



Bodleian Libraries

UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD

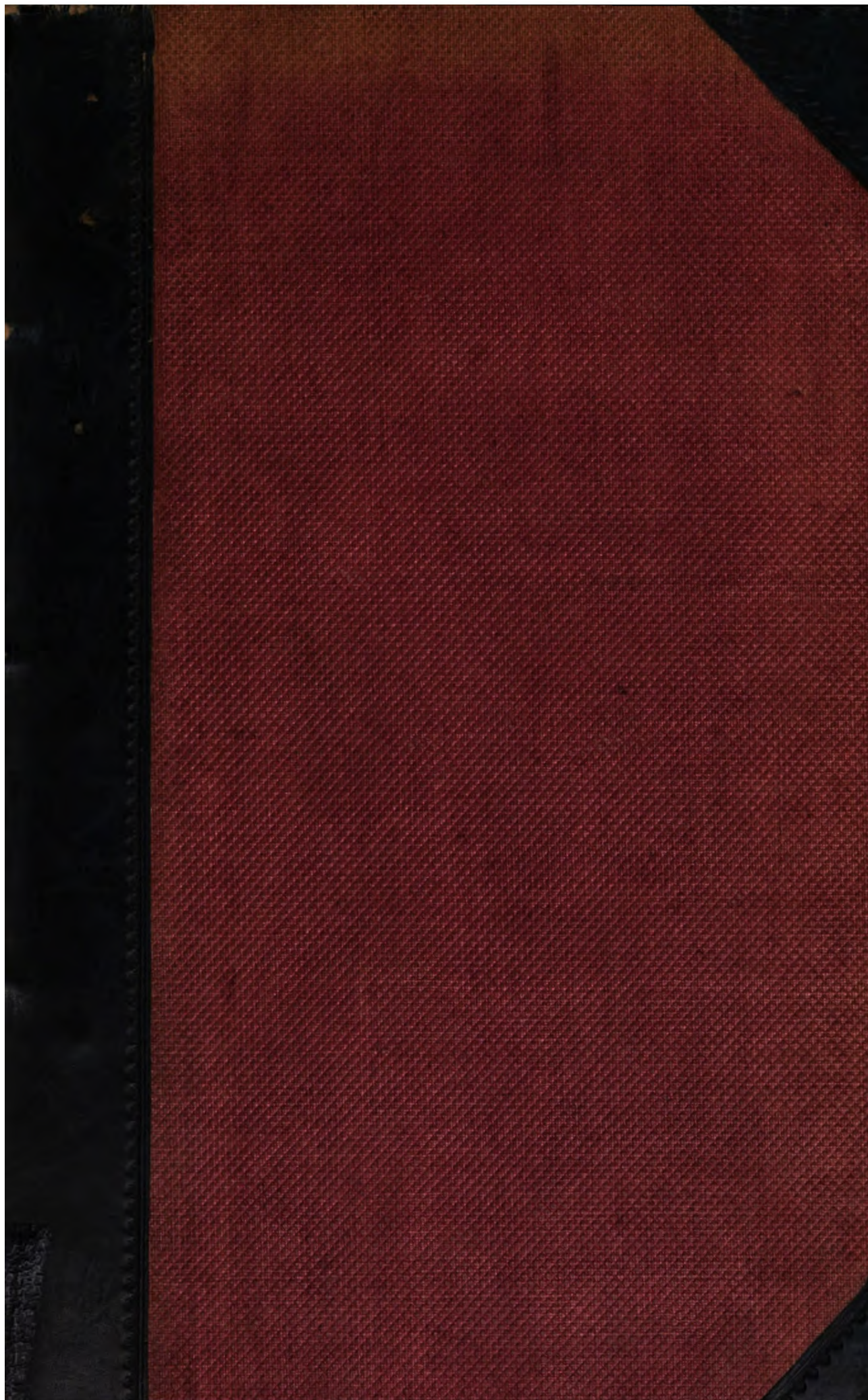
This book is part of the collection held by the Bodleian Libraries and scanned by Google, Inc. for the Google Books Library Project.

For more information see:

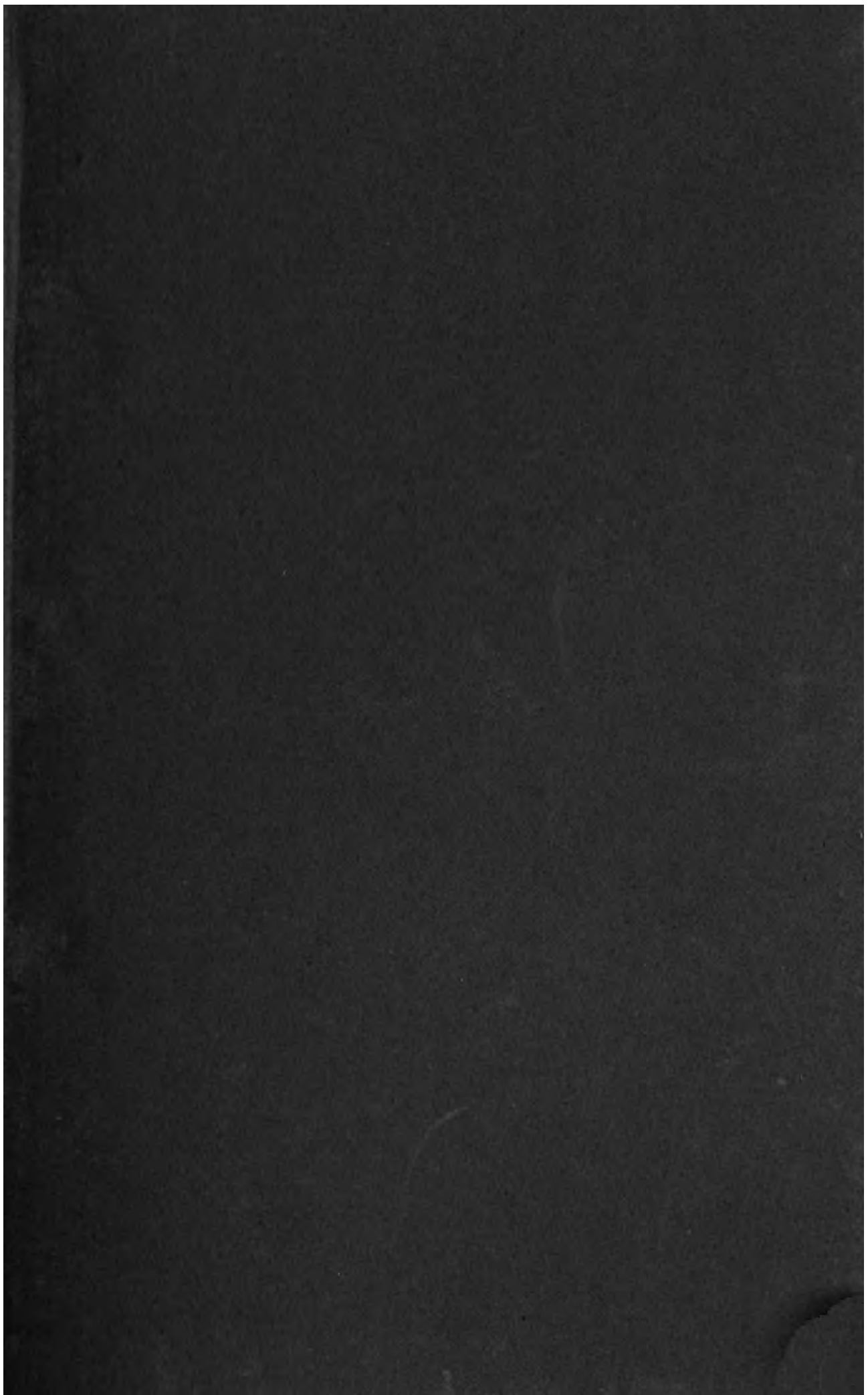
<http://www.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/dbooks>

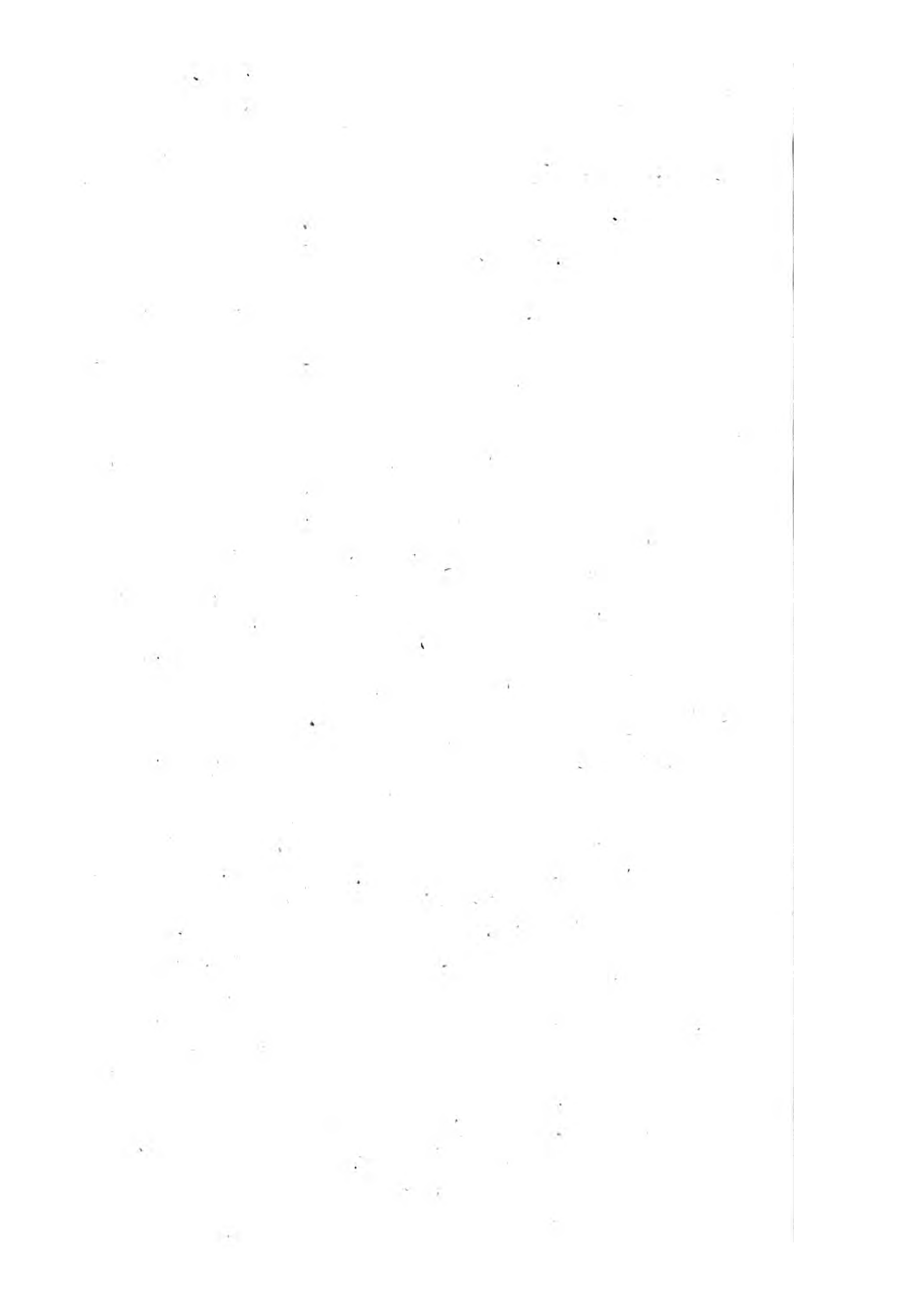


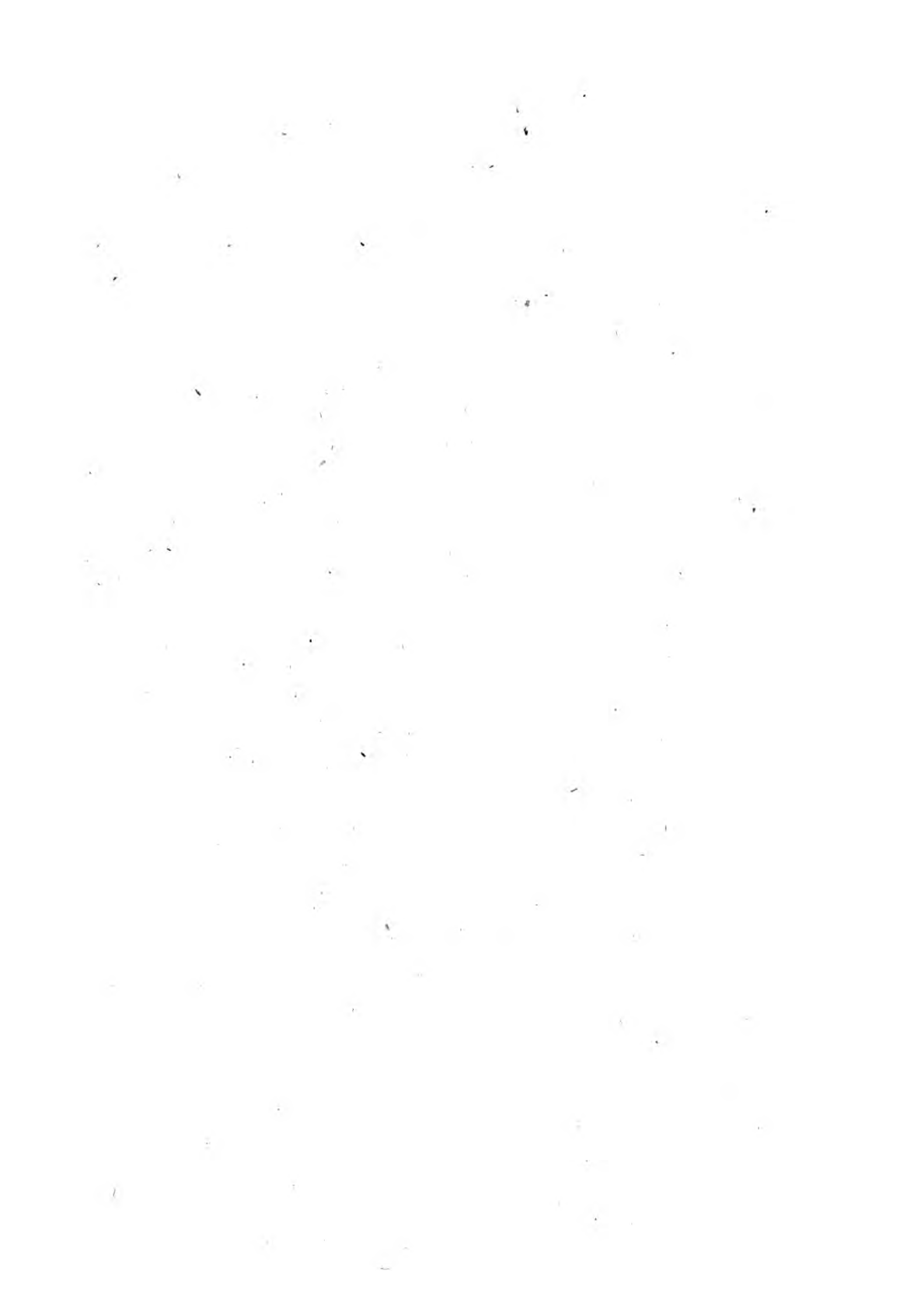
This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 2.0 UK: England & Wales (CC BY-NC-SA 2.0) licence.

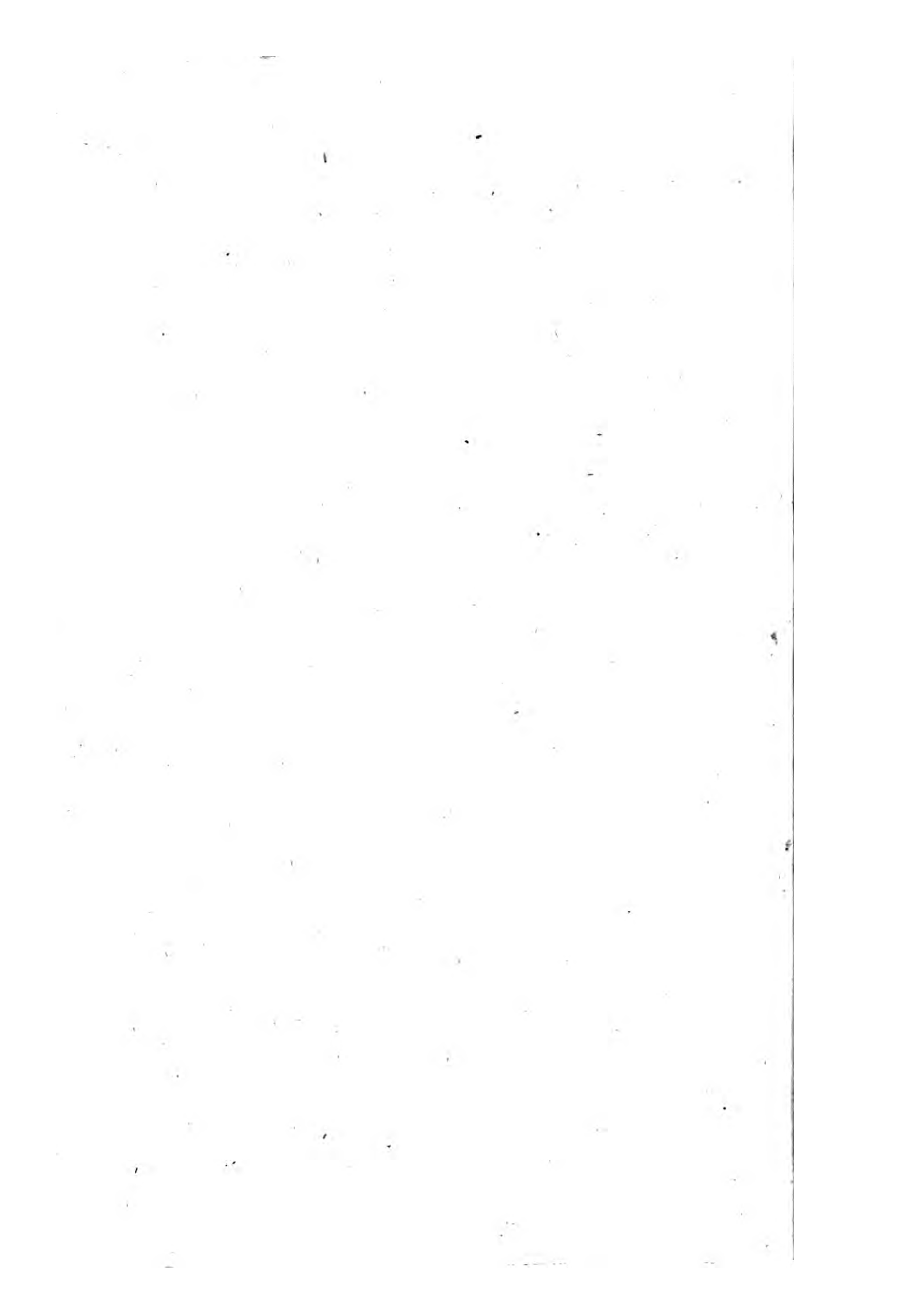


Malone J. 170.









For the LONDON MAGAZINE

THE BRITISH THEATRE.

March 8. 1776

LAST night a new comedy of two acts, called *The Spleen, or Islington Spaw*, was performed for the first time at the theatre royal in Drury Lane: the characters were as follow, and thus personated:

Rubrick,	Mr. King.
Doyley,	Mr. Parsons.
Aspin,	Mr. Baddeley.
Dr. Machoof,	Mr. Moody.
Jack Rubrick,	Mr. Palmer.
Merton,	Mr. Brereton.
Folio,	Mr. Whitefield.
Mrs. Rubrick,	Mrs. Hopkins.
Eliza,	Miss P. Hopkins.
Letitia,	Mrs. King.
Tabitha,	Mrs. Love.
Maid,	Mrs. Davies.

THE scene of this petty piece is partly laid in London and partly in Islington: the story is shortly this: Eliza, the daughter of Rubrick, a bookseller in Paternoster-Row, is by her father contracted to Doyley, an old woollen-draper, behind St. Clement's church; but previous to the time the action commences, is secretly married to Merton, a half-pay officer, and an intimate companion of Jack Rubrick, Eliza's brother. The piece opens with a scene between Merton and young Rubrick, in which the former explains his true situation to his friend and brother-in-law, in confidence; acquaints him, that he had been forbid his father's house; and consults him on the most feasible means of effecting a reconciliation. Jack sympathises with Merton, and assures him, that he will do every thing in his power to extricate him from his present *embarras*. This gives birth to a scheme contrived by Jack Rubrick, and

Aspin, a friend of the Rubrick family, in which Letitia, a cousin of Eliza's, undertakes, in the disguise of Anodyne, a young modern dressed physician, to co-operate with them, in a scheme for defeating the proposed match between Doyley and Eliza. Letitia, in her new character, introduces herself to Doyley and persuades him that he is troubled with almost every disorder, known or described in the *Materia Medica*. In the midst of this scene between the self-created valetudinarian, and the female mock doctor, Aspin, as had been before concerted, makes his appearance, and charges Doctor Anodyne with having a very improper intimacy with Eliza, no less than passing more than one night in her bedchamber. Doyley, alarmed at so strong an appearance of criminality, endeavours to recede from his engagement; and to recover the bond which he had given in assurance of the performance of his contract. While this matter occupies the consideration of the parties, Merton and Eliza make their appearance, and Doyley, anxious to get rid of so disagreeable an affair, consents to forfeit half the penalty. The private marriage between Merton and Eliza is then confessed, the parents are reconciled, Doctor Anodyne gives some salutary advice to Doyley, and the piece ends.

This piece has very little merit, either in respect of plot or character. The former is trifling, uninteresting, and improbable; and though some of the characters are taken from real life, they fail to strike, because they are neither strongly marked nor happily selected. The second act is unsufferably long, and the intended effect of the principal scene between Anodyne and Doyley, is

tally lost; and the audience are obliged to endure it with disgust. The Dramatis Personæ are too numerous, and more than one half of them serve only to crowd the stage and interrupt the business of the play, by which means it is divided and broken into such a variety of parts, that the auditor has scarcely any leading object on which to fix his attention or to rest his judgement.

Rubrick is the only good character that the author has attempted; but the *trait* is rather imperfectly conceived, and slovenly executed. It is certainly done after an original; but it is equally certain, that it wants that degree of expression and colouring which copies require, in order to preserve the intended likeness. And so far from thinking that Rubrick is a caricature, we are of opinion, that the author would have succeeded better, if he had drawn with a freer and a bolder hand. It is unnecessary to remark, that Mr. King did justice to the part, and looked as consequential and as buckish, as if he had been just returned from hearing a debate in the House of Commons on literary property affairs.

The character of Doyley is evidently borrowed from Moliere. It has no degree of novelty, nor is the situation Doyley is introduced into, at all improved or varied, in order to give it the appearance of what it really has not. Mr. Parsons made as much of it as it would bear, and if it was deficient no person could impute any part of its ill success to him.

The character of Machoof is well conceived, and puts us in mind of those swarms of Scotch porters and pebble and mortar men from Edinburgh, which infest this metropolis, under the appellation of doctors generated from surgeon's mates. They were spawned during the late war, they were brought into actual existence by Scotch influence, and they have arrived at their present state of maturity, through the natural indolence and credulity of the people of this country. Mr. Moody however seemed to affect the manner of an Irish tooth-drawer, much more than that of a Scotch farrier.

Young Rubrick, though generally given the first place in this little dramatic groupe, is not, in our opinion, entitled to it; the technical terms of a very abstruse dry science, do not come very naturally from the mouth of a man, who seems to have surrendered his thoughts, and directed his whole attention to the fashionable pleasures of the town, and the fordid follies of Newmarket. But supposing that this double character could naturally subsist together in the same person, or that one of them was nothing more than a borrowed appearance, the mere result of affectation, we cannot applaud the author's judgement in bringing the mathematician and the
of the turf forward, in the same point

of view at the same instant. It was done, we presume, with intention of giving the character the air of originality; but we are of opinion, that the attempt would have succeeded much better, and the effect been much stronger, if this *amateur* of sines, lines, angles, segments, and tangents, had displayed his scientific knowledge in one scene and his taste for the *ton* in another. Mr. Palmer had little more to do than to preserve a rapid utterance, and appear in good spirits; those requisites he certainly possessed, and was of course well received in the part.

Merton had little to say, and less to do, and was therefore very characteristically performed by Mr. Brereton.

Mrs. Rubrick was no bad draught of the wife of a citizen of the middle class. Mrs. Hopkins filled the part with great propriety. She preserved all that vulgar *bauteur* that acquired wealth is apt to inspire; and displayed that avidity for fashionable amusements that frequently springs up in minds in which toil and narrow circumstances have depressed, not extinguished it in the more early periods of life.

Eliza is a modern young lady, modern in love, and we applaud the poetical justice of Mr. Colman, in giving her a modern half pay officer, for her *caro*. The old retailer of remnants is we think very properly compelled to enable this deserving young man, to lay a cool hundred at the Bedford or the Rose; and if Mr. Colman, in imitation of Mr. Gay, should oblige the town with a second part of *The Spleen*, we shall probably find the family of the Rubricks thus disposed of; Mrs. Merton on the *ton*; Merton in the King's-bench prison starving; Mrs. Rubrick dead of poverty and a broken heart; the young Cantab in full possession of a curacy of thirty pounds a year, and old Rubrick keeping a pamphlet shop, and married to his maid. Such we are sure ought to be the effects of a modern education, in the middle walks of life, and such we believe are very frequently the consequences of breeding up our youth to be small gentry, instead of teaching them to be sober substantial citizens, and useful creditable members of society.

Mrs. Tabitha makes several pertinent observations, of the same tendency with what we have now hinted. They are natural and just, and were certainly delivered in a very proper manner by Mrs. Love, and in the very spirit in which they were wrote.

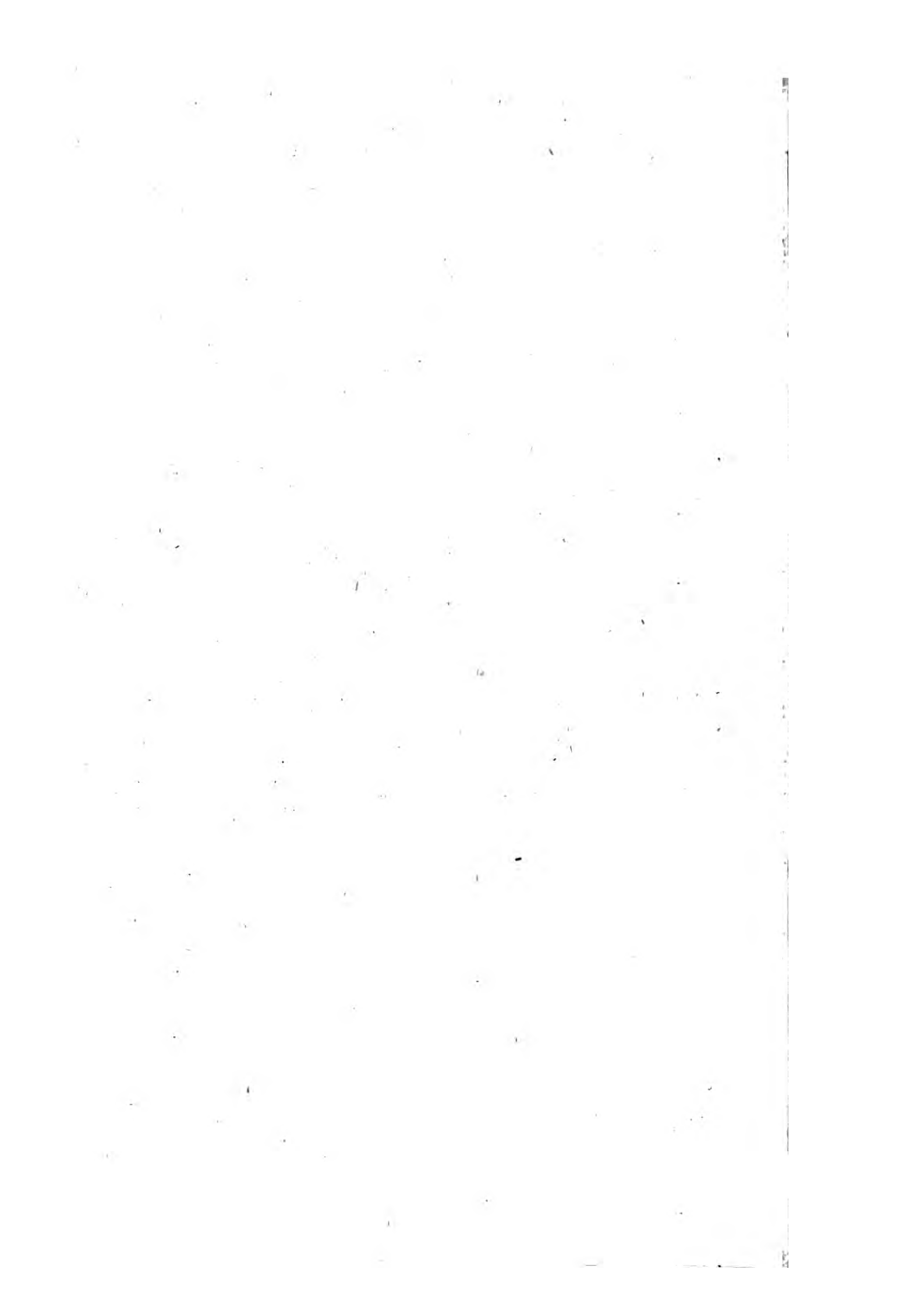
The character of Letitia, or rather the business the author has assigned her in this piece, is improbable. The disguise was introduced by way of seasoning, but in our opinion it favoured more of the gallipot, than of joy or cayenne. Mr. Colman's extensive acquaintance with dramatic writing and the stage effect, or his solicitude to avoid the ap-
pearance

pearance of plagiarism, perhaps suggested the idea. The *denouement*, however, might have been better accomplished by other means; and Aspin, Jack Rubrick, or Mac-hoof, would have answered the other purpose, that of exposing the imaginary illness of Doyley, without doing that open violence to every rule of living manners, or even dramatic probability. Mrs. King performed the part of Anodyne extremely well; and spoke the epilogue with great propriety and characteristic spirit. The herd of critics refused her the applause she was justly entitled to: they forgot perhaps, that Mrs. King's confident and unfeeling glare was perfectly natural from an empty, modern, medical coxcomb. On the whole, we pronounce *The Spleen* to have several traits of real character in it. The author has certainly proved himself to be possessed of the powers of discrimination and dramatic conception; but he either wanted judgement to arrange them, or abilities to give us one finished portrait. Yet after all we are inclined to hope, that if he had improved the fable and had lengthened the piece into a comedy of five acts, he would have succeeded much better; for with all its faults it is evident, that most of the characters in *The Spleen* are taken from real life; which, in our opinion, so far as such a requisite can be supposed to operate, gives the

author a preference over the greater part of the present formidable body of modern playwrights.

March 18. Mr. Webster appeared on Saturday night at the theatre royal in Covent Garden for the first time as a vocal performer, in the masque of Comus. Great expectations were formed of his excellence in this walk; but the public appeared to be rather disappointed. His voice is certainly pleasing and contains great variety, but he seems to want feeling and expression. As in playing, his conception never reaches beyond the languid and correct; so his singing is destitute of that grace, warmth, energy, and animation, which are no less essential to the true effect of harmony, than native passion is to a first rate tragedian. Those advantages are only to be derived from nature; and we venture to pronounce, that if he does not open a second intercourse with that bountiful lady, he will never answer the expectations the town, as well as his friends, were first inclined to form of him.

Mrs. Farrel, and Miss Weller, were well received in this celebrated masque; the former as singing with equal judgment and correctness, and the latter with infinite grace and delicacy of expression, though her powers in other respects at present seem to be limited.



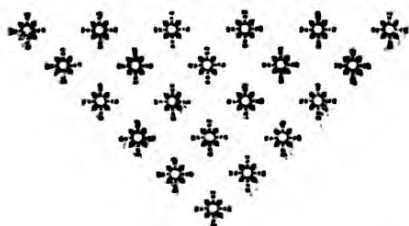
THE
S P L E E N,
OR,
ISLINGTON SPA;

A
C O M I C K P I E C E,
O F
T W O A C T S:

AS IT IS PERFORMED AT THE

THEATRE ROYAL, in DRURY-LANE.

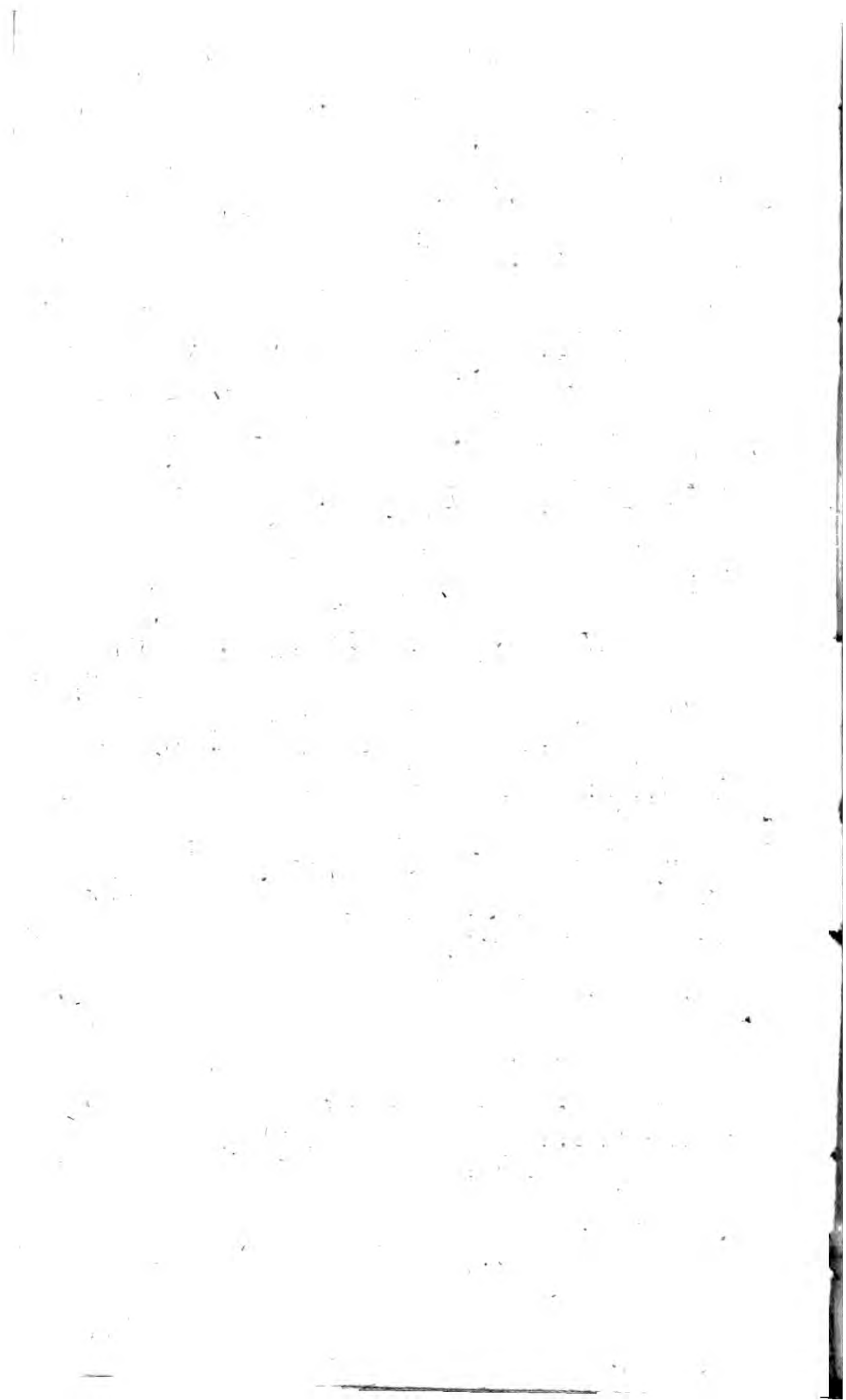
By GEORGE COLMAN.



L O N D O N:

PRINTED for T. BECKET, Corner of the ADELPHI,
in the STRAND,
M,DCC,LXX,VI.





ADVERTISEMENT.

THE *Malade Imaginaire* of Moliere first suggested the idea of *The Spleen*, the Author of which has however deviated without scruple from his admirable original. The readers of the agreeable essays under the title of *The Idler*, will also discover some *traits* of D'Oyley in that writer's description of Drugget's retirement, as well as some features of Rubrick in his character of Whirler. Any other *gleanings*, as the Prologue neatly terms them, I do not recollect, except that I have before exhibited a young Cantabrigian at Newmarket, in one of the Numbers of *The Connoisseur*; in which papers, as well as other popular essays, there are also frequent allusions to the short excursions and suburb villas of our citizens.—It has (I am told) been asserted in one of our daily prints—the *Gazetteer*, or *Garretteer*—I forget the name of it—that for the idea of *the Noon-Post* I am indebted to my deceased friend BONNEL THORNTON. No body was more capable of giving excellent hints; there was nobody whose hints I would more readily have embraced, or more chearfully acknowledged. But the assertion is totally false. It is not the first time that my enemies have paid me a compliment they did not intend, by ascribing my feeble productions to more eminent writers. I will endeavour not to be vain of their censures; though perhaps they will think me so, in adopting the words of Terence on the occasion.

— *Quod isti dicunt MALEVOLI, homines nobiles
Eum adjuvare, assidueque una scribere :
Quod illi maledictum vebemens esse existimant,
Eam laudem hic ducit maximam, cum illis placet,
Qui vobis universis & populo placent.*

T O

D R. S C H O M B E R G.

My dear Friend,

Naturam intueri & sequi, is equally the province of the dramatist and physician; and could I trace the windings of the human heart with half that skill and sagacity that you have applied to the disorders of the body, I should, by mere force of talent, secure to myself a respectable seat in the college. Even among regulars, there is often found a tincture of empiricism not unworthy ridicule: for there are too few who, like you, have honesty and fortitude to confess the imperfection of art, and the uncertainty of science. There is a quackery in letters and morals also, as well as in medicine; but your knowledge and experience, your humanity and good sense, are not more distinguishing marks of your character, than your sovereign contempt for imposture in every situation. To this noble plainness
of

(ii)

of manners, this integrity of heart, permit me to make an humble offering, and to seize this occasion of publishing the sentiments of esteem and affection that I have long entertained for you, and with which I remain,

My dear Sir,

Your very faithful

and devoted Servant,

George Colman.

P R O L O G U E.

Written by DAVID GARRICK, Esq;

Spoken by Mr. K I N G.

THO' Prologues now, as blackberries are plenty,
And like them maukish too, nineteen in twenty;
Yet you will have them, when their date is o'er,
And Prologue, Prologue, still your honours roar;
Till some such dismal phiz as mine comes on,
Ladies and Gentlemen indeed there's none,
The Prologue, Author, Speaker, all are dead and gone! }
These reasons have some weight, and stop the rout;
You clap—I smirk—and thus go cringing out;
“ While living call me, for your pleasure use me;
“ Should I tip off—I hope you'll then excuse me.

So much for Prologues—and now enter Farce.
Shall I à scene, I lately heard, rehearse?
The Place, the Park; the Dramatis Personæ,
Two female wits, with each a macaroni.
Prithee, Lord Flimsy—what's this thing at Drury?
This Spleen? 'Tis low, damn'd low, Ma'am, I assure ye:
Ce't Vrai mi Lor!—we now feel no such evil,
Never are haunted with a vapourish devil.
In pleasures round we whirl it from the brain,
You rattle it away with Seven's the Main!
In upper life we have no Spleen or gall;
And as for other Life, it is no life at all.

What can I say in our poor Bard's behalf?
He hopes that lower life may make you laugh:
May not a trader who shall business drop,
Quiting at once his old accustom'd shop,
In Fancy thro' a course of pleasures run,
Retiring to his seat at Islington?

And

P R O L O G U E . •

*And of false dreams of happiness brim-full,
Be at his Villa, miserably dull?
Wou'd not he Islington's fine air forego.
Cou'd he again be choak'd in Butcher Row?
In showing cloth, renew his former pleasure,
Surpass'd by none, but that of clipping measure.
The master of this shop too seeks repose,
Sells off his stock in trade, his verse and prose,
His daggers, buskins, thunder, lightning, and old clothes. }
Will he in rural shades find ease and quiet?
Ob no! —————
He'll sigh for Drury, and seek peace in riot.*

*Nature of yore prevail'd thro' human kind,
To low and middle life, she's now confin'd.
'Twas there the choicest dramatists have sought her;
'Twas there Moliere, there Jonson, Shakespear, caught her.
Then let our gleaning Bard with safety come.
To pick up straws, dropt from their harvest home.*

C H A R A C T E R S.

<i>D'Oyley,</i>	—		Mr. Parsons,
<i>Aspin,</i>	—	—	Mr. Baddeley,
<i>Merton,</i>	—		Mr. Brereton,
<i>Rubrick,</i>		—	Mr. King,
<i>Jack Rubrick,</i>			Mr. Palmer,
<i>Folio,</i>	—		Mr. Wrighten,
<i>Clerk,</i>	—	—	Mr. Whitefield,
<i>Mac-boof,</i>	—		Mr. Moody,
<i>Merton's Servant,</i>			Mr. La-Mash.
<i>Mrs. Rubrick,</i>		—	Mrs. Hopkins,
<i>Mrs. Tabitha,</i>			Mrs. Love,
<i>Eliza,</i>	—		Miss P. Hopkins,
<i>Lætitia,</i>	—	—	Mrs. King,
<i>Maid,</i>	—		Mrs. Davies.

THE S P L E E N :

O R,

I S L I N G T O N S P A .

A C T I.

SCENE, *a Street near St. Paul's.*

M E R T O N *alone.*

HOW tedious is the time, when expectation obliges us to mark its progress! Here have I been near an hour and an half, watching the dial of St. Paul's, and counting the minutes, in hopes of news from my Eliza. It is now almost noon; where can this rascal of mine be loitering? Oh; here he is!

Enter S E R V A N T.

Well, firrah! what intelligence?

B

SER-

SERVANT.

A Gazette Extraordinary, Sir! I have been upon the scout ever since they opened the shop windows, and I'm as full of news as the Morning Chronicle.

MERTON.

Out with it! Where is my Eliza?

SERVANT.

In town, Sir.

MERTON.

And her mother?

SERVANT.

In town too, Sir.

MERTON.

And her father?

SERVANT.

Out of town, Sir.

MERTON.

And I thought my Eliza was with him?

SERVANT.

So she was, Sir—Father and daughter both in the country—that is, if you call Islington out of town.

MERTON.

Islington?

SERVANT.

Yes, Sir, Islington. Her father, Mr. Rubrick, has taken lodgings at Islington Spa for the summer, Sir; and Madam Eliza attended him there. And is now returned to fetch Mrs. Rubrick from

Paternoster-Row, to join her husband at Islington.

MERTON.

How did you learn this?

SERVANT.

From your merry cousin, Mrs. Lætitia, Sir.

MERTON.

Lætitia! where did you see her?

SERVANT.

At Madam Eliza's, Sir. She saw me from the dining room window, sent for me in, told me all I have told you, charging me to be sure on no account to acquaint you with a word of it!

[*archly.*]

MERTON!

No, to be sure!—Excellent girl!—Well; away to my lodgings, firrah; and wait for further orders.

SERVANT.

I am gone, Sir. (*going returns*) But here's a young lady in the case.

MERTON.

And what then, Sir?

SERVANT!

Only have a care of the Police, Sir! Don't make a Bow-street affair of it. Her father is a Common Council man too: he may take you before the Lord Mayor, or the Sitting Alderman; or——

MERTON.

Away, rascal! Do you banter?

B 2

SER-

SERVANT.

I am gone, I am gone, Sir.

[Exit.

MERTON.

My Eliza just come to town! My arrival is critical. Now, though old Rubrick has banished me his house, could I but contrive to get a sight of my mad-cap cousin, Lætitia, she might perhaps be able to introduce me. Suppose I go and reconnoitre a little! (*going*) Jack Rubrick!

Enter JACK RUBRICK.

JACK RUBRICK.

What! Tom Merton in England? and in London too? My old friend and school-fellow! how do you? your hand, Tom! I did not think you had been in our hemisphere. A commission took you from us in the middle of Westminster college; and how has it disposed of you since, Tom?

MERTON.

For three years, my dear Jack, I have been stationed at Gibraltar, from whence I have been returned, with the rest of the regiment, little more than so many months.

JACK RUBRICK.

So you have been studying the Tactics at the Hercules Pillars, while I have been cudgelling the Mathematicks at Cambridge. How we diverge, like rays, from the same centre! We walk through life together indeed, but seem hitherto, like parallel lines, destined never to meet. But I am heartily glad of this encounter.

MER-

MERTON.

And I as heartily.—But by your boots and your language, Jack, I should imagine you to be just fresh from the University.

JACK RUBRICK.

You have hit it. I am so.—Not immediately though—for I flew off in a tangent the beginning of last week to Newmarket. It was the second Spring meeting; and I chose to take the Sun's altitude on the course every day, make a few observations (during the heats) upon matter and motion, with as many calculations, as a Lottery-Office-keeper, on the Doctrine of Chances.

MERTON.

What a hard student! But was there good sport?

JACK RUBRICK.

Sport! you talk as if you were speaking of a common country race. They never think of sport. It is all *business* at Newmarket, man!

MERTON.

Well, was the business good, then?

JACK RUBRICK.

Many thought excellent; but it was quite in an inverse *ratio* to me, Tom! Fourscore *minus*, I promise you. My quarter's allowance, which I had just received at Lady-day, (thirty guineas!) gone.—Reduced to sell my little horse *Phosphorus* for thirty more! Gone. And I was obliged to give a promissory note for twenty more.—So that if you understand Algebra but half so well as I do, Tom, you will find by all the powers of numbers,

numbers, that I was just eighty guineas a loser.

MERTON.

Thirty and thirty, and twenty! Fourscore exactly, Jack! I have just so much arithmetick.

JACK RUBRICK.

The odds were all hollow in my favour too! Were you ever at Newmarket?

MERTON.

Never.

JACK RUBRICK.

I'll tell you then——It was a four-mile heat on the long course—a match between Pantheon, Jubilee, Duenna, and Gabrielli!—At first going off they kept pretty even together; Jubilee and Duenna, Pantheon and Gabrielli, cheek by jowl, and formed a kind of Parallelogram.—When they came to describe a circle on the Round Course, you might almost as soon have squared the circle, as have told which would be the winner. Then away they went, whip and spur, through the Devil's ditch, like the Devil himself!—Coming up Choakjade, Pantheon lagged behind. Gabrielli, though some thought her touched in the wind, got a-head of the other two; and she before, with Jubilee and Duenna abreast of each other, formed an equilateral triangle—A thousand pound to a china orange on Gabrielli! when all of a sudden, with a damned excentrick motion, she made an acute angle on the wrong side of the post—Jubilee started and stumbled—but by the bye, I believe his rider played booty—Duenna won the stakes, and the knowing ones were all taken in.

MER-

MERTON.

And poor Jack Rubrick into the bargain.

JACK RUBRICK.

Poor indeed, Tom! I discovered as absolute a *vacuum* in my breeches pockets, as in those of a heathen philosopher: I would fain have been among the red ribbands and black legs at *Hell* in the evening, and tried my luck with tossing the *cubes* about—but not a single guinea left to bribe my fortune, or take me off the course. By good luck, Frank Whip of Clare Hall was there, and being on a scheme to London, brought me up to town in his phaeton.

MERTON.

And what's your business here, Jack?

JACK RUBRICK.

Partly to get a fresh recruit from Old Square-toes. I might have made out a list of mathematical books for a supply—but as the Devil will have it, he sells books himself, you know.—So there's no hopes in that quarter—but I was obliged to come up, in order to attend the marriage of my sister Eliza.

MERTON.

The marriage of your sister Eliza! to whom, pray?

JACK RUBRICK.

To old D'Oyley, the rich draper, that kept the three sheep behind St. Clement's—did you never hear of him?

MERTON.

I have. But Eliza will never be his wife, Jack.

JACK

JACK RUBRICK.

Ay, but she will though! He may like her, and she not like him, it is true, Tom. There may be all the powers of attraction and repulsion between them, perhaps. But they'll be married within these ten days, for all that, my friend.

MERTON.

Impossible.

JACK RUBRICK.

Impossible! why so, Tom?

MERTON.

Because she is married already.

JACK RUBRICK.

The devil she is! That's solving the problem with a vengeance. But to whom?

MERTON.

Even to your old friend and school fellow. To me, Jack.

JACK RUBRICK.

To you! I am heartily glad of it. But Old Squaretoes knows nothing of this?

MERTON.

Not a syllable.

JACK RUBRICK.

Nor my mother?

MERTON.

Neither. The mere suspicion of my fondness, and conviction of my half pay, has banished me the house: and I am at this moment rather in ambush, endeavouring to make an impression.

JACK RUBRICK.

And I will be your chief engineer, Tom. Come along! I'll introduce you. I am as happy

at this intelligence, as if I had found a passage to the North Pole, or discovered the longitude.— Come along with me! Never shall it be said, if I can help it, that one Old Westminster deserted another. Come along, Tom! *[Exeunt.]*

Scene changes to an apartment in the house of Mr. Rubrick, Paternoster-Row.

MAID and Mrs. TABITHA packing.

Mrs. TABITHA.

Come, make haste, Molly, make haste; my sister will be here presently.

MAID.

Lord, I does, Ma'am. I makes all the haste as I can. Here's such a *rumpus* about my mistress going out of town indeed!

Mrs. TABITHA.

Well, well; a rolling stone's always bare of moss, as you say.—But have you corded the band-boxes?

MAID.

Ay that I have; there they stand—all of a row—piled one o'top o't'other—more than they'll stuff into the seats, the boot, and the basket, I warrant them. There's blond ruffles, and gauze handkerchiefs, and cabbage-net caps, with wires and wipers, enough to set up one of the milliners in the Cloisters of Christ Church Hospital!

Mrs. TABITHA.

Well, well; a store's no sore, as they say.—Have you papered the neats' tongues, and the cold chickens? and put up the lettuce and cabbages,

C

from

from the cellar in Honey-lane market? Nothing like *fresh* provisions in the country, you know. We must send them from London every day. They shall have them fresh and fresh, I warrant you. Are they all ready, Molly?

M A I D.

Yes, yes, they are all ready; fowls, tongues, and cabbages, all ready ma'am. Ah, I wishes to heaven as how my dear brother, the corporal, and the rest of the poor Christians at Boston, had some of them!

Enter Mrs. RUBRICK hastily.

Mrs. RUBRICK.

Are you ready, Molly? Are the things all packed up, sister? I have not a moment to spare. It's almost one o'clock. I expect the *coach and three* at the corner every moment.

M A I D.

Coach and three! Lord, Lord, here's things enough to load a coach and six, Ma'am.

Mrs. RUBRICK.

The coachman makes us pay accordingly, you know. He weighs all the goods and parcels at the end of *the Row* at the cheesemonger's. And he's so saucy too, he won't wait for any body. Is *Poll* ready?

M A I D.

Yes, Ma'am; little Miss has been drest and ready this half hour.

Mrs. RUBRICK.

Little Miss! 'Psha, I don't mean the child. I mean the Parrot. You know I never travel
without

without it. One wants both company and conversation in the country ; and Poll serves for both, you know. Go, run and fetch her in. Make haste, make haste Molly.

M A I D.

(Going out) Here's such a fuss indeed! [Exit.

Mrs. TABITHA.

Ay, more haste, worse speed, I say. Keep your house, and your house will keep you, as the old proverb goes.

Mrs. RUBRICK.

It's impossible to keep in town all the summer, let the proverb go as it will, sister Tabby!—To be cooped up in *the Row*, amidst the smell of the printing-house, and Dolly's beef stakes, all the dog days!—No, give me fresh air, and Islington!—All the world shut up their houses in London at this time of the year, and resort to the watering places.

Mrs. TABITHA.

So much the worse, sister Rubrick! I have never resorted out of the sound of Bow bell these fifty years—nor ever desired it—winter or summer, all's one to Tabitha!—And as to the watering places, I'm told nobody goes there, that's fit to go any where else.—Cripples, and sharpers! phtificky old gentlewomen, and frolicksome young ones! Married ladies that want children, unmarried ladies that want sweethearts, and gentlemen that want money! Newgate out of town, the London Hospital in the country, sister!

Mrs. RUBRICK.

Never more mistaken in your life, sister Tabby! There may be a little scandal indeed; but

where there are agreeable men, and handsome women, that's always the case, you know.

Mrs. TABITHA.

Ay, ay, handsome is as handsome does, as the old proverb goes.

Mrs. RUBRICK.

Does! why they do every thing that's polite and agreeable.—And then the Spa! The Spa grows as genteel as Tunbridge, Brighthelmstone, Southampton, or Margate.—Live in the most sociable way upon earth—all the company acquainted with each other—walks, balls, raffles, and subscriptions! Mrs. Jenkins of the Three Blue Balls, Mrs. Rumer and family from the King's Arms, and several other people of condition to be there this season! And then Eliza's wedding, you know; that was owing to the Spa, you know: Oh the watering places, are the only places to get young women lovers and husbands.

Mrs. TABITHA.

Ay, they get loviars, oftener than husbands, I fear, sister.

Mrs. RUBRICK.

Never do you fear us, my dear Tabby! If there should be a little flirtation, Prudence, Prudence will prevent duels, or such terrible consequences; and as to gaming, I assure you, I'll never go above six-pence a rubber.

Mrs. TABITHA.

Ah, they never touched a card the whole year through, on this side of the bar, in my time, except at the round table at Christmas.

Mrs. RUBRICK.

In your time! Lord, what signifies talking of your time! You may as well expect St. Paul's clock to stand still, as the fashions not to alter. Times will change, sifter.

Mrs. TABITHA.

So much the worse, sifter! The sun rises and sets, and makes out the four and twenty hours, and so does St. Paul's clock, just as it used to do, sifter;—but the people round St. Paul's are all changed, sifter. Common-Council-Men that wear bag wigs, Aldermen that keep gilt coaches, and Deputies that keep madams! And then the women, my own *set* forsooth, that used to study the Compleat Housewife, or spend the sabbath in reading the Practice of Piety, read nothing but *Boyle's* games, and keep routs on a Sunday. Such doings with their high heads, squeezed stomachs, broad bosoms, false hair, and false faces! It was not so in my time. No negligigees, or plummets of feathers in my time, sifter!

Re-enter MAID and CLERK.

MAID.

The stage waits at the end of Cheapside, Ma'am, and little Miss and Poll are in the coach already—and the things are all in, Ma'am.

Mrs. RUBRICK.

I'll be with them immediately. Eliza's brother is come, and he'll walk over the fields with her.—What young man's that, Molly?

MAID

MAID.

He wants master, Ma'am—so I have sent for the foreman to speak to him—Mr. Folio is but just stept into the Chapter Coffee-house.

Mrs. RUBRICK.

That's right, that's right, Molly. The foreman will speak to you in a moment, young man!—Well, heaven blefs you, Tabby! (*kif-fing*) Come! don't be uneasy, though the family are at such a *distance*! There's above forty coaches pass within an hundred yards of the place every day, and you may hear of us every quarter of an hour.

Mrs. TABITHA.

Heaven fend I hears no harm of you! No news is good news sometimes, as the proverb goes.

Mrs. RUBRICK.

Well, but I must go now, Tabby!

Mrs. TABITHA.

And I'll go with you to the coach door, since you must be gadding. Home's home, though never so homely! (*enter Folio*) Oh! here, speak to the young man, Mr. Folio! [*Exeunt Women.*]

Manent CLERK and FOLIO,

FOLIO.

Your pleasure, Sir!

CLERK.

A little business, Sir. A bill for an hundred, accepted by Mr. Rubrick, and become due this day, you see! (*giving bill*)

FOLIO.

FOLIO.

Let me see—*Please to pay—um—um—two hundred pounds—um—um—to Mr. Thomas Rubrick, Paternoster-Row—accepted T. R.*—I don't know what to say to this—I have no directions about it, and my master's at Spa.

CLERK.

The devil he is! then the bill will be noted, that's all—Spa indeed!

FOLIO.

Nay, don't be so furious. He's only at Tunbridge Wells.

CLERK.

Tunbridge Wells!—The bill lies for payment at Dollar's and Co. in Birchin-lane, and if not taken up this afternoon, will be protested.—Tunbridge quoth'a! who is to wait, while your master is sent to forty miles off and back again!

FOLIO.

Forty miles! 'tis scarce half a mile. The *New Tunbridge Wells, Islington Spa*, you know. (*enter Aspin*) Oh, here's my master's kinsman, Mr. Aspin. The bill's safe enough, he'll satisfy you.

ASPIN.

Hey day! Squabbling! What's the matter, Folio?

FOLIO.

Only a bill, Sir, become due to-day, and presented for payment—but my master left no orders, and I don't know what to say to it.

ASPIN:

A S P I N.

Ah, the old game!—I am not at all surprized at it. Such accidents happen every day. And how should it be otherwise! This comes of splitting himself, and dividing his time between two houses, and two occupations. So that he is never to be found at either place, and follows regularly no business at all.

C L E R K.

Well—you know where the bill lies—if you don't send by six o'clock——

F O L I O.

Oh, here is my master!

Enter RUBRICK hastily.

R U B R I C K.

Well, Folio; has the gentleman been here that I was to meet between eleven and twelve?

F O L I O.

Yes, Sir, and I told him you sent word, you could not get from the country till one; so he promised to call again, and I expect him every minute.

R U B R I C K.

You must let him know I came then, but was obliged to run out again directly to attend a sale at the Globe, but shall be glad to see him at seven in the evening. (*going*)

A S P I N.

Did you ever see such a piece of quicksilver? Hip, master Mercury! Halo, Rubrick!

RUBRICK.

RUBRICK.

(Returning) Ha! Mr. Aspin, are you there!

ASPIN.

Yes, and another gentleman 's here, that has business of a little more consequence.

RUBRICK.

What business?

CLERK.

Only a bill, Sir. *(presenting it.)*

RUBRICK.

(Looking at it.) Very true, very true; here, Folio, take the young man into the compting-house, and pay it immediately!*[Exeunt Clerk and Folio.]*Well, kinsman! *(to Aspin)*—Oh, Folio! *(Folio returns)*—send little Primer the shop-boy, to Pica the Printer's, and desire 'em to let me have proofs of my New History of England, and the next sheet of Lord Littlewit's Jest. —*(Folio going)* And Folio! *(Folio returns)* and tell him to call at the *Laboratory*, as he goes along, and see if they have mended the *flues*, and bottled the *Elixir*. *(exit Folio)* Well, kinsman!

ASPIN.

'Zouns, it's not well kinsman; nor it won't be well, till you live in one house, and stick to one business.

RUBRICK.

Why so, kinsman? you might as well blame me for having two legs and two eyes, as two lodgings and two trades, Mr. Aspin.

ASPIN.

Two eyes that look different ways produce a squint, Mr. Rubrick; and our legs are meant to

D

carry

carry us both the same road, though they are placed on opposite sides. But you—zouns, if you had as many eyes as Argus, or as many legs as a spider, you have employment for each of them.

RUBRICK.

What wou'd you have me fixt to my shop-door, like my sign-post? or d'ye think I can travel, like a snail, with my house upon my back, Mr. Aspin?

ASPIN.

No: but you have more roads than a way-post, more projects than a crack'd politician; the town Jack of all trades, a mere jack o'lantern! half bookseller, half apothecary! half in town, half at Islington! doing every thing, and doing nothing! here and there and every where, and to be catched no where!

RUBRICK.

A man involved in a multiplicity of businefs, must have many engagements. As to books at one end of the shop, and medicines at the other, Apollo, you know, the patron of booksellers, is the common god of physick and poetry: besides, since the doctors are moft of them turned authors, it is but proper that the booksellers, to keep pace with their principals, should become a sort of apothecaries. But I shall be too late for the Globe: fo your servant! (*going*)

Enter MACHOOFF.

Your pleasure, Sir!

MACHOOFF.

Gin I ken reet, you're Maister Rubrick, Sir!

RUBRICK.

I am, Sir:

MAC-

MACHOO F.

May I crave the favour of a word wi' you ?

RUBRICK.

I was this moment going out, Sir.

MACHOO F.

I ha' some particklar business.

RUBRICK.

Have you ? Well then I attend you, fir ; and I'll send word to the Globe that I can't come at all.

ASPIN.

I thought so ; last come first served is your rule, I see. I have some particular business with you too ; but I'll stay till I can nail you down for two minutes to listen to it. You are stuck round like the man in the Almanack : so good day to you ! I'll go and speak to my god-daughter Eliza, and then call upon the old fool you mean to make your son in-law. Good day to you ! (*Exit*)

Manent RUBRICK and MACHOO F.

RUBRICK.

And now what is your business, fir ?

MACHOO F.

I understand, Maister Rubrick, that you deal in *buks* and medicines, and that you bland the bible and cushion with the pestle and mortar. I ha' not, like many others of my countrymen, wretten a *buk*, but I ha' invanted a medicine.

RUBRICK.

Did you ever study physick ?

MACHOO F.

I ha' not neglected the study of pheedick ; I am wal rad in Bracken's Farriery, and Gebson's Treatise on the Disases of Horses.

20 THE SPLEEN; OR,

RUBRICK.

Did you ever practice?

MACHOOFF.

Yes, by my faul, I practised three years together in Lothian's dragoons, and cured the horses of aw the hool reeg'ment.

RUBRICK.

Dragoons! horses! Why this is all farriery.

MACHOOFF.

Wal, fir!

RUBRICK.

Why, what the devil, are you a farrier?

MACHOOFF.

Ay, by St. Andrew, a farrier.

RUBRICK.

A horse-doctor?

MACHOOFF.

Yas, a Doctor of Horse.

RUBRICK.

Well, but Doctor, how shall I venture to sell your medicine? Why this horse-remedy will send my customers out of the world full-gallop.

MACHOOFF.

You are aw wrong. The animal œconomy in th hooman species and equine is vary semilar—it's only the deefrence in the proportion o' the doses. Yo' may larn fra' Horace, that they are not en-compatible—as he sweetly saings—*Hoomano capiti cervicem pector EQUINAM.*

RUBRICK.

Well, if Horace says so—But, Doctor, I must go snacks, you know that.

M A C.

MACHOOOF.

You shall ha' five shellings i' the poond.

RUBRICK.

Five? I'll have half.—Ten, Doctor, or I don't touch it.

MACHOOOF.

You shall ha' three half croons.

RUBRICK.

Half! half.

MACHOOOF.

Ah! you're vary hard. You shall ha' *tan* then.

RUBRICK.

Well then, let me see! Ay, send me in fifty dozen of bottles or powders, which ever it is, for a trial. They'll go among country chapmen. I'll advertise it in my new paper immediately.

MACHOOOF.

You shall no' fail to ha' them. Your servant!
[Going.

RUBRICK.

Oh, but Doctor! (*Mach. returns*) I had forgot. What diseases is your nostrum to cure?

MACHOOOF.

Haud you, haud you!—by St. Andrew, that's no *leeght* affair (*pausing*). What diseases do you think the most popular?

RUBRICK.

Doctor, your hand! Now I see you're a man of business. Let me see! a good thing in the *secret* way now—and yet that branch is over-run.
Drops,

Drops, Pills, and Electuaries, innumerable !
 What d'ye think of the *Nerves*, Doctor ? *Never*
were Nervous Disorders so frequent, you know.—
 And then your name, Doctor ? In drugs, as well
 as books, the author's name is of no small con-
 sequence.

MACHOOOF.

My name is Machoof, Sir !

RUBRICK.

Machoof ? Machoof, Doctor ?

MACHOOOF.

Doctor David Machoof, Sir ; and by my faul
 Maister Rubrick, the medicine will not lack
 celabrity.—I ha' gotten already a diploma from
 St. Andrew's, and in a mail or twa I expac an
 order from Sweden.

RUBRICK.

Do you ? Why then *Machoof's Mixture*, or,
Swedes' Balsam, shall be the title of it.—A lucky
 chrittning is more than half the battle. We'll
 go in, and prepare the advertisement.

MACHOOOF.

Yas, we mun invastigate its axcellent facul-
 ties—it may be caw'd the Univarfal Ramedy,
 the Grand Specefick, the Panacæa!—and you
 may add a sma *nota bene*, that it's an infallible
 cure for Corns.

RUBRICK.

Ay, ay, *Machoof's Mixture*, or, *Swedes Balsam*,
 shall cure every thing ; one thing as well as
 another, I warrant you. [Exeunt.

End of the First Act.

ISLINGTON SPA.

A C T II.

SCENE, *the Fields near Islington.*

Enter Merton, Jack Rubrick, and Eliza.

MERTON.

WELL, but Eliza!

ELIZA.

Well, but Mr. Merton! I can tell you no more than you have heard over and over already. Your lively cousin, Lætitia, is gone on before with Mr. Aspin; is in high spirits, and seems sure of success in her operations. What they are to be, I don't exactly know; and were I fully apprized of them, being enjoined secrecy, I tell you plainly, I would not disclose them. But the fullest confidence may be reposed in her friendship and abilities; and that ought to satisfy you.

MERTON.

Cruel Eliza!

JACK RUBRICK.

Cruel! Why so, Tom? You are fast married already, you know; and there is not a proposition in Euclid more clear, than that when two young people are lawfully married, not all the parents in England can unmarry them.

ELIZA.

Very true; but he is always so discontented, so unreasonable!

JACK

THE SPLEEN; OR,

JACK RUBRICK.

Nay, now I am sure you are married. Your scolding the poor man, when he is ready to hang himself, is downright demonstration.

MERTON.

Scold me, rate me, my dear Eliza, do what you will with me! but, for heaven's sake, deliver me as soon as possible from this anxious situation; for I long to claim you in the face of the world, and openly acknowledge you.

ELIZA.

All in good time, Mr. Merton; Lætitia has undertaken for us, has promised to make you acquainted with her intentions herself, and perhaps assign you a part in carrying them into execution; so I must insist on your waiting the result of her endeavours with patience.

MERTON.

Patience! Well.

JACK RUBRICK.

Well! Ay, very well. There is no going always in a direct line, Tom. A Curve sometimes answers the purpose better. The longest way about is the shortest way home, you know.—Ha! yonder's old D'Oyley on horseback.—Let us make haste to the Spa! He is just returning from his constant exercise. He is as regular as the Clock, as exact as a Time-Piece, and the good housewives roast their meat by him. He enjoys the air of the New Road every day, takes a whet at Mother Redcap's,
trots

trots up to Hampstead, crosses the Heath, comes down Highgate Hill, and so through Holloway, back to Islington. This is Cuckold's Round, as they call it! Would not one swear he was in the high road to Matrimony, Sister?

ELIZA.

Ah, graceless!—Come, Mr. Merton!

MERTON.

Oh, Eliza!

JACK RUBRICK.

Oh, Eliza! (*mocking him*)—Oh Tom Merton! Tom Fool indeed.—Let the Women alone, Tom! Intrigue is their province. You shall admire the effect of their schemes, though (like the powers of the Magnet) you don't comprehend them; and shall arrive as safe and secure at the height of your wishes, as you go up a staircase that hangs by geometry. Safe and secure, Tom; but step by step, Tom; so have patience, and be governed by us, Tom! [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE changes to D'Oyley's Lodgings at Islington Spa. A table, chairs, with books, papers, a case of medicines, looking-glass, &c.

Enter D'Oyley in spatterdash.

D'OYLEY.

Something better for my ride, I think, but not quite right neither. Always, always ill; and never, never able to discover what's the matter with me! I have taken my glass of water since I got off my horse, but it seems to feel cold and heavy on my stomach. Suppose I swing the

E

leads

leads, or ring the dumb bell, or take fifty turns in my room, from North to South, as Dr. Quackley directed me! (*Takes a turn and a half and stops at the table.*) Let me see! my eyes are as yellow as saffron. (*looking in the glass.*) Jaundice, jaundice! And then my tongue! (*putting it out*) my tongue is as white as milk, and loaded as thick as a curd! A bilious fever coming! Heigh ho! Ill take a little of the Saline—(*going to the case of medicines.*)

Enter ASPIN.

ASPIN.

Ha! Old Gallipot!

D'OYLEY.

Mr. Aspin!

ASPIN.

What! Quacking yourself? Let the phials alone, man. You are no more sick than I am. These are all new fancies, taken up in the evening of your life; the twilight of the understanding; the mere effects of indolence and want of employment. I don't remember that you ever felt, or fancied you felt, an hour's illness, till you left the back of St. Clement's.

D'OYLEY.

If I had not come from behind St. Clement's, I should have lain in St. Clement's Church-yard by this time. At a certain time of life, retirement from business, as well as air and exercise, are absolutely necessary.

ASPIN.

Air and exercise! Formerly you had not a single complaint. Standing at the shop door, and
looking

looking into the street, was air enough; and opening bales of cloth sufficient exercise; but you took leave of your business and good spirits together; and now your mind is over-run with vapours and megrims, that make you fancy your body swarms with disorders.

D'OYLEY.

Fancy! why if Fancy would do the business, don't you think I had rather fancy myself in good health, Mr. Aspin?

ASPIN.

No—you are sick by way of amusement—melancholy, to keep up your spirits—you are eat up with the Spleen, Master D'Oyley.

D'OYLEY.

I! why d'ye think so?

ASPIN.

I know so. You have every symptom of it.

D'OYLEY.

Symptoms? Name them, I understand symptoms.

ASPIN.

Don't I know you weigh yourself every day after dinner?

D'OYLEY.

To be sure. Why not settle the state of my health, as well as balance my accounts, Mr. Aspin?

ASPIN.

caught. Have not I ~~catched~~ you feeling your pulse by a stop-watch?

E 2

D'OYLEY.

D'OYLEY.

Granted. The pulse can't be watched too minutely.

A SPIN.

And are not you afraid of going out in an East Wind?

D'OYLEY.

All the world agrees, nothing is more prejudicial.

A SPIN.

Except not going out at all. Were not you kept at home for three weeks at one time by an old rusty weathercock? and near a fortnight at another, when it was tied up by some school-boys?

D'OYLEY.

Ridiculous!

A SPIN.

Yes, and what's ten times more ridiculous, are not you going to be married?

D'OYLEY.

No great symptom of spleen in that, Mr. Aspin!

A SPIN.

A very woeful symptom of folly and weakness, Master D'Oyley! You are turned the corner of fifty; she is on the inside of twenty. What a prospect of the comforts of matrimony! Do you think such a girl will much relish being turned into a nurse? or do you fancy that your old St. Clement's foppery of a clean shirt, shining shoes, smug wig, and neatly brushed-coat, worn threadbare without a spot, will have sufficient charms for her? Do you imagine——

Enter

Enter SERVANT.

SERVANT.

Dr. Anodyne, sir, is in the rooms, and will wait on you presently, if you are at leisure.

D'OYLEY.

Oh, my best compliments to the Doctor; I shall be very glad to see him. (*Exit Servant*). Now, my dear friend, truce with your raillery, and give me leave to receive the Doctor's visit.

ASPIN.

Doctor Anodyne! who is he? I never heard of him; he never attended you before.

D'OYLEY.

No, he is a new physician; I don't think that any of the faculty have yet hit my case, and I wish to consult Dr. Anodyne. He is but a young practitioner, it is true; yet I am told of great promise and extensive practice; though he is not long returned from abroad, and has but lately attended the Spa.

ASPIN.

A young wife and a young physician! you are in a rare way, Master D'Oyley. Doctor Anodyne! aye, he is one of those sucking doctors, I warrant you, that make up by insinuation and impudence for their want of skill and experience; feeling the pulses of old maids, and bowing themselves into the good graces of dowagers; rolling their job chariots into the city, when they can't succeed at St. James's; and killing Jews, when they are not allowed to slaughter Christians; running down to Tunbridge or Southampton, when they have no—

D'OYLEY.

D'OYLEY.

For Heaven's sake! he will hear you; he'll be in the room, Mr. Aspin.

A S P I N.

Will he? then I'll leave you a little. I'll take a turn or two in the walks, and then return to finish my lecture. To a man who has been used all his life to be busy, ease and indolence is a very hard task, Master D'Oyley! The mind of a retired tradesman often stagnates for want of employment, and becomes as dull, dark and gloomy, as the inside of his shop on a Sunday. But take my advice, D'Oyley, and I'll do you more good than all the Doctors in Christendom. *[Exit.]*

D'OYLEY *alone.*

What coarse, boisterous spirits! Health is a fine thing, a very fine thing; but a man, who has never known what it is to be ill, commonly seems to have neither nerves nor affections. I long to see the Doctor—Let me sit and compose myself—What's here? *(opening a book)* “Advice to the People in general with regard to their health!” Ay, I'll read a little—This book always gives me some useful information—“Of consumptions.” *(reading)* “This disease generally begins with a dry cough, which often continues for some months.” Hack, hack! *(half coughing)* Yes, I have a dry cough, and have had for some months.—“If a disposition *(reading)* to sickness after eating be excited by it, there is still greater reason to fear an approaching consumption.”—I was sick as a dog immediately after dinner yesterday—“The patient is *(reading)* apt to be sad.”—No-
body

body ever so apt to be sad, without any reason on earth, as I am.—“ There is generally (*reading*) “ a quick, soft, small pulse.” Tick, tick, tick! (*feeling his pulse*) quick as lightning, very soft and small too! “ though sometimes (*reading*) the “ pulse is pretty full, and rather hard.”—Tack, tack, tack! (*feeling again*) Full! it beats like a drum, ready to burst thro’ my veins.—“ These “ are (*reading*) the common symptoms of a beginning consumption.”—All which symptoms I feel.—Nothing but a proper regimen can keep me out of a consumption.—Let me see! (*turning over the leaves*) “ Symptoms of a Dropsy.” (*reading*) “ The *Anasarca* generally begins with a “ swelling of the feet and ankles towards night, “ which, for some time, disappears in the morning.” Ah! (*looking at his feet and legs*) I have not the least appearance of swelling this morning—That may be a very dropfical symptom. “ In “ the evening (*reading*) the parts, if prest with “ the finger, will pit.” I’ll try that this evening.—“ The swelling (*reading*) gradually ascends—

RUBRICK *without.*

Stay! I’ll only just call upon Mr. D’Oyley, and be with you again immediately.

Enter RUBRICK (a printed paper in his hand.)

D’OYLEY.

Mr. Rubrick! I am heartily glad to see you. You are very good to call in upon a poor sick man. This is kind of you.

RUBRICK.

Yes, I am in a great hurry; but I could not help

help popping in upon you, before I go to meet the partners in our intended new paper, at the Angel at Islington.—How are you, Sir? Did you take the Stomach Pills?

D'OYLEY.

I did; but continue rather flatulent—full of wind, as a pop-gun.

RUBRICK.

You should have followed up the pills with a dose or two of the Corrective Elixir.

D'OYLEY.

I did so.

RUBRICK.

And how did it agree?

D'OYLEY.

Weakened me most exceedingly.

RUBRICK.

Then I must send you two or three bottles of the Restorative, with the next magazines.

D'OYLEY.

Do so! But what paper is that, Mr. Rubrick?

RUBRICK.

A proof of our new paper—the first number to be published the day after to-morrow—the Noon-Post!

D'OYLEY.

The Noon-Post?

RUBRICK.

Yes, the Noon-Post—an excellent project!—for it is the only time of day, you know, left open for an additional news-paper. The Morning and
Evening

Evening are quite overloaded.—Besides, it will serve for an early Morning Paper at the West end of the town, and will come out just about Change hours in the East.—Then it will include all that has been in the Morning papers—Play Bills, *et cetera*, without possibility of mistake or deception, and will forestall all that *is to be* in the Evening ones—~~that~~ that *the Noon-Post* will be the only paper, justly calculated for the Meridian of London—But we'll deliver it without horns—horns may offend the people of quality, you know—

D'OYLEY.

Well, I wish you joy and success, Mr. Rubrick.—But how is my Eliza?

RUBRICK.

Very well. She is just arrived. You'll see her presently.

D'OYLEY.

And when are we to fix the happy day? Ha, Mr. Rubrick!

RUBRICK.

Let me see, let me see! How stand my engagements?

[pulling out a memorandum book.

This is my eating calendar, Mr. D'Oyley.

D'OYLEY.

Don't let us drive it off till towards autumn! for then my health will call me to Bath.—What dy'e think of next Tuesday, for instance!

F

RU.

RUBRICK.

(*Looking at his Almanack*) Tuesday, June 11—the longest day, and the shortest night—a whimsical day for a marriage, Mr. D'Oyley!

D'OYLEY.

Well—the Thursday after then.

RUBRICK.

Thursday! let me see! (*consulting his Calendar*) Thursday I am engaged to eat a buck with the proprietors of Lloyd's Chronicle, at the Long Room, in Hampstead.

D'OYLEY.

The Saturday following then!

RUBRICK.

(*Still looking at his Calendar*) Saturday, June 15—to feast on the Almanacks at Stationers' Hall!

D'OYLEY.

Well—Monday or Tuesday in the next week!

RUBRICK.

(*Still looking at his Calendar*) Monday, the annual dinner of Turlington's Balsam, at the Star and Garter on Richmond Hill; and Tuesday the meeting of the proprietors of *Beaume de Vie*, at the Packhorse, on Turnham Green.

D'OYLEY.

Psha! if you put it off in this manner, you'll get beyond the term of the contract.

RUBRICK.

Nay, never be impatient, son-in-law! We'll settle it for some day in the month. You'll have time,

time, and time enough, I warrant you. The fair lasts all the year, you know.—I'll be with you again shortly—but you must excuse me at present—for I have left a gentleman waiting for me below. I am to-treat with him for a Dissertation on the Virtues of Islington Spa; and to be concerned with him in a scheme for extracting salts from the New River; so your servant, your servant! Good day to you!

[*Exit hastily.*]

D'OYLEY *alone.*

This man is so hasty and violent, he always flurries my spirits. Stay! I hear the Doctor—No—'tis somebody else—a gentleman to ask for him perhaps.

Enter LÆTITIA, as Dr. Anodyne, dressed in an elegant suit of cloaths, with a bag-wig and sword.

LÆTITIA.

I came to receive your commands, Sir.

D'OYLEY.

My commands, Sir!

LÆTITIA.

If you please. Let me have the honour to feel your pulse, Sir. (*takes his hand*) Let me look at your eyes, Sir!—Put out your tongue, Sir!—Very well, very well!—I see how it is, at once, Sir!—Your appetite is good, and digestion bad; your sleep sound, but refreshment little; strength great, but nerves weak; and your whole habit, paregorick, and hypochondriacal.

F 2

D'OY,

D'OYLEY.

My case to a tittle ! But you amaze me. Are you Dr. Anodyne ? You a physician, Sir ?

LÆTITIA.

To be sure. Why should you doubt it, Sir ?

D'OYLEY.

By your figure and appearance, I must confess, Sir, I should rather have taken you for a foreign Count, or an Opera-singer.

LÆTITIA.

Why so, Sir ? Do you think it necessary for a physician to appear like an undertaker ? Thank Heaven I am the first of the faculty, Sir, that made it proper and fashionable in this country for a physician to look like a gentleman. I have spent a good deal of time abroad, Sir ; and even our Clergy, when abroad, moult their feather'd grizzles, cast their pudding-sleeves, and put on white stockings, long swords, and bag-wigs, Sir.

D'OYLEY.

Ah ! some of them are coming pretty near the mark at home, Doctor.

LÆTITIA.

I have had the honour of travelling, Sir, and I thought it right to adopt the modes, as well as science, of the several countries I visited. Formerly, the grave owls of the College, with their clouted cravats, hay-cock perukes, clouded canes, and bolus buttons, seemed to think no man qualified to prescribe a cathartick or emetick, that did not look, as if he had just taken one himself.

—And

—And their practice was as absurd, as their figures were ridiculous.

D'OYLEY.

Indeed, Doctor!

LÆTITIA.

Yes, indeed, Sir. A consultation of mere home-bred physicians, is worse than an epidemick distemper. The plague, or the *influenza*, is nothing to it.—Your case for instance! By your appearance, I should judge your case to have been wholly mistaken. It appears at first to have been merely nervous; but now, by improper management, it seems tending very fast to epileptick, paralytick, and dropical.

D'OYLEY.

You frighten me. What course would you prescribe, Doctor?

LÆTITIA.

What regimen have you followed hitherto, Sir?

D'OYLEY.

I have been ordered to live very temperate, to ride every day, and to keep my spirits quiet and easy.

LÆTITIA.

Ah! temperance, exercise, and peace of mind! the old remedy, and a wonderful discovery to be sure! But your diet! Give me the particulars.

D'OYLEY.

Plain food, no wine, and no pickles.

LÆ-

LÆTITIA.

Wrong, wrong, all wrong! Your temperament being too low, nature plainly directs that you should live very high. A bottle of wine would operate as the most excellent cordial, and the stimulation of pickles would both create and strengthen the appetite.

D'OYLEY.

Nothing can be more reasonable. I must alter my whole regimen, and enrich my blood with good eating and drinking—take chocolate for breakfast, a chearful glass for dinner, and make a hearty supper.—How many grains of salt may I put to an egg, Doctor?

LÆTITIA.

None. Eat salt in no shape, unless salted meats,—but as much of those as you please, Sir.

D'OYLEY.

Meats salted or smoaked, are what I have been expressly forbid, Doctor.

LÆTITIA.

Not by me, Mr. D'Oyley. Consult your own understanding, Sir! How should smoke, that preserves a fitch of bacon, injure you; or salt, that keeps a ham from putrefaction, hurt the tone of your stomach? Cookery indeed renders many things unwholesome, that are not so in themselves. How is your meat drest, Sir?

D'OYLEY.

Thoroughly done, always—for else, the Doctors tell me, that the juices would not assimilate.

LÆ-

LÆTITIA.

For which reason they leave the food without any juices at all. Without them, Sir, instead of beef or mutton, you might as well eat mahogany. In Abyssinia, where a state of nature prevails, a raw rasher from a live ox is wholesome and delicious. Eat your meat as rare as possible, Sir, and avoid bread as pernicious.

D'OYLEY.

Pernicious, Doctor! I always understood bread to be the wholesomest food in the world.

LÆTITIA:

A vulgar error, Sir! Pap, mere pap, kills nine tenths of the children that die in the Foundling Hospital. Bread and milk swell the bills of mortality. Bread induces a chachexy, and milk brings on an atrophy. The London milk too is nothing but a composition of chalk and rain water, and the bread is all whitened with alum.

D'OYLEY.

Mercy on me! I shall never dare to venture on a slice of bread and butter, or to put a spoonful of cream in my tea again.—Raw flesh, and no bread!—Why these are wonderful discoveries, Doctor.

LÆTITIA:

I have imported a thousand discoveries, Sir: It was I that first entertained the world with the agreeable sight of people walking the streets in the height of the small-pox. It was I that—

Enter ASPIN hastily.

ASPIN.

Yes, it was you! You, Doctor, that have broken the laws of society, disturbed the peace of a private family, and thrown the whole place into confusion.

LÆTITIA.

Sir!

D'OYLEY.

What now? What's the matter, Mr. Aspin?

ASPIN.

The Doctor's the matter. He has been feeling the pulse of your wife that was to be, examining too closely into her constitution, Mr. D'Oyley.

D'OYLEY.

I don't understand you.

ASPIN.

You are the only person in Islington that don't. It is the common topick of the Wells, that there is too strict an understanding between Eliza and this young Practitioner.

Enter Mr. and Mrs. RUBRICK.

RUBRICK.

But have patience, Mrs. Rubrick!

Mrs. RUBRICK.

No, there is no bearing this. We shall be the laugh of the whole place, the subject of all the
Spa-

Spa-Lampoons of the season! I can't stand it, Mr. Rubrick; and have sent word to *the Row* that we are returning thither immediately.

Enter Mrs. TABITHA.

Oh, Sister Tabby! I am glad you are come. Did you ever hear of such an affair, sister?

Mrs. TABITHA.

Aye, aye; I told you how it would be sooner or later, Sister. This comes of your travelling. This comes of your watering-places. The pitcher never goes so often to the well—I need say no more.—But come; the hackney-coach, that brought me from *the Row*, is turned about; and is ready to carry the family back again.

(Going)

RUBRICK.

Stay, Mrs. Rubrick! Stay, sister Tabitha! I question the truth of this story. What signifies an idle report? Are not there a thousand things paragraphed for facts one day, and paragraphed for damned lies the very day after?

ASPIN.

Don't trust to that, Mr. Rubrick! The fact, I fear, is indisputable. The very maid whom they trusted, has betrayed them, and confess that *the Doctor there*, has more than once slept all night in your daughter's chamber.

RUBRICK.

The Devil!

D'OYLEY:

Ay, it's too plain; I shake as if I were in an
G
ague;

ague; three months of the Cold Bath will not bring me right again.

LÆTITIA.

Psha! this is a mere English complaint. Abroad, no case is more common, or less alarming—I'll fet you right, I warrant you, Mr. D'Oyley!

RUBRICK.

Look ye, Mr. D'Oyley, I shall insist on your fulfilling your contract.—The penalty, you know, is pretty considerable—and I hope not to be obliged, by force of law, to compel you to it.

D'OYLEY.

So; this affair will be the death of me. My health depends on my peace of mind; and that is sure of being destroyed, either by a wife, or a law-suit.

Enter JACK RUBRICK.

JACK RUBRICK.

Where is this rascal, that pretends to have dishonoured my sister? I'll drive him to the center.

LÆTITIA.

My center is here, Sir.

Enter ELIZA and MERTON.

Mr. and Mrs. RUBRICK.

Eliza! and Mr. Merton here!

MERTON.

Yes Sir; yes, Madam, I am here; when Eliza's life, fortune, or reputation are in danger, it is impossible for me to keep at a distance. She now lies under a most vile and false calumny,
and

and he is a rascal that dares assert or insinuate the contrary.

LÆTITIA.

So, say I, Sir! Woe be to the man that dares impeach her honour! I have always been a staunch friend to the sex, and shall most certainly be true to this lady.

E L I Z A.

I have been more true to myself, Sir.—Believe me, Madam; believe me, Aunt; believe me, Mr. D'Oyley, there is no truth in this infamous story.

D'OYLEY.

Too much, I am afraid, Miss Eliza! You never paid the least attention to me before; and your earnestness now only serves to confirm my suspicions. Would you marry her yourself, Doctor? that is the surest way of making her fame whole again.

LÆTITIA.

For particular reasons, best known to myself and the young lady, I must beg to be excused.

RUBRICK.

Damnation!

D'OYLEY.

See there! Can you wonder at my hesitation, Mr. Rubrick?

MERTON.

For my part, I look upon the Doctor to be more dangerous as a physician, than a gallant; and so little do I credit this scandal, that with Mr. and Mrs. Rubrick's consent, I am willing to accept of her hand immediately.—What

say Eliza, and Mr. and Mrs. Rubrick, to my proposal?

E L I Z A.

I am all confusion.

R U B R I C K.

And I am all distraction. As to your offer, there's something handsome enough—but Mr. D'Oyley's contract—

D ' O Y L E Y.

As to that, Mr. Rubrick, I'll endeavour to make you easy. For the sake of health, and happiness, and peace of mind, I am content to forfeit half the penalty, and to settle it on the young couple.

A S P I N.

And I'll throw in the other half, as a blessing to my god-daughter.

R U B R I C K.

That's generous I must confess—generous on both sides. What day shall we fix for the ceremony?

M E R T O N.

It is needless to fix any day.

R U B R I C K.

How?

M E R T O N.

The ceremony is already over. We have been married these three weeks. And I consider the Doctor as my best friend, in having been the means of obtaining your consent to ratify our union.

L Æ T I T I A.

Yes, I am a fast friend to all this good company, Mr. Rubrick.

RUBRICK.

Friend! And pray who the devil are you, friend?

MERTON.

An old acquaintance of your's, I assure you, Mr. Rubrick.

RUBRICK.

An acquaintance of mine?

LÆTITIA.

Yes, Sir. Look me full in the face, and see if you don't recollect me.

RUBRICK.

(*Looking stedfastly*) Eh! Let me see! Why, sure it can't be—i'faith, but it is tho'—a female Hippocrates, by Jupiter!

D'OYLEY.

What! the Doctor a woman? Have I been bled, and blistered, and purged, and pickled, by a female physician?

LÆTITIA.

Even so, Sir!—A woman well-known to your family, Mr. Rubrick.—And you must own, gentlemen, that I boast less than modern gallants are apt to do, and am more careful of the honour of the ladies than gallants are apt to be, when I avow the charge of being my sweet Eliza's bed-fellow.

RUBRICK.

So, so! Mr. Merton's cousin, Lætitia!

ASPIN.

Yes, Lætitia, Mr. Rubrick: and I'll fairly own, that I joined with Mrs. Madcap there, and the

the rest of the young folks, in concerting this scheme, to cure my friend D'Oyley both of his spleen and inclination to matrimony; and by that means to reconcile you to your daughter and son-in-law.

RUBRICK.

Well, I forgive you. I forgive them too. I am so pleased with this unexpected turn, and this clear proof of my daughter's innocence, that I can forgive any thing. I'll send a flaming paragraph of their wedding to all the news-papers—but the Noon-Post shall have the first of it.

Mrs. RUBRICK.

Do you think I ought to forgive them too, sister Tabby?

Mrs. TABITHA.

Ay, ay; all's well that ends well, say I, sister Rubrick.

JACK RUBRICK,

Why, here has been a change of system, to be sure, aunt Tabitha.

D'OYLEY.

To complete the change, let me throw in my new resolutions. For your sake, Miss Eliza, I shall hereafter wave all thoughts of matrimony; and for yours, Madam Doctor, (*to Lætitia*) I shall for the future, be more diffident of *nostrums* and physicians. Mr. Rubrick must henceforth expect my custom for books, rather than medicines; or if he chuses to weave my story and character into a farce or a novel, I should be happy to hear it afforded an hour's entertainment, and was repeated nightly, as A CURE FOR THE SPLEEN.

T H E E N D.

