we call it?

*Brain.* *The British Theatre.*

*Cap.* A worthy Gentleman and my Friend is writing that already.

*Brain.* An unlucky Thought; and you have forfeited your Governmentship by it.

*Cap.* 'Tis no matter for that; the Chief Governor will retrieve the past Mis-conduct by his unparallel'd Knight Errantry.

*Brain.* But what shall we call the Play?

*Cap.* *The Heroick Actor,* a Tragedy.

*Brain.* *The Compleat Coxcomb,* a Comedy.

*Lud.* *The English Don Quixote,* a Tragi-Comedy.

*Grim.* *Chize-Chace,* an Opera.

*Spill.* *The Theatrical Owl,* a Farce.

*Cap.*

*Cap.* Excellent---- We'll away and do something wondrous.

*Tho' Wit with Players, 'tis well known,  
is scarce,  
We can together club a witty Farce.*



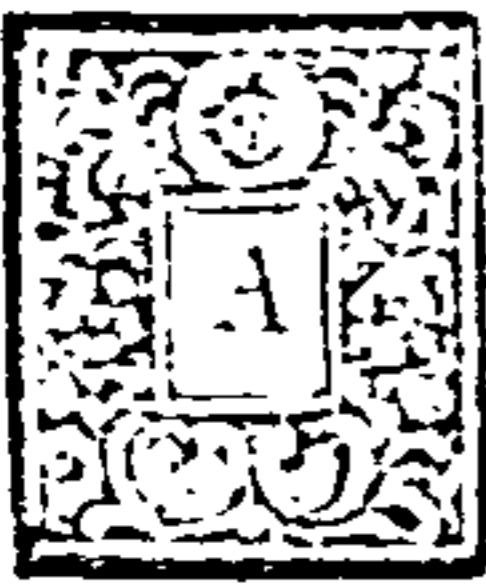


THE  
SESSIONS  
OF THE  
POETS.

Writ on the

4 AP 54

DEATH of Mr. ROWE, 1718.



POILLO did lately his grand Sessions hold,

Near to Westminster Hall his State to

uphol;

For Choice of a LAUREAT, great ROWE to succeed,

He summon'd the Poets to attend him with speed.

Old

Old D—n—s as Senior then first did advance,  
 The Bays claim'd for Mawling the Clergy and France ;  
 The other Pretenders call'd damnable Fools,  
 He's only a Poet by Aristotle's Rules.

Then P——r came up and demanded the Choice,  
 His Right s'rait proclaim'd with a laudable Voice ;  
 He wrote of a Ladle fix'd in the right place,  
 The Moral you'll find in the old Woman's A—se.

P——pe boldly approaching, now knock'd at the Door,  
 And of great Apollo the Bays did implore ;  
 He Hairs well could handle, declar'd in great calm,  
 Button's Wits he made Maggots, burlesqu'd the first  
 Psalm.

The City Ph—s—c—n, like Pellar and his Pack,  
 Then came with his Folios ty'd to his Back,

Porter's

*Porter's Strength they requir'd, to Apollo he prest,  
Said he wrote of a Female naked fine drest.*

*Sir R——d the Tatler next rose to do Honour  
To learned Apollo, the Laurel's great Donor;  
And told him he could not in Justice miscarry,  
His Dirge was so melodious wrote on Queen Mary.*

*The facetious J——n G——y now came to the Bar,  
And early his Right to the Bays did declare;  
Strong his Back and his Tail, his Flights still were high,  
And call'd for a Jury of Women to Try.*

*To the Court, like Skeleton, W——d then turn'd,  
And with Frown on his Look each Poet he spurn'd;  
But said to Apollo he merited Praise,  
Tho' Weak were his Lines he expected the Bays.*

*Y——g hastily follow'd, demanding the Prize,  
To see such a Crowding with Rage fill'd his Eyes;*

*He Addison's Elegy wrote with Applause,  
If Nonsense his Talent, was Doctor of Laws.*

*Tom D—f—y with Bagpipe, next made his Ap-  
pearance,*

*And to the High Court he paid low his Deference;  
His Claim was most Righteous all Interest apart,  
He Sonnet had made on the Theme of a Fart.*

*Then G—ld—n said truly that he had best Merit,  
If learned Apollo would please but to hear it;  
He kept the Pretenders in Awe still as Foes,  
And Musick could make by the help of his Nose.*

*At length there came S—t—le with Errant so strange,  
He fain would the City for Court Laureat change;  
Since fill'd up of late with Men least deserving,  
Hop'd Apollo wou'd gi'e't him to keep him from starving.*

But straitway great E—f—n attends on the Court,  
 And swore that his Worship was the fittest for't,  
 His Head was the largest of any there present,  
 And t'entitle him more it had the least Brains in't.

Next T——l in the Rear comes hastily on,  
 And told 'em he came from the Mount Helicon;  
 That of the whole Tribe there he only was fit,  
 For as he was Statesman of course was a Wit.

Now Th—b—lds made way, with his dull silly Grin,  
 Expecting by Pedantry Favour to win;  
 He many fine Pieces had wrote in his time,  
 And if Sense there be none, he's sure there is Rhime.

But Beck——m young, who there came from a Punk,  
 Said he had best Right, who osteneft was drunk;  
 This rightly consider'd, his Int'rest was good,  
 And hop'd that his Merit was well understood.

Next

Next J——b advancing, tho' Modest his Face,  
 Put in his just Claim for the great Laureat's Place;  
 His Lives of the Poets, and Works should prevail  
 He boldly insisted, and his Bawdy Tale.

Then S——w——l came last, in a downlooking Plight,  
 And damning 'em all, he swore none there cou'd write  
 But himself alone; who the Muses did greet,  
 And he wrote a fam'd Walk to St. James's Street.

Their Speeches deliver'd, Apollo unus'd,  
 To such slender Merit, th' Election refus'd,  
 But E——n appointed, for his fairest Claim,  
 Th' Office to hold 'till another he did name.

**F I N I S.**