



This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

- + *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.
- + *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.
- + *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.
- + *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at <http://books.google.com/>





J. B. W. A. Leene

Bold Stroke for a WIFE:

A

COMEDY.

Written by Mrs. SUSANNA CENT-LIVRE.

Omnia vincit Amor.



L O N D O N :

Printed for J. HODGES, at the *Looking-Glass*
over-against *St. Magnus Church, London-Bridge* ;
and J. OSBORN, in *Paternoster-Rew.*

MDCCLXIX.

M. A. L. S.
1070 f. 4.





To his G R A C E

PHILIP,

DUKE and MARQUIS

O F

WHARTON, &c.

MY LORD,



It has ever been the Custom of Poets, to shelter Productions of this Nature under the Patronage of the brightest Men of their Time; and 'tis observed, that the Muses always met the kindest Reception from Persons of the greatest Merit. The World will do me Justice as to the Choice of my Patron; but will, I fear, blame my rash Attempt, in daring to address your Grace, and offer at a Work too difficult for our ablest Pens, *viz.* an Encomium on your Grace. I have no Plea against such Reflections, but the Disadvantage of Education, and the Privilege of my Sex.

A 2

If

If your Grace discovers a Genius so surprising in this Dawn of Life, what must your riper Years produce? Your Grace has already been distinguished in a most peculiar Manner, being the first young Nobleman that ever was admitted into a House of Peers before he reached the Age of One and Twenty: But your Grace's Judgment and Eloquence soon convinced that August Assembly, that the excellent Gifts of Nature ought not to be confined to Time. We hope the Example that *Ireland* has set, will shortly be followed by an *English* House of Lords, and your Grace made a Member of that Body, to which you will be so conspicuous an Ornament.

Your good Sense, and real Love for your Country, taught your Grace to persevere in the Principles of your glorious Ancestors, by adhering to the Defender of our Religion and Laws; and the penetrating Wisdom of your Royal Master saw you merited your Honours e'er he confer'd them. It is one of the greatest Glories of a Monarch to distinguish where to bestow his Favours; and the World must do ours Justice, by owning Your Grace's Titles most deservedly worn.

It is with the greatest Pleasure imaginable, the Friends of Liberty see you pursuing the Steps of your Noble Father: Your courteous affable Temper, free from Pride and Ostentation, makes your Name adored in
the

DEDICATION. ▼

the Country, and enables your Grace to carry what Point you please. The late Lord *Wharton* will be still remembered by every Lover of his Country, which never felt a greater Shock than what his Death occasioned : Their Grief had been inconsolable, if Heaven, out of its wonted Beneficence to this Favourite Isle, had not transmitted all his shining Qualities to you, and Phoenix-like, raised up one Patriot out of the Ashes of another.

That your Grace has a high Esteem for Learning, particularly appears by the large Progress you have made therein : And your Love for the Muses shews a Sweetness of Temper, and Generous Humanity, peculiar to the Greatness of your Soul ; for such Virtues reign not in the Breast of every Man of Quality.

Deser no longer then, my Lord, to charm the World with the Beauty of your Numbers, and shew the Poet, as you have done the Orator ; convince our unthinking *Britons*, by what vile Arts *France* lost her Liberty ; and teach them to avoid their own Misfortunes, as well as to weep over *Henry IV.* who (if it were possible for him to know) would forgive the bold Assassin's Hand, for the Honour of having his Fall celebrated by your Grace's Pen.

To be distinguished by Persons of Your Grace's Character, is not only the highest

vi *DEDICATION.*

Ambition, but the greatest Reputation to an Author; and it is not the least of my Vanities, to have it known to the Publick, I had Your Grace's Leave to prefix Your Name to this Comedy.

I wish I were capable to cloath the following Scenes in such a Dress as might be worthy to appear before Your Grace, and draw your Attention as much as Your Grace's admirable Qualifications do that of all Mankind; but the Muses, like most Females, are least liberal to their own Sex.

All I dare say in Favour of this Piece, is, that the Plot is intirely new, and the Incidents wholly owing to my own Invention; not borrowed from our own, or translated from the Works of any Foreign Poet; so that they have at least the Charm of Novelty to recommend them. If they are so lucky, in some leisure Hour, to give Your Grace the least Diversion, they will answer the utmost Ambition of,

MY LORD,

Your Grace's most obedient,

Most devoted, and

Most humble Servant,

Sufanna Cent-Livre.



PROLOGUE.

Spoken by Mrs. THURMOND.

T O Night we come upon a bold Design,
 To try to please without one borrow'd Line :
 Our Plot is new, and regularly clear,
 And not one single Tittle from Moliere.

O'er bury'd Poets we with Caution tread,
 And Parish Sextons leave to rob the Dead :
 For you, bright British Fair, in Hopes to charm ye,
 We bring to Night a Lover from the Army :

You know the Sc^diers have the strangest Arts,
 Such a Proportion of prevailing Parts,
 You'd think that they rid Post to Womens Hearts.

I wonder whence they draw their bold Pretence ;
 We do not chuse them sure for our Defence :

That Plea is both impolitick and wrong,
 And only suits such Dames as want a Tongue.

Is it their Eloquence and fine Address ?
 The Softness of their Language ?—Nothing less.

Is it their Courage, that they bravely dare
 To storm the Sex at once ?—Egad ! 'tis there.

They act by us as in the rough Campaign,
 Unmindful of Repulses, charge again :-

They mine, and countermine, resolv'd to win,
 And, if a Breach is made,—they will come in.

You'll think, by what we have of Soldiers said,
 Our Female Wit was in the Service bred :

But she is to the hardy Toil a Stranger,
 She loves the Cloth indeed, but bates the Danger :

Yet to this Circle of the Brave and Gay,
 She bid me, for her good Intentions, say,

She hopes you'll not reduce her to Half-Pay.
 As for our Play, 'tis English Humour all :

Then will you let our Manufacture fall ?
 Would you the Honour of our Nation raise,

Keep English Credit up, and English Plays.

Dramatis PERSONÆ.

M E N.

SIR *Philip Modlove*, an old Beau. Mr. *Knap*.
Periwinkle, a Kind of filly } Mr. *Spiller*.
Virtuoiſo.
Tradelove, a Change-Broker. Mr. *Bullock*, ſen.
Obadiab Prim, a Quaker, Hoſier. Mr. *Pack*.
[All Four choſe Guardians to Mrs. *Lovely*.]
Colonel *Faintwell*, in Love with } Mr. *Cb. Bullock*.
Mrs. *Lovely*.
Freeman, his Friend, a Merchant. Mr. *Ogden*.
Simon Pure, a Quaking Preacher. Mr. *Griffin*.
Mr. *Sackbut*, a Vintner. Mr. *Hall*.

W O M E N.

Mrs. *Lovely*, a Fortune of Thirty } Mrs. *Bullock*.
Thouſand Pounds.
Mrs. *Prim*, Wife to *Prim* the } Mrs. *Kent*.
Hoſier.
Betty, Servant to Mrs. *Lovely*. Mrs. *Robins*.

Scene, *London*; Footmen, Drawers, &c.



A Bold Stroke for a WIFE.

ACT I. SCENE I.

SCENE, a Tavern.

Colonel FAINWELL and FREEMAN over a Bottle.

F R E E M A N.

COME, Colonel, his Majesty's Health.—You are as melancholy as if you were in Love : I wish some of the Beauties at *Bath* han't snapt your Heart.

Col. Why Faith, *Freeman*, there is something in't : I have seen a Lady at *Bath*, who has kindled such a Flame in me that all the Waters there can't quench.

Free. Women, like some poisonous Animals, carry their Antidote about 'em.—Is she not to be had, *Colonel*?

Col. That's a difficult Question to answer ; however, I resolve to try : Perhaps you may be able to serve me ; you Merchants know one another.—The Lady told me herself she was under the Charge of four Persons.

Free. Odsfo ! 'tis Mrs. *Anne Lovely*.

Col. The same,—Do you know her?

Free. Know her ! Ay.—Faith, Colonel, your Condition is more desperate than you imagine : Why she is the Talk and Pity of the whole Town ; and it is the Opinion of the Learned, that she must die a Maid.

10 A Bold Stroke for a WIFE.

Col. Say you so? That's somewhat odd, in this charitable City.—She's a Woman, I hope.

Free. For aught I know,—but it had been as well for her, had Nature made her any other Part of the Creation. The Man who keeps this House, serv'd her Father; he is a very honest Fellow, and may be of Use to you; we'll send for him to take a Glass with us; he'll give you her whole History, and 'tis worth your hearing.

Col. But may one trust him?

Free. With your Life: I have Obligations enough upon him, to make him do any Thing: I serve him with Wine. [Knocks.]

Col. Nay, I know him pretty well myself. I once used to frequent a Club that was kept here.

Enter Drawer.

Drawer. Gentlemen, d'ye call?

Free. Ay; send up your Master.

Drawer. Yes, Sir.

[Exit.]

Col. Do you know any of this Lady's Guardians, Freeman?

Free. Yes, I know two of them very well.

Enter Sackbut.

Free. Here comes one will give you an Account of them all—Mr. Sackbut, we sent for you to take a Glass with us. 'Tis a Maxim among the Friends of the Bottle, that as long as the Master is in Company, one may be sure of good Wine.

Sack. Sir, you shall be sure to have as good Wine as you send in.—Colonel, your most humble Servant; you are welcome to Town.

Col. I thank you, Mr. Sackbut.

Sack. I am glad to see you, as I should 'a hundred Tun of French Claret Custom-free.—My Service to you, Sir, [drinks] You don't look so merry as you used to do; Ar'n't you well, Colonel?

Free. He has got a Woman in his Head, Landlord, can you help him?

Sack. If 'tis in my Power, I shan't scruple to serve my Friend.

Col. 'Tis one Perquisite of your Calling.

Sack.

A Bold Stroke for a WIFE. I.I.

Sack. Ay, at t'other End of the Town, where you Officers use, Women are good Forcers of Trade: A well-custum'd House, a handsome Bar-keeper, with clean obliging Drawers, soon get the Master an Estate; but our Citizens seldom do any thing but cheat within the Walls.—But as to the Lady, Colonel, point you at Particulars, or have you a good *Champagne* Stomach? Are you in full Pay, or reduc'd, Colonel?

Col. Reduc'd, reduc'd, Landlord.

Free. To the miserable Condition of a Lover!

Sack. Pish! that's preferable to Half-pay; a Woman's Resolution may break before the Peace; push her home, Colonel, there's no parlying with the Fair Sex.

Col. Were the Lady her own Mistress, I have some Reasons to believe I should soon command in Chief.

Free. You know Mrs. *Lovely*, Mr. *Sackbut*.

Sack. Know her! Ay, poor *Nancy*; I have carried her to School many a frosty Morning. Alas! if she's the Woman, I pity you, Colonel: Her Father, my old Master, was the most whimsical out-of-the-way temper'd Man I ever heard of, as you will guess by his last Will and Testament.—This was his only Child: I have heard him wish her dead a thousand Times.

Col. Why so?

Sack. He hated Posterity, you must know, and wish'd the World were to expire with himself.—He used to swear, if she had been a Boy, he would have qualified him for the Opera.

Free. 'Tis a very unnatural Resolution in a Father:

Sack. He died worth thirty thousand Pounds, which he left to his Daughter, provided she married with the Consent of her Guardians: But that she might be sure never to do so, he left her in the Care of four Men, as opposite to each other as the four Elements; each has his quarterly Rule, and three Months in a Year she is oblig'd to be subject to each of their Humours, and they are pretty different, I assure you.—She is just come from *Balb*.

Col. 'Twas there I saw her.

Sack. Ay, Sir, the last Quarter was her Beau Guardian's.—She appears in all publick Places during his Reign.

Col. She visited a Lady who boarded in the same House with me: I lik'd her Person, and found an Opportunity to tell her so. She reply'd, she had no Objection to mine; but if I could not reconcile Contradictions I must not think of her, for that she was condemned to the Caprice of four Persons, who never yet agreed in any one Thing, and she was oblig'd to please them all.

Sack. 'Tis most true, Sir, I'll give you a short Description of the Men, and leave you to judge of the poor Lady's Condition. One is a Kind of Virtuoso, a silly half-witted Fellow, but positive and surly, fond of every Thing antique and foreign, and wears his Clothes of the Fashion of the last Century; doats upon Travellers, and believes more of Sir *John Mandevill*; than he does of the *Ebble*.

Col. That must be a rare odd Fellow!

Sack. Another is a Change-Broker; a Fellow that will out-lie the Devil for the Advantage of Stock, and cheat his Father that got him, in a Bargain: He is a great Stickler for Trade, and hates every Man that wears a Sword.

Free. He is a great Admirer of the *Dutch Management*, and swears they understand Trade better than any Nation under the Sun.

Sack. The Third is an old Beau, that has *May* in his Fancy and Dress, but *December* in his Face and his Heels: He admires all the new Fashions, and those must be *French*; loves Operas, Balls, Masquerades, and is always the most tawdry of the whole Company on a Birth Day.

Col. These are pretty opposite to one another, truly! And the Fourth, What is he, Landlord?

Sack. A very rigid Quaker, whose Quarter begun this Day.—I saw Mrs. *Lovely* go in, not above two Hours ago,—Sir *Philip* set her down. What think you now, Colonel, is not the poor Lady to be pitied?

Col. Ay, and rescu'd too, Landlord.

Free. In my Opinion, that's impossible.

Col. There is nothing impossible to a Lover. What would not a Man attempt for a fine Woman and thirty thousand

thousand Pounds? Besides, my Honour is at stake, I promised to deliver her,—and she bid me win her and wear her.

Sack. That's fair, Faith.

Free. If it depended upon Knight-errantry, I should not doubt your setting free the Damsel; but to have Avarice, Impertinence, Hypocrisy, and Pride, at once to deal with, requires more Cunning than generally attends a Man of Honour.

Col. My Fancy tells me, I shall come off with Glory. I resolve to try however.—Do you know all the Guardians, Mr. *Sackbut*?

Sack. Very well, Sir, they all use my House.

Col. And will you assist me, if Occasion requires?

Sack. In every Thing I can, Colonel.

Free. I'll answer for him; and whatever I can serve you in, you may depend on. I know Mr. *Periwinkle* and Mr. *Tradelove*; the latter has a very great Opinion of my Interest abroad.—I happen'd to have a Letter from a Correspondent two Hours before the News arrived of the *French King's* Death: I communicated it to him; upon which he bought all the Stock he could, and what with that, and some Wagers he laid, he told me he had got to the Tune of five hundred Pounds; so that I am mtch in his good Graces.

Col. I don't know but you may be of Service to me, *Freeman*.

Free. If I can, command me, Colonel.

Col. Isn't it possible to find a Suit of Clothes ready made at some of these Sale-shops fit to rig out a Beau, think you, Mr. *Sackbut*?

Sack. O hang 'em,—No, Colonel, they keep nothing ready-made that a Gentleman would be seen in: But I can fit you with a Suit of Clothes, if you'd make a Figure.—Velvet and Gold Brocade.—They were pawn'd to me by a *French Count*, who had been stript at play, and wanted Money to carry him home; he promised to send for them, but I have not heard any Thing of him.

Free. He has not fed upon Frogs long enough yet to recover his Loss; ha, ha!

24 A Bold Stroke for a Wife.

Col. Ha, ha!—Well, the Clothes will do, *Mr. Sackbut*,—tho' we must have three or four Fellows in tawdry Liveries: They can be procur'd, I hope.

Free. Egad! I have a Brother come from the *West-Indies* that can match you; and, for Expedition-sake, you shall have his Servants: There's a Black, a Tawny-moor, and a *Frenchman*; they don't speak one Word of *English*, so can make no Mistake.

Col. Excellent!—Egad! I shall look like an *Indian* Prince. First I'll attack my Beau Guardian; Where lives he?

Sack. Faith somewhere about *St. James's*; tho' to say in what Street, I cannot; but any Chairman will tell you where *Sir Philip Modelove* lives.

Free. Oh! you'll find him in the Park at Eleven every Day; at least I never pass'd thro' at that Hour without seeing him there.—But what do you intend?

Col. To address him in his own Way, and find what he designs to do with the Lady.

Free. And what then?

Col. Nay, that I can't tell; but I shall take my Measures accordingly.

Sack. Well, 'tis a mad Undertaking, in my Mind: But here's to your Success, Colonel. [*Drinks.*]

Col. 'Tis something out of the Way, I confess; but Fortune may chance to smile, and I succeed.—Come, Landlord, let me see those Clothes. *Freeman*, I shall expect you'll leave Word with *Mr. Sackbut*, where one may find you upon Occasion; and send me my *Indian* Equipage immediately, d'ye hear?

Free. Immediately. [*Exit.*]

Col. Bold was the Man who ventur'd first to Sea,
But the first vent'ring Lovers bolder were.
The Path of Love's a dark and dang'rous Way,
Without a Landmark, or one friendly Star,
And he that runs the Risque deserves the Fair. [*Exit.*]

SCENE II. *Prim's* House.

Enter Mrs. Lovely, and her Maid Betty.

Betty. Bless me, Madam! Why do you fret and teaze yourself so? This is giving them the Advantage with a Witness.

Mrs. Lov. Must I be condemned all my Life to the preposterous Humours of other People, and pointed at by every Boy in Town?—Oh! I could tear my Flesh, and curse the Hour I was born.—Is n't it monstrously ridiculous, that they should desire to impose their Quaking Dress upon me at those Years? When I was a Child, no matter what they made me wear; but now—

Betty. I would resolve against it, Madam; I'd see 'em hang'd before I'd put on the pinch'd Cap again.

Mrs. Lov. Then I must never expect one Moment's Ease: She has rung such a Peal in my Ears already, that I sha'n't have the right Use of them this Month, —What can I do?

Betty. What can you *not* do, if you will but give your Mind to it? *Marry*, Madam.

Mrs. Lov. What! and have my Fortune go to build Churches and Hospitals?

Betty. Why let it go.—If the Colonel loves you, as he pretends, he'll marry you without a Fortune, Madam; and I assure you a Colonel's Lady is no despicable Thing; a Colonel's Post will maintain you like a Gentlewoman, Madam:

Mrs. Lov. So you would advise me to give up my own Fortune, and throw myself upon the Colonel's.

Betty. I would advise you to make yourself easy, Madam.

Mrs. Lov. That's not the Way, I'm sure. No, no, Girl, there are certain Ingredients to be mingled with Matrimony, without which I may as well change for the worse as the better. When the Woman has Fortune enough to make the Man happy, if he has either Honour or Good Manners, he'll make her easy: Love makes but a slovenly Figure in a House where Poverty keeps the Door.

Betty. And so you resolve to die a Maid, do you, Madam?

Mrs. Lov. Or have it in my Power to make the Man I love Master of my Fortune.

Betty. Then you don't like the Colonel so well as I thought you did, Madam, or you would not take such a Resolution.

Mrs.

16 A Bold Stroke for a WIFE.

Mrs. Lov. It is because I do like him, *Betty*, that I do take such a Resolution.

Betty. Why do you expect, Madam; the Colonel can work Miracles? Is it possible for him to marry you with the Consent of all your Guardians?

Mrs. Lov. Or he must not marry me at all: And so I told him; and he did not seem displeas'd with the News.—He ~~promis'd to set me free~~; and I, on that Condition, promis'd to make him Master of that Freedom.

Betty. Well! I have read of enchanted Castles, Ladies deliver'd from the Chains of Magick, Giants kill'd, and Monsters overcome; so that I shall be the less surpriz'd if the Colonel should conjure you out of the Power of your four Guardians: If he does, I am sure he deserves your Fortune.

Mrs. Lov. And shall have it, Girl, if it were ten times as much — For I'll ingenuously confess to thee, that I do like the Colonel above all Men I ever saw. — There's something so *Jantée* in a Soldier, a Kind of *Je ne sçai quoi* Air, that makes 'em more agreeable than the rest of Mankind: — They command Regard, as who should say, We are your Defenders. We preserve your Beauties from the Insults of rude and unpolish'd Foes, and ought to be preferr'd before those lazy indolent Mortals, who, by dropping into their Father's Estate, set up their Coaches, and think to rattle themselves into our Affections.

Betty. Nay, Madam. I confess that the Army has engross'd all the prettiest Fellows. — A laced Coat and Feather have irresistible Charms.

Mrs. Lov. But the Colonel has all the Beauties of the Mind as well as the Body. — O all ye Powers that favour happy Lovers, grant that he may be mine! Thou God of Love, if thou be'st aught but Name, assist my *Fainwell*.

*Point all thy Darts to aid his just Design,
And make his Plots as prevalent as thine.* [Exit.

ACT II. SCENE I.

SCENE, the Park.

Enter Colonel finely dress'd, three Footmen after him.

COLONEL.

SO, now if I can but meet this Beau!—Egad! methinks I cut a smart Figure, and have as much of the tawdry Air as any *Italian Count* or *French Marquée* of them all.—Sure I shall know this Knight again.—Ah! yonder he sits, making Love to a Mask, i'faith, I'll walk up the *Mall*, and come down by him. [*Exit.*

Scene draws, and discovers Sir Philip upon a Bench, with a Woman mask'd.

Sir *Phil.* Well but, my Dear, are you really constant to your Keeper?

Wom. Yes, really Sir.—Hey day! Who comes yonder? He cuts a mighty Figure.

Sir *Phil.* Ha! a Stranger, by his Equipage keeping so close at his Heels.—He has the Appearance of a Man of Quality.—Positively *French*, by his dancing Air.

Wom. He crosses, as if he meant to sit down here.—

Sir *Phil.* He has a Mind to make Love to thee, Child.

Enter Colonel, and seats himself upon the Bench by Sir Philip.

Wom. It will be to no Purpose if he does.

Sir *Phil.* Are you resolv'd to be cruel then?

Col. You must be very cruel indeed, if you can deny any Thing to so fine a Gentleman, Madam.

[*Takes out his Watch.*

Wom. I never mind the Outside of a Man.

Col. And I'm afraid thou art no Judge of the Inside.

Sir *Phil.* I am positively of your Mind, Sir, for Creatures of her Function seldom penetrate beyond the Pocket.

Wom. Creatures of your Composition have, indeed, generally more in their Pockets than in their Heads. [*Aside.*

Sir *Phil.* Pray what says your Watch? mine is down. [*Pulling out his Watch.*

Col. I want thirty-six Minutes of twelve, Sir.—

[*Puts up his Watch, and takes out his Snuff-box.*

Sir *Phil.* May I presume, Sir?

Col.

Col. Sir, you honour me. [*Presenting the Box.*]

Sir *Phil.* He speaks good *English*,—tho' he must be a Foreigner.—This Snuff is extremely good,—and the Box prodigious fine; the Work is *French* I presume, Sir.

Col. I bought it in *Paris*, Sir.—I do think the Workmanship pretty neat.

Sir *Phil.* Neat! 'tis exquisitely fine, Sir. Pray, Sir, if I may take the Liberty of enquiring,—What Country is so happy to claim the Birth of the finest Gentleman in the Universe? *France*, I presume.

Col. Then you don't think me an *Englishman*?

Sir *Phil.* No, upon my Soul, don't I.

Col. I am sorry for't.

Sir *Phil.* Impossible you should wish to be an *Englishman*!—Pardon me, Sir, this Island could not produce a Person of such Alertness.

Col. As this Mirror shews you, Sir.

[*puts up a Pocket-Glass to Sir Philip's Face.*]

Wom. Coxcombs! I'm sick to hear them praise one another. One seldom gets any Thing by such Animals; not even a Dinner, unless one can dine upon Soop and Celery.

Sir *Phil.* O Gad, Sir!—Will you leave us, Madam? Ha, ha!

Col. She fears 'twill be only losing Time to stay here, ha, ha!—I know not how to distinguish you, Sir, but your Mien and Address speak you Right Honourable.

Sir *Phil.* Thus great Souls judge of others by themselves.—I am only adorn'd with Knighthood, that's all I assure you, Sir; my Name is Sir *Philip Modelove*.

Col. Of *French* Extraction?

Sir *Phil.* My Father was *French*.

Col. One may plainly perceive it.—There is a certain Gaiety peculiar to my Nation (for I will own myself a *Frenchman*) which distinguishes us every where.—A Person of your Figure would be a vast Addition to a Coronet.

Sir *Phil.* I must own I had the Offer of a Barony about five Years ago, but I abhor'd the Fatigue which must have attended it.—I could never yet bring myself to join with either Party.

Col.

A Bold Stroke for a WIFE. 19

Col. You are perfectly in the Right, Sir *Philip*,—a fine Person should not embark himself in the slovenly Concern of Politicks: Dress and Pleasure are Objects proper for the Soul of a fine Gentleman.

Sir *Phil.* And Love.—

Col. Oh! that's included under the Article of Pleasure.

Sir *Phil.* *Parbleu il est un Homme d'Esprits*, I must embrace you.—[*rises and embraces*].—Your Sentiments are so agreeable to mine, that we appear to have but one Soul, for our Ideas and Conceptions are the same.

Col. I should be sorry for that. [*aside*].—You do me too much Honour, Sir *Philip*.

Sir *Phil.* Your Vivacy and '*jantée* Mien assured me at first Sight there was nothing of this foggy Island in your Composition. May I crave your Name, Sir?

Col. My Name is *La Fainwell*, Sir, at your Service.

Sir *Phil.* The *La Fainwells* are *French*, I know; tho' the Name is become very numerous in *Great-Britain* of late Years.—I was sure you was *French* the Moment I laid my Eyes upon you: I could not come into the Supposition of your being an *Englishman*: This Island produces few such Ornaments.

Col. Pardon me, Sir *Philip*, this Island has two Things superior to all Nations under the Sun.

Sir *Phil.* Ah! what are they?

Col. The Ladies, and the Laws.

Sir *Phil.* The Laws indeed, do claim a Preference of other Nations,—but, by my Soul, there are fine Women every where.—I must own I have felt their Power in all Countries.

Col. There are some finish'd Beauties, I confess, in *France*, *Italy*, *Germany*, nay, even in *Holland*, *mais sont bien rare*: But *les Belles Angloises*!—Oh, Sir *Philip*, where find we such Women! such Symmetry of Shape! such Elegancy of Dress! such Regularity of Features! such Sweetness of Temper! such commanding Eyes! and such bewitching Smiles!

Sir *Phil.* Ah! *parbleu vous estes attraper*.

Col. *Non, je vous assure, Chevalier*.—But I declare there is no Amusement so agreeable to my *Gout*, as the Conversation of a fine Woman.—I could never be prevailed

prevailed upon to enter into what the Vulgar calls the Pleasure of the Bottle.

Sir *Phil.* My own Taste, *positivement*.—A Ball, or a Masquerade, is certainly preferable to all the Productions of the Vineyard.

Col. Infinitely! I hope the People of Quality in *England* will support that Branch of Pleasure, which was imported with their Peace, and since naturaliz'd by the ingenious Mr. *Heidegger*.

Sir *Phil.* The Ladies assure me it will become Part of the Constitution,—upon which I subscrib'd a hundred Guineas,—it will be of great Service to the Publick, at least to the Company of Surgeons; and the City in general.

Col. Ha, ha! it may help to enoble the Blood of the City. Are you married, Sir *Philip*?

Sir *Phil.* No; nor do I believe I ever shall enter into that honourable State: I have an absolute *Tendre* for the whole Sex.

Col. That's more than they have for you, I dare swear. [Aside.

Sir *Phil.* And I have the Honour to be very well with the Ladies; I can assure you, Sir; and I won't affront a million of fine Women to make one happy.

Col. Nay, Marriage is reducing a Man's Taste to a Kind of half Pleasure; but then it carries the Blessing of Peace along with it; one goes to sleep without Fear, and wakes without Pain.

Sir *Phil.* There's something of that in't; a Wife is a very good Dish for an *Engl'sh* Stomach,—but gross Feeding for nicer Palates, ha, ha, ha!

Col. I find I was very much mistaken,—I imagined, you had been married to that young Lady whom I saw in the Chariot with you this Morning in *Gracechurch-street*.

Sir *Phil.* Who, *Nancy Lovely*? I am a Piece of a Guardian to that Lady: You must know, her Father, I thank him, joined me with three of the most preposterous old Fellows,—that, upon my Soul, I am in Pain for the poor Girl;—she must certainly lead Apes, as the Saying is; ha, ha!

Col. That's Pity, Sir *Philip*. If the Lady would give me Leave, I would endeavour to avert that Curse.

Sir

Sir *Phil.* As to the Lady, she'd gladly be rid of us at any Rate, I believe; but here's the Mischief, he who marries Miss *Lovely*, must have the Consent of us all four,—or not a Penny of her Portion.—For my Part, I shall never approve of any, but a Man of Figure,—and the rest are not only averse to Cleanliness, but have each a peculiar Taste to gratify.—For my Part, I declare I would prefer you to all Men I ever saw.

Col. And I her to all Women. —

Sir *Phil.* I assure you, Mr. *Fainwell*, I am for marrying her, for I hate the Trouble of a Guardian, especially among such Wretches; but resolve never to agree to the Choice of any one of them,—and I fancy they'll be even with me, for they never came into any Proposal of mine yet.

Col. I wish I had your Leave to try them, Sir *Philip*.

Sir *Phil.* With all my Soul, Sir, I can refuse a Person of your Appearance nothing.

Col. Sir, I am infinitely obliged to you.

Sir *Phil.* But do you really like Matrimony

Col. I believe I could with that Lady, Sir.

Sir *Phil.* The only Point in which we differ—But you are Master of so many Qualifications, that I can excuse one Fault; for I must think it a Fault in a fine Gentleman; and that you are such, I'll give it under my Hand.

Col. I wish you'd give me your Consent to marry Mrs. *Lovely* under your Hand, Sir *Philip*.

Sir *Phil.* I'll do't, if you'll step into *St. James's Coffeehouse*, where we may have Pen and Ink;—tho' I can't foresee what Advantage my Consent will be to you, without you could find a Way to get the rest of the Guardians.—But I'll introduce you, however: She is now at a Quaker's, where I carried her this Morning, when you saw us in *Gracechurch-street*.—I assure you she has an odd *Ragoût* of Guardians, as you will find when you hear the Characters, which I'll endeavour to give you as we go along.—Hey! *Pierre, Jaque, Renno*,—Where are you all, Scoundrels?—Order the Chariot to *St. James's Coffeehouse*.

Col. *Le Noir, la Brun, la Blanc*.—*Mortbleu, ou sont ces Coquins la? Allons, Monsieur le Chevalier.*

Sir

Sir *Phil.* Ah! *Pardonnez moy, Monsieur.*

Col. Not one Step, upon my Soul, Sir *Philip.*

Sir *Phil.* The best bred Man in *Europe*, positively.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE changes to *Obadiah Prim's House.*

Enter Mrs. Lovely, followed by Mrs. Prim.

Mrs. Pr. Then thou wilt not obey me: And thou dost really think those Fallals become thee?

Mrs. Lov. I do, indeed.

Mrs. Pr. Now will I be judged by all sober People, if I don't look more like a modest Woman than thou dost, *Anne.*

Mrs. Lov. More like a Hypocrite you mean, *Mrs. Prim.*

Mrs. Pr. Ah! *Anne, Anne*, that wicked *Philip Mode-love* will undo thee.—Satan so fills thy Heart with Pride, during the three Months of his Guardianship, that thou becomest a Stumbling Block to the Upright.

Mrs. Lov. Pray who are they? Are the pinch'd Cap and formal Hood the Emblems of Sanctity? Does your Virtue consist in your Dress, *Mrs. Prim*?

Mrs. Pr. It doth not consist in cut Hair, spotted Face, and bare Necks.—Oh the Wickedness of this Generation! The primitive Women knew not the Abomination of hoop'd Peticots.

Mrs. Lov. No, nor the Abomination of Cant neither. Don't tell me, *Mrs. Prim*, don't.—I know you have as much Pride, Vanity, Self-conceit, and Ambition among you, couched under that formal Habit, and sanctified Countenance, as the proudest of us all, but the World begins to see your Prudery.

Mrs. Pr. Prudery! What! do they invent new Words as well as new Fashions? Ah! poor fantastick Age, I pity thee.—Poor deluded *Anne*, which dost thou think most resemblest the Saint, and which the Sinner, thy Dress or mine? Thy naked Bosom allureth the Eye of the By-stander,—encourageth the Frailty of human Nature,—and corrupteth the Soul with evil Longings.

Mrs. Lov. And pray who corrupted your Son *Tobias* with evil Longings? Your Maid *Tabitha* wore a Handkerchief, and yet he made the Saint a Sinner.

Mrs.

Mrs. Pr. Well, well, spit thy Malice.—I confess Satan did buffet my Son *Tobias*, and my Servant *Tabitha*; the evil Spirit was at that Time too strong, and they both became subject to its Workings,—not from any outward Provocation,—but from an inward Call;—he was not tainted with the Rottenness of the Fashions, nor did his Eyes take in the Drunkenness of Beauty.

Mrs. Lov. No! that's plainly to be seen.

Mrs. Pr. *Tabitha* is one of the Faithful; he fell not with a Stranger.

Mrs. Lov. So! Then you hold Wenching no Crime, provided it be within the Pale of your own Tribe,—You are an excellent Casuist truly.

Enter Obadiah Prim.

Ob. Pr. Not stripp'd of thy Vanity, yet, *Anne!* Why dost thou not make her put it off, *Sarah?*

Mrs. Pr. She will not do it.

Ob. Pr. Verily, thy naked Breasts troubleth my outward Man; I pray thee hide 'em, *Anne*: Put on an Handkerchief, *Anne Lovely*.

Mrs. Lov. I hate Handkerchiefs when 'tis not cold Weather, *Mr. Prim*.

Mrs. Pr. I have seen thee wear a Handkerchief; nay, and a Mask to boot, in the Middle of *July*.

Mrs. Lov. Ay, to keep the Sun from scorching me.

Ob. Pr. If thou couldst not bear the Sun-beams, how dost thou think Man should bear thy Beams? Those Breasts inflame Desire, let them be hid, I say.

Mrs. Lov. Let me be quiet, I say.—Must I be tormented thus for ever? Sure no Woman's Condition ever equalled mine! Foppery, Folly, Avarice, and Hypocrisy are, by Turns, my constant Companions,—and I must vary Shapes as often as a Player.—I cannot think my Father meant this Tyranny! No, you usurp an Authority which he never intended you should take.

Ob. Pr. Hark thee, Do'st thou call good Counsel Tyranny? Do I, or my Wife, tyrannize, when we desire thee in all Love to put off thy tempting Attire, and veil thy Provokers to Sin?

Mrs. Lov. Deliver me, good Heaven! or I shall go distracted.

[*Walks about.*

Mrs.

Mrs. Pr. So! now thy Pinner's are tost, and thy Breasts pulled up;—verily they were seen enough before.—Fie upon the filthy Taylor who made thy Stays.

Mrs. Lov. I wish I were in my Grave! Kill me rather than treat me thus.

Ob. Pr. Kill thee! ha, ha! thou thinkest thou art acting some lewd Play sure:—Kill thee! Art thou prepared for Death, *Anne Lovely*? No, no, thou would'st rather have a Husband, *Anne*:—Thou wantest a gilt Coach, with six lazy Fellows behind, to flant it in the Ring of Vanity,—among the Princes and Rulers of the Land,—who pamper themselves with the Fatness thereof; but I will take Care that done shall squander away thy Father's Estate: Thou shalt marry none such, *Anne*.

Mrs. Lov. Wou'd you marry me to one of your own canting Sect?

Ob. Pr. Yea, verily, no one else shall ever get my Consent, I do assure thee, *Anne*.

Mrs. Lov. And I do assure thee, *Obadiab*, that I will as soon turn Papist, and die in a Convent.

Mrs. Pr. Oh Wickedness!

Mrs. Lov. Oh Stupidity!

Ob. Pr. Oh Blindness of Heart!

Mrs. Lov. Thou Blinder of the World, don't provoke me,—lest I betray your Sanctity, and leave your Wife to judge of your Purity:—What were the Emotions of your Spirit,—when you squeez'd *Mary* by the Hand last Night in the Pantry,—when she told you, you bus'd so filthily? Ah! you had no Aversion to naked Bosoms, when you begged her to shew you a little, little, little Bit of her delicious Bubby:—Don't you remember those Words, Mr. *Prim*?

Mrs. Pr. What does she say, *Obadiab*?

Ob. Pr. She talketh unintelligibly, *Sarab*. Which Way did she hear this? This should not have reach'd the Ears of the wicked Ones:—Verily, it troubleth me.

4

[*Aside*.*Enter*

Enter Servant.

Serv. *Philip Modelove*, whom they call *Sir Philip*, is below, and such another with him, shall I send them up?

[*Exit.*]

Ob. Pr. Yea.

Enter Sir Philip and Colonel.

Sir Phil. How dost thou do, Friend *Prim*? Odsso! my She-Friend here too! What you are documenting Miss *Nancy*, reading her a Lecture upon the pinch'd Coif, I warrant ye.

Mrs. Pr. I am sure thou never did'st read her any Lecture that was good.——My Flesh riseth so at these wicked Ones, that Prudence adviseth me to withdraw from their Sight.

[*Exit.*]

Col. Oh! that I could find Means to speak with her! How charming she appears! I wish I could get this Letter into her Hand.

[*Aside.*]

Sir Phil. Well, Miss *Cockey*, I hope thou hast got the better of them.

Mrs. Low. The Difficulties of my Life are not to be surmounted, *Sir Philip*.——I hate the Impertinence of him, as much as the Stupidity of the other.

[*Aside.*]

Ob. Pr. Verily, *Philip*, thou wilt spoil this Maiden.

Sir Phil. I find we still differ in Opinion; but that we may none of us spoil her, prithee, *Prim*, let us consent to marry her.——I have sent for our Brother Guardians to meet me here about that very Thing.——Madam, will you give me leave to recommend a Husband to you?——Here's a Gentleman, whom, in my Mind, you can have no Objection to.

[*Presents the Colonel to her, she looks another way.*]

Mrs. Low. Heaven deliver me from the formal, and the fantastick Fool!

Col. A fine Woman, ——a fine Horse, and fine Equipage, are the finest Things in the Universe: And if I am so happy to possess you Madam, I shall become the Envy of Mankind, as much as you out-shine your whole Sex.

(*As he takes her Hand to kiss it, he endeavours to put a Letter, into it; she lets it drop——Prim takes it up.*)

26 A Bold Stroke for a W I F E.

Mrs. Lov. I have no Ambition to appear conspicuously ridiculous, Sir. [Turning from him.]

Col. So fall the Hopes of *Fainwell!*

Mrs. Lov. Ha! *Fainwell!* 'tis he! What have I done?
Prim has the Letter, and will be discover'd. [Aside.]

Ob. Pr. Friend, I know not thy Name, so cannot call thee by it; but thou feest thy Letter is unwelcome to the Maiden, she will not read it.

Mrs. Lov. Nor shall you; [Snatches the Letter] I'll tear it in a thousand Pieces, and scatter it, as I will the Hopes of all those that any of you shall recommend to me. [Tears the Letter.]

Sir Phil. Ha! Right Woman, faith!

Col. Excellent Woman. [Aside.]

Ob. Pr. Friend, thy Garb favoureth too much of the Vanity of the Age for my Approbation; nothing that resembleth *Philip Modelove* shall I love, mark that; — therefore, Friend *Philip*, bring no more of thy own Apes under my Roof.

Sir Phil. I am so entirely a Stranger to the Monsters of thy Breed, that I shall bring none of them I am sure.

Col. I am likely to have a pretty Task by that Time I have gone thro' them all; but she's a City worth taking, and 'egad I'll carry on the Siege: If I can but blow up the Out-works, I fancy I am pretty secure of the Town. [Aside.]

Enter Servant.

Serv. *Toby Periwinkle* and *Thomas Tradelove* demandeth to see thee. To Sir Philip.

Sir Phil. Bid them come up.

Mrs. Lov. Deliver me from such an Inundation of Noise and Nonsense. Oh *Fainwell!* whatever thy Contrivance be, prosper it Heaven; — but oh! I fear thou never canst redeem me. [Exit.]

Sir Phil. *Sic transit Gloria Mundi!*

Enter Mr. Periwinkle and Tradelove.

These are my Brother Guardians, Mr. *Fainwell*, pry'st thee observe the Creatures. [Aside to Col.]

Trad. Well, Sir *Philip*, I obey your Summons.

Per. Pray, what have you to offer for the Good of *Mrs. Lovely*, Sir *Philip?*

A Bold Stroke for a WIFE. 27

Sir Phil. First I desire to know what you intend to do with that Lady? Must she be sent to the *Indies* for a Venture,—or live to be an old Maid, and then enter'd amongst your Curiosities, and shewn for a Monster, Mr. *Periwinkle*?

Col. Humph, Curiosities, that must be the Virtuoso.

[*Aside.*]

Per. Why what wou'd you do with her?

Sir Phil. I wou'd recommend this Gentleman to her for a Husband, Sir— a Person whom I have pick'd out from the whole Race of Mankind.

Ob. Pr. I would advise thee to shuffle him again with the rest of Mankind, for I like him not.

Col. Pray, Sir, without Offence to your Formality, what may be your Objections?

Ob. Pr. Thy Person; thy Manners; thy Dress; thy Acquaintance; — thy every Thing, Friend.

Sir Phil. You are most particularly obliging, Friend, ha, ha!

Trad. What Business do you follow, pray Sir?

Col. Humph, by that Question he must be the Broker. [*Aside.*—Business, Sir! the Business of a Gentleman.

Trad. That is as much as to say, you dress fine, feed high, lie with every Woman you like, and pay your Surgeon's Bills better than your Taylor's or your Butcher's.--

Col. The Court is much oblig'd to you, Sir, for your Character of a Gentleman.

Trad. The Court, Sir! What wou'd the Court do without us Citizens?

Sir Phil. Without your Wives and Daughters, you mean Mr. *Tradelove*.

Per. Have you ever travell'd, Sir?

Col. That Question must not be answer'd now—
In Books I have, Sir.

Per. In Books! That's fine travelling indeed! —

Sir Philip, when you present a Person I like, he shall have my Consent to marry Mrs. *Lovely*, 'till when your Servant.

[*Exit.*]

Col. I'll make you like me before I have done with you, or I'm mistaken.

[*Aside.*]

Trade. And when you can convince me that a Beau is more

28 A Bold Stroke for a WIFE.

more useful to my Country than a Merchant, you shall have mine; 'till then you must excuse me. [Exit.

Col. So much for Trade.——I'll fit you too. [Aside.

Sir Phil. In my Opinion, this is very inhuman Treatment, as to the Lady, Mr. Prim.

Ob. Pr. Thy Opinion and mine happens to differ as much as our Occupations, Friend; Business requireth my Presence, and Folly thine, and so I must bid thee farewell.

Sir Phil. Here's Breeding for you, Mr. Fainwel! —— Gad take me.

Half my Estate I'd give to see 'em bite.

Col. *I hope to bite ye all, if my Plot bit.* [Exit.

ACT III. SCENE I.

SCENE the Tavern; Sackbut and the Colonel in an Egyptian Dress.

Sack. **A** Lucky Beginning, Colonel——you have got the old Beau's Consent.

Col. Ay, he's a reasonable Creature; but the other three will require some Pains.——Shall I pass upon him, think you? Egad, in my Mind, I look as antique as if I had been preserv'd in the Ark.

Sack. Pass upon him! ay, ay, as roundly as White-wine dash'd with Sack does for Mountain and Sherry, if you have Assurance enough.——

Col. I have no Apprehension from that Quarter; Assurance is the Cockade of a Soldier.

Sack. Ay, but the Assurance of a Soldier differs much from that of a Traveller.——Can you lye with a good Grace?

Col. As heartily, when my Mistress is the Prize, as I would meet the Foe when my Country call'd, and King commanded; so don't you fear that Part; if he don't know me again, I'm safe,——I hope he'll come.

Sack. I wish all my Debts would come as sure; I told him you had been a great Traveller, had many valuable Curiosities, and was a Person of a most singular Taste;

he seem'd transported, and begg'd me to keep you till he came.

Col. Ay, ay, he need not fear my running away. — Let's have a Bottle of Sack, Landlord, our Ancestors drank Sack.

Sack. You shall have it.

Col. And whereabouts is the Trap-door you mentioned ?

Sack. There's the Conveyance, Sir. [Exit.]

Col. Now if I should cheat all these Roguish Guardians, and carry off my Mistress in Triumph, it would be what the *French* call a *Grand Coup d'Eclat*. — Odsso ! here comes *Periwinkle* — Ah ! duce take this Beard ; pray *Jupiter* it does not give me the Slip, and spoil all.

Enter Sackbut with Wine, and Periwinkle following.

Sack. Sir, this Gentleman hearing you have been a great Traveller, and a Person of fine Speculation, begs Leave to take a Glass with you ; he is a Man of a curious Taste himself.

Col. The Gentleman has it in his Face and Garb : Sir, you are welcome.

Per. Sir, I honour a Traveller, and Men of your enquiring Disposition ; the Oddness of your Habit pleases me extremely ; 'tis very antique, and for that I like it.

Col. 'Tis very antique, Sir ; — This Habit once belong'd to the famous *Claudius Ptolemeus*, who liv'd in the Year a Hundred and Thirty-five.

Sack. If he keeps up to the Sample, he shall lye with the Devil for a Bean stack, and win it every Straw.

[Aside.]

Per. A Hundred and Thirty-five ! why, that's prodigious now ; — Well, certainly 'tis the finest Thing in the World to be a Traveller.

Col. For my Part I value none of the modern Fashions of a Fig-Leaf.

Per. No more don't I, Sir ; I had rather be the Jest of a Fool, than his Favourite, — I am laugh'd at here for my Singularity. — This Coat, you must know, Sir, was formerly worn by that ingenious and very learned Person, *Mr. John Tradescant of Lambeth.*

Col. *John Tradescant!* Let me embrace you, Sir, — *John Tradescant* was my Uncle, by Mother-side; and I thank you for the Honour you do his Memory; he was a very curious Man indeed.

Per. Your Uncle, Sir, — Nay then, 'tis no Wonder that your Taste is so refined; why, you have it in your Blood. — My humble Service to you, Sir, to the immortal Memory of *John Tradescant*, your never-to-be-forgotten Uncle. [Drinks.]

Col. Give me a Glass, Landlord.

Per. I find you are primitive, even in your Wine; *Canary* was the Drink of our wise Forefathers, 'tis Balmick, and saves the Charge of 'Pothecaries Cordials. — Oh! that I had liv'd in your Uncle's Days! or rather, that he were now alive; — Oh! how proud he'd be of such a Nephew!

Sack. Oh Pox! that would have spoil'd the Jest. [Aside.]

Per. A Person of your Curiosity must have collected many Rarities.

Col. I have some, Sir, which are not yet come ashore, as an *Egyptian Idol*.

Per. Pray, what might that be?

Col. It is, Sir, a Kind of an Ape, which they formerly worshipp'd in that Country; I took it from the Breast of a female Mummy.

Per. Ha, ha! our Women retain Part of their Idolatry to this Day, for many an Ape lies on a Lady's Breast, ha, ha. —

Sack. A smart old Thief. [Aside.]

Col. Two Tusks of an *Hippotamus*, two Pair of *Chinese Nut-crackers*, and one *Egyptian Mummy*.

Per. Pray, Sir, have you never a Crocodile?

Col. Humph! the Boatswain brought one with Design to shew it, but touching at *Rotterdam*, and hearing it was no Rarity in *England*, he sold it to a *Dutch Poet*.

Sack. The Devil's in that Nation, it rivals us in every Thing.

Per. I should have been very glad to have seen a living Crocodile.

Col. My Genius led me to Things more worthy of Regard. — Sir, I have seen the utmost Limits of this globular

globbular World; I have seen the Sun rise and set; know in what Degree of Heat he is at Noon, to the Breadth of a Hair, and what Quantity of Combustibles he burns in a Day, how much of it turns to Ashes, and how much to Cinders.

Per. To Cinders! You amaze me, Sir; I never heard that the Sun consum'd any Thing.—*Descartes* tells us——

Col. *Descartes*, with the rest of his Brethren, both Ancient and Modern, knew nothing of the Matter.—I tell you, Sir, that Nature admits an annual Decay, tho' imperceptible to vulgar Eyes.—Sometimes his Rays destroy below, sometimes above.—You have heard of blazing Comets, I suppose.

Per. Yes, yes, I remember to have seen one; and our Astrologers tell us of another which shall happen very quickly.

Col. Those Comets are little Islands bordering on the Sun, which at certain Times are set on fire by that luminous Body's moving over them perpendicular, which will one Day occasion a general Conflagration.

Sack. One need not scruple the Colonel's Capacity, faith. [Aside.]

Per. This is marvellous strange! These Cinders are what I never read of in any of our learned Dissertations.

Col. I don't know how the Devil you should. [Aside.]

Sack. He has it at his Fingers Ends; one would swear he had learn'd to lye at School, he does it so cleverly.

[Aside.]

Per. Well! you Travellers see strange Things! Pray, Sir, have you any of those Cinders?

Col. I have, among my other Curiosities.

Per. Oh, what have I lost for want of Travelling!—Pray, what have you else?

Col. Several Things worth your Attention.—I have a Muff made of the Feathers of those Geese that sav'd the Roman Capitol.

Per. Is't possible?

Sack. Yes, if you are such a Gander as to believe him,

[Aside.]

Col. I have an Indian Leaf, which open, will cover an

Acre of Land, yet folds up in so little a Compass, you may put it into your Snuff-box.

Sack. Humph! That's a Thunderer. [Aside.

Per. Amazing!

Col. Ah! mine is but a little one; I have seen some of them that would cover one of the *Caribbée* Islands.

Per. Well, if I don't travel before I die, I shan't rest in my Grave.—— Pray, what do the *Indians* with them?

Col. Sir, they use them in their Wars for Tents, the old Women for Riding-hoods, the Young for Fans and Umbrellas.

Sick. He has a fruitful Invention. [Aside.

Per. I admire our *East-India* Company imports none of them; they would certainly find their Account in them.

Col. Right, if they could find the Leaves.—— [Aside.
—— Look ye; Sir, do you see this little Vial?

Per. Pray you, what is it?

Col. This is call'd *Polussofoio*.

Per. *Polussofoio*! —— It has a rumbling Sound.

Col. Right, Sir; it proceeds from a rumbling Nature.—— This Water was Part of those Waves which bore *Cleopatra's* Vessel when she sail'd to meet *Anthony*.

Per. Well, of all that ever travell'd, none had a Taste like you.

Col. But here's the Wonder of the World.—— This, Sir, is call'd *Zona*, or *Moros Musphonon*, the Virtues of this is inestimable.

Per. *Moros Musphonon*! What in the Name of Wisdom can that be? —— to me it seems a plain Belt.

Col. This Girdle has carried me all the World over.

Per. You have carried it, you mean.

Col. I mean as I say, Sir. —— Whenever I am girded with this, I am invisible; and by turning this little Screw, can be in the Court of the Great Mogul, the Grand Signior, and King *George*, in as little Time as your Cook can poach an Egg.

Per. You must pardon me, Sir, I can't believe it.

Col.

A Bold Stroke for a WIFE. 33.

Col. If my Landlord pleases, he shall try the Experiment immediately.

Sack. I thank you kindly, Sir; but I have no Inclination to ride Post to the Devil.

Col. No, no, you shan't stir a Foot, I'll only make you invisible.

Sack. But if you could not make me visible again.

Per. Come, try it upon me, Sir, I am not afraid of the Devil, nor all his Tricks. ——— 'Sbud, I'll stand 'em all.

Col. There, Sir, put it on. ——— Come, Landlord, you and I must face the East. [*They turn about.*] Is it on, Sir?

Per. Tis on. [*They turn about again.*]

Sack. Heaven protect me! Where is he?

Per. Why here, just where I was.

Sack. Where, where, in the Name of Virtue? Ah, poor Mr. *Periwinkle*! ——— Egad, look to't, you had best, Sir; and let him be seen again, or I shall have you burnt for a Wizzard.

Col. Have Patience, good Landlord.

Per. But really don't you see me now?

Sack. No more than I see my Grandmother that dy'd forty Years ago.

Per. Are you sure you don't lye? Methinks I stand just where I did, and see you as plain as I did before.

Sack. Ah! I wish I could see you once again.

Col. Take off the Girdle, Sir. [*He takes it off.*]

Sack. Ah, Sir, I am glad to see you with all my Heart. [*Embraces him.*]

Per. This is very odd; certainly there must be some Trick in't. ——— Pray, Sir, will you do me the Favour to put it on yourself.

Col. With all my Heart.

Per. But first I'll secure the Door.

Col. You know how to turn the Screw, Mr. *Sackbut*.

Sack. Yes, yes. ——— Come, Mr. *Periwinkle*, we must turn full East.

[*They turn, the Colonel sinks down a Trap-door.*]

Col. 'Tis done, now turn. [*They turn.*]

34 A Bold Stroke for a WIFE.

Per. Ha! Mercy upon me; My Flesh creeps upon my Bones——'Tis must be a Conjuror, Mr. *Sackbut*.

Sack. He is the Devil, I think.

Per. Oh! Mr. *Sackbut*, why do you name the Devil, when perhaps he may be at your Elbow.

Sack. At my Elbow; marry Heaven forbid.

Col. [*Below.*] Are you satisfied, Sir?

Per. Yes, Sir, yes. —— How hollow his Voice sounds!

Sack. Yours seem'd just the same —— Faith, I wish this Girdle were mine, I'd sell Wine no more. Hark ye, Mr. *Periwinkle*, [*Takes him aside 'till the Colonel rises again,*] if he would sell this Girdle, you might travel with great Expedition.

Col. But it is not to be parted with for Money.

Per. I am sorry for't, Sir, because I think it the greatest Curiosity I ever heard of.

Col. By the Advice of a learned Physiognomist in *Grand Cairo*, who consulted the Lines in my Face, I returned to *England*, where he told me I should find a Rarity in the Keeping of *four Men*, which I was born to possess for the Benefit of Mankind; and the *first* of the *four* that gave me his Consent, I should present him with this Girdle——Till I have found this Jewel, I shall not part with the Girdle,

Per. What can that Rarity be? Didn't he name it to you.

Col. Yes Sir; he called it a Chaste, Beautiful, Unaffected Woman.

Per. Pish! Women are no Rarities —— I never had any great Taste that way. I married, indeed, to please a Father, and I got a Girl to please my Wife; but she and the Child (thank Heav'n) died together —— Women are the very Geugaws of the Creation; Playthings for Boys, who, when they write Man, they ought to throw aside.

Sack. A fine Lecture to be read to a Circle of Ladies!

[*Aside.*

Per. What Woman is there, dress'd in all the Pride and Foppery of the Times, can boast of such a Foretop as the *Cockatoo*?

Col. I must humour him——[*Aside*]——Such a Skin as the *Lizzard*.

Per. Such a shining Breast as the *Humming Bird*?

Col. Such a Shape as the *Antelope*?

Per. Or, in all the artful Mixture of their various Dresses, have they half the Beauty of one Box of Butterflies?

Col. No, that must be allow'd——For my part, if it were not for the Benefit of Mankind, I'd have nothing to do with them, for they are as indifferent to me as a Sparrow or a Flesh Fly.

Per. Pray, Sir, what Benefit is the World to reap from this Lady?

Col. Why Sir, she is to bear me a Son, who shall revive the Art of embalming, and the old *Roman* Manner of Burying the Dead; and, for the Benefit of Posterity, he is to discover the Longitude so long sought for in vain.

Per. Od! these are valuable Things, Mr *Sackbut*.

Sack. He hits it off admirably, and t'other swallows it like Sack and Sugar——[*Aside*]——Certainly, this Lady must be your Ward, Mr. *Periwinkle*, by her being under the Care of four Persons.

Per. By the Description it should——Egad, if I could get that Girdle, I'd ride with the Sun, and make the *Tour* of the World in *four and twenty* Hours [*Aside*]: And are you to give that Girdle to the *first* of the *Four* Guardians that shall give his Consent to marry that Lady, say you, Sir?

Col. I am so order'd, when I can find him.

Per. I fancy, I know the very Woman——her Name is *Anne Lovely*.

Col. Excellent!——he said, indeed, that the first Letter of her Name was *L*.

Per. Did he really?——Well; that's prodigiously amazing, that a Person in *Grand Cairo* should know any Thing of my Ward.

Col. Your Ward!

Per. To be plain with you, Sir; I am one of those *four* Guardians.

Col. Are you indeed, Sir? I am transported to find the Man who is to possess this *Moros Musphonon* is a Person of so curious a Taste.— Here is a Writing drawn up by that famous *Egyptian*, which if you will please to sign, you must turn your Face full North, and the Girdle is your's.

Per. If I live till this Boy is born, I'll be embalm'd, and sent to the Royal Society when I die.

Col. That you shall most certainly.

Enter Drawer.

Draw. Here's Mr. *Staytape* the Taylor enquires for you, *Colonel*.

Col. Who do you speak to, you Son of a Whore.

Per. Ha! *Colonel!*

[*Aside.*

Col. Confound the blundering Dog!

[*Aside.*

Draw. Why, to *Colonel*—

Sack. Get you out, you Rascal.

[*Kicks him out, and goes after him.*

Draw. What the Devil is the Matter?

Col. This Dog has ruin'd all my Schemes, I see by *Periwinkle's* Looks.

[*Aside.*

Per. How finely I should have been chous'd— *Colonel*, you'll pardon me that I did not give you your Title before— it was pure Ignorance, Faith it was— Pray— hem, hem! Pray, *Colonel*, what Post had this learned *Egyptian* in your Regiment?

Col. A Pox of your Sneer. [*Aside.*] I don't understand you, Sir.

Per. No, that's strange! I understand you, *Colonel*— An *Egyptian* of *Grand Cairo!* ha, ha, ha— I am sorry such a well-invented Tale should do you no more Service— We old Fellows can see as far into a Millstone as them that pick it— I am not to be trick'd out of my Trust— mark that.

Col. The Devil! I must carry it off, I wish I were fairly out. [*Aside.*] Look ye, Sir, you may make what Jest you please— but the Stars will be obey'd, Sir, and, depend upon't, I shall have the Lady, and you none of the Girdle.— Now for *Froeman's* Part of the Plot.

[*Aside.*]

[*Exit.*

Per. The Stars! ha, ha— No Star has favour'd you, it seems— The Girdle! ha, ha, ha, none of your *Legerdemain* Tricks can pass upon me— Why, what a Pack of Trumpery has this Rogue pick'd up— His *Pagod*, *Polustobois*, his *Zonas*, *Moros*, *Musphonons*, and the Devil knows what— But I'll take Care— Ha, gone? — Ay, 'twas Time to sneak off— Soho! the House! [*Enter Sackbut.*] Where is this Trickster? Send for a Constable, I'll have this Rascal before the Lord Mayor; I'll *Grand Cairo* him, with a Pox to him— I believe you had a Hand in putting this Imposture upon me, *Sackbut*.

Sackbut. Who I, Mr. *Periwinkle*? I scorn it; I perceiv'd he was a Cheat, and left the Room on purpose to send for a Constable to apprehend him, and endeavour'd to stop him when he went out— but the Rogue made but one Step from the Stairs to the Door, call'd a Coach, leap'd into it, and drove away like the Devil, as Mr. *Freeman* can witness, who is at the Bar, and desires to speak with you; he is this Minute come to Town.

Per. Send him in. [*Exit Sackbut.*] What a Scheme this Rogue had laid! How I should have been laugh'd at, had it succeeded! [*Enter Freeman booted and spurr'd.*] Mr. *Freeman*, your Dress commands your Welcome to Town; what will you drink? I had like to have been impos'd upon here by the veriest Rascal—

Free. I am sorry to hear it.— The Dog flew for't— he had not 'scap'd me, if I had been aware of him; *Sackbut* struck at him, but miss'd his Blow, or he had done his Business for him.

Per. I believe you never heard of such a Contrivance, Mr. *Freeman*, as this Fellow had found out.

Free. Mr. *Sackbut* has told me the whole Story, Mr. *Periwinkle*; but now I have something to tell you of much more Importance to yourself.— I happen'd to lie one Night at *Coventry*, and knowing your Uncle Sir *Toby Periwinkle*, I paid him a Visit, and, to my great Surprise, found him dying.

Per. Dying!

Free. Dying, in all Appearance; the Servants weeping, the Room in Darkness; the 'Potheary shaking his Head,

38 A Bold Stroke for a WIFE.

Head, told me, the Doctors had given him over; and then there is small Hopes, you know.

Per. I hope he has made his Will — he always told me, he would make me his Heir.

Free. I have heard you say as much, and therefore resolv'd to give you Notice. I should think, it would not be amiss, if you went down To-morrow Morning.

Per. It is a long Journey, and the Roads very bad.

Free. But he has a great Estate, and the Land very good—Think upon that.

Per. Why, that's true, as you say; I'll think upon it: In the mean time, I give you many Thanks for your Civility, Mr. *Freeman*, and should be glad of your Company to dine with me.

Free. I am oblig'd to be at *Jonathan's* Coffee-House at Two, and now it is Half an Hour after One; if I dispatch my Business, I'll wait on you; I knew your Hour.

Per. You shall be very welcome, Mr. *Freeman*, and so your humble Servant. [Exit.

Re-enters Colonel and Sackbut.

Free. Ha, ha, ha—I have done your Business, *Colonel*; he has swallow'd the Bait.

Col. I overheard all, though I am a little in the Dark; I am to personate a Highwayman, I suppose.—That's a Project I am not fond of; for though I may fright him out of his Consent, he may fright me out of my Life, when he discovers me, as he certainly must in the End.

Free. No, no, I have a Plot for you without Danger, but first we must manage *Tradescote*—Has the Taylor brought your Clothes?

Sack. Yes, Pox take the Thief.

Col. Pox take your Drawer, for a jolt-headed Rogue.

Free. Well, well, no Matter, I warrant we have him yet.—But now you must put on the *Dutch Merchant*.

Col. The Duce of this trading Plot—I wish he had been an old Soldier, that I might have attack'd him in my own Way, heard him fight over all the Battles of the Civil War—But for Trade, by *Jupiter* I shall never do it.

Sack.

A Bold Stroke for a WIFE. 39

Sark. Never fear, *Colonel*, *Mr. Freeman* will instruct you.

Free. You'll see what others do, the Coffee-house will instruct you.

Col. I must venture however. — But I have a farther Plot in my Head upon *Tradelove*, which you must assist me in, *Freeman*; you are in Credit with him, I heard you say.

Free. I am, and will scruple nothing to serve you, *Colonel*.

Col. Come along then — Now for the *Dutchman* — Honest *Ptolomy*, by your Leave.

*Now must Bog Wig and Bus'ness come in play ;
A Thirty-Thousand-Pound Girl leads the Way.*

ACT IV. SCENE I.

SCENE, Jonathan's Coffee-House in 'Change-Alley. A Crowd of People with Rolls of Paper and Parchment in their Hands; a Bar, and Coffee Boys waiting.

Enter Tradelove and Stock-jobbers, with Rolls of Paper and Parchment.

1st Stock. South-Sea at seven Eighths! who buys?

2d Stock. South-Sea Bonds due at Michaelmas, 1718. Class-Lottery Tickets.

3d Stock. East-India Bonds?

4th Stock. What, all Sellers and no Buyers? Gentlemen, I'll buy a thousand Pound for Tuesday next, at three Fourths.

Coff. Boy. Fresh Coffee, Gentlemen, fresh Coffee?

Trade. Hark ye, *Gabriel*, you'll pay the Difference of that Stock we transacted for t'other Day.

Gabr. Ay, *Mr. Tradelove*, here's a Note for the Money upon the Sword-Blade Company. [*Gives him a Note,*

Coff. B. Bohea-Tea, Gentlemen?

Enter a Man.

Man. Is *Mr. Smuggle* here?

1st Coff. B. *Mr. Smuggle's* not here, Sir, you'll find him at the Books.

2d Stock. Ho! here come two Sparks from t'other End of the Town; what News bring they?

Enter two Gentlemen.

Trade. I would fain bite that Spark in the brown Coat, he comes very often into the Alley, but never employs a Broker.

Enter Colonel and Freeman.

2d Stock. Who does any Thing in the Civil-List Lottery? or *Caco*? Zounds, where are all the *Jews* this Afternoon? Are you a Bull or a Bear To-day, *Abraham*?

3d Stock. A Bull, faith, —— but I have a good Putt for next Week.

Trade. Mr. *Freeman*, your Servant! Who is that Gentleman?

Free. A *Dutch Merchant*, just come to *England*; but hark ye, Mr. *Tradelove*, —— I have a Piece of News will get you as much as the *French King's Death* did, if you are expeditious.

Trade. Say you so, Sir! Pray, what is it?

Free. [*Shewing him a Letter.*] Read there, I receiv'd it just now from one that belongs to the Emperor's Minister.

Trade. [*Reads.*] *Sir, As I have many Obligations to you, I cannot miss any Opportunity to shew my Gratitude; this Moment my Lord has receiv'd a private Express, that the Spaniards have rais'd their Siege from before Cagliari; if this proves any Advantage to you, it will answer both the Ends and Wishes of, Sir, Your most obliged humble Servant,*
Henricus Duffeldorp.

Postscript,

In two or three Hours the News will be publick.

May one depend upon this, Mr. *Freeman*?

[*Aside to Freeman.*

Free. You may. —— I never knew this Person send me a false Piece of News in my Life.

Trade. Sir, I am much oblig'd to you, 'Egad 'tis rare News. —— Who sells *South-Sea* for next Week?

Stock Job. [*All together.*] I sell; I, I, I, I, I sell.

1st Stock. I'll sell 5000 *l.* for next Week, at *five Eighthths.*

2d Stock. —— I'll sell ten Thousand, at *five Eighthths*, for the same Time.

Trade.

A Bold Stroke for a WIFE. 45

Trade. Nay, nay, hold, hold, not all together, Gentlemen, I'll be no Bull, I'll buy no more than I can take: Will you sell ten thousand Pound at a half, for any Day next Week, except Saturday?

1st Stock. I'll sell it you, Mr. *Tradelove*.

Free. [*Whispers to one of the Gentlemen.*]

Gent. [*Aloud.*] The Spaniards rais'd the Siege of *Cagliari*! I don't believe one Word of it.

2d Gent. Rais'd the Siege! As much as you have rais'd the Monument.

Free. 'Tis rais'd I assure you, Sir.

2d Gent. What will you lay on't.

Free. What you please.

1st Gent. Why, I have a Brother upon the Spot, in the Emperor's Service; I am certain if there were any such Thing, I should have had a Letter.

2d Stock. How's this? The Siege of *Cagliari* rais'd; — I wish it may be true, 'twill make Business stir, and Stocks rise.

1st Stock. *Tradelove's* a cunning fat Bear; if this News proves true, I shall repent I sold him the five thousand Pounds.— Pray, Sir, what Assurance have you that the Siege is rais'd?

Free. There is come an Express to the Emperor's Minister.

2d Stock. I'll know that presently. [*Exit.*]

1st Gent. Let it come where it will, I'll hold you fifty Pounds 'tis false.

Free. 'Tis done.

2d Gent. I'll lay you a Brace of Hundreds upon the same.

Free. I'll take you.

4th Stock. 'Egad, I'll hold twenty Pieces 'tis not rais'd, Sir.

Free. Done, with you too.

Trade. I'll lay any Man a Brace of Thousands the Siege is rais'd.

Free. The Dutch Merchant is your Man to take in.

[*Aside to Tradelove.*]

Trade. Does not he know the News?

Free. Not a Syllable; if he did, he wou'd bet a Hundred

42. A Bold Stroke for a W I F E.

Hundred thousand Pound as soon as one Penny; —
he's plaguy rich, and a mighty Man at Wagers.

[To Tradelove.]

Trade. Say you so, — 'Egad, I'll bite him, if possible; —
— Are you from *Holland*, Sir?

Col. Ya, Mynheer.

Trade. Had you the News before you came away?

Col. Wat believe you, Mynheer?

Trade. What do I believe? Why, I believe that the
Spaniards have actually rais'd the Siege of *Cagliari*.

Col. Wat Duyvel's News is dat? 'Tis niet waer, Myn-
heer, — 'tis no true, Sir.

Trade. 'Tis so true, Mynheer, that I'll lay you two-
thousand Pounds upon it. — You are sure the Letter
may be depended upon, Mr. *Freeman*?

Free. Do you think I would venture my Money if I
were not sure of the Truth of it? [Aside to Trade.]

Col. Two duysend Pound, Mynheer, 'tis gadaen —
dis Gentleman sal hold de Gelt. [Gives Freeman Money.]

Trade. With all my Heart — this binds the Wager.

Free. You have certainly lost, Mynheer, the Siege is
rais'd indeed.

Col. Ik golov't niet, Mynheer. *Freeman*, ik sal ye dub-
bled houden, if you please.

Free. I am let into the Secret, therefore won't win
your Money.

Trade. Ha, ha, ha! I have snapt the *Dutchman*, faith,
ha, ha! this is no ill Day's Work, — pray, may I crave
your Name, Mynheer?

Col. Myn Naem, Mynheer! myn Name is *Jan van*
Timtamtirelereletta Heer van Fairwell.

Trade. Zounds, 'tis a damn'd long Name, I shall ne-
ver remember it. — *Myn Heer van Tim, Tim, Tim*, —
What the Devil is it?

Free. Oh! never heed, I know the Gentleman, and
will pass my Word for twice the Sum.

Trade. That's enough.

Col. You'll hear of me sooner than you'll wish, old
Gentleman, I fancy. [Aside.] You'll come to *Sackbut's*,
Freeman. [Exit.]

Free. Immediately:

[Aside to the Colonel.
1st Man.]

1st Man. *Humphrey Hump* here ?

2d Boy. *Mr. Humphrey Hump* is not here ; you'll find him upon the *Dutch Walk*.

Trade. *Mr. Freeman*, I give you many Thanks for your Kindness.——

Free. I fear you'll repent when you know all. [*Aside*.]

Trade. Will you dine with me ?

Free. I'm engag'd at *Sackbut's* ; adieu. [*Exit*.]

Trade. Sir, your humble Servant. Now I'll see what I can do upon *'Change* with my News. [*Exit*.]

S C E N E *the Tavern.*

Enter Freeman and Colonel.

Free. Ha, ha, ha ! The old Fellow swallow'd the Bait as greedily as a Gudgeon.

Col. I have him, faith, ha, ha, ha !—— His two thousand Pound's secure.—— If he would keep his Money, he must part with the Lady, ha, ha.—— What came of your two Friends ? They perform'd their Part very well ; you should have brought 'em to take a Glass with us.

Free. No matter, we'll drink a Bottle together another Time.—— I did not care to bring them hither ; there's no Necessity to trust them with the main Secret, you know, *Colonel*.

Col. Nay, that's right, *Freeman*.

Enter Sackbut.

Sack. Joy, Joy, *Colonel* ! The luckiest Accident in the World !

Col. What say'st thou ?

Sack. This Letter does your Business.

Col. (*Reads*). To *Obadiak Prim*, Hoffer, near the Building call'd the *Monument*, in *London*.

Free. A Letter to *Prim* ! How came you by it ?

Sack. Looking over the Letters our Post-Woman brought, as I always do, to see what Letters are directed to my House, (for she can't read, you must know) I spy'd this to *Prim*, so paid for it among the rest ; I have given the old Jade a Pint of Wine on Purpose to delay Time, till you see if the Letter be of any Service ; then I'll

seal

feal it up again, and tell her I took it by Mistake;—I have read it, and fancy you'll like the Project--Read, read *Colonel*.

Col. (Reads.) *Friend Prim, There is arriv'd from Pennsylvania, one Simon Pure, a Leader of the Faithful, who hath sojourn'd with us eleven Days, and hath been of great Comfort to the Brethren.—He intendeth for the Quarterly Meeting in London; I have recommended him to thy House. I pray thee treat him kindly, and let thy Wife cherish him, for he's of weakly Constitution—he will depart from us the third Day; which is all from thy Friend in the Faith,*

Aminadab Holdfast.

Ha, ha, excellent! I understand you, Landlord. I am to personate this *Simon Pure*, am I not?

Sack. Don't you like the Hint?

Col. Admirably well!

Free. 'Tis the best Contrivance in the World, if the right *Simon* gets not there before you——

Col. No, no, the Quakers never ride Post; he can't be here before To-morrow at soonest: Do you send and buy me a Quaker's Dress, Mr. *Sackbut*; and suppose, *Freeman*, you should wait at the *Bristol Coach*, that if you see any such Person, you might contrive to give me Notice——

Free. I will--the Country Dress and Boots, are they ready?

Sack. Yes, yes, every Thing.—— Sir.

Free. Bring 'em in then.—— [*Exit Sack.*] Thou must dispatch *Periwinkle* first,——remember his Uncle Sir *Toby Periwinkle* is an old Bachelor of Seventy-five,——that he has Seven hundred a Year, most in Abbey-Land; that he was once in Love with your Mother, and shrewdly suspected by some to be your Father,——that you have been thirty Years his Steward,——and ten Years his Gentleman,——remember to improve these Hints.

Col. Never fear, let me alone for that——but what's the Steward's Name? *Free.* His Name is *Pillage*.

Col. Enough—— [*Enter Sackbut with Clothes.*] Now for the Country Put—— [*Dresses.*]

Free. 'Egad, Landlord, thou deservest to have the first Night's Lodging with the Lady for thy Fidelity;—what say you, *Colonel*, shall we settle a Club here, you'll make one?

Col. Make one; I'll bring a Sett of honest Officers, that will spend their Money as freely to the King's Health, as they would their Blood in his Service. *Sack.*

A Bold Stroke for a WIFE. 75

Sack. I thank you, Colonel; here, here! [Bell rings.
[Exit Sackbut.

Col. So, now for my Boots. [Puts on Boots.] Shall I find you here, Freeman, when I come back?

Free. Yes, ——— or I'll leave Word with Sackbut, where he may send for me—Have you the Writings & the Will, ——— and every thing?

Col. All, all! ——— Enter Sackbut.

Sack. Zounds! Mr. Freeman! yonder is Tradelove in the damned'st Passion in the World.—He swears you are in the House,—he says you told him you was to dine here.

Free. I did so, ha, ha, ha! he has found himself bit already--

Col. The Devil! he must not see me in this Dress.

Sack. I told him I expected you here, but you were not come yet. ———

Free. Very well, ——— make you haste out Colonel, and let me alone to deal with him: Where is he?

Sack. In the King's-Head.

Col. You remember what I told you?

Free. Ay, ay, very well; Landlord, let him know I am come in, ——— and now Mr. Pillage, Success attend you. [Exit Sack.

Col. Mr. Proteus rather. ———

From changing Shape, and imitating Jove,

I draw the happy Omens of my Love.

I'm not the first young Brother of the Blade

Who made his Fortune in a Masquerade. [Exit Col.

Enter Tradelove.

Free. Zounds! Mr. Tradelove, we're bit it seems.

Trade. Bit do you call it, Mr. Freeman? I am ruin'd, ——— Pox on your News.

Free. Pox on the Rascal that sent it me. ———

Trade. Sent it you! Why Gabriel Skinflint has been at the Minister's, and spoke with him, and he has assur'd him 'tis every Syllable false; he receiv'd no such Express.

Free. I know it: I this Minute parted with my Friend, who protested he never sent me any such Letter.—Some roguish Stockjobber has done it on purpose to make me lose my Money, that's certain; I wish I knew who he was, I'd make him repent it—I have lost 300 l. by it.

Trade. What signifies your three hundred Pounds to what I have lost? There's two thousand Pounds to that

46 A Bold Stroke for a W.I.F.E.

Dutchman with a cursed long Name, besides the Stock I bought; the Devil! I cou'd tear my Flesh— I must never shew my Face upon 'Change more; — for, by my Soul, I can't pay it.

Free. I am heartily sorry for it! What can I serve you in? Shall I speak to the *Dutch Merchant*, and try to get you Time for the Payment.

Trade. Time! Ad'sheart! I shall never be able to look up again.

Free. I am very much concern'd that I was the Occasion, and wish I could be an Instrument of retrieving your Misfortune; for my own, I value it not. 'Adso! a Thought comes into my Head, that, well improv'd, may be of Service.—

Trade. Ah! there's no Thought can be of any Service to me, without paying the Money, or running away.

Free. How do do we know? What do you think of my proposing Mrs *Lovely* to him? He is a single Man, — and I heard him say he had a Mind to marry an *English Woman* — nay, more than that. he said somebody told him, you had a pretty Ward—he wish'd you had betted her instead of your Money.

Trade. Ay, but he'd be hang'd before he'd take her instead of the Money; the *Dutch* are too covetous for that; besides, he did not know that there were three more of us, I suppose.

Free. So much the better; you may venture to give him your Consent. if he'll forgive you the Wager; it is not your Business to tell him, that your Consent will signify nothing.

Trade. That's right as you say; but will he do it; think you?

Free. I can't tell that; but I'll try what I can do with him—He has promis'd me to meet me here an Hour hence; I'll feel his Pulse, and let you know: If I find it feasible, I'll send for you; if not, you are at liberty to take what Measures you please.

Trade. You must extol her Beauty, double her Portion, and tell him I have the entire Disposal of her, and that she can't marry without my Consent; — and that I am a covetous Rogue, and will never part with her without a valuable Consideration.

A Bold Stroke for a WIFE. 47

Free. Ay, ay, let me alone for a Lye at a Pinch.

Trade. 'Egad if you can bring this to bear, Mr. *Free-man*, I'll make you whole again; I'll pay the three hundred Pounds you lost, with all my Soul.

Free. Well, I'll use my best Endeavours—Where will you be?

Trade. At Home; pray Heaven you prosper—If I were but the sole Trustee now, I should not fear it. Who the Devil would be a Guardian,

If, when Cash runs low, our Coffers t'enlarge,

We can't, like other Stocks, transfer our Charge? [Exit;

Free. Ha, ha, ha—he has it. [Exit.

SCENE changes to Periwinkle's House.

Enter Periwinkle on one Side, and Footman on t'other.

Foot. A Gentleman from *Coventry* enquires for you, Sir.

Per. From my Uncle, I warrant you, bring him up — This will save me the Trouble, as well as the Expence of a Journey.

Enter Colonel.

Col. Is your Name *Periwinkle*, Sir,

Per. It is, Sir.

Col. I am sorry for the Message I bring—My old Master, whom I served these forty Years, claims the Sorrow due from a faithful Servant to an indulgent Master. [Weeps,

Per. By this I understand, Sir, my Uncle *Sir Toby Periwinkle* is dead.

Col. He is, Sir, and he has left you Heir to seven Hundred a Year, in as good *Abbey-Land* as ever paid *Peter-Pence* to *Rome* — I wish you long to enjoy it, but my Tears will flow when I think of my Benefactor — [Weeps.] Ah! he was a good Man — he has not left many of his Fellows — the Poor lament him sorely.

Per. I pray, Sir, what Office bore you?

Col. I was his Steward, Sir.

Per. I have heard him mention you with much Respect; your Name is —

Col. *Pillage*, Sir.

Per. Ay, *Pillage!* I do remember he call'd you *Pillage*.—Pray Mr. *Pillage*, when did my Uncle die?

Col. Monday last, at Four in the Morning. About Two he sign'd his Will, and gave in into my Hands, and strictly charg'd me to leave *Coventry* the Moment he expir'd, and deliver it to you with what Speed I could; I have obey'd him, Sir, and there is the Will.

[Gives it to *Per.*]

Per. 'Tis very well, I'll lodge it in the Commons.

Col. There are Two Things which he forgot to insert, but charg'd me to tell you, that he desir'd you'd perform them as readily as if you had found them written in the Will, which is to remove his Corpse, and bury him by his Father at *St. Paul's Covent-Garden*, and to give all his Servants Mourning.

Per. That will be a considerable Charge; a Pox of all modern Fashions. [*Aside.*] Well! it shall be done, Mr. *Pillage*: I will agree with one of Death's Fashion-Mongers, call'd an Undertaker, to go down, and bring up the Body.

Col. I hope, Sir, I shall have the Honour to serve you in the same Station I did your worthy Uncle; I have not many Years to stay behind him, and would gladly spend them in the Family, where I was brought up.——[*Weeps.*] He was a kind and tender Master to me.

Per. Pray don't grieve, Mr. *Pillage*, you shall hold your Place, and every Thing else which you held under my Uncle——You make me weep to see you so concern'd. [*Weeps.*] He liv'd to a good old Age and we are all mortal.

Col. We are so, Sir, and therefore I must beg you to sign this Lease: You'll find Sir *Toby* has ta'en particular Notice of it in his Will——I could not get it time enought from the Lawyer, or he had sign'd it before he dy'd.

[Gives him a Paper.]

Per. A Lease! for what?

Col. I rented a Hundred a Year of Sir *Toby* upon Lease, which Lease expires at *Lady-Day* next I desire to renew it for twenty Years——that's all, Sir.

Per. Let me see.

[Looks over the Lease.]

A Bold Stroke for a WIFE. 49

Col. Matters go swimmingly, if nothing intervene.
[Aside.]

Per. Very well—Let's see what he says in his Will about it.

[Lays the Lease upon the Table, and looks on the Will.]

Col. He's very wary, yet I fancy I shall be too cunning for him.
[Aside.]

Per. Ho, here it is—*The Farm lying—now in Possession of Samuel Pillage—suffer him to renew his Lease—at the same Rent—*Very well Mr. Pillage, I see my Uncle does mention it, and I'll perform his Will. Give me the Lease—[Col. gives it him, he looks upon it, and lays it upon the Table] Pray you step to the Door, and call for a Pen and Ink, Mr. Pillage.

Col. I have Pen and Ink in my Pocket, Sir, [Pulls out an Inkborn.] I never go without that

Per. I think it belongs to your Profession — [He looks upon the Pen, while the Col. changes the Lease, and lays down the Contract] I doubt this is but a forry Pen, tho' it may serve to write my Name.
[Writes.]

Col. Little does he think what he signs.
[Aside.]

Per. There is your Lease, Mr. Pillage, [Gives him the Paper.] Now I must desire you to make what Haste you can down to *Coventry*, and take Care of every Thing, and I'll send down the Undertaker for the Body; do you attend it up, and whatever Charge you are at, I will repay you.

Col. You have paid me already, I thank you, Sir. [Aside.]

Per. Will you dine with me?

Col. I would rather not, there are some of my Neighbours which I met as I came along, who leave the Town this Afternoon, they told me, and I should be glad of their Company down.

Per. Well, well, I won't detain you.

Col. I don't care how soon I am out.
[Aside.]

Per. I will give Orders about Mourning.

Col. You will have Cause to mourn, when you know your Estate imaginary only.

You'll find your Hopes and Cares alike are vain,

In Spite of all the Caution you have ta'en,

Fortune rewards the faithful Lover's Pain.

[Exit.]

Per.

Per. Seven Hundred a Year! I wish he had died seventeen Years ago; ——— What a valuable Collection of Rarities might I have had by this Time? — I might have travell'd over all the known Parts of the Globe, and made my own Closet rival the Vatican at *Rome*. ——— Odso, I have a good Mind to begin my Travels now; ——— let me see, ——— I am but Sixty! My Father, Grandfather, and Great Grandfather, reach'd Ninety odd; — I have almost forty Years good: ——— Let me consider! what will seven hundred a Year amount to in ——— ay! in thirty Years, I'll say but Thirty — Thirty times Seven, is seventimes Thirty — that is ——— just twenty-one thousand Pound, — 'tis a great deal of Money, ——— I may very well reserve sixteen Hundred of it for a Collection of such Rarities, as will make my Name famous to Posterity; ——— I would not die like other Mortals, forgotten in a Year or two, as my Uncle will be — No,

*With Nature's curious Works I'll raise my Fame,
That Men, 'till Doom's-Day, may repeat my Name.*

[*Exit.*]

SCENE changes to a Tavern; Freeman and Tradelove over a Bottle.

Trade. Come, Mr. Freeman, here's Mynheer Jan, Van Tim, Tam, Tam; ——— I shall never think of that Dutchman's Name. ———

Free. Mynheer Jan Van Timtamirelireletta Heer Van Fainwell.

Trade. Ay, Heer Van Fainwell, I never heard such confounded Name in my Life — here's his Health, I say.

Free. With all my Heart,

Trade. Faith I never expected to have found so generous a Thing in a Dutchman.

Free. Oh, he has nothing of the Hollander in his Temper ——— except an Antipathy to Monarchy ——— As soon as I told him your Circumstances, he reply'd, he would not be the Ruin of any Man for the World

World ——— and immediately made this Proposal himself ——— Let him take what Time he will for the Payment, said he; or if he'll give me his Ward, I'll forgive him the Debt.

Trade. Well, Mr. *Freeman*, I can but thank you, ——— 'Egad you have made a Man of me again; and if ever I lay a Wager more, may I rot in a Gaol.

Free. I assure you, Mr. *Tradelove*, I was very much concern'd, because I was the Occasion, ——— tho' very innocently, I protest.

Trade. I dare swear you was, Mr. *Freeman*.

Enter a Fidler.

Fid. Please to have a Lesson of Musick, or a Song, Gentlemen?

Free. A Song; Ay, with all our Hearts; have you ever a merry one?

Fid. Yes, Sir, my Wife and I can give you a merry Dialogue. [Here is the Song.]

Trade. 'Tis very pretty Faith.

Free. There's something for you to drink, Friend, go, lose no Time.

Fid. I thank you, Sir. [Exit.]

Enter Drawer, and Colonel dress'd for the Dutch Merchant.

Col. Ha, *Mynheer Tradelove*, Ik ben sorry voor your Troubles—maer Ik sal you easie macken, Ik will degelt nie hebben—

Trade. I shall for ever acknowledge the Obligation, Sir.

Free. But you understand upon what Condition, Mr. *Tradelove*; Mrs. *Lovely*.

Col. Ya, de Frow sal al te regt setten, *Mynheer*.

Trade. With all my Heart, *Mynheer*; you shall have my Consent to marry her freely.—

Free. Well then, as I am a Party concern'd between you, *Mynheer Jan Van Timtamirelireletta Heer Van Fainwell* shall give you a Discharge of your Wager

under his own Hand, ——— and you shall give him your Consent to marry Mrs. *Lowly* under yours ——— that is the Way to avoid all Manner of Disputes hereafter.

Col. Ya, Waeragtig.

Trade. Ay, ay, so it is, Mr. *Freeman*, I'll give it under mine this Minute. [Sits down to write.]

Col. And so Ik sal. [Sits down to write.]

Free. So ho, the House, [Enter *Drawwer*.] Bid your Master come up ——— I'll see there be Witnesses enough to the Bargain. [Aside.]

Enter *Sackbut*.

Sack. Do you call, Gentlemen?

Free. Ay, Mr. *Sackbut*, we shall want your Hand here. ———

Trade. There Mynheer, there's my Consent as amply as you can desire; but you must insert your own Name, for I know not how to spell it; I have left a Blank for it.

[Gives the Colonel a Paper.]

Col. Ya Ik sal dat well doen. ———

Free. Now, Mr. *Sackbut*, you and I will witness it.

[They write.]

Col. Daer, Mynheer *Tradelowe*, is your Discharge.

[Gives him a Paper.]

Trade. Be pleased to Witness this Receipt too, Gentlemen. [Freeman and Sackbut put their Hands.]

Free. Ay, ay, that we will.

Col. Well, Mynheer, ye most meer doen, ye most Myn voorsprach to de Frow Syn.

Free. He means you must recommend him to the Lady. ———

Trade. That I will, and to the rest of my Brother Guardians.

Col. Wat voor, de Duyvel heb you meer Guardians?

Trade. Only Three, Mynheer.

Col. Wat donder heb ye Myn betrocken Mynheer?

Had Ik dat gewoeten, Ik soude eaven met you geweest Syn.

Sack. But Mr. *Tradelowe* is the Principal, and he can do a great deal with the rest, Sir.

Free. And he shall use his Interest, I promise you, Mynheer.

Trade.

A Bold Stroke for a WIFE. 53

Trade. I will say all that ever I can think on to recommend you, Mynheer; and if you please, I'll introduce you to the Lady.

Col. Well, dat is waer.—Maer ye must first spreken of Myn to de Frow, and to de ouderé Gentlemen.

Free. Ay, that's the best Way, — and then I and the Heer Van Fainwell will meet you there.

Trade. I will go this Moment, upon Honour. — Your most obedient humble Servant — My speaking will do you little Good, Mynheer, ha, ha; we have bit you, faith, ha, ha.

Well.—*my Debt's discharg'd, and for the Man, Hea's my Consent—to get her, if he can.* [Exit.

Col. Ha, ha, ha! this was a Master-piece of Contrivance, Freeman.

Free. He hugs himself with his supposed good Fortune, and little thinks the Luck's on our Side; — but come, pursue the fickle Goddess while she's in the Mood. — now for the Quaker.

Col. That's the hardest Task.

*Of all the Counterfeits perform'd by Man,
A Soldier makes the simplest Puritan.* [Exit.





ACT V. SCENE I.

SCENE, Prim's House.

*Enter Mrs. Prim and Mrs. Lovely in Quakers
Dresses, meeting.*

Mrs. Pr. SO, now I like thee *Anne*: Art thou not better without thy monstrous Hoop-Coat and Patches!—If Heaven should make thee so many black Spots upon thy Face, wou'd it not fright thee, *Anne*?

Mrs. Lov. If it shou'd turn your Inside outward, and shew all the Spots of your Hypocrisy, 'twou'd fright me worse!

Mrs. Prim. My Hypocrisy! I scorn thy Words, *Anne*, I lay no Baits.

Mrs. Lov. If you did, you'd catch no Fish.

Mrs. Pr. Well, well, make thy Jest; — but I'd have thee to know, *Anne*, that I cou'd have catch'd as many Fish (as thou call'st them) in my Time, as ever thou did'st with all thy Fool-Traps about thee—If Admirers be thy Aim, thou wilt have more of them in this Dress than the other—The Men, take my Word for't, are most desirous to see what we are most careful to conceal.

Mrs. Lov. Is that the Reason of your Formality, *Mrs. Prim*? Truth will out: I never thought, indeed, there was more Design than Godliness in the pinch'd Cap.

Mrs. Pr. Go, thou art corrupted with reading lewd Plays, and filthy Romances, — good for nothing but

to lead Youth into the High Road of Fornication. — Ah! I wish thou art not already too familiar with the wicked Ones.

Mrs. *Low*. Too familiar with the wicked Ones! Pray no more of those Freedoms, Madam, — I am familiar with none so wicked as yourself; — How dare you talk thus to me! you, you, you, unworthy Woman you. [Bursts into Tears.]

Enter *Tradelove*.

Trade. What in Tears, *Nancy*? What have you done to her Mrs. *Prim*, to make her weep?

Mrs. *Love*. Done to me! I admire I keep my Senses among you; — but I will rid myself of your Tyranny, if there be either Law or Justice to be had; — I'll force you to give me up my Liberty.

Mrs. *Pr*. Thou hast more need to weep for thy Sins, *Anne*, — Yea, for thy manifold Sins.

Mrs. *Low*. Don't think that I'll be still the Fool which you have made me, — No, I'll wear what I please — go when and where I please, — and keep what Company I think fit, and not what you shall direct, — I will.

Trade. For my part, I do think all this very reasonable, Mrs. *Lowly*, — 'tis fit you should have your Liberty, and for that very Purpose I am come.

Enter *Mr. Periwinkle*, and *Obadiah Prim*, with a Letter in his Hand.

Per. I have bought some black Stockings of your Husband, Mrs. *Prim*, but he tells me the Glover's Trade belongs to you; therefore I pray you look me out five or six Dozen of mourning Gloves, such as are given at Funerals, and send them to my House.

Ob. Prim. My Friend *Periwinkle* has got a good Windfall To-day — seven Hundred a Year.

Mrs. *Pr*. I wish thee Joy of it, Neighbour.

Trade. What, is Sir *Toby* dead then?

Per. He is! You'll take care, Mrs. *Prim*.

Mrs. Pr. Yea, I will Neighbour.

Ob. Pr. This Letter recommendeth a Speaker; 'tis from *Aminadab Holdfast* of *Bristol*; peradventure he will be here this Night; therefore *Sarah*, do thou take Care for his Reception———

Gives her the Letter.

Mrs. Pr. I will obey thee.

[*Exit.*

Ob. Pr. What art thou in the Dumps for *Anne*?

Trade. We must marry her, *Mr. Prim.*

Ob. Pr. Why truly, if we cou'd find a Husband worth having, I should be as glad to see her married as thou would'st, Neighbour.

Per. Well said, there are but few worth having.

Trade. I can recommend you a Man now, that I think you can none of you have an Objection to!

Enter Sir Philip Modelove.

Per. You recommend? Nay, whenever she marries, I'll recommend the Husband.———

Sir Phil. What must it be, a Whale or a Rhinoceros, *Mr. Periwinkle*, ha, ha, ha? *Mr. Tradelove*, I have a Bill upon you (*gives him a Paper*) and have been seeking for you all over the Town.

Trade. I'll accept it, *Sir Philip*, and pay it when due.———

Per. He shall be none of the Fops at your End of the Town, with full Perukes and empty Skulls, — nor yet none of your trading Gentry, who puzzle the Heralds to find Arms for their Coaches.———No, he shall be a Man famous for Travels, Solidity and Curiosity,——— one who has search'd into the Profundity of Nature: when Heaven shall direct such a One, he shall have my Consent, because it may turn to the Benefit of Mankind.

Mrs. Lov. The Benefit of Mankind! What, would you anatomize me?

Sir Phil. Ay, ay, Madam, he wou'd dissect you.

Trade. Or, pore over you through a Microscope, to see how your Blood circulates from the Crown of your Head to the Sole of your Foot,——— ha, ha! but I have a Husband for you, a Man that knows how to improve

prove your Fortune; one that trades to the four Corners of the Globe.

Mrs. Love. And would send me for a Venture perhaps.

Trade. One that will dress you in all the Pride of Europe, Asia, Africa and America — a Dutch Merchant, my Girl.

Sir Phil. A Dutchman! ha, ha, there's a Husband for a fine Lady — Ya Frow, will you meet myn Slapen — ha, ha; he'll learn you to talk the Language of the Hogs, Madam, ha, ha!

Trade. He'll learn you that one Merchant is of more Service to a Nation than fifty Coxcombs — The Dutch know the Trading Interest to be of more Benefit to the State, than the Landed.

Sir Phil. But what is either Interest to a Lady?

Trade. 'Tis the Merchant makes the Belle — How would the Ladies sparkle in the Box without the Merchant? The Indian Diamond! The French Brocade! The Italian Fan! The Flanders Lace! the fine Dutch-Holland! How would they vent their Scandal over their Tea-Tables? and where would you Beaus have Champagne to toast your Mistresses, were it not for the Merchant?

Ob. Pr. Verily Neighbour Tradelove, thou dost waste thy Breath about nothing — All that thou hast said tendeth only to dedauch Youth, and fill their Heads with the Pride and Luxury of this World. — The Merchant is a very great Friend to Satan, and sendeth as many to his Dominions as the Pope.

Per. Right, I say Knowledge makes the Man.

Ob. Pr. Yea, but not thy Kind of Knowledge — it is the Knowledge of Truth. — Search thou for the Light within, and not for Bawbles, Friend.

Mrs. Low. Ah, study your Country's Good, Mr. Periwinkle, and not her Insects. — Rid you of your home-bred Monsters, before you fetch any from abroad — I dare swear you have Maggots enough in your own Brain to stock all the Virtuoso's in Europe with Butterflies.

Sir Phil. By my Soul, Miss Nancy's a Wit.

Ob. Pr. That is more than she can say by thee.

58 A Bold Stroke for a WIFF.

Ob. Prim. That is more than she can say to thee, Friend———Look ye, it is in vain to talk, when I meet a Man worthy of her, she shall have my Leave to marry him.

Mrs. Love. Provided he be one of the Faithful——— Was there ever such a Swarm of Caterpillars to blast the Hopes of a Woman! [*Aside.*] Know this that you contend in vain: I'll have no Husband of your chusing, nor shall you lord it over me long———I'll try the Power of an *English* Senate———Orphans have been redress'd and Wills set aside———and none did ever deserve their Pity more——— Oh *Fainwell!* where are thy Promises to free me from these Vermin? Alas! the Task was more difficult than he imagin'd!

*A harder Task than what the Poets tell
Of Yore, the fair Andromeda besel;
She but one Monster fear'd, I've four to fear,
And see no Perseus, no Deliv'rer near.*

[Exit.

Enter Servant, and whispers to Prim.

Serv. One *Simon Pure* enquireth for thee.

Per. The Woman is mad.

[Exit.

Sir Phil. So you are all in my Opinion.

[Exit.

Ob. Pr. Friend *Tradelove*, Business requireth my Presence.

Trade. Oh, I shan't trouble you——— Pox take him for an unmannerly Dog——— However, I have kept my Word with my *Dutchman*, and will introduce him too for all you.

[Exit.

Enter Colonel in a Quaker's Habit.

Ob. Pr. Friend *Pure*, thou art welcome; how is it with Friend *Holdfast*, and all Friends in *Bristol*? *Timothy Littleworth*, *John Slenderbrain*, and *Christopher Keepfaith*?

Col. A goodly Company! [*Aside.*] They are all in Health; I thank thee for them.

Ob. Pr. Friend *Holdfast* writes me Word, that thou comest lately from *Pensilvania*, how do all Friends there?———

Col. What the Devil shall I say? I know just as much of *Pensilvania* as I do of *Bristol*. [Aside.

Ob. Pr. Do they thrive?

Col. Yea Friend, the Blessing of their good Works fall upon them.

Enter Mrs. Prim and Mrs. Lovely.

Ob. Pr. Sarah, know our Friend *Pure*.

Mrs. Pr. Thou art welcome. [He salutes her.

Col. Here comes the Sum of all my Wishes—How charming she appears, even in that Disguise? [Aside.

Ob. Pr. Why dost thou consider the Maiden so intently, Friend?

Col. I will tell thee: About four Days ago I saw a Vision—This very Maiden, but in vain Attire, standing on a Precipice; and heard a Voice, which called me by my Name—and bid me put forth my Hand and save her from the Pit—I did so, and methought the Damsel grew to my Side.

Mrs. Pr. What can that portend?

Ob. Pr. The Damsel's Conversion—I am persuaded.

Mrs. Lov. That's false—I'm sure. [Asides.

Ob. Pr. Wilt thou use the Means, Friend *Pure*?

Col. Means! what Means? Is she not thy Daughter, already one of the Faithful?

Mrs. Pr. No, alas! she's one of the Ungodly.

Ob. Pr. Pray thee mind what this good Man will say unto thee; he will teach thee the Way that thou shouldst walk, *Anne*.

Mrs. Lov. I know my Way without his Instructions: I hop'd to have been quiet, when once I had put on my odious Formality here.

Col. Then thou wearest it out of Compulsion, not Choice, Friend?

Mrs. Lov. Thou art in the Right of it, Friend.—

Mrs. Pr. Art not thou ashamed to mimick the good Man? Ah! thou art a stubborn Girl.

Col. Mind her not; she hurteth not me—If thou wilt leave her alone with me, I will discuss some few Points with her, that may perchance soften her Stubbornness, and melt her into Compliance.

60. A Bold Stroke for a WIFE.

Ob. P. Content: I pray thee *put it home to her.*——
Come, *Sarah*, let us leave the good Man with her.

Mrs. Low. *Catching hold of Prim, he breaks loose and Exit*] What do you mean——to leave me with this old Enthusiastical Canter? Don't think, because I comply'd with your Formality, to impose your ridiculous Doctrine upon me.

Col. I pray thee, young Woman, moderate thy Passion.

Mrs. Low. I pray thee, walk after thy Leader, you will but lose your Labour upon me.——These Wretches will certainly make me mad.

Col. I am of another Opinion; the Spirit telleth me I shall convert thee, *Anne.*

Mrs. Low. 'Tis a lying Spirit, don't believe it.

Col. Say'st thou so? Why then thou shalt convert me, my Angel. [*Catching her in his Arms.*]

Mrs. Low. [*Shrieks.*] Ah! Monster hold off, or I'll tear thy Eyes out.

Col. Hush! for Heaven's-sake——dost thou not know me? I am *Fainwell.*

Mrs. Low. *Fainwell!* [*Enter old Prim.*] Oh I'm undone! *Prim* here——I wish with all my Soul I had been dumb.

Ob. Pr. What is the Matter? Why did'st thou shriek out *Anne.*

Mrs. Low. Shriek out! I'll shriek and shriek again, cry Murder, Thieves, or any Thing, to drown the Noise of that eternal Babblers, if you leave me with him any longer.

Ob. Pr. Was that all? Fie, fie, *Anne.*

Col. No matter, I'll bring down her Stomach, I'll warrant thee.——Leave us; I pray thee.

Ob. Pr. Fare thee well. [*Exit.*]

Col. My charming lovely Woman! [*Embraces her.*]

Mrs. Low. What mean'st thou by this Disguise, *Fainwell?*

Col. To set thee free, if thou wilt perform thy Promise.

Mrs. Low. Make me Mistress of my Fortune, and make thy own Conditions.

Col.

A Bold Stroke for a WIFE. 61

Col. This Night shall answer all thy Wishes. — See here, I have the Consent of *three* of thy Guardians already, and doubt not but *Prim* will make the *Fourth*.

[*Prim* listening.

Ob. Pr. I would gladly hear what Arguments the good Man useth to bend her.

[*Afide*.

Mrs. Lov. Thy Words give me new Life, methinks.

Ob. Pr. What do I hear?

Mrs. Lov. Thou best of Men, Heaven meant to bless me sure, when first I saw thee.

Ob. Pr. He hath mollified her.—Oh wonderful Conversion!

Col. Ha! *Prim* listening.—No more, my Love, we are observ'd; seem to be edified, and give 'em Hopes that thou wilt turn Quaker, and leave the rest to me. [*Aloud*.] I am glad to find that thou art touch'd with what I said unto thee, *Anne*; another Time I will explain the other Article unto thee; in the mean-while be thou dutiful to our Friend *Prim*.

Mrs. Lov. I shall obey thee in every Thing.

Enter Old Prim.

Ob. Pr. Oh what a prodigious Change is here! Thou hast wrought a Miracle, Friend! *Anne*, how dost thou like the Doctrine he hath preached?

Mrs. Lov. So well, that I could talk to him for ever, methinks——I am ashamed of my former Folly, and ask your Pardon, Mr. *Prim*.

Col. Enough, enough, that thou art sorry, he is no Pope, *Anne*.

Ob. Pr. Verily, thou dost rejoice me exceedingly, Friend; will it please thee to walk into the next Room, and refresh thyself——Come, take the Maiden by the Hand.

Col. We will follow thee.

Enter Servant.

Serv. There is another *Simon Pure* enquireth for thee, Master.

Col. The Devil there is.

[*Afide*.

62 A Bold Stroke for a WIFE.

Col. The Devil there is. [Aside.]

Ob. Pr. Another *Simon Pure*? I do not know him, is he any Relation of thine?

Col. No Friend, I know him not——Pox take him, I wish he were in *Pensylvania* again, with all my Blood.

Mrs. Love. What shall I do? [Aside.]

Ob. Pr. Bring him up.

Col. Humph! then one of us must go down, that's certain.——Now Impudence assist me.

Enter *Simon Pure*.

Ob. Pr. What is thy Will with me, Friend?

S. Pu. Didst thou not receive a Letter from *Aminadab Holdfast of Bristol*, concerning one *Simon Pure*?

Ob. Pr. Yea, and *Simon Pure* is already here, Friend.

Col. And *Simon Pure* will stay here, Friend, if possible. [Aside.]

S. Pu. That's an Untruth, for I am he.

Col. Take thou heed, Friend, what thou dost say; I do affirm that I am *Simon Pure*.

S. Pu. Thy Name may be *Pure*, Friend, but not that *Pure*.

Col. Yea that *Pure*, which my good Friend *Aminadab Holdfast* wrote to my Friend *Prim* about, the same *Simon Pure* that came from *Pensylvania*, and sojourned in *Bristol* eleven Days; thou would'st not take my Name from me, would'st thou? — 'till I have done with it. [Aside.]

S. Pu. Thy Name! I am astonish'd!

Col. At what? at thy own Assurance?

[Going up to him, S. Pure starts back.]

S. Pu. Avant, *Satan*, approach me not; I defy thee and all thy Works.

Mrs. Love. Oh, he'll out can him—Undone, undone for ever. [Aside.]

Col. Hark thee, Friend, thy Sham will not take——Don't exert thy Voice, thou art too well acquainted with *Satan* to start at him, thou wicked Reprobate —— What can thy Design be here?

Enter a Servant and gives Prim a Letter.

Ob. Pr. One of these must be a Counterfeit, but which I cannot say.

Col. What can that Letter be? [*Aside.*]

S. Pu. Thou must be the Devil, Friend, that's certain, for no human Power can stock so great a Falshood.

Ob. Pr. This Letter sayeth that thou art better acquainted with that Prince of Darknes, than any here— Read that, I pray thee, *Simon.* [*Gives it the Col.*]

Col. 'Tis *Frceman's* Hand — [*Reads.*] *There is a Design formed to rob your House this Night, and cut your Throat, and for that Purpose there is a Man disguised like a Quaker, who is to pass for one Simon Pure; the Gang, whereof I am one, though now resolved to rob no more, has been at Bristol, one of them came in the Coach with the Quaker; whose Name he hath taken, and from what he hath gathered from him, formed that Design, and did not doubt but he should impose so far upon you, as to make you turn out the real Simon Pure, and keep him with you. Make the right Use of this Adieu—Excellent well!* [*Aside.*]

Ob. Pr. Dost thou hear this? [*To S. Pure.*]

S. Pu. Yea, but it moveth me not; that doubtless is the Impostor. [*Pointing at the Col.*]

Col. Ah! thou wicked One—now I consider thy Face, I remember thou didst come up in the Leathern Conveniency with me—thou hadst a Black Bob-Wig on, and a brown Canlet-Coat with Brass Buttons.— Can't thou deny it, ha?

S. Pu. Yea. I can, and with a safe Conscience too, Friend.

Ob. Pr. Verily Friend; thou art the most impudent Villain I ever saw.

Mrs. Lov. Nay, then I'll have a Fling at him, [*Aside.*] I remember the Face of this Fellow at *Barb*—Ay, this is he, that pick'd my Lady *Raffle's* Pocket in the Grove ——— Don't you remembr that the Mob pump'd you Friend? ——— This is the most notorious Rogue.

S. Pu.

64 A Bold Stroke for a Wife.

S. Pr. What doth provoke thee to seek my Life? Thou wilt not hang me, wilt thou, wrongfully?

Ob. Pr. She will do thee no Hurt, nor thou shalt do me none; therefore get thee about thy Business, Friend, and leave thy wicked Course of Life, or thou may'st not come off so favourably every where.

Col. Go, Friend, I would advise thee, and tempt thy Fate no more.

S. Pu. Yea, I will go, but it shall be to thy Confusion; for I shall clear myself: I will return with some Proofs that shall convince thee, *Obadiab*, that thou art highly imposed upon. [Exit.]

Col. Then there will be no staying for me, that's certain — What the Devil shall I do? [Aside.]

Ob. Pr. What monstrous Works of Iniquity are there in this World, *Simon*!

Col. Yea, the Age is full of Vice — Z' death, I am so confounded, I know not what to say. [Aside.]

Ob. Pr. Thou art disorder'd, Friend — art thou not well?

Col. My Spirit is greatly troubled, and something telleth me, that tho' I have wrought a good Work in converting this Maiden, this tender Maiden, yet my Labour will be in vain; for the evil Spirit fighteth against her; and I see, yea I see with the Eyes of my inward Man, that *Satan* will re-buffet her again, whenever I withdraw myself from her; and she will, yea, this very Damfel will, return again to that Abomination from whence I have retriev'd her, as if it were, yea, as if it were out of the Jaws of the Fiend. —

Ob. Pr. Good lack, thinkest thou so?

Mrs. Love. I must second him [Aside.] What meaneth this struggling within me? I feel the Spirit resisteth the Vanities of this World, but the Flesh is rebellious, yea the Flesh — I greatly fear the Flesh and the Weakness thereof — hum —

Ob. Pr. The Maid is inspir'd.

Col. Behold, her Light begins to shine forth. —
Excellent Woman! [Aside.]

Mrs. Love. This good Man hath spoken Comfort unto me.

me, yea Comfort, I say; because the Words which He hath breathed into my outward Ears, are gone through and fix'd in mine Heart, yea verily in mine Heart, I say; ——— and I feel the Spirit doth love him exceeding-ly, hum ———

Col. She acts it to the Life. [Aside.

Ob. Pr. Prodigious! The Damsel is filled with the Spirit, *Sarab.*

Enter Mrs. Prim.

Mrs. Pr. I am greatly rejoiced to see such a Change in our beloved *Anne.*

Col. I am not disposed for thy Food, my Spirit longeth for more delicious Meat; ——— fain would I, redeem this Maiden from the Tribe of Sinners, and break those Cords asunder wherewith she is bound, ——— hum ———

Mrs. Lov. Something whispers in my Ears, methinks ——— that I must be subject to the Will of this good Man, and from him only must hope for Consolation, ——— hum. ——— It also telleth me, that I am a chosen Vessel to raise up Seed to the Faithful, and that thou must consent that we *two* be *one* Flesh according to the Word, ——— hum. ———

Ob. Pr. What a Revelation is here! This is certainly Part of thy Vision, Friend, this is the Maiden's *growing to thy Side*; Ah! with what Willingness should I give thee my Consent, could I give thee her Fortune too, ——— but thou wilt never get the Consent of the wicked Ones.

Col. I wish I was as sure of yours. [Aside.

Ob. Pr. My Soul rejoiceth; yea, it rejoiceth, I say, to find the Spirit within thee; for lo, it moveth thee with *natural* Agitation, ——— yea, with *natural* Agitation, towards this good Man ——— yea, it *stirreth*, as one may say, ——— yea verily, I say it *stirreth* up thy Inclination, ——— yea, as one would *stir* a Pudding.

Mrs. Lov. I see, I see! the Spirit guiding of thy Hand, good *Obadiab Prim*, and now behold thou art signing thy Consent; ——— and now I see myself within thy Arms, my Friend and Brother, yea, I am become

Beau

56 A Bold Stroke for a W I F E.

Bone of thy Bone, and Fleſh of thy Fleſh. [*Embracing him.*—*hum*—

Col. Admirably perform'd [*Aſide.*] — And I will take thee in all Spiritual Love for an Hetpmate, yea, for the Wife of my Boſom, — and now methinks — I feel a *Longing*, — yea a *Longing*, I ſay, for the Conſummation of: thy Love, — yea, I do long exceedingly.

Mrs. Lov. And, verily, verily, my Spirit feeleth the ſame *Longing*.

Mrs. Prim. The Spirit hath greatly moved them both, — Friend *Prim*, thou muſt conſent, there's no reſiſting of the Spirit!

Ob. Pr. Yea, the Light within ſheweth me, that I ſhall fight a good Fight, — and wreſtle thro' thoſe reprobate Fiends, thy other Guardians; — yea, I perceive the Spirit will hedge thee into the Flock of the Righteous. — Thou art a choſen Lamb, — yea, a choſen Lamb, and I will not puſh thee back, — no, I will not, I ſay; — no, thou ſhalt leap-a, and frisk-a, and ſkip-a, and bound, and bound, I ſay, — yea, bound within the Fold of the Righteous, — yea, even within thy Fold, my Brother. — Fetch me the Pen and Ink, *Sarah* — and my Hand ſhall confeſs its Obedience to the Spirit.

Col. I wiſh it were over.

Enter Mrs. Prim with Pen and Ink.

Mrs. Lov. I tremble leſt this quaking Rogue ſhould return and ſpoil all. [*Aſide.*

Ob. Pr. Here Friend, do thou write what the Spirit prompteth, and I will ſign it. [*Col. ſits down.*

Mrs. Pr. Verily, *Anne*, it greatly rejoiceth me, to ſee thee reformed from that original Wickedneſs wherein I found thee.

Mrs. Lov. I do believe thou art, and I thank thee. —

Col. [*Reads*] *This is to certify all whom it may concern, that I do freely give all my Right and Title in Anne Lovely, to Simón Pure, and my full Conſent that ſhe ſhall become his Wife, according to the Form of Marriage. Witneſs my Hand.*

Ob. Pr. That's enough — give me the Pen. [*Signs it.*

Enter Betty running to Mrs. Lovely.

Betty. Oh! Madam, Madam, here's the quaking Man again, he has brought a Coachman and two or three more.

Mrs. Lov. Ruin'd past Redemption! [*Aside to Col.*

Col. No, no, one Minute sooner had spoil'd all, but now——here's Company coming, Friend, give me the Paper. [*Going up to Prim hastily.*

Ob. Pr. Here it is, *Simon*; and I wish thee happy with the Maiden.

Mrs. Lov. 'Tis done, and now Devil do thy worst.

Enter Simon Pure, and Coachman, &c.

S. Pu. Look thee, Friend, I have brought these People to satisfy thee that I am not that Impostor which thou did'st take me for, this is the Man that did drive the Leathern Conveniency, and brought me from *Bristol*,——and this is——

Col. Look you, Friend, to save the Court the Trouble of examining Witnesses—I plead guilty,—ha, ha!

Ob. Pr. How's this! Is not thy Name *Pure*, then?

Col. No really, Sir, I only made bold with this Gentleman's Name——but I here give it up safe and sound; it has done the Business which I had occasion for, and now I intend to wear my own, which shall be at his Service upon the same Occasion at any Time.—Ha, ha, ha!

S. Pu. Oh! the Wickedness of the Age!

Coachman. Then you have no farther Need of us.

[*Exit.*

Col. No, honest Man, you may go about your Business.

Ob. Pr. I am struck dumb with thy Impudence. *Anne*, thou hast deceiv'd me,——and perchance undone thyself.

Mrs. Prv. Thou art a dissembling Baggage, and Shame will overtake thee. [*Exit.*

S. Pu. I am grieved to see thy Wife so much troubled: I will follow and console her. [*Exit.*

Enter

Enter Servant.

Ser. Thy Brother Guardians enquire for thee; there is another Man with them.

Mrs. Lov. Who can that other Man be? [*To the Col.*]

Col. 'Tis one *Freeman*, a Friend of mine, whom I ordered to bring the rest of the Guardians here.

Enter Sir Philip, Tradelove, Periwinkle, and Freeman.

Free. [*To the Col.*] Is all safe? did my Letter do you Service?

Col. All, all's safe! ample Service. [*Aside.*]

Sir Phil. Miss Nancy, how do'st do, Child;

Mrs. Lov. Don't call me Miss, Friend *Philip*, my Name is *Anne*, thou knowest,——

Sir Phil. What is the Girl metamorphos'd?

Mrs. Lov. I wish thou wert so metamorphos'd. All *Philip*, throw off that gaudy Attire, and wear the Cloaths becoming thy Age.

Ob. Pr. I am ashamed to see these Men. [*Aside.*]

Sir Phil. My Age! the Woman is possess'd.

Col. No, thou art possess'd rather, Friend.

Trade. Hark ye, *Mrs. Lovely*, one Word with you. [*takes hold of her Hand.*]

Col. This Maiden is my Wife, Thanks to Friend *Prim*, and thou hast no Business with her.

Trade. His Wife! hark ye, *Mr. Freeman*. [*Takes her from him.*]

Per. Why, you have made a very fine Piece of Work of it, *Mr. Prim*.

Sir Phil. Married to a Quaker! thou art a fine Fellow to be left Guardian to an Orphan, truly —— there's a Husband for a young Lady!

Col. When I have put on my Beau-Cloaths, *Sir Philip*, you'll like me better:——

Sir Phil. Thou wilt make a very scurvy Beau —— Friend.——

Col. I believe I can prove it under your Hand, that you thought me a very fine Gentleman in the Park t'other Day, about thirty-six Minutes after Eleven; will you take

take a Pinch, Sir *Philip*———One of the finest Snuff-boxes you ever saw. [Offers him Snuff.

Sir Phil. Ha, ha, ha! I am overjoy'd, Faith I am, if thou be'st the Gentleman.——I own I did give my Consent to the Gentleman I brought here to-day; —— but whether this is he, I can't be positive.

Ob. Pr. Can'st thou not? —— Now I think thou art a fine Fellow to be left Guardian to an Orphan.—— Thou shallow-brain'd Shuttlecock, he may be a Pick-pocket for ought thou do'st know.

Per. You would have been two rare Fellows to have been trusted with the sole Management of her Fortune, would ye not, think ye? But Mr. *Tradelove* and myself shall take Care of her Portion.——

Trade. Ay, ay, so we will.——Didn't you tell me the Dutch Merchant desired me to meet him here, Mr. *Freeman*?

Free. I did so, and I am sure he will be here, if you'll have a little Patience.

Col. What, is Mr. *Tradelove* impatient? nay then, ik ben gereet voor you, heb be, *Jan van Timamtirelire-letta-Heer van Fainwell*, vergeeten?

Trade. Oh! pox of the Name! what have you trick'd me too, Mr. *Freeman*.

Col. Trick'd, Mr. *Tradelove*! did not I give you two Thousand Pounds for your Consent fairly? and now do you tell a Gentleman he has tricked you?

Per. So, so, you are a pretty Guardian, faith, to sell your Charge; what, did you look upon her as Part of your Stock?

Ob. Pr. Ha, ha, ha! I am glad thy Knavery is found out however —— I confess the Maiden over-reach'd me, and no sinister End at all.

Per. Ay, ay, one Thing or other over reach'd you all, ——but I'll take care he shall never finger a Penny of her Money, I warrant you; —— over-reach'd quoth'a! Why I might have been over-reach'd too, if I had had no more Wit: I don't know but this very Fellow may be him that was directed to me from *Grand Cairo* t'other Day. Ha, ha, ha!

Col.

Col. The very fame.

Per. Are you so, Sir? but your Trick would not pass upon me. —

Col. No, as you say, at that Time it did not, that was not my lucky Hour; ——— but hark ye, Sir, I must let you into one Secret ——— you may keep honest *John Tradescant's* Coat on, for your Uncle Sir *Toby Periwinkle* is not dead, ——— so the Charge of Mourning will be saved, ha, ha, ha! ——— Don't you remember Mr. *Pillage*, your Uncle's Steward? Ha, ha, ha!

Per. Not dead! I begin to fear I am trick'd too.

Col. Don't you remember the Signing of a Lease, Mr. *Periwinkle*?

Per. Well, and what signifies that Lease, if my Uncle is not dead? ——— Ha! I am sure it was a Lease I signed. ———

Col. Ay, but it was a Lease for Life, Sir, and of this beautiful Testament, I thank you.

[Taking hold of Mrs. *Lovely*.

Omnes. Ha, ha, ha! Neighbours Fare.

Free. So then, I find you are all trick'd, ha, ha!

Per. I am certain I read as plain a Lease as ever I read in my Life.

Col. You read a Lease I grant you, but you sign'd this Contract.

[Shewing a Paper.

Per. How durst you put this Trick upon me, Mr. *Free-man*? Didn't you tell me my Uncle was dying?

Free. And would tell you twice as much to serve my Friend, ha, ha!

Sir Phil. What the learned and famous Mr. *Periwinkle* chous'd too! ——— Ha, ha, ha! ——— I shall die with Laughing, ha, ha, ha!

Ob. Pr. It had been well if her Father had left her to wiser Heads than *thine* and *mine*, Friends, ha, ha, ha!

Trade. Well since you have outwitted us all, pray you what and who are you, Sir?

Sir Phil. Sir, the Gentleman is a fine Gentleman ——— I am glad you have got a Person, Madam, who understands Dress and good Breeding. ——— I was resolv'd she should have a Husband of my chusing.

Ob.

Ob. Pr. I am sorry the Maiden is fallen into such Hands.

Trade. A Beau! nay then she is finely help'd up.

Mrs. Lov. Why Beaus are great Encouragers of Trade, Sir, ha, ha, ha!

Col. Look ye, Gentlemen ——— I am the Person who can give the best Account of myself, and I must beg Sir *Philip's* Pardon, when I tell him that I have as much Aversion to what he calls Dress and Breeding, as I have to the Enemies of my Religion. I have had the Honour to serve his Majesty, and headed a Regiment of the bravest Fellows that ever push'd Bayonet in the Throat of a *Frenchman*; and notwithstanding the Fortune this Lady brings me, whenever my Country wants my Aid, this Sword and Arm are at her Service.

*Therefore, my Dear, if thou'lt but deign to smile,
I meet a Recompence for all my Toil:*

*Love and Religion ne'er admit Restraint,
And Force makes many Sinners, not one Saint;
Still free as Air the active Mind does rove,
And searches proper Objects for its Love;
But that once fix'd, 'tis past the Pow'r of Art
To chase the dear Ideas from the Heart:
'Tis Liberty of Choice that sweetens Life,
Makes the glad Husband and the happy Wife.*



EPILOGUE.

Written by Mr. SEWELL:

Spoken by Mrs. BULLOCK.

WHAT new strange Ways our' modern Beaus devise!
What Trials of Love-Skill, to gain the Prize!
The Heathen Gods, who never mutter'd Rapes,
Scarce wore such strange Variety of Shapes:
The Devil takz their odious barren Skulls,
To court in Form of Snakes and filthy Bulls:
Old Jove once nick'd it too, as I am told,
In a whole Lap-full of true standard Gold;
How must his Godship then fair Danae warm!
In trucking Ware for Ware there is no Harm.
Well after all, that Money has a Charm:
But now indeed that stale Invention's past;
Besides you know that Guineas fall so fast,
Poor Nymph must come to Pocket piece at last.
Old Harry's Face, or good Queen Bess's Ruff,
Not that I'd take 'em — may do well enough;
No — my ambitious Spirit's far above
Those little Tricks of mercenary Love:
That Man be mine, who, like the Col'nel here,
Can top his Character in ev'ry Sphere;
Who can a thousand Ways employ his Wit,
Out promise Statesmen, and out-cheat a Cit:
Beyond the Colours of a Trav'ler paint,
And cant, and ogle too — beyond a Saint.
The last Disguise most pleas'd me, I confess,
There's something tempting in the preaching Dress;
And pleas'd me more than once a Dame of Note,
Who lov'd her Husband in his Footman's Coat.
To see one Eye in wanton Motions play'd,
The other to the Heav'nly Regions stray'd,
As if it for its Fellow's Frailties pray'd:
But yet I hope, for all that I have said,
To find my Spouse a Man of War in Bed.

F I N I S.

