



Lud. Du Guernier inv. et Sculp.

WIT at a PINCH:

OR, THE

Lucky Prodigal.

A

COMEDY.

As it is Acted

At the New THEATRE
In *Lincoln's-Inn-Fields*.

LONDON:

Printed for E. Curll, and J. Pemberton,
against St. Dunstan's Church in Fleet-street;
and J. Brown, and W. Mears, without
Temple-bar. 1715. Price 1 s.



To the Peaceable ..

PATRONS of the STAGE.

GENTLEMEN,

THE Brothers of the Quill,
at least those of the Dra-
matick Fraternity, have
made it their long Observa-
tion, that the coolest Heads show'r
the warmest Favours on the Theatri-
cal Performances: You, Worthy Sirs,
who not in the least fired with *Party*,
and consequently no ways tainted with
the present too universal Contagion,
can quietly sit down under Your
own Fig-tree; there make an honest
Payment of Your Treble Debt of
Gratitude to the Founders of the
whole Feast of Life, *viz.* Bless both
the Memcry of Your Parents that

A 3

gave

To the peaceable Patrons of the Stage.

gave You Your Wealth, Providence that gives You Your Health, and the Government Your Protection. Thus from a plentiful Table, and a cheerful Grace-Cup, can trole to the innocent Diversion of the Fiddle and the Comedian; then back again to Your untroubled Rest, without the least Visionary Dream of the two terrible Goblins now rais'd amongst us. 'Tis You, Gentlemen, are the *Muses* best Benefactors; and the Poetical Pens lie under no higher Obligation, than paying You their Dutiful Acknowledgments accordingly. But, alas, *Hinc illæ lacrymæ!* You, peaceable Gentlemen, make but a narrow Class of Worthies; and Your Visits alone are not enough to support the Stage, in the present unhappy Divisions, and the Irruption of a Civil War in our Bowels, How many Thousands, on both Sides, have their Hearts so fix'd at *Stirling* or *Perth*, that a poor Dish of Coffee, with an Hour's Chat upon News and Politicks, compounds

To the peaceable Patrons of the Stage.

pounds for many a fair Half-Crown, that otherwise had been devoted to the *Play-House*.

But here we cannot forbear Reflecting on One more particular Hardship upon the *Muses*, that is, the too popular Outcry, that the *Theatres* are *Party-Houses*; the *Governours*, or *Masters* of the *New Play-House*, being maliciously represented to be of a contrary Inclination to those of the *Old One*. How this villainous Suggestion took Rise is unaccountable, when 'tis well known, there cannot be warmer Zealots, or more hearty Devotees to the present Government, than the *Founders* and *Proprietors* in that House; more especially the two Young Gentlemen, the nearest concern'd in it, it being a Principle suck'd in with their very Milk.

If it may be said that any of their Servants, Acting under them, are of a different Kidney; even that Calumny, when well examin'd, 'tis hoped, may be wiped off. For as they are very sensible, that *Inter Arma silent Artes*,
when

To the peaceable Patrons of the Stage.

when the Drum rattles the Muse is struck dumb ; and where Blood flows Diversion stops. And as the now Face of Affairs plainly shows them, that the present Administration is neither so weak at Home, nor in her Alliances Abroad; even the New attempted Revolution, but with the most plausible Flattery of Success, could not be less than the Work of Years ; and consequently, when the Scene of Blood spreads wider and nearer to Us, the Play-Houses, in Course, must have shut up their Doors. Certainly these Gentlemen of the Sock and the Buskin, possibly not over-loaded with Fortunes and Patrimonies to support them without their Labours for their Bread, cannot well be supposed to have any over-warm Fondness for Fire and Sword, both to the National Ruin and their own : No, no, they have learn'd so long to speak Sense on the Stage, as not to be down-right Fools in the Tying-Room. Even Self-Preservation alone has been their better School.

To the peaceable Patrons of the Stage.

School-Mistress, and has taught them to sit down with their own honest *Trinculo*, to joyn in his frank Declaration for, *Peace, and the Butt.*

As to the Inclination of the *Sons of the Muses*, 'tis observable, that Providence has, at present, distributed the Poetical Talent, (at least to those of Figure and Merit amongst 'em) to the Well-wishers to the Establishment: In their warmest Wishes therefore, for the speedy Restoration of their dear Country's Quiet and Tranquility, they hope to see the Day when our Victorious *Heroes* shall shine in our Boxes again; nay, and the Vanquish'd too, even the mortify'd Side shall creep into some Corner or other of the Play-House, if only for a little Mirth to wear off their Melancholy: And consequently, both the Theatrical Trade, as well as the National One, shall once more flourish.

P R O.



PROLOGUE

THE Prodigal we now bring on the Stage,
Tho' English dress'd, sprung from French P
(rentag

Ev'n when Britannia her dread Thunder bore
To strike her Terrors to the Gallick Shore ;
Their Muses found an open Entrance here ;
We fought not with their Racine nor Moliere.
No Prohibition there did we enjoyn :

French Wit came over cheaper than French W
Not that the French Stage-Wit brings Wen
(for

At least her Tragick Muse has no hard Birth.
No, their Heroicks, tied to those strict Rules,
Those Critick Laws, impos'd by Pedant Schools ;
Beneath their Shackles, so unmerciful,
Politely weak, and regularly dull ;
Those Skelliton thin Births, have no Pretence
T' our manlier English Growth, Plot, Strength,
(S

Oh ! Shakespear had such Tyranny reign'd here
A Yoke our free-born Bards wou'd never bear ;
F



Dramatis Personæ

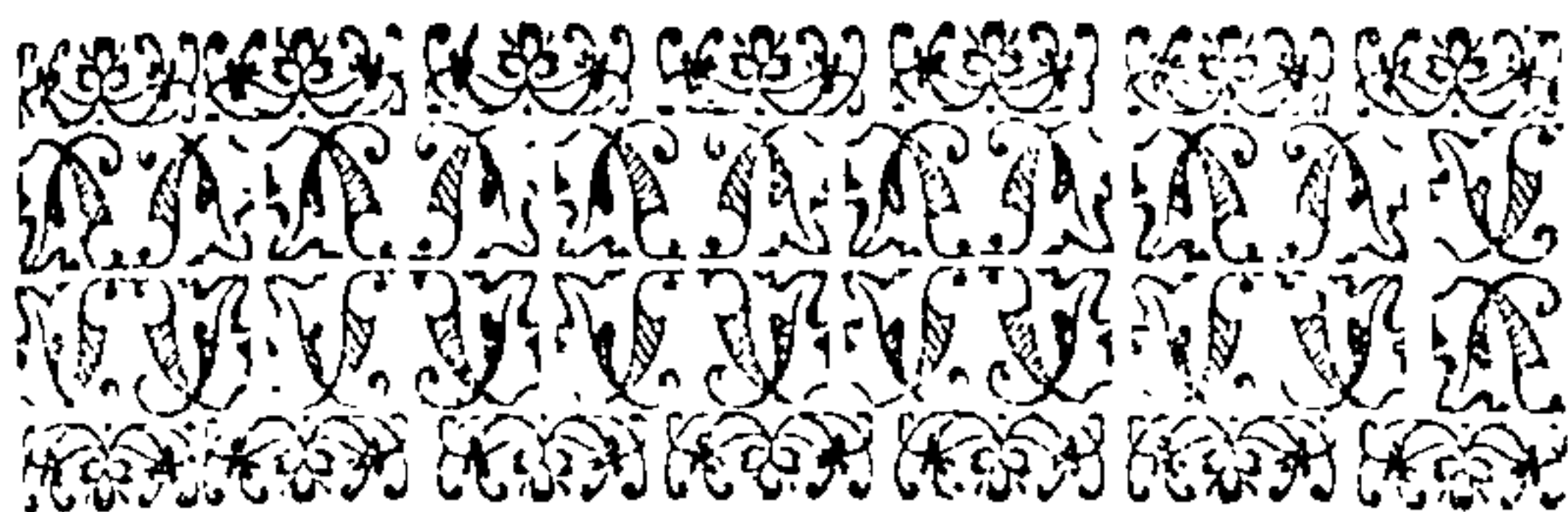
M E N.

Mr. Gerard, an old Gentleman, Father to <i>Charles Gerard</i> ,	} Mr. Griffin.
<i>Charles</i> , a young Student, in Love with <i>Lucinda</i> ,	
A False Marquess, <i>Andrew</i> , an Usurer, <i>Merlin</i> , Gerard's Man, <i>Jaquinet</i> , old Gerard's Man,	} Mr. Smith. Mr. Bullock, jun. Mr. Knapp. Mr. Spiller. Mr. H. Bullock.

W O M E N.

<i>Madam Bertrand</i> , an old Lady, <i>Lu-</i> <i>cinda's</i> Aunt,	} Mrs. Kent.
<i>Lucinda</i> , <i>Madam Bertrand's</i> Neice, in Love with <i>Charles</i> .	
<i>Cydne</i> , <i>Lucinda's</i> Cousin, <i>Priscilla</i> , <i>Lucinda's</i> Woman,	} Mrs. Vincent. Mrs. Rubridge. Mrs. Spiller.

W I T



WIT at a PINCH:
OR, THE
Lucky PRODIGAL.



ACT I.

SCENE the Street.

Enter Madam Bertrand meeting Priscilla.



O, —well met, Mrs. *Priscilla* ;
I am glad of this Opportunity ;
pray let us have a little seri-
ous Discourse.

Madam.

Pris. As serious as you please,

M. Bert. Do you know that I am very
uneasie at my Niece's Conduct ?

B

Prisc. But how, Madam? What are the Faults you find?

M. Bert. —She does nothing but commit Faults; and the greatest, I think, is her keeping such an unlucky Jade as you are, who fill her with nothing else but evil Instructions, and drive her on, Huzzy, to do those things to which she is already too prone, and needs none of your Counselling.

Prisc. Is this your serious Discourse, Madam? Truly, if I was to make as serious Answers, our Conversation might be a fit Subject for Laughter: But the Respect I have to you, and your being my Mistress's Aunt, forbids my Replying with that Sharpness, I otherwise wou'd.

M. Bert. You have a great deal of Moderation.

Prisc. Indeed, it were to be wish'd, Madam, that you had as much, then you wou'd not be one of the First that shou'd scandalize your Niece after this Manner, and by such Talk, which proceeds rather from a Defect of your Understanding, than any thing else.

M. Bert. How now, Impudence? The Defect of my Understanding! 'Tis the Effect of your Manners makes me speak, and nothing can be more scandalous than the Life you lead.

Prisc.

Prisc. If you come to that, Madam, Pray what do we do, that we need be ashamed of?

M. Bert. What, Is there any thing more shameful than *Lucinda's* daily Expence? A Person that has her little Income?

Prisc. But we have Credit, Madam, and that you know is almost the same thing.

M. Bert. She must have fine Lodgings, fine Cloaths, and every thing else suitable.

Prisc. May not every Body make their Fortune if they can?

M. Bert. Yes; But what Way does she do it?

Prisc. Very innocently, I assure you; she Eats, Drinks, Dances, Sings, Laughs, Plays, Talks, and Fortune favours us with all the honourable Conversation, such attracting Charms can gain us.

M. Bert. Her Charms! Her Levity you mean. Ay, Fortune may favour her that way; But where is Reputation gone? She'll see the Worst on't: For my Part, she shan't have a Penny of my Estate. What, tho' my latest dearest Hopes, my poor Girl is lain in her Virgin Bed of Dust, my only Child snatch'd from me; let not your Mistress fancy that her

4 *Wit at a Pinch : Or,*
Nearness of Blood to me shall entitle her
to either my Favours, or my Fortune,
whilst she takes this Course to forfeit
them. Well, we must have Patience,
her Youth won't last always.

Prisc. No, truly, and for that Reason
we take care to make good Use of our
Time.

M. Bert. Very good, and mind what
this comes to at last, when you have lost
your Reputation, and can go on no
longer, you'll both die in a Garret.

Prisc. Oh, no, Madam, a good Hus-
band spoils that Prediction.

M. Bert. A good Husband ! Why ?
What is she going to be married ?

Prisc. Yes, Madam.

M. Bert. In a very good Time ! I ut-
terly discard her,—I'll have nothing to do
in it,—I'll help to deceive no Body.

Prisc. You need not trouble your self,
Madam, we shall manage our Affairs as
well without you, never fear.

M. Bert. I suppose this is some fine Bu-
siness too, of a-piece with the rest, I
don't doubt. [*Exit M. Bert.*

Prisc. When this is done, you'll think
your self happy in being Aunt to such a
Niece.

Enter

Enter Merlin.

Merl. How do'st, *Priscilla*? How is it, my little Rogue? What old Beldam was that you were talking with just now?

Prisc. What! Are not you acquainted with *Madam Bertrand*, my Mistress's Aunt?

Merl. Yes, but I did not much mind her.

Prisc. — She's a miserable old Creature, but has a good Estate; tho' *Lucinda* has little of her own, she has Rich Relations.

Merl. — Ay, but she's never the better for 'em.

Prisc. Come, we ought not to despair, she may be in Time: She'll be a great Heiress after the Death of three Uncles, two Aunts, and six Cousin-Germans, four Nephews, and as many Nieces.

Merl. — The Devil! — Why, if there shou'd happen to be a Plague — as you say, she might have great Expectations.

Prisc. However, she's a very desirable Lady at present, she has Beauty. —

Merl. — True, her Beauty surpasses every thing, and my Master is resolv'd to marry her.

B 3

Prisc. And

Prisc. And she's resolv'd to marry your Master.

Merl. — We may, perhaps, have a little Disturbance at the old Fellow's Return, but we shan't see him a long while; so that we shall have time enough to prepare our selves for that: And if no other Misfortune happens upon this Wedding, my Master's a happy Man.

Prisc. I don't understand what you mean by other Misfortunes.

Merl. Ah, *Priscilla*, Marriage is subject to great Revolutions.

Prisc. Thou Fool, dost thou think young Mr. Gerard can ever repent his Marriage with *Lucinda*, a young Lady of my bringing up?

Merl. — So much the worse.

Prisc. A Lady that's handsom, young and witty.

Merl. These are but small Encouragements.

Prisc. A Lady that loves to live pleasantly.

Merl. — That is too much the Fault of the whole Sex.

Prisc. — A Lady, wise, modest, and vertuous?

Merl. — What, and of your Educating, I warrant you, ha?

Prisc. —

The Lucky Prodigal.

Prisc. — Yes, Fool, of my Educating; and what then, Sirrah?

Merl. — Nay, nothing — Prithee, *Priscilla*, don't be angry; — shall I let you know my real Sentiments of this Matter? Then to speak freely, between you and I, I don't like this Marriage at all, — and I don't find that we shall get any thing by it: — For look you, my young Master's Expences, at present, are large; and a good Reason why, because he is in Love; for 'tis Love makes him liberal: Now, since Marriage cures Love, it puts a Stop to his Liberality 'o course, and then what the Devil will become of us.

Prisc. Oh! He's of too generous a Nature, ever to become avaritious. Has your Master given good Orders for the Entertainment to Day?

Merl. — Oh! Here's the Devil and all to do; three Cooks are just now arriv'd with all their Kitchin Equipage, he has sent in six Dozen of *Champaigne*, tho' there's none in the Country.

Prisc. Good — I like this Manner of Living; but here comes your Master.

Enter

Enter Charles.

Char. — Good Morrow my pretty *Priscilla*; How does your Mistress? What is she doing?

Prisc. — *Cydne* and she are together.

Char. — Go run to her, my dear *Priscilla*, and tell her each Moment I am absent from her, brings fresh Torment to my Mind.

Prisc. — I believe, in my Heart, you were made for one another: Poor Creature, when she does not see you, she whines and pines her self away to Death almost; I'll answer for her, she'll be here in an Instant. [Exit.

Merl. — So, Sir, — You're going to be married, I perceive; Heaven be thank'd, you're just at the Finishing of your Love and Money together; and you have certainly made a fine Conclusion of your Affairs. But, Sir, pray consider — what you are doing in your Father's Absence, who you know is now in *Portugal*, a true City Son of *Gresham*, over Head and Ears in Commerce and Traffick, heaping Wealth, if possible, as fast as you squander it. Well, the old Gentleman, as long as he has been absent, has not taken up his

his foreign Quarters for a Lease of Life, we shall have him trip Home again, and how you are prepar'd for his Return!—

Char. — What, Impertinence! Prithee hold thy Tongue; let us enjoy the Present, never regret what is past, nor think of what Consequences may be produced by future Effects. Did not you receive some Money for me some few Days ago?

Merl. — About some three Weeks ago, I receiv'd half a Year's Advance of one of your Tenants, for the Raising of which you gave him a Receipt for the whole Year.

Char. — Well.

Merl. — Last Week I receiv'd a hundred and fifty Pounds from a Gentleman, for two large Pictures, for which your Father refus'd three Hundred a little before he went.

Char. — Well.

Merl. — Well, — I have also receiv'd two hundred Pounds of the same Chap. for that Tapestry, which your Father bought three Years ago, and for which he gave four hundred Pound.

Char. — Good.

Merl.

Merl. Yes, Yes, we have made fine Bargains, during your Father's Absence, han't we?

Char. Well, this is some little Support for the present; when we want again, we must work upon other Foundations.

Merl. Then, in short, Sir, you may work by your self, for my Conscience won't let me any longer be an Instrument of your Ruin: It has been thorough my Diligence that you have spent above a thousand Pound, besides five or six hundred Pound that you owe, and which we daily expect to fall upon our Backs.

Char. — The Man that gives me the most Troubie is *Andrew*, and I don't owe him above two hundred Pounds.

Merl. You borrow'd no more, 'tis true, but you have given him a Bill for three Hundred: Four Days ago he took out a Writ, and I am afraid will make you solemnize your Marriage in a Prison.

Char. Never fear, we'll find some Expedient or other to remove these Inconveniencies.

Merl. — Pray what Expedient can you find? We've made Money of all we can; your Rents are paid before-hand; as for the House in Town, 'twou'd grieve one to
see

The Lucky Prodigal.

11

See it, it's so stripp'd ; and you have cut down all the Wood round about that in the Country, under Pretence of having a better Prospect ; for my Part, all Intention is at an End with me.

Char. — If my Father shou'd stay away five or six Months, I shou'd have Time ; which, with good Conduct, may retrieve the Disorders of my Youth.

Merl. — Certainly ; But what is your Father working for, but to repair these Disorders ?

Char. For nothing else, as I know of.

Merl. — Then you had much better commit these Extravagancies during his Life, than after his Death, for then he won't be able to remedy 'em.

Char. — Right, *Merlin.*

Merl. — Come, Sir, you have not done so much Mischief neither, if we consider ; for your Father will get a great deal of Money while he is Abroad, and you have spent a great deal in that Time ; so when he comes Home, what can he be angry at ; for 'tis the same thing as if he had never travell'd.

Charl. — Thou'rt a clever Fellow, *Merlin*, Faith.

Merl. —

Merl. — Between you and I, Sir, the Father of yours is none of the cunning'st; his Head's a little of the weakest, tho' his Faith's pretty strong. Formerly, remember I have led him by the Nose and made him believe what I wou'd especially if I got into a Tale of Witches or Spirits; for he's strangely superstitious that way; and I believe, were he to return now, I cou'd make a Shift to draw you out of these Difficulties. Come, Sir, Courage. How many shall you be a Table to Day?

Char. — Five, or six.

Merl. — And the *French* Marques, as you call him, or rather as he calls himself; for we have no other Tradition of his Original but his own. He who helps you so generously to eat out your Estate will he be there?

Charl. — He promis'd me, — but hold — here comes the Charming *Lucinda* and her Cousin with her.

Enter Lucinda, Cydne, and Priscilla.

Luc. — After all your passionate Professions, and mutual Vows between us, these Proceedings cannot be justify'd, but by the Success of the Event; and I sha

be utterly undone, if this Marriage does not succeed according to my Wishes.

Char. — My Dear, my Charming *Lucinda* ! All the Care I have is to make your Happiness compleat ; your Friend there, can justify the Sincerity of my Intentions.

Cyd. — That, indeed, I can ; but pray, before you come to a Conclusion, let me know what Part I am to perform in all this ?

Merl. — Why, e'en for Company sake, I say, take a Husband too ; you need only speak a Word, my Master has Acquaintance enough.

Prisc. — Ay, Madam, do, take One ; were I in your Place, I shou'd soon determine.

Merl. They say Gaping's catching ; now the Devil fetch me, if I have not the greatest Inclination in the World to marry *Priscilla*.

Char. — I wish our Example might be of so much Force as to engage you to imitate it ; there is a young Gentleman of my Acquaintance just fall'n out with his Friends. —

Merl. — And to marry without their Consent, is a fine Way of Reconciliation, truly.

C

Cyd. —

Cyd. — No, I am for no clandestine Doings; as I have no Dependance on any Body but my self, so I won't marry any one that has.

Merl. — Right, — but here comes your Marquis; I'll run in, and see if every Thing is ready for your Dinner. [*Exit.*

Enter the Marquis.

Marq. Ha, — my good Friend, your most humble Servant; — Ha, Ladies, yours, — eternally devoted to the Service of your Sex: I know, without my Company, you can take no Satisfaction. — Well, is Dinner ready? Shall we have Store of good Wine to Night, my Friends? 'Egad, I think I never was in a better Humour in my Life. — Come — lets be gay, — brisk and merry; I defie any thing to put me out of the Humour I'm now in.

Cyd. — I assure you, Sir, we have staid for you.

Prisc. Fie, Madam, wou'd you have a Marquis the First at an Entertainment? That wou'd look as if he had nothing else to do.

Marq.

Marq. Upon my Honour, Ladies, 'tis no more than forty-nine Minutes since I left *Epsome*; you know that Pair of *Flander's* Mares I commonly drive with: I am sure Two better Beasts were never put in a Chaise, my Coachman drove, as if't had been for a Wager.

Luc. Methinks you shou'd have a little Mercy on Two such beautiful, and serviceable Creatures.

Marq. [*Not bearing.*] Well,— my dear Friend, now you're made Possessor of those Joys, and will swim in those Delights you have long wish'd for. What Excess of Happiness must there be, when two Lovers, having an equal Affection for one another, do, at last, taste those long'd for, secret Pleasures, which were before forbid?

Ch. r. But tell me, did you call, as you promis'd me, at the Jewellers, for the Jewels?

Marq. [*Not answering, but speaking to Cydne.*] And you, pretty Lady! does not this Example give you Encouragement? Had not you as good pay your Debts to Love and Nature, and take some Person you may live happily with? Fie, Madam, don't, for shame, live in the World and be useless.

Cyd. — I don't find a single Life's a Burden to me.

Marq. — Let you and I make a sort of a Bargain now ; for without Vanity, the Ladies were made for me, and I made for the Ladies ; never trust my Honour if I don't find you just to my Fancy : I perceive too, that for a Day or two I cou'd adore you, love you even to Madness,—but no Marriage : — D'ye see, I can't endure Matrimony, I love to carry on an Amour that has no bad Consequences attending it. D'ye understand me ?

Prisc. Truly, this Discourse is ease enough to be understood, it needs no Commentary ; — but, Sir——

Marq. It is certain I cannot be parallel'd, for teaching any rude Heir of a Family Gentility, Gaming, giving him a good Taste in his Cloaths, Furniture, Equipage, &c. Are not these sort of Gentlemen happy in having such a Person to instruct 'em in these Principles ? Or, can they learn from any Body sooner to be undone ?

Luc. — Have you many Scholars, Sir.

Marq. —

Marq. — [*Not minding.*] Where's *Merlin*? I don't see him: I cannot but admire at your Father's chusing you such a discreet Governour, for putting away Duns, stopping a Usurer's Mouth, or Gutting a House, there's not his Fellow; but here he comes.

Enter Merlin.

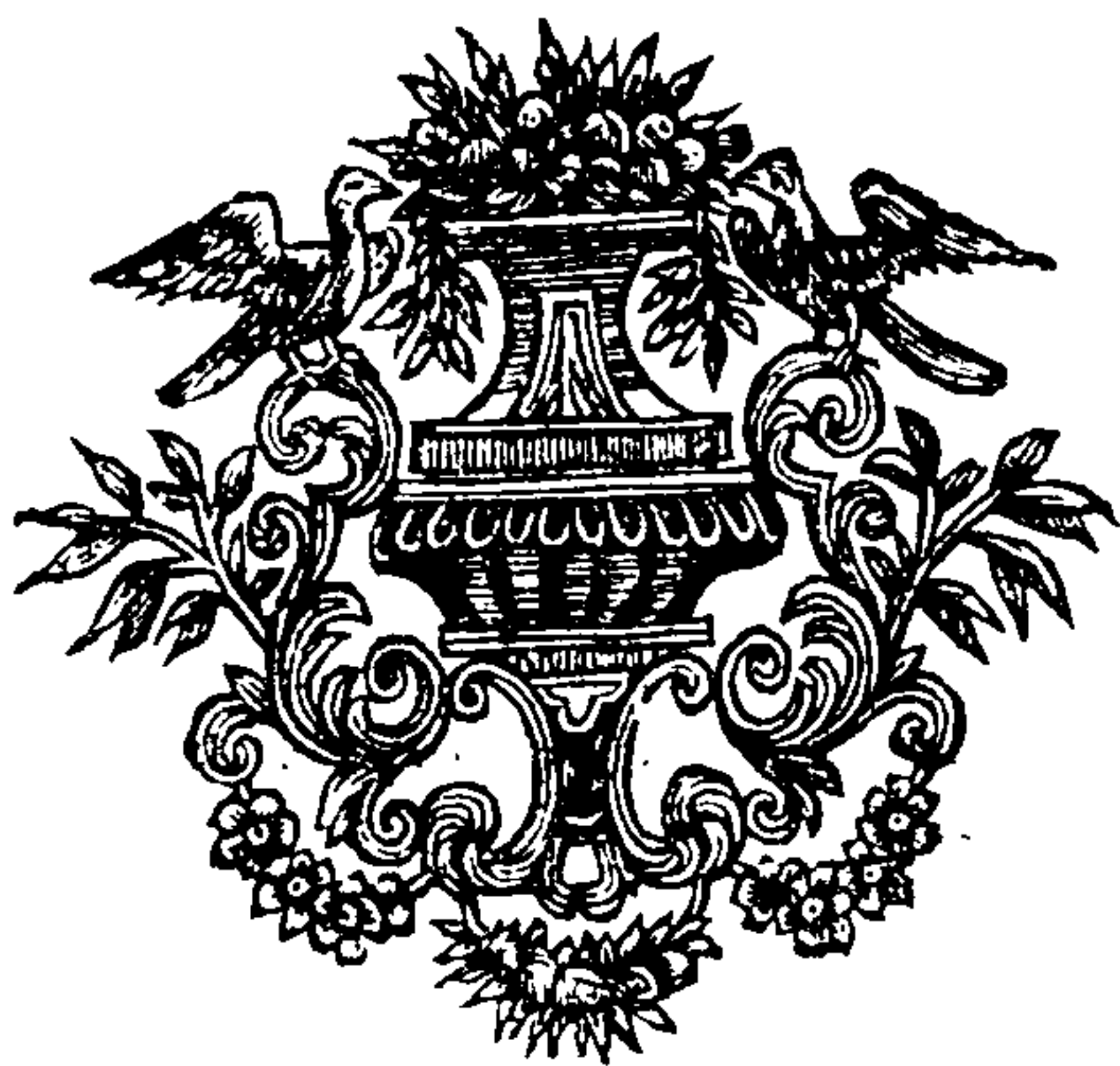
Merl. — Ladies and Gentlemen, if you please to walk in, Dinner's upon the Table.

Marq. — That's well said; I find my self dispos'd to be merry this Evening, and fancy I cou'd drink a Glafs of good Wine with Pleasure. I told you *Merlin* was a pretty Lad. Come, Ladies, those that love me, follow me. [*Goes out first.*]

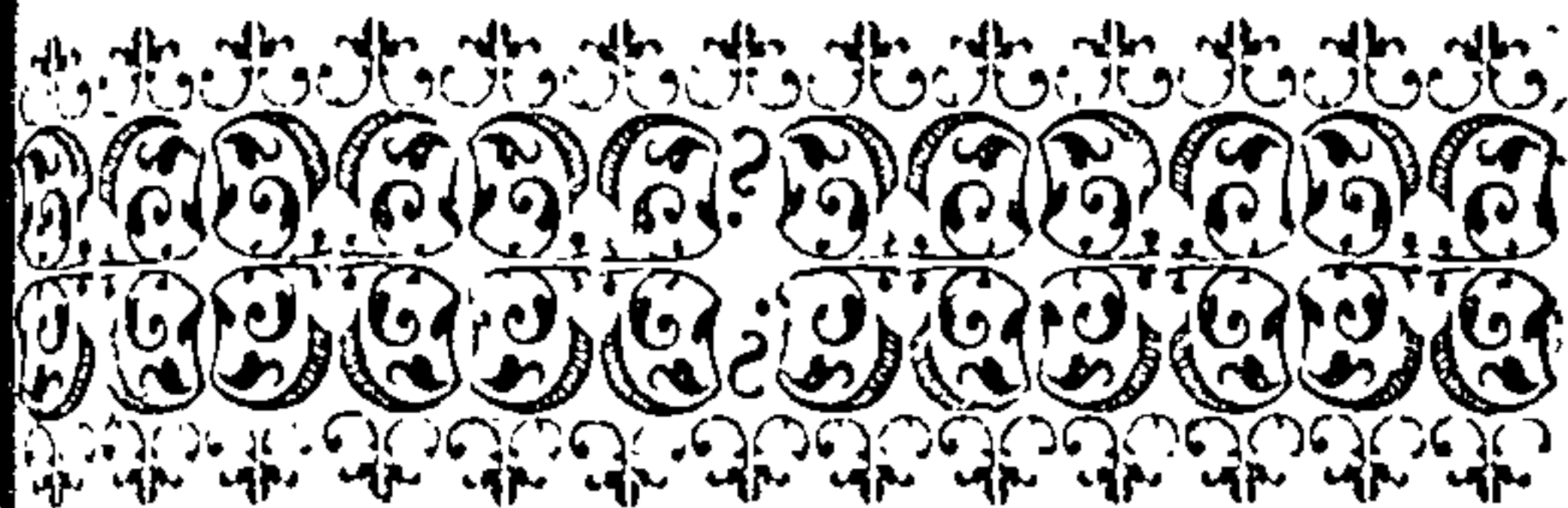
Char. — Each Minute's precious to a Lover; then let's away, and lose no Time. —

*When courting Lovers, treat the charming Fair,
 What's the poor Entertainments they prepare?
 The Feast, the Song, the Dance, those empty
 (Toys
 are but faint Prologues to Diviner Joys.
 [Exeunt.*

The End of the First Act.



ACT



A C T II.

Enter Merlin.

Merl. **S**O, — Now their Affairs are
in a fine Posture; what Joy
there is among these Amorous Fools now;
— pray Heaven it may continue. —
But who's that I see yonder coming this
Way. — If my Eyes don't deceive me,
'tis *Jaquinett*, my old Master's Man, —
'tis he, Faith; — now Wit, or
never.

Enter Jaquinett.

Jaq. — So, now 'tis hop'd we are at
our Journey's End. — Ha! *Merlin*,
How dost thou do?

C 4

Merl. —

Merl. — Plague on him, [*Aside.*] Oh! welcome Home, Mr. *Faqui*, How have you done this long time?

Faq. — You see we are arriv'd, at last, after a great deal of Fatigue.

Merl. — We arriv'd at last? Why I thought you was come alone?

Faq. — What, art mad! Why, I am come with my Master, he is but gone to the Custom-House, to take Care of some Things there, and sent me before to let his Son know of our safe Arrival.

Merl. — Ay, this News will rejoyce him indeed; — What the Devil shall we do! [*Aside.*]

Faq. — What's the Matter, *Merlin*? Methinks you look discontented, and not satisfy'd at our Return.

Merl. — I'm afraid all's undone, Faith: [*Aside.*] But tell me, *Faqui*, has the good old Man as much Business as will keep him long at the Custom-House?

Faq. — No, he'll be here in a Moment.

Merl. — In a Moment! What shall I do? [*Aside.*]

Faq. — What's the Matter with you that you can't speak?

Merl. —

Merl. — I cannot ; this cursed old Coxcomb to come at such a Time as this, and without our Knowledge too !

[*Aside.*

Faq. — I see, now, this unexpected Return disturbs you, and puts some of your Affairs at Home out of Order, does it not ?

Merl. — No, no, no, not at all ; my young Master is a Person of that Prudence, that nothing can put his Affairs into Disorder — But must you go into him your self, to give him this joyful Account of his Father's happy Return.

Faq. — Ay, and make but a short speech on't neither ; for I have two Errands to dispatch, one as far as *Westminster*.

Merl. — Then, to expedite thy Business, I'll excuse thee from the Execution of this first Errand to my young Master, and do it for thee.

Faq. — With all my Heart, and thank you, and so dear *Merl.* adieu.

[*Exit.*

Merl. — So, so, he's gone ; I would not willingly have had e'en this poor Rogue a Witness of my young Master's Riot and Debauchery, for fear of Babbling to the Old-one, but now I'll step in
my

22 *Wit at a Pinch : Or,*
my self, and give him timely Warning
of his Danger. — S'Death ! Here's his
Father appears — How shall I give him
Intelligence now, and stay at the same
time to stop the Old-one from entering ?
Oh, I see him peeping out of the Win-
dow, he has his Father in his Eye, and
his own Discretion will now be his Di-
rector.

Enter Old Gerard.

Ger. — Now thanks to Heaven, after
so many Difficulties, and Dangers, I'm
at last safe arriv'd at my dear Home, and
believe my Son will not be a little pleas'd
to find me Return in Health.

Merl. — He'd be much better pleas'd,
to know you was in Health a thousand
Leagues off.

Ger. — What Obligations have Chil-
dren to their Parents who take so much
Care, and run so many Hazards for
their Welfare !

Merl. — Yes, Faith, but they have
none to those who return untimely.

Ger. — I won't delay any longer my
going in, nor deprive him of so much
Pleasure as he'll enjoy at seeing me —
poor Rogue, he won't be able to con-
tain

tain himself for Joy, the poor Boy will be out of his Wits.

Merl. — This is the Time, Invention help [*Aside.*] Heavens! What is it I see! Am I awake? Or is it a Ghost?

Ger. — If I am not mistaken, that's *Merlin.*

Merl. — Yes, certainly it is Mr. Gerard, or the Devil in his Shape; but seriously speaking, dear Sir, can it be you, your self?

Ger. — Yes, *Merlin*, 'tis I, how dost do?

Merl. — As a faithful Servant ought, Sir; honest, gay, brisk, and always ready to obey your Commands.

Ger. — That's well, let's go in.

Merl. — Upon my Word, Sir, we did not expect you.

Ger. — No, I believe not; I came over by the Pacquet-Boat, lay last Night at *Gravesend*, and reach'd *London* this Morning Tide, my Ship arriv'd safe a Week ago.

Merl. — Faith, Sir, I think I never saw you look so well in my Life; What a fine fresh Colour you've got? Certainly, Sir, the Air of that Country from whence you came, must agree extreamly well with Persons of your Age.——

Posi-

Positively, had I been in your Place, shou'd have remain'd there sometim longer for my Health sake.

Ger. — How do's my Son? Has he taken good Care of my Affairs, during my Absence? And did those Commodities I sent last do well here?

Merl. — I'll answer for that, Sir, he's taken such Care——you can't imagine how the young Gentleman loves Money. Sir, he has dispos'd of your Money after such a Manner, and has put your Affairs into such a Posture, as upon my Word you'll be astonish'd, when you come to hear.

Ger. — Thou tell'st me such News, makes me weep for Joy; I shall find Mint of Money by him then!

Merl. — Oh! No, Sir, none at all.

Ger. — How! None at all!

Merl. — No, Sir, he's a better Manager than you imagine; he puts his Money out to good Interest, as soon he gets ten Pistols' into his Hands, he works it Day and Night.

Ger. — This it is now to give Children a right Education, and shew 'em a good Example! ——*Merlin*, let's go in, I'm distracted 'till I see him.

Merl.

Merl. — He is not at Home, Sir, now, but if you've a Mind to see him so soon. —

Enter Mr. Andrew.

And. Good Morrow, Mr. *Merlin*.

Merl. — Your humble Servant, Mr. *Andrew* — This Rogue takes a fine Time to ask his Money in. [*Aside.*

And. — Do you know, Sir, that I am weary of following your Master thus every Day, and not seeing him, pray tell him from me, that if he don't pay me, or give me some Satisfaction, to Morrow, I shall take such Methods, as perhaps mayn't please him.

Merl. — I'm afraid we are now ruin'd indeed. [*Aside.*

Ger. — What is this Business, *Merlin*?

Merl. — I'll tell you presently.

And. — Only a Business, Sir, of about three hundred Pounds due to me from his Master, for which I have his Note, have taken out a Writ, and intend speedily to put it in Execution.

Ger. — How's this, *Merlin*!

Merl. — [*Aside to Ger.*] He's a Rascal, Sir, don't mind him.

D

Ger. —

Ger. — Does his Master owe you three hundred Pounds?

And. — Yes, certainly, Sir, his very Master, young *Mr. Gerard*, whose Father they say is gone a long Voyage, I don't know whither, not I; but I'm sure he'll find a fine Reprobate of a Son, when he comes Home.

Merl. — The Devil take him; this goes quite wrong. [*Aside.*

And. — And they say, as the Son spends all he can rap and rend in Whoring, Drinking, Gaming, and so forth; so the Father is one of the most miserly, poor spirited, villainous Fellows in all *Europe*.

Ger. — What do you mean, Sir, by these Terms, my Choler rises—— 'Od-s'bud, I cou'd break his Head now. [*Aside.*

And. — I beg your Pardon, Sir, I don't speak of you, but of young *Gerard's* Father.

Ger. — *Merlin*.

Merl. — 'Tis true, Sir, he does owe him that Sum.

Ger. — And thou hast been telling me all this time of his Discretion

Merl. — Yes, Sir, 'twas owing to his Discretion, that this Money's due.

Ger. —

Ger. — What to borrow three hundred Pounds of an Usurer? For I see by his Countenance he's of that Profession.

And. — Yes, Sir, and if I ben't mistaken, I take you to be of the same Trade.

Merl. — How soon these honest Gentlemen know one another. [*Aside.*

Ger. — Hum! — And thou term'st this Prudence, *Merlin*?

Merl. — [*To Ger.*] Peace, Sir, don't speak one Word; when you know the Bottom of this, you'll be charm'd with your Son's Conduct; he has bought a House, which cost him near two thousand Pounds.

Ger. — A House!

Merl. — Which is worth above Three; having not quite so much ready Money by him, and not being willing to lose such a Pennyworth, was the Reason he borrow'd this Sum. I hope, Sir, you are not so angry now as you were?

Ger. — On the contrary, I am extremely well pleas'd — D'ye hear, Sir, this *Charles* is my Son.

Merl. — D'ye hear, Mr. *Clodpate*?

And. — O, Sir, I am mighty glad

to——

Ger. — No more Words, I approve the Use my Son has made of it ; and here, Sir, here's three hundred Pounds, just that Money, in *Moidors* ; my Son shall never be dunn'd for such a paultry Sum, especially borrow'd on so honourable an Occasion ; you'll find it right——I'll answer for it. [*Gives him a Purse of Gold, takes up his Son's Note, and tears it.*]

And. — Your most humble Servant, Sir. [*Exit.*]

Ger. — But tell me, *Merlin*, in what Part of the Town is this House my Son has bought ?

Merl. — In what Part ?

Ger. — Yes ; for some are better than others ; for Example, this now.——

Merl. Certainly, and 'tis just by here.

Ger. — Good ; so much the better, but where ?

Merl. — [*Pointing.*] Hold——D'ye see that House there, with Sash-Windows, and a Stately Roof ?

Ger. — O, Yes, yes, I do.

Merl. — 'Tis not that, but a little farther to the Left——so —— Now d'ye see that Coach-House there, which is just over against the Stable Yard, a little beyond the Brew-House, not far from the

the Church, just turning the Corner of that Street, out yonder.

Ger. — Why, I can't see so far.

Merl. — How can I help that?

Ger. — I believe you mean Madam Bertrand's House?

Merl. — The very same; Is'nt it a fine Purchase?

Ger. — Yes, but how comes she to sell her Estate?

Merl. — She became Mad, Sir, a little while after your Departure.

Ger. — Mad!

Merl. — Yes, Sir, and her Relations have set her aside; her Son, who is an extravagant raking sort of a Fellow, has sold this House for half the Worth of it. — I shall embroil my self more; Faich. [*Aside.*

Ger. — But when I went Abroad she had no Son.

Merl. — None!

Ger. — Not as I know of.

Merl. — Then 'twas a Daughter. — Ay, now I think on't, 'twas a Daughter.

Ger. — I hear'd some talk that Daughter was dead too.

Merl.— Dead, Sir! O Lord, Sir, she's as live as you are.

Ger.— Poor Woman, I am mighty sorry for her Misfortune.—Come, open the Door, I think the Time long 'till I see my Boy.

Merl.— [*Aside.*] Now we're undone, that's for certain.—

Ger.— What's the Matter you look so, tell me quickly.— Is any Harm come to my Boy, ha? [*Hastily.*]

Merl.— No, Sir. [*Sorrowfully.*]

Ger.— Has my House been robb'd, tell me immediately.

Merl.— What shall I say. [*Aside.*]

Ger.— Speak quickly, I say.

Merl.— I can hardly forbear Tears when I think on't; pray don't go in, Sir—this House, this dear House that you us'd to love so, has been these six Months.—

Ger.— What has it been these six Months? Speak.

Merl.— Haunted, Sir, there was no staying in it, we were oblig'd to remove—the Devil has taken Possession of it.

Ger.— My House haunted!

Merl.— This was, I believe, the greatest Reason, why my Master bought Madam

Bertrand's ; for we saw such dismal Apparitions, there was no staying in it any longer.

Ger. — You do but jest sure.

Merl. — There are no sort of Tricks that these Sprights have not plaid me ; sometimes tickling the Bottom of my Feet, sometimes twinging me by the Nose with red-hot Pincers ; at other times singing my Beard with sulphurous Matter, with abundance of other Devices.

Ger. — I can't believe you'r in earnest.

Merl. — I am, indeed, Sir, we have taken all Methods to get 'em laid, but cannot ; 'tis sure the most obstinate Devil that ever was known. Ah, Sir, there has been nothing wanting on my Part to get the House rid of these troublesome Companions, I have been very laborious.——Wou'd you believe me, I have lain in my Bed, Watching and Praying three whole Nights together, and Cursing and swearing six more, and all to no purpose.

Ger. — All to no purpose !

Merl. — And then, Sir, they keep such a Thundring and Rattling all Night, as if they'd shake the House down. Ah, Master, if these black Gentlemen of the
lower

lower Region are such boisterous Companions in the Quarters of us poor Mortals, what Roarers must they be in their own Sovereign Dominions?

Ger. — I am seiz'd all over me with a sudden Trembling.—— Feel, *Merlin*, ben't I all over in a cold Sweat? Dost thou know whether they have been in the Cellar?

Merl. — Lord, Sir, they've rummag'd all the Places in the House.

Ger. — Nay then I'm undone, for there lies two thousand broad Pieces buried.

Merl. — Where, in our House?

Ger. — Yes.

Merl. — Whereabouts, pray, Sir?

Ger. — In the Cellar, in the Cellar, *Merlin*.

Merl. — Why there it was they always made the most racket. I wish we'd known it before: And, Sir, in what Part?

Ger. — On the Left-hand Side of the Door, just going in, under a black Stone.

Merl. — Under the black Stone, two thousand broad Pieces: [*Aside.*] If you had told us so before, you'd spar'd us some Trouble; [*Aloud.*] the Left-hand Side?

Ger. —

Ger. — O, Yes, 'tis not hard to be found.

Merl. — I'll know that presently——
what is it all Gold?

Ger. — All in *Jacobus's*.

Merl. — 'Tis the easier to carry. [*Aside.*]
But, Sir, don't grieve too much, since we know the Cause, leave it to me, I'll find out a Remedy if possible.

Ger. — Well, I can hardly persuade myself to believe all thou say'st, *Merlin*; but indeed I have both heard and read so many frightful Stories of the Power of Spirits, that I don't know what to think.——I'll go and get some few Things out of the Custom-House, and return immediately.—— What Difficulties and Troubles one meets with in Life!—— A Man can't have a little Money, but either his Fellow-Creatures, or the Devil, do their utmost to deprive him of it.

[*Exit.*

Merl. — The Devil shan't have this, I'll answer for that.——

Enter Charles.

Oh, dear Sir, Do you know your Father's come Home?

Char. ---

Char. — Know ! Ay, *Merlin*, I receiv'd a mortifying Glance of him at his very first Appearance, by a lucky Peep thro' the Window, Time enough to turn out all my drunken Companions at the Back door.

Merl. — And very wisely done ; for shou'd he have enter'd, and found a spread Table before him, and bare Wall all round him, such a frightful Medley of Luxury and Beggary together, wou'd have doubly blasted your Credit with him.

Char. — But, dear Rogue, I see the Coast is now clear ; Whither hast thou pack'd him off ?

Merl. — He's gone to the Custom House to take care of some Goods, but will be back in an Instant — for he's all o' Fire to see his dear Boy — but in haste, I have a noble Discovery for you.

Char. — Prithee what dear Engineer ?

Merl. — To keep him from Entering the House, among Twenty other blind Stories, I told him it was haunted, gave him such a terrible Description of Goblins, Spirits, Apparitions, and the Devil and all, as put him in such a Fright, that he confess'd he had hid two Thousand broad Pieces in the House.

Char. —

Char. — Two Thousand broad Pieces!
But where, honest *Merlin*?

Merl. — Under a black Stone, on the
Left-hand Side of the Cellar, just at the
going in, wrapt in a Leather Bag, and all
Jacobus's.

Char. — Under a black Stone! S'Death!
I have several times took Notice of that
Stone; — particularly that it is so botch'd
into the Pavement, that 'tis a Disgrace
to the rest of the Floor; no doubt when
he took up that Stone to hide his Money
under it, he durst not trust an Artist, but
blaid the Mason himself, in laying it down
again——but I lose Time. To the Trea-
sure-Boy, the Treasure. I'll instantly
ransack the Mine, then Gallop to Gro-
cer's-Hall, turn it into Bank-Bills.——

'Tis Gold, and will soon be told over:
But if any unlucky Accident shou'd bring
his troublesom Daddy back before me,
tell him Forty more Lyes, any thing to
amuse him 'till my Return, and then ex-
pect me back in Triumph. This Golden
Prize shall make up all my Breaches:
let my Love, Fortune, Honour, (as I'll
manage it) all to rights; nay, thou
shalt own every Tale thou hast told him,
to be downright Fiction and Romance,
except the Haunting of the House, that
Legend

Legend must be kept up with all the fairest Face of Credit, and Veracity. For I am resolv'd for the honourable Purchase of this Rich Booty, to make the Devil the Thief.

Merl. — And your self the Receiver.

Char. — Right, *Merlin*, and so I'll leave thee to the Management of thy Post.

[*Exit*

Merl. — Ay, Sir, do you secure the Bag of Gold, and leave my Front of Brass to do the other Work for you.

Enter Priscilla.

Prisc. — Well, *Merlin*, this sudden and unexpected Return of the old Gentleman, has a little surpriz'd thy young Master; but not so disorder'd him, but that he just now past by me (as I thought) with such an Air of Satisfaction, that he seems rather pleas'd, than disturb'd at it.

Merl. — Ay, Child, his Case is not desperate but that I and his kind Stars have been in Conjunction to serve him. There's something on the Anvil, dear *Priscilla*, of my Hammering, which perhaps shall Crown both the Happiness of my Master, and thy Mistress. — Oh, the

Devil

Devil ! Here's the old Gentleman returning, begone dear Gypsie, thy Appearance will not be convenient.

Prisc. — Well, Sir Politick, I'll leave him to your self. [*Exit.*

Enter Old Gerard.

Ger. — You see, *Merlin*, I have made haste, I met the Things I wanted, hard by, and made the People stay, for I think to lay 'em up in that House my Son has bought.

Merl. — So, new Troubles.

Ger. — 'Tis so long since I have been there, I've forgot where it is. Prithee, *Merlin*, shew me the Way.

Merl. — With all my Heart, Sir, but—

Ger. — But what? —

Merl. — 'Tis true, Sir, the Devil do's not lodge there, —but *Madam Bertrand* is not gone out yet.

Ger. — Not gone out yet?

Merl. — No, Sir, they have agreed that she shall stay a certain Time, because whenever she hears of the Disposal of her House, she raves extreamly, and has the most unaccountable Fits of Madness that ever were heard of.

E

Ger. —

Ger. — Come, let's go, I'll take care to speak to her after such a Manner, as not to disturb her.

Merl — Now Impudence assist me.

[*Aside.*

Ger. — Thou tirest my Patience, I must and will see her presently.

Merl. — Well, Sir, so you may if you please, and see, here she comes in the Nick of Time; but take care what you say, Sir, remember she's mad.

Enter Madam Bertrand.

M. Bert. — Who is that I see ! Mr. Gerard return'd!

Merl — [*Aside to her.*] Yes, Madam, 'tis he, but alas, he's come Home mad, he has lost his Ship, and that has turn'd his Brain.

M. Bert. — Poor Man, what Pity 'tis!

Merl. — [*To her.*] If he speaks to you, Madam, don't mind what he says, we are going to confine him close. — [*To Gerard.*] When you talk with her, Sir, pray consider the Loss of her Understanding.

Ger. — Let me alone for that.

M. Bert. —

M. Bert. — See how he stares, how his Eye-Balls rowl!

Ger. — I see a visible Alteration in her Face, her Eyes look as if they were ready to start out of her Head.

M. Bert. — So, Mr. Gerard, I see you're return'd, I am overjoy'd at it.

Ger. — Yes, Madam, and always ready to do you what Service lies in my Power.

M. Bert. — But am very sorry to hear of your Misfortune.

Ger. — Yes, Madam, I must have Patience; they say that there are Spirits walk in my House, I know no Remedy for it, when they are weary of it, they'll leave it.

M. Bert. — Spirits in his House! I must not contradict him, that will make him worse. [*Aside.*

Ger. — I wou'd beg your Leave to let me lay up a few Bails of Goods in your House, for a short time.

M. Bert. — What a Misfortune! He do's not remember his Ship's lost. [*Aside.*] Sir, my House, and every thing I have, Mr. Gerard, are at your Service.

Ger. — Madam, I humbly thank you.

—— But, *Merlin*, she do's not seem to be so bad, as you said she was.

Merl. — Oh, Sir, she has her Intervals of Sense, which are but short tho'.

Ger. — Pray tell me, Madam, are you always as sensible as at present?

M. Bert. — Did ever any Body see me otherwise, Mr. Gerard?

Ger. — But if that be true, I think your Relations have done you a great deal of Injustice, to cut you off from your Estate.

M. Bert. — Cut me off!

Ger. — Poor Woman, she do's not know her Misfortune!

M. Bert. — I'm sure if you are as mad always as you are now, they have reason enough to lock you up.

Ger. — Lock me up! ——— I find her Madness returns: We had best break off this Discourse. [*Aside.*] But, Madam are you displeas'd my Son has bought your House?

M. Bert. — My House!

Ger. 'Tis better that he has bought it than a Stranger; I know you had rather we shou'd have the Advantage than any Body else.

M. Bert. — Poor Mr. Gerard, my House is neither fold, nor to be fold.

Ger. —

Ger. — Alack a Day! Well, don't be angry, Madam, I'll take care you shall have an Apartment in it, as long as you please, and as good a one as if you were in your Senses.

M. Bert. — What does he mean? As if I were in my Senses! Go, you're an old Fool, and fit for nothing but a Mad-House.

Merl. — [*To her.*] Fie, Madam, I thought you had more Sense, than to scold with a Madman.

Ger. — Oh, Madam, since you come to huffing, the House is mine, my Goods shall come in, and you shall turn out.

Merl. — For shame, Sir, don't be so indiscreet to quarrel with a Woman that's distracted.

M. Bert. — Ay, ay, do come, I'll wait for you; *Merlin*, take care, and get him shut up, he may do Mischief else. [*Exit.*

Merl. — I am got into such Perplexities, I can't tell how to dis-entangle my self.

Enter the Marquis, half Drunk.

Marq. — What's the Reason we continually hear such Noises, and Disturbances before the Door, ha !

Ger. — *Merlin*, what can this mean ?

Merl. — Faith, I can't tell, Sir, unless the Devil's broke loose in the Cellar.

Ger. — I'm afraid, *Merlin*, here's some Trick in all this.

Marq. — We hear that the Master of this House is come Home, perhaps you are he, Sir.

Ger. — Yes, I am he, Sir, and what then, Sir ?

Marq. — Oh, nothing, Sir, but — dear Sir, ——— you're welcome. ——— How polite Travelling renders some Men in their Manners ; but here's your Son, that ne'er set Foot from his own Threshold, is as much a Gentleman, as if he had made the Tour of *Europe* — Well, he's perfectly a fine Gentleman, indeed, Sir ; why, Sir, he's as generous, as you are niggardly, Sir.

Ger. — How, Sir !

Merl. —

Merl. — What Impudence these Ghosts
have!

Ger. — *Merlin*, come hither, *Merlin*,
I'm afraid thou art a Rogue, indeed,
Merlin, I am.

Marq. — Sir, we have been so trou-
bled at your Return. — I beg your
Pardon — I beg your Pardon, Sir,
I wou'd say Absence; and your Son
has been touch'd with so sensible a
Grief, that 'tis incredible how he loves
you, Sir; he was so melancholy at your
Departure, that he cou'd not endure
the Sight of any Thing that was showish,
which made him dispose of all the Fur-
niture, Plate, and what not, he cou'd
lay his Hands on.

Ger. — Dispos'd of all my Plate, and
Furniture! And pray, Sir, how have
you been disposing your self at this House
of mine?

Marq. — Don't you see, Sir, why
drinking of good *Champaigne*, in good
Company, your Son endeavours to com-
fort himself, as well as he can, during
the Absence of so good a Father.

Ger. — [*Angry.*] I'll go in —
This Rogue will ruin me.

Marq. — Hold, Sir, I forbid your
going in.

Ger. —

Ger. — What, hinder me going into my own House!

Marq. — Yes, Sir, you can't at present.

Ger. — What d'ye mean?

Marq. — 'Twoud be a fine Thing indeed, for a Son so well bred as you are, to bring his dear Father, after such a long Voyage, into a House with bare Walls.

Ger. — Bare Walls! Why what's become of my fine Tapistry then?

Marq. — Sold.

Ger. — Sold!

Marq. — Yes, sold, indeed Sir; the Story of it was so dismal, being the Burning of *Troy*: Besides, there was the most abominable Wooden-Horse in that ever was seen, without Eyes or Mouth.

Ger. — Oh!

Marq. — Had not you two large Pictures?

Ger. — Yes, and they were Originals too, of a very famous Master; I hope they an't gone? I mean the Rape of the *Sabines*!

Marq. — The same; we parted with them out of a Nicety of Conscience.

Ger. —

Ger. — Nicety of Conscience!

Marq. — I must profess, I always was astonish'd how so Modest, Vertuous, and Religious a Gentleman as your self was able to bear 'em in his House. There was a *Sabine* done as naked, and in such a lascivious Posture! Oh, ———— fie upon't, Mr. *Gerard*, fie upon't!

Merl. — O, fie, my Lord, this is ungenerous in you, to heap all this Scandal upon my young Master, he has treated you more honourably.

Marq. — How now, Rascal, do you know who you speak to! A Person of my Quality, and to be corrected by a Valet! Fare you well old Gentleman; and pray, the first Thing you do, teach that saucy Slave of yours more Manners. [Exit.

Ger. — Teach him Manners! Teach him Honesty. Art not thou a precious Rogue, to amuse me with all these fair Flams in thy young Master's Absence, when the wicked Reprobate has strip'd my House, sold my Goods, and——

Merl. — Hold, Sir; D'ye seriously believe my young Master has done all this?

Ger. — Ay, what shou'd I believe else?

Merl. ———

Merl. — Lord, Sir, there's not a Syllable of Truth in all that this *French* Rogue has told you. He calls himself a Marquis with a Pox to him; when if his Pedigree cou'd be search'd, 'tis Ten to One but we shou'd find him a Pultroon, such an ungrateful Dog too, to so civil a Gentleman as my young Master has been to him. 'Tis true, Sir, that Furniture which he tells you is sold, is not at present in the House: For you must know, one Night last Week, these troublesome Goblins that haunt your House left such a Stench of Brimstone behind 'em, as tarnish'd all your Pictures, and Tapestry; so that my young Master was forc'd to send 'em out to be scour'd, and we look for 'em home again every Day.

Ger. — Only gone to be scour'd, say'st thou?

Merl. Nothing else, upon my Honour; but this villainous *French* Monster to tell you a Pack of Stories! S'bud, Sir, if I thought the proud Upstart wou'd condescend to accept a Challenge from a poor serving Man, I cou'd find in my Heart to invite him to meet me behind *Montague* House, and cut the Dog's Throat for him; — my very Blood rises

Wishes at him. I hate a Lyar, as I do the Devil.

Ger. — Nay, *Merlin*, never put thyself in this Passion ; I have a natural Affection for my Son, and am inclinable to believe him honest.

Merl. — Honest ! Ay, and honourable too, and so you'll find him.

Ger. — I believe so, *Merlin*.

Merl. — Tell Lyes of my young Master !

Enter Madam Bertrand.

M. Bert. — Ay, Sir, here are fine Proceedings carrying on, between your Son and my Niece !

Ger. — As for your Niece, I know not what she is, and for my Son, I'll hear him before I'll condemn him ; I expect him now every Minute, and he's old enough to answer for himself ; but here he comes.

Enter Charles, leading Lucinda, Cydne and Priscilla.

Char. — My Honour'd Father, let me beg your Blessing. [*Kneels.*] Your double Blessing, Sir, this sweet young Lady, that
that

that calls you Father too, joyns her Knee with me.

Ger. — How ! Married, my dear Boy

Bert. — And to my Niece !

Char. — Love, and my smiling Stars have so decreed it.

Ger. — Her Beauty does deserve thee and I hope the gracious Providence that has so bountifully endow'd her with a Face so fair, has been no Niggard to her in it's other Favours. I hope she's Mistress of a Fortune too, such as may deserve my Son.

Bert. — A Fortune ! Quotha !

Char. — There Sir, I fear she does not reach the Heights to which a Father may aspire ; however she has here brought me her small Dower, two Thousand Pounds, in Bank-Bills.

[*Shows Bills*

Ger. — Four, five hundred Pound Bills

Bert. — Two thousand Pound !

Luc. — 'Twas all I had to give him.

Merl. — Here's an ingenious Boy For Wits and Politicians, Master and Man, I see are both well match'd. (*Aside*

Bert. — Hark you Niece, how came you by two thousand Pounds ? Not honestly I fear.

Merl. —

Merl — That's no fair Question. [*Aside.*] It's enough she has it, thanks to my kind Goblins that got it for her.

M. Bert. — Your Father, rest his Soul, left you no more than one Thousand Pound, and at your Rate of Living, I question if you can count two hundred; and how 'tis mounted up to a brace of Thousands, is something unaccountable.

Luc. — Cease your Wonder, and hear me, Madam: That my Father left me but One Thousand Pound is true; but still he left me a tender Orphan to an Uncle's Care: This Uncle who out-liv'd him but nine Months, took such a Kindness to his dear young Charge, as generously to double my small Portion, all lodg'd together in the Bank of *England*.

M. Bert. — Go on.

Luc. — To lay then my whole Life before you, I own I both paid Visits, and receiv'd them; appear'd in publick, and took the honest Freedom of generous Conversation.

Prisc. — Who can blame her? Young Ladies with my Mistress's Stock of Charms, and but her moderate Dowry, must take Liberty to rove and range the World to make their Fortune, whilst

F

richer

richer Dowdies with a Load of Wealth can take their Rest, and have their Courts come Home to them.

M. Bert.—In Troth, the Wench speaks Sense.

Luc.—And tho', dear Madam, I made a little Figure in the World, I kept within the Interest of my Portion; what tho' my Wardrobe look'd a little Gay, my Kitchen, and my Pantry were but coldly furnish'd?

Prisc.—Kitchen, and Pantry! Ay, to her Shame^{be} it spoken. Lord, Madam, a boil'd Chicken between us was a Coronation Feast; a Couple of roast-ed Eggs wou'd serve for a common Meal. For my Part, I was half afraid I shou'd have starv'd with her. Then, as gay as she tells you her Wardrobe look'd, I'm sure she has got the Way of Robbing me of half my Fees; instead of a costly Mercer's Bill for a new Rigging, many a Time the Dyer, and the Scourer, have excus'd that Charge.

Luc.—Betwixt this harmless Freedom Abroad, and all this Frugality at Home, you see I've made my self happy, in this dear Gentleman.

Char.—

Char. — [*Aside to Merlin.*] His Pictures, and Tapistry thou hast told him, are sent to be scour'd: A very lucky Excuse; that Blot shall never be hid. I just now met the honest Gentleman that bought them, and for his Money again, and a Score and a Half of Guinea's, he has promis'd he'll relinquish his Bargain, and return them.

Merl. — That's well.

M. Bert. — Only one Question more; Why was not I let into the Secret of this kind Uncle's Legacy, this last Thousand Pound?

Luc. — Nay, there I hope you'll pardon me, you know 'tis natural to do the best we can for our selves, and therefore I conceal'd this last good Fortune, for fear it shou'd have lessen'd your good Graces to me, as being so well provided for.

M. Bert. — Politick Girl! Come to my Arms! A virtuous, witty, and a prudent Virgin: Come, Sir, my Niece shall not disgrace your Son. I have three Thousand Pound-Stock in the *East-India* Company; we'll all take Coach together, and I'll transfer it to my Niece, to make her a worthier Match for your Son.

Ger. --- Five thousand Pounds !

Char. --- [*Kneeling.*] Thus low we thank you.

M. Bert. --- Nay rise my Children, for so I'll call you. This is but an Earnest of my Favour.

Char. — Before we go to receive this generous Blessing, I hope you'll pardon me, that I have been so bold as to make some Preparation for this Lady's Reception in your House. The Tapestries and Pictures are sent to be clean'd. Nay, I have sent your Plate to the Goldsmiths (you know 'twas old Fashion'd to be melted down, and order'd a new Sett with my own and the Lady's Coat of Arms.

Ger. — Very worthily done ; you cannot treat so fair a Bride too honourably.

Char. — Nay, I have one Pardon more to beg, and that's for honest *Merle* here ; for all the Tricks and Banter he has impos'd upon you, purposely to keep you from entering the House, 'till *Luzinda* and my self had consummate our Marriage, and his young Master himself return'd to introduce you.

Ger. —

Ger. — Ay, Son, I can forgive any Thing on this Occasion.

Char. — One Truth he has told you, and a very unhappy One; your House, Sir, in your Absence, has been visited by an unruly Troop of Guests, by Spirits.

Merl. — Ay, but now, Sir, I hope they have broken up their Haunts; they have lain quiet these two last Nights. I suppose, dear Sir, your Return to *England* has dispers'd them; they never durst enter our Walls, whilst we had you for our Guardian, and under the same happy Protection, I hope never will again.

Ger. — I thank thee, honest *Merlin*, for thy good Wishes.

Merl. — So, now all's well, all Jar's and Danger's hush'd.

*We often see, when such Adventures hit,
That Masters are oblig'd to Servants Wit.*

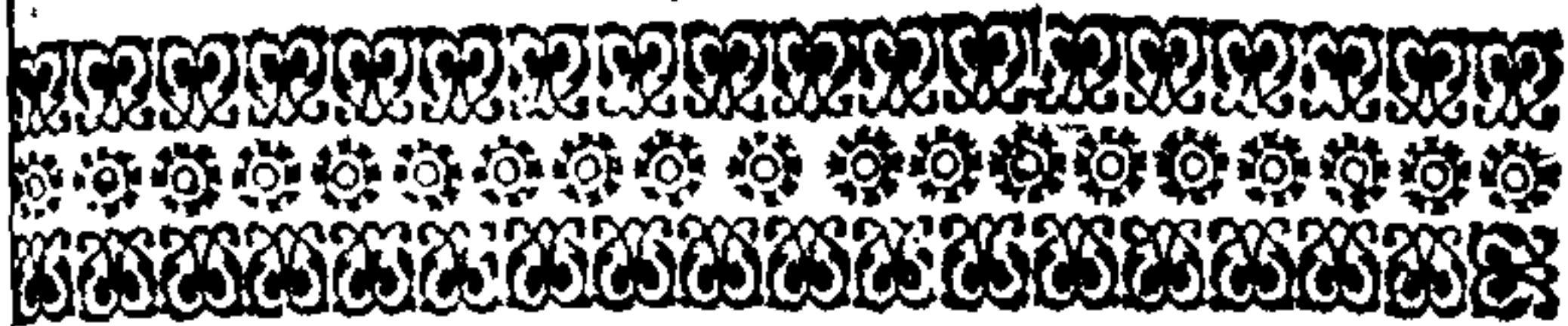
Char. — Now my sweet Life, thou shalt reclaim the Prodigal. Henceforth I'll be profuse in nought but Love.

A courted

*A courted Mistress's Favour to obtain,
We think no Tribute, nor Expence too vain,
But Wedlock grows more wise, 'tis then the
(Husband's Reign)*

F I N I S.





LAYS lately printed after the *Elzevir* Manner, in neat Pocket Volumes.

THE *Amorous Widow: Or, The Wanton Wife.* By Mr. Betterton.

I. *Sauny the Scot: Or, The Taming of the Shrew.* By Mr. Lacey.

II. *The Gamester.* By Mrs. Centlivre.

V. *The Wonder: A Woman keeps a Secret.* By Mrs. Centlivre.

A City Ramble: Or, The Humours of the Compter. By Capt. Knipe.

I. *A Woman's Revenge: Or, A Match in Newgate.* By Mr. Bullock.

All COMEDIES; Price 1 s. each.

II. *Hob: Or, The Country Wake.* A Farce. By Mr. Dogget. Price 6 d.

III. *The Earl of MAR marr'd: With the Humours of Jocky the Highlander.* A Tragi-Comical Farce. By Mr. Philips. Price 6 d.

BOOKS

BOOKS lately Printed,

- I. *Monfieur Fontenelle's Conversations on the Plurality of Worlds.* Price 2 s. 6 d.
- II. *The Works and Life of the Right Honourable CHARLES late Earl of Halifax.* Price 5 s.
- III. *Mr. William Lilly's True History of King James the First, and King Charles the First; with many secret Memoirs concerning the Civil Wars.* Price 1 s. 6 d.
- IV. *Capt. William Sympfon's New Voyage to the East-Indies; adorn'd with feveral curious Cuts.* Price 3 s. 6 d.
- V. *The Works of the Earls of Rochefter, Roscommon, and Dorfet; adorn'd with Cuts.* Price 5 s.
- VI. *The Cafes of Impotency, and Divorce, in five Parts compleat.* Price 12 s. 6 d.

