

THE
Theatre-Royal

Turn'd into a
Mountebank's Stage.

IN SOME
REMARKS

UPON
Mr. CIBBER's *Quack-Dramatical*
Performance, called the *Non-*
Juror.

*His Crime was for being a Felon in Verse,
And Presenting the Theft to the King:
Tho' the first was a Trick not uncommon or scarce,
Yet the last was an Impudent Thing.*

Miscellanies over Claret. Printed 1697.

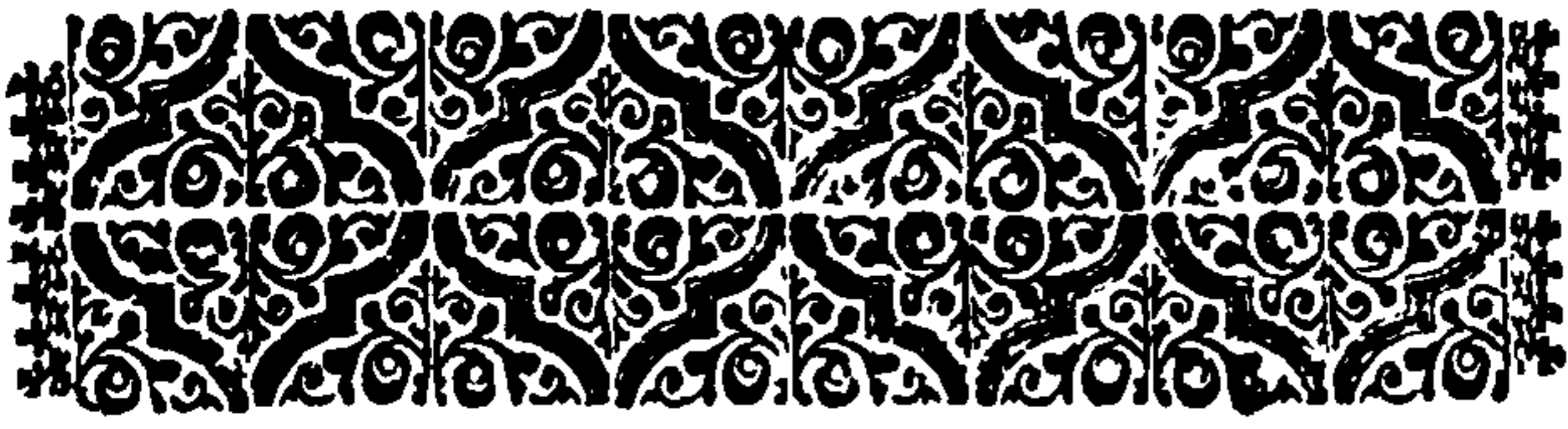
By a NON-JUROR.

L O N D O N:

Printed for JOHN MORPHEW, near Stationers'
Hall. 1718.

[Price Sixpence.]

2



T H E
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H E Supreme Authority, that has lately asserted its Prerogative in giving Laws to the PULPIT, and has said to the Priesthood, like God to the Sea, *Hitherto shalt thou go, and no farther*; is not to be suppos'd thereby to have countenanc'd unlimited Power in the STAGE, by submitting the Practices of holy Men, in sacred Orders, to the lewd Censures of a Set of profane *Comedians*. 'Tis possible, that by the Tenure of their Grant from the Crown, which entitles them to call their Nursery of Vice and

B Debauchery

Debauchery the *Theatre-Royal*, they may, with some colour of Justice, write themselves *His Majesty's Servants* ; but upon what Grounds or Encouragements they dare assume the Exercise of a Power wholly belonging to His Majesty himself, and those in Commission under him, I am, no way, able to determine.

Yet notwithstanding all these Letts and Hindrances for *Vagrants* who are liable to the *Penalties* of *Statutes* themselves, dispossess the Magistrate of what is due to the Dignity of his Office, in a just Animadversion upon proper Offences ; the World is now to stand amazed at a Wretch, who (not only with Impunity, but Applause, arrogates to himself a Right of Judgment over Mens Consciences, and in Opposition to all the Liberties that are given to Others in this Age, of Thinking and Judging for themselves, most audaciously sits himself down before our Princes and Nobles, *in the Seat of the Scorners*.

The Town is too well appris'd of Mr. *Cibber's* Courage upon several eminent Occasions, not to think him the Man pointed at ; and not to imagine a Person of his Bravery of Soul, and unblamcable Conduct, very ready to enter into a Combat with those whom he and his Abettors suppose to be gifted with neither. The want of the *first*, in those he has thought fit to attack, might have infus'd Honour and Gallantry into him ; and the Failure (if any there be) of these Unhappy Gentlemen the Nonjuring Clergy, as to the *last*, might have
induced

induced him rather to argue with them behind the Curtain, than endeavour to expose them before it, when drawn up. I say, *endeavour*; because the more Considerate part of the World (howsoever the Fondness of such as give themselves no leisure to think, may win them over to unnatural Deductions) will be apt to conclude, that, maugre all the Interest made to support this *Unnatural* Product of Noise and Emptiness, he himself will appear the greater Monster in *Nature*.

Thus far by way of Introduction, which, from a *Glance* at the *Author*, who remains yet often and often to be accounted with, leads the Reader of Course into a *View* of the *Work* itself, if a Piece of *Plagiarism* may be so called, that is as abhorrent of Reason and right Application, as of Truth and Humanity. I am now therefore to observe, that how wide soever the Difference may be, as to Matters of Faith and Principle, between a PURITAN and a NONJURING CLERGYMAN of the *Church of England*; it was for Mr. *Cibber's* Purpose (which is altogether Gain and Sycophancy) to torture the Remains of the ingenious *Moliere*, and take away the Reproach due to the vicious and disloyal Behaviour of Sectaries and Dissenters, by fixing what is inseparable from the Name of the *Puritan*, as an indelible Stain of Infamy on the Character of the *Nonjuror*. A piece of Outrage seldom, 'till now, done by the Manes of the Dead, whose Sense with Mr. *Dryden* (that made bold with the same Play,

Play, by calling it the PURITAN) ought always to be *preserved inviolate and unstained*.

A Man of any tolerable Compassion for the Sufferings of his Fellow-Creatures, would have reflected within himself, upon the Infirmities of Humane Nature, and the Scruples that put tender Consciences upon the Rack, before he enter'd upon so uncharitable an Undertaking. He would have inferr'd, from the Wants and Pressures most of the Non-complying Clergy labour'd under, that they made not an exchange of the Good Things of this Life, such as Opulent Preferments, and the Favour of Courts, out of meer Caprice, and Sourness of Temper. In a word, He would have imputed their entire Resignation to the Will of their Superiors, and their undisturb'd Acquiescence under the Frowns of the Government, rather to a spirit of Patience and Obedience, than of Innovation and Sedition; and instead of calling *their* Integrity in question, would have given Proofs of his *own* by a due Pity for their Misfortunes, and a commendable Grief for their Mistakes. But such is the Licentiousness of the Times Current, that now seem to draw upon the Lees of Humanity, that while some from the Pulpit give up the Rights of the Christian Priesthood, by setting the Laity upon a Level with their Pastors and Teachers, others, as in the first Ages of the Church, are not only suffer'd, but encourag'd to make a Mock of Religion, under the Pretence of exerting their Loyalty, and

to dress up Men truly Pious and Religious, as the Primitive Christians were of old, in the Skins of Bears and other Beasts of Prey, to be worry'd and torn to pieces by the Phangs of the Populace. This favours very little of copying after that Lenity lately shewn from the Throne, even to those who not only refus'd the Oaths to His Majesty, but took up Arms against him, and makes it fully demonstrable that both the Taste and Morals of an Audience must be corrupted to the last degree, that can bear with *Disputes upon the Nature of Schism, and the Divine Rights of Episcopacy, brought scoffingly upon the Stage, by the Devil's Agents in his own Academy.*

Had this Tormenter of *Moliere's* Ghost been tolerably civil to the Remains of that excellent Poet, he would have acted with the same Caution in taking Transcripts and Sketches from his *Tartuffe*, as he made use of in Writing it, he would have expos'd the Hypocrite, rather than have fallen foul upon the Divine, and have brought a *Real Impostor* upon the Stage, instead of fixing that Character upon a Person who has lost all the Conveniencies of Life for not being one, for not prevaricating with his Conscience, and breaking thro' the Ties of the most sacred Engagements: He would have introduced a Scotch Covenanter, or an English Schismatick into his *Drama*, rather than an Episcopal Minister, one whose Profession is the Practice of Obedience, and, who, though he cannot comply with a surrender of some Scruples

ples relating to the Government in the State, holds every thing for his Duty that is enjoin'd by the Church. For if the Reader will take the Pains to examine the Comedy, from which *Mr. Cibber* has topp'd upon the Town, by filching his chief Characters, he will there find, that the Poet's Intentions throughout every Passage, are all Innocent, and that, it does not at all tend to ridicule the Things that ought to be revered; that he has handled it with all the Precaution which the Delicacy of the Matter required; and that he has used all the Art and Care he could to distinguish the Character of the *Hypocrite* from that of the truly Good Man.

Yet, notwithstanding all these Excellencies in the *Original*, the Imperfections of the Copy have far the greater Influence on the Favours of the Audience, and that *Tartuffe*, who for his Innocence was prohibited at *Paris*, is highly priz'd and esteem'd for his Guilt in *London*. This puts me in Mind of a certain Passage relating to the former of these Plays, which was succeeded Eight Days after it was forbid, by a Comedy called *Scaramouche turn'd Hermit*. The King going from it, said to the Prince of Conde, *I would fain know, why the Persons, who are so much offended at Moliere's Play, don't say a Word of this of Scaramouche.* To which his Highness answer'd, 'Tis because the Play of *Scaramouche* mocks Heaven and Religion, which those Gentlemen don't so much value; but *Moliere's* ridicules

‘ cules Them themselves; and that they can’t
 ‘ endure.” The Inference is not much to be
 strain’d for; and we have those, who at the
 same time as they lift up their sanctimonious
 Eyes by way of Abhorrence at the sight of a
 Presbyterian Chaplain brought in drunk upon
 the Stage at the *Committee*, can look greedily
 till they dance with the Pleasure of seeing a
 Clergyman of the Church Establish’d detected
 in Attempts to commit Adultery with the Wife
 of his Patron.

Among these is the Author of a certain
 Weekly Paper, deserved to be ranked, who is
 not only a Presbyterian, but a Scotch Presby-
 terian: Not only a Scotch Presbyterian, but a
 Scotch Covenanting Presbyterian; and not only
 a Scotch Covenanting Presbyterian, but a Came-
 ronian Scotch Covenanting Presbyterian, (and
 who, in many Instances before this, has run down
 and decry’d all Theatrical Performances and
 Interludes whatsoever, as Irreligious and Pro-
 phane) has inserted the following Letter by
 way of Panegyrick, on the Play now under
 Consideration.

On the Play called the Non-juror and its
A U T H O R.

S I R,

Covent-Garden, Saturday.

‘ **T**H E Town is at present entertained
 ‘ with a *Comedy*, called, *The Non-juror*,
 ‘ which is but just beginning to take (what is as
 ‘ they phrase it) its *Run*; Yesterday having been
 ‘ its

' its first Day's Acting. The Coffee-Houses
 ' adjacent to the Theatre are generally fre-
 ' quented in an Evening, before and after the
 ' Play, by Persons who have a Relish for that
 ' sort of Representations, and this Performánce
 ' has been well received by the Majority of
 ' good Judges that way; some, who love to
 ' speak their Mind quite out, assert, 'That tho'
 ' there may have been many Comedies, where-
 ' in Nature has been as well represented, and
 ' the Wit, Humour, and Breeding of the Au-
 ' thor as well display'd, there never has ap-
 ' pear'd, since the Stage of *Athens*, which was
 ' the great Engine of that Polite Nation, any
 ' Work of Wit so immediately and justly cal-
 ' culated for the Service of the Publick.

' The NONJUROR, who, in the best Ac-
 ' ceptation of that Character, ought to be a
 ' *Conscientious Man, peaceably living under a*
 ' *Government whence he has his Protection. ab-*
 ' *horring as much the least Design against it,*
 ' *as incapable of serving (in his Sense) its unjust*
 ' *Interests.* The Nonjuror, I say, instead of be-
 ' ing this unfortunate Man, as he has sometimes
 ' appear'd, is drawn, in this Play, in his more
 ' common Behaviour, as an Incendiary, a Sower
 ' of Sedition and Schism, an Enemy to his
 ' Prince and Country, distracting the Relations,
 ' and perverting the Affections of private Fa-
 ' milies, and turning all to that one End, of
 ' *introducing a Popish King to a Protestant*
 ' Nation.

' What

‘ What appears to be the great Skill and
 ‘ Address of the Author, is his manner of
 ‘ mingling Things so foreign to Pleasure and
 ‘ Diversion, thus naturally in the Incidents
 ‘ of a Comedy. That which has been at-
 ‘ tempted in so many Reams of Pamphlets,
 ‘ and has cost even Reverend Persons all their
 ‘ Reputation for Charity, and a great Part of
 ‘ their Character for Understanding, is *bit off*,
 ‘ with a Grace and Force equally irresistible.

‘ When Mr. Collier writ his excellent
 ‘ Piece against the Stage, a most Reverend
 ‘ Prelate, upon the Perusal of it, said, *He*
 ‘ *would have given 1000l. a Man of his Prin-*
 ‘ *ciples, that is, one capable of receiving Fa-*
 ‘ *vours from the Government for it) had been*
 ‘ *the Author of that seasonable Work.*

‘ Mr. CIBBER has that same Merit, as he
 ‘ more than corrects the Stage, by writing
 ‘ well for it, and has shewn himself unre-
 ‘ servedly a Friend to the Government, in
 ‘ provoking a Crowd of its Enemies to exert
 ‘ their Malice against him, in a Place where
 ‘ *he earns his Bread*, and where there is no
 ‘ Defence to be made against their Resentment.
 ‘ Add to this, that he himself plays the Part
 ‘ of the NONJUROR; and there is more
 ‘ Mortification than can be conceiv’d by those
 ‘ who are not conversant in such Matters,
 ‘ in doing an odious Thing, tho’ but in Ficti-
 ‘ on. SHAKESPEAR a greater Poet, tho’ not
 ‘ so good a Player as CIBBER, according to
 ‘ *Play-house Tradition*, is said to have done

‘ nothing so well as *The Ghost of Hamlet’s Fa-*
 ‘ *ther*. Let the Town then consider what they
 ‘ owe to the Merit of him who has wrote so
 ‘ usefully in this *Drama*, and acted so skilfully
 ‘ in all other Comedies, *that is to say*, has per-
 ‘ formed so well as a *Writer*, and so eminently
 ‘ as a *Player*, that in the latter he excell’d
 ‘ such a Genius as SHAKESPEAR, tho’ the
 ‘ Art was also his Profession.

‘ Those who love the present Establish-
 ‘ ment, should see this Play for the Encou-
 ‘ ragement of the Author; those who have
 ‘ been ensnared into the Principles he ridi-
 ‘ cules, may there meet with a Conviction be-
 ‘ fore they smart for it; and a Jacobite may
 ‘ there be prevented from venturing his Neck
 ‘ for a Cause which can never be *powerful*,
 ‘ after it is once *contemptible*.

‘ You, Sir, have long labour’d for this
 ‘ good End, and will therefore, I hope, kind-
 ‘ ly receive this Account of this *Comedy*, and
 ‘ its Author, from

Your most humble Servant.

Tho’ the Name of the Writer of the fore-
 going Letter is not hereunto subscribed, it
 may with Justice enough be suppos’d to be
 written by Mr. *Cibber* himself, whose Vanity
 is too well known in many Instances of the
 like Nature, not to have prompted him to
 very large Eulogies of himself; since no one
 but he, or the Person to whom it is directed
 to,

to; could have the Presumption to aver, that no one Performance on the Stage, since that of *Athens*, (whose Poets were under the greatest Restrictions from ridiculing the Priesthood) came up to that Perfection of Wit, and was so immediately calculated for the Service of the Publick as this, which he has most audaciously adopted for the Issue of his own Brain, at the same time he has scarce any Right or Title to any one Thought or Incident that offends not chaste Ears, nor violates the Laws of Decency and Morality. I take leave to say *adopted*, because he neither in *Prologue*, *Epilogue*, or *Dedication* acknowledges the least Obligation to the deceas'd Author from whom he took all his best Hints, and most beautiful Turns; but after having made a Present of it, as his own Off-spring to the Audience, very arrogantly does the same to the King, by valuing himself, without any previous Confession of Assistance or Help, for his *Duty and Concern that made him more careful in the Conduct of this, than any of his former Eudeavours*.

These Reflections on his Ingratitude to *Moliere*, and his Self-conceit in taking the upper hand of *Shakespear*, bring into my Memory some Invectives written by the late ingenious Mr. *Thomas Brown* upon *D'Urfey* the Poet, who, not unlike him to Opinion, gave the Name of *Lyricks* to his Medley of Rhimes and Nonsense. A very little Alteration will make them run thus, and its only

changing the Name, to make *Cibber*, and that
 Trifle of a Song-jobber, alike in Nature.

*Thou Cur, half Dane, half English Breed,
 Thou Mongrel of Parnassus,
 To think leud Lines grown up to Seed,
 Can ever tamely pass us.*

*Thou write Nonjurors, and be damn'd!
 Write Anagrams for Cutlers;
 None with thy Frippery will be slamm'd
 But Chamber-maids and Butlers.*

*In t'other World expect dry Blows,
 No Tears can wash thy Stains out,
 MOLIERE will pull thee by the Nose,
 And SHAKESPEAR dash thy Brains out.*

The just Provocation which the last of these injured Manes has to give Mr. *Cibber* this Chastisement, is accounted for already; I am therefore, in the next place, to make appear, that he is liable to the Displeasure and Resentment of the first, upon full as good Grounds and Motives, which cannot better be done, than by a Review of the *Tartuffe* on the one part, and of the *Nonjuror* on the other.

To begin with the *Tartuffe*, and the Occasion of its being written. The Design of this Play was to expose the Hypocrisy of pretended Zealots in *France*, who under the Notion of Purity in Religion, and Sanctity of Life,

Life, took upon them to raise Scruples as to Matters of Faith, and to separate themselves from the Communion of the Church Establish'd. These were called *Hugonots*, who had been in open Rebellion against their lawful Sovereign, like the Dissenters among us, and had taken Arms against Heaven's Vicegerent, under a shew of engaging for the Cause of Heaven. Yet notwithstanding these Incendiaries were such fit Objects of *Satyr* and *Ridicule*, such was the Temper of that Nation, and the Aversion of their Prince and Great Men, to any thing that had the least View towards Prophaneness or Immorality on their Stage, that, as it has been before observed, the Play was for some time Prohibited, and was with great difficulty Revived, even tho' the *Hypocrite* or Impostor represented therein was introduced as a *Layman*, not under the Character of one of the Clergy.

The Persons of this *Drama* are, a Gentleman of great Hospitality and Credulity, married to a second Wife, after having had a Son and a Daughter by the first Venture, and Bigotted to the last degree in Favour of a Villain whom he has taken into his Family even Naked and Distress'd, out of meer respect to a sanctimonious Shew and Appearance. This Wretch, in Return to his Benefactor's Kindness, is made not only to usurp an Authority over the whole House, but under a Mask of Piety, to dispose of all Affairs therein, to attempt the Chastity of his
Wife.

Wife, to obtain the Disinheritance of his Son, the sole Disposal of the Daughter, who is under a Contract of Marriage with a young Gentleman of a plentiful Fortune, and a Deed of Gift of all the Father's Estate: So that they are all made to seem in a desperate Condition, 'till their Circumstances are retriev'd by the detection of his lewd Designs upon the *First*, who makes her Husband an Eye and Ear Witness of *Tartuffe's* Baseness, his Treacherous Practices against the *Second*, his Attempts to Ruine the *Third*, and take away the Life of the *Fourth*, by a false accusation of Treason to the King, whose penetrating Understanding makes a Discovery of the *Impostor*, that concludes the Play with a *Catastrophe* fatal to himself, in his commitment to Prison, the just Reward of his Hypocrisy and other Crimes.

Here is no *Smut* from the first to the last, no Oaths, Execrations, or Double Entendres, to excite Lust in the Audience, and fire the Blood of the Spectators, but every Scene is so conducted as to lead us on very artfully to the View of another. Here is nothing to shock the Imagination with impure Ideas, or to do Violence to Nature in any one of its Representations, but all the Persons concerned are made to act their Parts with a due regard to their respective Characters. The very first Scene in the Person of *Pernelle*, the Husband's Mother, gives you such a lively description of an Impertinent Woman, as few have yet given, and it is *Moliere's* peculiar Felicity, that he prepares

prepares two whole Acts for the Entrance of his Villain: He does not hold the Audience in suspense a Moment; he is presently known by the Marks he gives him, and from one End to the other he does not speak a Word, nor use an Action, but what gives the Spectators a perfect Idea of a wicked Man, and sets off that of a truly good Man, which is oppos'd to him. When the Master of the House gives his Brother-in-law *Cleantes* the Character of his New Guest, the Description is so lively that, I cannot but repeat it. ‘ Brother, says he, ‘ (speaking of *Tartuffe*) you’d be charm’d if ‘ you knew him, and your Joys wou’d never ‘ be at an end. ‘Tis a Man——who——a Man ‘ ——a——Man—— in a Word, whoever follows ‘ his Rules, tastes a profound Peace, and looks ‘ upon the World as Dirt. He unbinds the Soul ‘ from all sensual Affections, and I could behold, Brother, Children and Wife die, without caring that, [*snaps his Fingers*] Oh! if ‘ you had but seen him as I did first, you’d ‘ have lov’d him as I do: He came every Day ‘ to Church with a composed Mien, and ‘ kneel’d on both Knees just against me. He ‘ attracted the Eyes of the whole Assembly, ‘ by the Ardour wherewith he put up his ‘ Prayers to Heaven: He Sigh’d, ran into ‘ Raptures, and every Moment with great humility kiss’d the Ground; and when the Service was over, he came before me to offer me Holy Water at the Door. Being informed by his Man, (who imitated him in every ‘ thing)

‘ thing) both of his Indigence and his Merit,
 ‘ I made him Presents, but he would always
 ‘ modestly have return’d them again, *’Tis too*
 ‘ *much*, says he, *too much by half, I don’t de-*
 ‘ *serve your Pity.* When I refused to take it
 ‘ again, he went and gave it to the Poor in
 ‘ my sight. In short, Heaven prompted me
 ‘ to take him Home, and since that time eve-
 ‘ ry thing seem’d to prosper in my House. He
 ‘ reprehends every Body, and takes an extreme
 ‘ Interest even in my Wife her self: He tells
 ‘ me of those that Ogle her, and appears ten
 ‘ times more Jealous of her than I am: But
 ‘ you won’t believe how far his Zeal extends:
 ‘ He thinks the least Trifle a Sin: A thing
 ‘ of nothing, is almost sufficient to scandalize
 ‘ him: Infomuch that t’other Day he was an-
 ‘ gry with himself for having taken a Flea, as
 ‘ he was Praying, and in his Passion killing
 ‘ it.

He makes no Coquet of the Maiden Lady
 design’d by her Father for his Bride, but
 gives those Airs of Lightness to the Maid,
 as more agreeable to one of her Character, than
 to the Mistress; when he is constrain’d to
 make his Villain in his amorous Discourse with
 his Patron’s Wife, speak any thing contrary to
 good Manners and sound Doctrine, he calls
 upon his Reader to *remember, that ’tis an Im-*
pious Wretch that speaks, and tho’ he suffers
 him to squeeze her by the Hand, to put his
 upon her Knee, to feel the softness of her
 Petticoat, and admire the Work of the Pen-
 Shape

Shape that covers her Bosom, he launches out into no manner of Excess, nor transgresses the Bounds of Modesty in the minutest Article. To be plain and concise, tho' the Scenes, as in most French Plays, work in upon each other too fast, and by affecting Brevity, *Moliere* may be deem'd Obscure, he has preserved the *Unity* requisite for such Dramatical Entertainments: Whereas, the pilfering *Maroder*, that purloins all his Incidents from him, even from the Beginning to the End, from Sir *John Woodvil's* Resolution to marry his Daughter to *Dr. Wolfe*, to his being under the Table, and surprising him in his attempts to Debauch his Wife, has regard to no Rules of the *Drama*, and does neither, as he confesses, not only to the King in his Dedication, but to his Audience in the Epilogue,

*As for the Criticks, those he owns may teize him,
Because he never took such pains to please 'em
In Time, Place, Action, Rules, by which old Wits
Made Plays, as—Dames do Puddings by Receipts:*

This brings me to a Review of my second Particular, the *Rib* of a Play, called the *Nonjuror*, surreptitiously taken out of *Moliere's Side*, and converted into an Image for the Enemies of Religion to gaze at. Well might this *Rapparee* of an Author, who takes the Liberty of making Majesty itself to Patronize the *unlicensed Boldness of his Undertakings*, (Ded. p. iv.) be assured *the worst of Plays* (*ibid.*) might pass with
D Favour

Favour from an Audience, and *meet with no Opposition* from our *Publick Malecontents*, when such noisie Crouds were in Conspiracy to support it, and that Man was in danger of his Life that durst utter one Hiss at it. Well might his Advocate Mr. *Rowe*, like the Champion on a Coronation Day, sling down the Gauntlet, blast the Laurels on his Brow, and call the most opprobrious Treatment of Men set aside for the Service of God in the Administration of his Sacred Ordinances, according to the Usage of the Church of *England*, *sousing old Satan and the Pope*, when he had such Numbers to abide by his insolent and undeserved Assertions: Well indeed might he call them *Bawds* and *lurking Pastors*, make them *Patriarchs of blind Lanes and Allies*, and cry *Ship off ye Slaves*, without a Word in their Defence, when Detachments of the Party, sworn to abide by every Expression us'd in the Play, were posted in Box, Pit and Gallery to awe the best Judges into Silence. I am now come to the Play itself, wherein it must be confess'd, the *Action* was good, and very suitable to the Disposition of the Actors, since it is very natural to conclude, that Mr. *Cibber* is well skill'd in Personating of Men of loose Principles, and vicious Indinations, for such is Dr. *Wolfe*, the Nonjuring Clergyman represented to be; and that Mrs. *Olfeild*, who has living Witnesses of her Chastity in a certain Will at the *Prerogative Office* in *Doctour's-Commons*, is not at these Years to learn how to converse lewdly, and
 play

play the *Coquet*; that has so often, with more than one Man, play'd something else.

The first Act opens with a Discovery of the Father's disposition to break his Promise made to the Daughter's Humble Servant, as in *Moliere's Tartuffe*, and to give her to a Person of the Nonjuring Perswasion, and shews the Author's Respects to the Cloth, by making the Son call a Clergyman a *Love-sick Monkey, that had stolen his Mother-in-Law's Slipper and a Glove, for private Play-things*. After which, the *sanctify'd Rogue*, as he stiles him, without any previous Introduction but what is dark and obscure, is brought upon the Stage talking to his Man *Charles*, after the rate of *Tartuffe* at his first Entrance with his Servant *Lawrence*, only with this difference, that the first cries, *Step up into my Study, and bring down half a Dozen more of those Manuals of Devotions* (which by the bye, should have been *Manuals of Devotion*) *that I compos'd for the Use of our Friends in Prison, &c.* And the last says, *Lock up my Hair-Cloth and my Discipline, and beseech Heaven always to Illuminate you—I am gone to the Prisoners to distribute my Alms.* Nor is it difficult to judge, how a Man of his Profession and Habit is to be treated in the *Sequel*, when he is called *Villain*, taken by the Collar, and tacitly accused of *Lascivious Purposes* at his first appearance, in rushing in upon a young Lady, who, with as great Violence to the Character of the Fair Sex, after several indecent Expressions before put in her Mouth, speaks

D 2

thus,

thus, ‘ Nay, no great matter— but I was sitting carelessly in my Dressing-Room, a— a fast’ning my Garter, with my Face towards the Door, and this impudent Cur, (meaning the Doctor) without the least Notice, comes Bounce in upon me— and my devilish Hoop happening to hitch in the Chair, I was an Hour before I could get down my Petticoats.”

A pretty Image truly for a Circle of the brightest Beauties, and well worthy of their Smiles and Encouragement to an Author and Adress, who deserv’d rather the Correction of the *Porter’s Lodge*, than the Favour and Protection of Courts.

The *Second*, to render the Clergy more and more the Object of Hatred and Scorn, after having divested the whole Order of *any Shew of Religion* (for ’tis at the *Whole* that he points) brings the Doctor’s Servant in with a Deed of Gift, wherein his Master, by his Insinuations into his Patron’s Affections, as in *Tartuffe*, is entitled to his whole Estate, exclusive of his Children, and a Bill of Costs expended by him for the service of the ruin’d Cause, which, it is to be own’d, is as New and Ridiculous, and wants only to be read to be refuted. Because it is but too notorious, on the side of which Party, Insurrections, Riots, Collections, Allowances and Bribes, are made and given; and that it is as little customary for the Clergy to give Money for packing of Juries, as it is to commit things worthy of falling under their Cognizance. Actions that altogether favour of
the

the Aire of a *Mug-house* Authority; and are wholly foreign to the Practice of a Church whose Religion teaches its Members to be Passive under the severest Trials and Afflictions.

What is new likewise in this Act, and not to be found in the *French* Author, is the Discovery of the Doctor's Man *Charles* his Affection for *Maria*; the Circumstances of his Birth and Family; which would have been moving enough, were it not dash'd with an Allay of Scandal and Reproach, concerning a false Report lately raised of a certain deprived Clergyman's being an Abettor and Contriver of the late Risings in the *North*, and tinctur'd with a mixture of Infamy in it, by means of a Dialogue held between Sir *John* and his Spiritual Guide, wherein it is maliciously insinuated, that the Clergy of the Establish'd Religion aim at an *Union* between the Churches of *England* and *Rome*, and that Dr. *Hickes*, than whom no Writer of this or the last Age was ever more averse to Popery, wrote his *Case of Schism*, in Behalf of the same.

The Poet might have also, for the sake of Modesty, if he found himself under a Necessity of making *Maria* speak two Greek Words, furnish'd her with two of a better and more inoffensive sound than Ζωνή, & Ψυχή, since any one that reads them in *Juvenal* must be apprisd of their Meaning, and that their Signification, as us'd there, explains something

thing not fit to be named, nay not so to be much as thought of by a Lady of good Fame.

The third is almost all of a piece with Scene IV. and V. in the Third Act of *Tartuffe* only, that after pressing Lady *Woodvil's* Hand, laying his own upon her Knee, admiring the softness of her Silk Petticoat, the *English* Author, instead of placing her Son-in-Law in the Closet, makes the Doctor, when he is going to explain his wicked Intentions at large to the Person he is enamour'd with, have a sight of both Father and Son standing behind him, whereby he recovers himself, and by a feign'd Passion for *Maria*, by naming her with great Fervour, avoids the Snare that was laid to entrap him in the very Fact. To instance in the Resemblance and the Original and the Copy bear to each other. What says the first a little before *Damis* breaks out of the Closet at the very nick of the *Hypocrite's* coming to the Point.

‘ *Tart.* I am ne’ertheless a Man because
 ‘ I’m devout ; and when one beholds your
 ‘ Heavenly Charms, a Heart suffers itself to
 ‘ be caught, without Reasoning with itself.
 ‘ I know such a Discourse will look strange in
 ‘ me : But, Madam, after all, I am no Angel,
 ‘ and if you condemn this Confession, you
 ‘ ought to impute it to the Force of your
 ‘ own Beauty ; so soon as I beheld their more
 ‘ than Humane Splendor, you became Sove-
 ‘ reign of my Faculties : The ineffable Sweet-
 ‘ ness

‘ nefs of your Divine Looks, broke through
 ‘ the Resistance of my Heart, made it sur-
 ‘ mount my Fastings, Prayers, and Tears,
 ‘ and turn’d all my Desires to your Charms.’

Doctor. ‘ What Bosom can be Proof ’gainst
 ‘ such Artillery of Love? I may resist, call
 ‘ all my Prayers, my Fastings, Tears, and
 ‘ Penance to my Aid; but yet, alas! these
 ‘ have not made an Angel of me, I am still
 ‘ but a Man; Vertue may strive, but Nature
 ‘ will be uppermost. Permit me then on this
 ‘ fair Shrine to pay my Vows, and offer up
 ‘ a Heart—

Elmira. ‘ I hear you, and your Rhetorick
 ‘ sufficiently explains it self: But are not you
 ‘ afraid that I should acquaint my Husband
 ‘ with this Gallantry, and that the speedy
 ‘ notice of such a Passion may alter the Friend-
 ‘ ship he has for you?

Lady Woodvil. ‘ Hold, Sir, you’ve said
 ‘ enough to put you into my Power: Suppose
 ‘ I now should let my Husband, Sir, your
 ‘ Benefactor, know the Favour you design’d
 ‘ him.

Tartuffe. ‘ I know you’ve too much Good-
 ‘ nefs, and you’ll pardon my Rashness. Ex-
 ‘ cuse my humane Frailty, and consider that
 ‘ I am not blind, and that Man is Flesh and
 ‘ Blood.

Doctor. ‘ You cannot be so cruel.

Elmira. ‘ Perhaps another would not take
 ‘ this as I do. But I’ll shew my Discre-
 ‘ tion. I won’t tell it to my Husband. But,
 ‘ in

' in Return, you must do one Thing for me :
 ' 'Tis to press the Union of *Valerio* with
 ' *Mariana*, to renounce the Unjust Power
 ' which wou'd enrich you with another's
 ' Goods.

Lady Woodvil. ' Nor will I, on condition
 ' that you renounce all Claim and Title to
 ' *Maria*, and use your utmost Interest with
 ' *Sir John*, to give her, with her full For-
 ' tune, to *Mr. Heartly*.

Thus far *Tartuffe* and the *Nonjuror* bear the exact Resemblance of each other, only the latter seems to fall short of the former in working up the Father to a Discovery of the Design against his Wife's Honour. In the one it is to be found, that the Author very artfully leads us on gradually 'till the Plot thickens more and more, and opens itself into a full View of what is prepar'd, to be detected in the last Act of the Play. *Damis* is there made hot with the full survey of the Villain's Wickedness : He sees and hears the whole Drift of his Amorous Discourses, and unable to bear the important Secret any longer, bursts out from the Closet, big with a Resolution to communicate it to his Faaher ; which he does with a Zeal suitable to the intended Injury. He tells *Elmira* the Person whom the Wretch would have Abused, and who dissuades him from the Discovery, saying, ' 'Tis enough that
 ' *be grow wiser* ; That he must do as he
 ' says ; That his Soul was then at the Height
 ' of

‘ of its Joy, and she, in vain, try’d to make
 ‘ him quit the Pleasure of being reveng’d.’
 In the other, the Father is brought in with
 the Son, in an Unnatural manner, before
 Things are any ways ripe; and the Doctor as
 unnaturally, when the *Lady Woodville* is
 pressing him to renounce *Maria*, amidst the
 Heat of his Lust, and the Agitations of his
 Thoughts highly disturb’d with Madam’s Re-
 fusal of his proffer’d Services, ‘spyés them both
 out. Not but the *French* Author and *English*
 Plagiary tally very fitly together, and come
 up to each other almost Verbatim as to the
 Expression and way of Dialogue in most
 Places, with this Difference only, that the
 First has got the Start of the Latter in the
 Conduct of this Incident.

Here *Moliere*, after putting *Orgon* into Sur-
 prise at the Account given, before his Wife’s
 Face, by his Son, makes *Tartuffe*, who knew
 how to work upon the Old Man’s Passions,
 speak thus; ‘ Yes, Brother, I am a wicked
 ‘ Wretch, an unhappy Sinner, full of Iniquity,
 ‘ the greatest Villain that ever was. Every
 ‘ Moment of my Life is full of Blots, ’tis
 ‘ nothing but a Heap of Crimes and Filthi-
 ‘ nefs; and I see that Heaven, for my Punish-
 ‘ ment, designs to mortifie me on this Occa-
 ‘ sion. How great soever the Forfeit of this
 ‘ may be, I won’t defend my self. Believe
 ‘ what’s told you, arm your Wrath, and drive
 ‘ me out of your House as a Criminal; I can-
 ‘ not be put to so much Shame as I have
 E ‘ deserv’d.’

‘ deserv’d.’ Upon this *Orgon* says to his
 Son, ‘ Ah, Traitor, you, by this Falshood,
 ‘ endeavour to tarnish the Purity of his Vir-
 ‘ tue.’ To which, when *Damis* has re-
 ‘ ply’d, What can the feign’d Mildness of
 ‘ this Hypocrite make you disbelieve? —
 and his Father has commanded him *to hold*
his Tongue; *Tartuffe*, in a Canting Tone, inter-
 poses, and says, ‘ Oh, let him speak; you
 ‘ chide him wrongfully: You’d better be-
 ‘ lieve what he tells you. Why shou’d you
 ‘ be so favourable to me upon such an Oc-
 ‘ casion? After all, do you know what I am
 ‘ capable of? Do you confide in my out-
 ‘ ward Appearance, Brother? Do you think
 ‘ me ever the better, for what you see of me?
 ‘ No, no, you suffer your self to be deceiv’d
 ‘ by exterior Objects; and alas! I am not
 ‘ what you think me. I am a meer Devil.
 ‘ [turning to *Damis*.] Yes, my dear Son, speak
 ‘ on; call me Perfidious, Infamous, Lewd,
 ‘ Thief, Murtherer; overwhelm me with
 ‘ Names yet more detestable. I don’t say but
 ‘ I have deserv’d them, and upon my Knees
 ‘ I’ll suffer the Ignominy of them, as a Thing
 ‘ due to the Crimes of my past Life.’

This is somewhat like the *Pathos* of Stile
 and Action, and of a most energetical Force
 on the Faculties of the Soul, which naturally
 sink into a Belief of the Villain’s Innocence.
 Whereas, if we look into Mr. *Cibber*’s Copy of
 this Admirable Draught of Art blended with
 Nature,

Nature, we shall there descry the mighty disproportion between them, and how exceedingly short it continues to fall of the lively Colours that dart forth Lustre in the bright Original. The *Nonjuror* looks faint and languid, in comparison of *Tartuffe*; and tho' the Criminal is made in both to intercede for the Innocent Son, who is turn'd out of Doors, and Disinherited, because he will not ask Pardon for believing his Senses; yet the manner of doing it is in no-wise adequate, or the like engaging. To prove this, there is nothing farther requisite than that I give the Dialogue in the last Scene of this Act verbatim in the French and English Comedy, just after the Son has made his Exit, and begin with *Moliere*.

Orgon. ' To offend an holy Person in this
' manner !

Tartuffe. ' O Heaven! pardon him the Trouble
' he gives me. [*To Orgon.*] If you did but
' know how uneasie it makes me to be black-
' en'd, Brother! ———

Orgon. ' Alas!

Tartuffe. ' The sole Thought of this In-
' gratitude is so great a Punishment to me—
' The Horror of it is inconceivable, my Heart
' is so swol'n that I can't speak, and I believe
' 'twill kill me.

Orgon. [*Runs in Tears to the Door, out of
' which he drove his Son.*] ' Knave! I'm sorry
' my Hand spared you, and did not break your

‘ Bones upon the Spot. Be your self, Brother,
‘ and don’t be griev’d.

Tartuffe. ‘ Let us break the Course of these
‘ grievous Disturbances: I see what Troubles I
‘ cause here, and think I had best be gone,
‘ Brother.

Orgon. ‘ How! What do you say?

Tartuffe. ‘ I am hated here, and I see they
‘ endeavour to make you suspect me.

Orgon. ‘ What signifies it? You see how I
‘ mind them.

Tartuffe. ‘ They certainly won’t fail to Pur-
‘ sue; and these same Stories which now you
‘ reject, may another time perhaps be listen’d
‘ to.

Orgon. ‘ No, Brother, never.

Tartuffe. ‘ O Brother, a Wife may easily mis-
‘ lead a Husband.

Orgon. ‘ No, no.

Tartuffe. ‘ Let me, by removing hence, take
‘ away the Cause of their attacking my Repu-
‘ tation thus.

Orgon. ‘ No, you shall stay.

Tartuffe. Well then I must mortify my self.
‘ Yet if you will— — —

Orgon. ‘ Fie!

Tartuffe. ‘ Be it so, let’s mention it no more.
‘ But I know what I must do in it. Honour
‘ is nice, and Friendship engages me to prevent
‘ Reports, and give no ground to Suspicion.
‘ I’ll avoid your Wife, and you shan’t see me—

Orgon. ‘ No, in spite of them all, you shall
‘ frequent her Company. My greatest Delight
‘ is

‘ is to cross the World, and I’ll have you be
 ‘ continually seen with her. This is not yet all;
 ‘ the better to brave them, I will make you
 ‘ my sole Heir, and I’ll immediately sign you
 ‘ a Deed of Gift of all my Estate. A good
 ‘ Friend is much more dear to me, than Son,
 ‘ Wife, or Kinsfolk. Will you accept of what
 ‘ I propose ?

Tartuffe. ‘ Heaven’s Will be done in all
 ‘ Things.

Orgon. ‘ Alas poor Man ! Come, let us have
 ‘ the Writings drawn instantly, and may they
 ‘ all burst with Envy.

C I B B E R.

Doctor. ‘ I did not think he had so hard a
 ‘ Nature.

Sir John. ‘ My good Lord, [*for the Reader
 ‘ is to understand, that he is not only made a
 ‘ Priest, but a Bishop, to inhance the Guilt which
 ‘ the whole Order of the Clergy is blacken’d
 ‘ with*] your charitable Heart discovers not the
 ‘ Rancour that’s in his: But what better can
 ‘ be hoped for, from a Wretch so swell’d with
 ‘ Spleen and Rage of Party ?

Doct. ‘ No, no, Sir, I am the Thorn that
 ‘ galls him; ’tis me, ’tis me he hates: He
 ‘ thinks I stand before him in your Favour;
 ‘ and ’tis not fit indeed I should do so; for
 ‘ Fallen as he is, he’s still your Son, and I,
 ‘ alas! an Alien, an Intruder here, and ought
 ‘ in Conscience to retire, and heal these hap-
 ‘ less Breaches in your Family.

Sir

Sir *John*. ' What means your Lordship?

Doct. ' But I'll remove this Eye-fore—

' Here, *Charles*! — [Enter *Charles*.

Sir *John*. ' For Goodness sake!

Doct. ' Bring me that Writing I gave you to
' lay up this Morning.

Charles. ' Now Fortune favour us; [*Aside.*]

[Exit *Charles*.

Sir *John*. ' Make haste, good *Charles*, it shall
' be sign'd this Moment.

Doct. ' Not for the World; 'twas not for
' that End that I sent for't, but to refuse your
' kind Intentions: For with your Childrens
' Curses, Sir, I dare not, must not take it.

Sir *John*. ' Nay, good my Lord, you carry
' it now too far; my Daughter is not wrong'd
' by it, but, if not Obstinate, may still be Hap-
' py: And for my wicked Son, shall he then
' Heir my Lands, to propagate more miserable
' Schismatics? No, let him depend on you,
' whom he has wrong'd; perhaps in Time he
' may reflect upon his Father's Justice, be re-
' conciled to your rewarded Vertues, and re-
' form his fatal Errors.

[*Re-enter Charles with a Writing.*]

Doct. ' That would be indeed a Blessing.

Sir *John*. ' If Heaven should at last reclaim
' him, the Power to Right him still is your's;
' in you, I know, he yet would find a fond
' forgiving Father.

Doct.

Doct. ‘ The Imagination of so blest’d an
 ‘ Hour, softens me to a Tenderness I can’t
 ‘ support.

Sir John. ‘ O the dear good Man! Come,
 ‘ come, let’s in, to execute this Deed.

Doct. ‘ Will you then force me to accept this
 ‘ Trust? For, call it what you will, with me
 ‘ it shall never be more than such.

Sir John. ‘ Let that depend upon the Con-
 ‘ duct of my Son.

Doct. Well, Sir, since yet it may prevent his
 ‘ Ruine, I consent.

Hereupon the English Playwright introduces his Fourth Act with a Dialogue between *Maria* and *Charles*, wherein the old Doctor (as has been before concerted between the young Lady and the Doctor’s Servant, who had discover’d the whole Affair of the Deed to her before in the Third) is made to sign a Writing of a quite contrary Tendency, wherein Justice is done to the Persons that would have been utterly Ruin’d by the latter. Which is destructive of all Sense and Reason; since it is next to an Impossibility, whatsoever may be pleaded in Excuse of *Sir John’s Earnestness* to have it done, and the Doctor’s want of *Curiosity* to examine a Line of it, that the one should set his Hand to a Paper, without the least inspection concerning the Purport of it; or the other, whom he makes very much upon his Guard in other Particulars, take it with *Reluctance*, and without the least Eye upon the Contents. *Charles*
 his

his discovery of his Love to the young Lady in the same Scene, is much of the same Complexion with this ridiculous piece of Indiscretion, for being Overstrain'd and Unnatural; and his yielding up that Passion at her Request, so resignedly and calmly, that he had foster'd up and entertain'd with the greatest Ardor, seems no small transgression of the Laws of the *Drama*, and very highly to offend against *Cupid's* Statutes. The Discourse betwixt the *Doctor* and *Maria*, when Sir *John* brings him to make Court to her, is a like Impertinent and Incredible; because it is not very easie to be imagin'd, that one who had with such Difficulty just before escap'd from the Toil that was laid for him in his Address'es to his Mother-in-Law, should put it into the Power of the Daughter, who he knew hated him heartily, from her own Confession, to ruine him in a Case of Bribery and flagrant Injustice, as is therein stipulated between them. But what are Nature, the Rules of the Stage, or the Authority of Reason, to such a Profligate as this Felon of a Writer? The Clergy is to be blacken'd; and while *Cibber* has the Dirt in his Hand, he flings it about, without Why or Wherefore, that it may stick lustily on the Sacred Order. It avails not with him that he had before endeavour'd, and was still going on, to detect a Minister that serves God at the Altar according to the Usage of the Church of *England*, in unlawful and forbidden Love, but he must make him a Thief as well as an Adulter-

rer, a Betrayer of his Trust, in a word, every thing that could set aside the Name of Religion, or the Practice of it, at the same time as he would be thought, in his Dedication to His Majesty, to have a Concern for tacitly inveighing against those People that turn'd our Church and Constitution into Irreligion and *Anarchy*.

Were I to follow the Example of him that has publish'd a *Key to Mr. Cibber's Nonjuror*, that has no such Thing as a *Lock* to it, I should take Leave of the Reader here, and more *Curleano*, after I had accus'd others of *Plagiarism*, at the same time as no One breathing was more guilty of making bold with other Mens Works than himself. Though how he came to overlook his Author's *Tossing St. Bartholomew in a Blanket, before a Mob-Audience in a Theatre*, without some Retrospection upon the late Treatment of a near Acquaintance of his at *Westminster College*, or for what Reason he suffer'd Mr. *Joseph Gay* to fall foul upon the Obscenity of the Play, without asking Pardon of God and the World for his Bookseller's Cases of Impotency, and other surreptitious Ribaldry, that I suppose is to himself, or will remain to others a Secret. For what reason also he calls his *imaginary KET* a *compleat* one, might not be out of the Question, since Sir *John Woodvil's* Character, and Mr. *H—y* of *C—b*, are as different from each other as Light from Darkness, and there are no more Grounds to imagine, that because the Doctor bids his Servant deliver such

and such Letters to *Aoran Sham* the Jew, he must thereby mean *Mr. Francia*, than that the Aspersions cast upon *Dr. Wolf*, whom at the same time the Poet makes *Suffragan Bishop of Thetford*, have any relation to *Dr. Welton*, *Mr. Howel*, or the late *Mr. Paul*. His other Pieces of Guess-work that are alike incoherent, have as small Grounds for any Credit to be given them, and *Mr. M—* the Writing-Knight, (which of the two *Sir Richards* he tells us not,) *Lord Charles Murray*, *Lady Betty C—*, *Miss H—w*, the *Lady Br—l*, and *Mr. H—d*, are full as little to be judg'd in *Mr. Cibber's* Thoughts, than any other *Design*, excepting that of keeping his Audience in the Dark, to the Intent that he with the greater Facility might pick their Pockets.

But I find myself under a sort of Obligation to go through with the Two last Acts, before I speak further on that Head, and enter into some other Reflexions on that melancholy Subject. Therefore to be as brief as possible, the Reader is to observe how *Tartuffe* in *Moliere* stands prepar'd, by *Orgon's* Leave, to execute his Designs, which he immediately goes upon the Perpetration of in the Fourth Act, where he is caught in the very Attempt, after the very same manner as the Doctor, in the Fifth written by *Mr. Cibber*, with this Advantage on the side of the former, that his coming out hastily from thence, occasions a very pleasant Dialogue between *Pernelle* and *Orgon* at the close of the Whole; wherein
the

the Mother argues in Favour of the Hypocrite, and says, ' You ought to have just Cause, before you accuse any body, and you should have stay'd 'till you had seen all things certain.' To this *Organ* answers, ' What the Devil, how could I be more certain? You'd have had me stay'd, Mother, 'till in my sight he had — You'll make me utter some Folly. *Pernelle*. In short, his Soul is smitten with too pure a Zeal, and I can't imagine how he could attempt what you say he did. *Dorina*, [*Woman to Mariana*.] A just Return, Sir, on my Word. You would believe no body, and now no body will believe you.' But Mr. *Cibber* reserves both the Crime and the Punishment of the Criminal to his Last Act; tho' the *English*, who stands indebted to the *French* Author for almost every Hint, is much to be blamed for changing the Incident of the Casket full of Reasonable Papers left in *Orgon's* Possession by his Friend *Argas*, who was fled from Justice, and by him intrusted into the Custody of *Tartuffe*, whereby the Poet had a much larger Field of complimenting the Prince whom he took the unlicens'd Liberty of Dedicating his Play to, into a Correspondence with the Colonel, and giving that Merit to a Boy, which was wholly ascribed, in the Original, to the Wisdom of the King; which is artfully display'd by *Moliere* at the close of his excellent Comedy, in these Words, ' We live under a Prince that's an Enemy to Fraud, a

‘ Prince whose Eyes penetrate to the Heart,
 ‘ and who cannot be deceiv’d by all the Im-
 ‘ postors in the World. His great Soul, pro-
 ‘ vided with a discerning Judgment, always
 ‘ takes a right View of Things. Never any
 ‘ thing gets too much Footing in that, and
 ‘ his firm Reason falls into no Excess. He
 ‘ gives to good Men an immortal Glory, but
 ‘ he shews this Zeal without Blindness; and
 ‘ his Love for the truly Pious, don’t shut his
 ‘ Heart against the Horrors which those that
 ‘ are falsely so, ought to inspire. This Man
 ‘ (meaning *Tartuffe*) was not able to surprize
 ‘ him, and he guards himself from his most
 ‘ cunning Snares. He immediately by his
 ‘ quick Perception pierc’d all the Foldings of
 ‘ his Heart. Coming to accuse you, he be-
 ‘ tray’d himself, and discover’d himself to the
 ‘ Prince to be a renowned Cheat, of which
 ‘ he was informed under another Name. In
 ‘ a word, that Monarch detests his Ingrati-
 ‘ to you; he sends me hither under him to
 ‘ see how far his Impudence would go, and
 ‘ to make him give you [to *Organ*] full Sa-
 ‘ tisfaction, &c.’ What an Example was
 here to have drawn a Copy from? And how
 much more would it have redounded to the
 display of his own Justice to the Author from
 whom he borrowed his other Incidents, and
 to the Reverence he ought to have had for
 his Prince’s Character, to have follow’d *Moliere*
 in this, than to have borrowed every other
 Particular from him worthy of Notice, and
 omitted

omitted this for the sake of an improbable Escape from *Preston*, and a more improbable Concealment of a Rebel in *Newgate*, and elsewhere : But this Scavenger of a Collector of Scandal, may in all probability imagine that it would be an Act of Supererogation to tread farther in the Footsteps of this modest Poet, who with his Countryman *Corneille*, never brings Priests of any Kind upon the Stage, than in making use of his Ground-work, to build a preposterous piece of Machinery upon, contrary to all the Rules of Architecture ; and to make that into a Temple, in dishonour to all Goodness and Religion, that was intended for a Brothel-House.

The holy Function is much too Solemn to be play'd with : Christianity is for no fooling ; neither the *Place*, the *Occasion*, nor the *Actors* are fit for such a Representation. To bring the *Church* into the *Play-House*, is the way to bring the *Play-House* into the *Church* : 'Tis apt to turn Religion into *Romance*, and make unthinking People conclude, that all serious Matters are nothing but *Farce*, *Fiction*, and *Design*. And now, what Pleasure is there in Abuse ? What Propriety is there in Misrepresentation ? In confounding Respects, disguising Features, and painting Things out of all Colour and Complexion ? Is it such an Entertainment, to see Religion worried by Atheism, and Things the most Solemn and Significant, tumbled and tofs'd by Buffoons ? A Man may laugh at a Puppy's tearing a Wardrobe, but I think 'twould be
alto-

altogether as discreet to beat him off. Well! but the Clergy mismanage sometimes, and they must be told of their Faults. What then? Are the Poets their Ordinaries? Is the Pulpit under the Discipline of the Stage? And are those fit to correct the Church, that are not fit to come into it? Besides, What makes 'em fly out upon the Function, and Rail by wholesale? Is the Priesthood a Crime, and the Service of God a Disadvantage? I grant, Persons and Things are not always suited. A good Post may be ill kept; but then the Censure should keep close to the Fault, and the Office not suffer for the Mismanager. The Clergy may have their Failings sometimes like others; but what then? The Character is still Untarnish'd. But I confess, to bring Religious Men upon a Stage, that has hitherto given a free Reception to Libertines, may be thought by some, to be the readiest Way to a COMPREHENSION: So it is high time to conclude with a Dyftich of Mr. Rowe in the Prologue, where, speaking of the Church, he says,

*Long may She these her worst of Foes defy,
And lift her Mitred Head triumphant to the
(Sky.*

F I N I S.