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THE
C U R A T E
AND
C O B L E R.
A
T H I R D D I A L O G U E.

L O N D O N :

Printed for C. WARBURTON, in *Amen-
Corner*; and sold by the Booksellers of *London*
and *Westminster*. MDCCLIV.

[Price Six-pence.]



(3)



THE
CURATE and COBLER.

A Third DIALOGUE.

SCENE, *A College Chamber.*

Cobler, [knocking at the Door.]

Curate, [within.]

WHO's there?

Cobler, [without] A Friend, Sir.

Cur. Come in.

Cob. [*enters, and finds Curate writing.*] — So, Sir, I have caught *You* hard at it now, I think.

Cur. A little, *Thomas*. Come, sit down; I'll just finish this Sentence.—Well! I take this Visit very kind of you indeed. I thought you never intended to smoke a Pipe with me more.

A 2

Cob.

Cob. Why, Sir, I did not imagine you'd stand much upon Ceremony; and for that Reason I was not over hasty in returning your Visit.

Cur. Well! what's the best News abroad?

Cob. Why, Sir, the old Affairs are still the Entertainment of the Town: Some are taken up with the *Election* Business, and others with the Story of the *Wood*. I have heard lately too, that you have got over some of your Difficulties.

Cur. I thank my Stars, and some few *under-hand Friends*, I have pretty well silenced some dangerous Chaps. But I was forced to lug out confoundedly in one or two Instances; and was setting down my Expences when you came in: For you must know, *Thomas*, I must give an Account of all Money spent; and I have lately had a very great Misfortune. By some Means or other I have flirtd a Paper of all the Secret-Service-Money I have parted with for the *New Interest* out of my Pocket, and am now trying to recollect it. I'm ruin'd if an *Old Interest* Man should find it.

Cob. I am really most surpriz'd how you could alter my old Friend *Will Lubberkin's* Note: I never took him for a Canary Bird before.

Cur. Did you never hear Sir *R——t W——lp——*'s Maxim; As long as I have the Treasury, (said that great Statesman) I am sure of commanding the Kingdom.

Cob.

Cob. Well, *the longer one lives, the more one knows*, is an old Saying ; but I never could have suspected that *Will* was such a sort of a Fellow. —Oh the Protestations I have heard that Rogue make of the Truth of every particular Circumstance ; swore that he would never depart from the Truth of it ; and assured me there was another Man with him who would swear the same. —Well ! I will never believe any Man living more.

Cur. Why, *Thomas*, all you say is very true : I did not treat with your Friend *William* upon the Fact itself : I had nothing more to do than to make *him* silent ; for a *dumb Witness*, you know, will never convict a Man.

Cob. But I hear some of your *dumb Witnesses* have convinced my Friend however.—And so now he's quite ignorant, I warrant you ! Ah, poor Creature ! Now, I suppose, he knows nothing of the Matter !

Cur. Not enough, I fancy, to hurt me, *Thomas* ; and that, you know, is all I wanted.

Cob. But pray, Sir, how does he come off about the Horse ? I wonder you should be fond of such a remarkable, particular colour'd Beast !

Cur. Oh ! I found out (or, at least, I made some of my *Mirmidons* trump up a Story) that there was another Parson, who travelled that Road on a *Sunday*, and upon a *grey Horse* : So your Friend *William* took the Hint, that it was difficult to swear, when there was such a Similitude in Horses ; and with a little *Gold Dust* flung

flung in his Eyes, he becomes presently as blind as a Beetle, and not able to swear to *Dapple's* Rider.—There, *Thomas*, Gold, you see, goes beyond Friendship. And now, pray never despise Counsellor *Crotchethead's* Advice.

Cob. sings.] “ Oh such a Rogue is a Round-head.” Well, you astonish me, i'faith: I would have laid my whole *Kitt* to one Shilling, that *Will Lubberkin* could not have been such a Villain.

Cur. You don't know the Charms of his Majesty's Picture set in Gold.—Why, I knew an honest *New Interest* Man, who hang'd his Brother by applying a little Gold well: He procur'd an *Irish* Evidence or two to be at the Expence of a few false Oaths, and came plumb into the Possession of his Estate.—But then observe, *Thomas*, there was Art in the Contrivance; but, however, it was all brought about by a proper Administration of the *Darby*, as you call it.

Cob. And these are your *New Interest* Fellows, are they? who don't scruple to hang their own Brethren for their Estates? The Lord preserve me in the *Old Interest* Principles then, I say.

Cur. Thomas—why! you seem to be all Astonishment: When you embark in any Political Contest, there is but one Thing necessary to be observ'd; and that is, *to stick at Nothing*. *Bribe, cheat, lie, flatter, swear, right or wrong* no Matter, so as it tends to forward your Scheme; and, in short, *stick at Nothing*, (as I just now said) and that's the Way to Preferment, *Thomas*.

Cob.

Cob. Sir, I thank you for your System of Politics.—There's one *Virtue* you did not mention, that of *Whoring*; which, I suppose, is not *prohibited* in your System?

Cur. No, *Thomas*, but *Whoring* is not look'd upon so much in the Light of a *Political Virtue*, as a little *Indulgence* given to *sensual Appetite*. The Founders of our Colleges were, I think, very much to blame, when, by their rigid Statutes, they tied their Fellows up from *marrying*. We are forced now to be obliged to our *Laundresses* and *Bedmakers* for a small Pittance of Gratification; and these are not always very dainty Bits.

Cob. I fancy, Sir, those old, good-natur'd, generous Benefactors, had no Design to propagate *Whoring* in what they did.—You know all Clergymen were forbidden Marriage at that Time of Day: And, I fancy, if the Fellows of Colleges, at present, followed the same Rules, in conducting *their* Lives in the same Manner, they would have as few Calls for the Use of the *Ladies* now, as those pious old Founders had in their Times.

Cur. Why, my Friend, I don't apprehend that our present fallacious Inclinations are owing to any extraordinary Luxury in our Lives.

Cob. Oh, dear Master! those old Worthies lived upon common simple Food. They studied no Art in Cookery; and, I dare say it, not one of them ever heard of such a stimulating Mixture as goes to the Composition of a *Squab Pye*.

Pye. Retrench your Diet, and your *Ladies* of the *College*, and *Nymphs* of the *Wood*, will have but very little of the magnetic Virtue in them. —But, Sir, (it is just shot into my Head) what do you intend to do with poor *Dofia*? She has lost the Use of one Leg, I'm told, by haggling her about so, from the Constable to the Justice, and from thence to the Castle.

Cur. I wish she had lost both, before I had ever meddled with either.

Cob. Let me see, Sir, this is the last Day of *February*: I think the Judges will be here the Sixth of *March*:—For the Lord's sake, tell me what you are determined to do in this Case? She vows she'll never quit the Town till she has faced you; and, depend upon it, if you have frequently been *Face* to *Face* already, she must know you: And what will you do then, Sir?

Cur. I am determined to prosecute her: And I had some Hopes, that I might have kept her in another six Months, and then have done it without being in Court myself. But I was drinking Tea at Counsellor *Crotchethead's* last *Tuesday*, and he then assured me, I could not put it off to another Assize: So it must come on, I find; but I am determined she shall not see me, though I am order'd to be in Court.

Cob. But, Sir, suppose you should be called upon, how will you avoid Appearance then?

Cur. Why, I'll tell you, *Thomas*. I have desired some Heads of Houses, and some Fellows of Colleges, who are my Friends, to stand just
before

before me: And I am sure of one Professor, (whose very Head would hide two Men) if I want him, will certainly be there. So, as soon as the Wench is to pop up before the Judge, I'll pop down behind my *Screeners*, and lie as quiet as a dead Lion.

Cob. But, Master, won't this shew Guilt?

Cur. Not so much as my *Face* might by appearing openly, *Thomas*. — Besides, I have taken Care of the principal Evidence, *Sally Hackabout*; instead of an Enemy, she's the best Friend I have. — I have well rigg'd her, bought her a Pair of Stays, a new Linnen Gown, a Pair of Ruffles, a new *Bermudas* Hat, and a swinging *Blue* Ribband round it, that People might not believe she ever was acquainted with any of Us *Greens*.

Cob. Upon my Reputation, Sir, I think this as bad a Step as you at first took in not relieving poor *Dofia*, and sending her away.

Cur. Why should you think so, *Thomas*? If there is any such thing as Fidelity in Swearing to be constant, I am sure I have Oaths and Protestations enough from her to confirm me in my good Opinion of her.

Cob. Why I allow, Sir, she may *appear*, and she may *say* that she held the Horse whilst the Engagement was in the Wood, and she may *swear* that you was not the Man. — But this will not clear you of an Ounce of Infamy: I think rather 'twill lay it the thicker upon you. — Oh dear, says one, here's a Proof of a Man's Innocency! what, could he get no better Testimony than

than the Word of a *common* Whore! One who has never been scarce a Month out of a *Bridewell*? —These I'm sure, Sir, will be the Reflections; and for that Reason, I beg you, Sir, not to make use of her.

Cur. But I have made Use of her, and will again too. Suppose I should get *Sally Hackabout's* Oath in my Defence, corroborated by the good Opinion of two very great and worthy Persons, What think you, *Thomas*, would *then* be the Opinion of Mankind?

Cob. Why, I think no such great Worthies as you seem to hint at would care to descend so low as to appear in a *Court of Common Law*, to be examined upon their *Oaths*; whose *Honour* in a— is thought sufficient.—But take Notice too, what pretty Company you will introduce your great Men into; thus to join their Testimony to that of a common *Prostitute*.—Besides, what can they say of you? They may say, that they have no Reason to believe any Clergyman of the Church of *England* would be guilty of what would bring such a Blemish on his Character— they may say further, that they did not see you in the Wood with *Dafia*—and they may say that you are a very good *Preacher*: But what can they say about your *private Devotions*? Remember this, Sir, that many an honest Man has given a *Felon* a good negative Character, and yet the *Felon* has been as guilty as if he had had none given him at all. I mean, Sir, by a negative Character, that he knew no Hurt of him:
And

And if this be the Case, I would advise you, for the sake of those great and good Men, as well as your own, not to desire them to be there *on your Account*.—Consider only what the Wags will say on their Appearance there: What! they have Hopes, we suppose, that the Naked Truth will be all laid open to View to Day: So they are willing to partake of a rich Entertainment: And perhaps some young Infidel may be apt to call it a sp-rit-al Gaudy. I have a great Veneration for the sacred Function, so, for the Lord's sake, let none be there (on your Account).

Cur. I really thought, *Thomas*, that it would make a very plausible Defence of me, to have two of the holy Order appearing in the Court.

Cob. And one common Whore, you mean, with them! Well, Sir, whether yours or any other Business engage them to the next Court, we'll hang upon your great Folk no longer.—I find you have great Confidence in Miss *Hack-about*. I shall stick to my old Friendship for you; and therefore don't be angry, if I should convince you that you are wrong in depending upon such a rotten Reed.

Cur. *Thomas*, speak your Mind freely.

Cob. Why then, Sir, here's my Love to you.
[Drinks.]

Cur. Thank you, *Thomas*, very kindly.

Cob. In the first Place, Sir, look a little forward, and see what you are about to do, or rather have been doing, with *Sally*.—You tell me you have new rigg'd her, and are sure of her *Fidelity*.

The Fidelity of a *Whore*, Sir, is just like the Promise of a *Courtier*: And you know, by your own System of Politics, that there is no Hurt in Lying, or Breaking ones Word.—When you have done all you can against *Dofia* in the Castle, without a Jury for the Purpose, you can't much hurt her, as I am credibly inform'd by an honest *one ey'd* Lawyer: And if you should convict her of sending that poor begging Letter to you for a little Relief, you will, perhaps only keep her a little longer in Prison. And what Advantage will all that be to you?—But here rests the Misfortune. *Sally Hackabout* now is *entail'd* upon you for ever. You must now absolutely keep her in every thing she shall want.—A pretty old Baudy-house pull'd about your Ears!—The Moment you refuse her Relief, you have another Letter-writer on your Back:—“What, Sir,” says she, “do you refuse *Me* Money who have “swore thro' thick and thin to get you out of “the Clutches of my old Friend *Dofia*? If you “don't immediately come into proper Remittances, I'll expose you to the World, relate “the whole Series of Affairs you led me into “to screen yourself;” and so *the last Error will be worse than the first*.—There, Sir, that's the Opinion of a Cobler for you.—Don't despise it.

Cur. Let the Affair of *Sally Hackabout* alone; I'll warrant you I'll manage that myself.—For you must know, *Thomas*, that as I have made use of her to wipe off the Scandal which her Partner *Dofia* threw upon me, I may also have
Mirmidons

Mirmidons enough to swear *her* into the Castle:—
What think you of my Tonfor, *W—st—n*,
P—r C—t—r, young *B—ck*, *T—nt—r*, and
many more, all devoted to my Service?

Cob. I'm sorry you are involved in such Difficulties; but more so, that you are to be vindicated by such a hopeful Collection of Witnesses.—I don't remember one of them, hardly, but what deserves hanging. Should the World know what a shocking Acquaintance you was got into—they'd think you belong'd to *Baxter's Gang*:—for my own Part, I should not sleep very comfortably, lest they should turn Tail, and swear away my Life.—But I think you told me your political Maxim was, to *stick at nothing*.—Well, Sir, I wish you well out of it.

Cur. Don't you think I have done great Things, in silencing so many Witnesses against me, especially such inveterate ones as some of them were? I don't care to mention all of them to you; if I should, I'm sure I should make you all over Astonishment.

Cob. I think I am astonished enough at what you have told me already:—But, however, Sir, for Goodness sake, what other Discoveries can you make to me?

Cur. Suppose I should tell you, that some of the most bellowing Chaps of the *Old Interest* are my Friends, *Thomas*, would not that surprize you?

Cob. I'm pretty well guarded against all Surprize from what you have told me already: So
that

that you may relate any Thing to me without any Danger at all of throwing me into Fits. But what can you mean by saying that any Blusterer for the *Old Interest* can be a Friend to you, who are a Bawler for the *New*?

Cur. I'll satisfy your Curiosity in that Point presently. You know some Folks love to be, or at least would be thought to be, very considerable, when any Enterprize is on Foot; and if they are not gratified in their Desires by one Party, they veer (like the Weather-cock) to another Quarter, to try what Luck they can have there.

Cob. Well, Sir, but then they can't be Bawlers for the *Old Interest* at the same Time that they are Friends to the *New*. This seems, to me, downright Contradiction and Absurdity.

Cur. Not at all, I assure you.—Don't you know, that Hypocrisy is necessary to carry a Man comfortably thro' Life? A Man who really is what he outwardly professes himself, is in Politics a *Ninny*: But he who can be outwardly one Thing, and really act another Part in his Heart, is, with us, the Beauty of a Man. He can deceive you insensibly; and whilst he is roaring a W——n and D——h——d, can, with the more Facility, dive into their Secrets, in order to betray them to a P——r and T——r. And I can tell you I am very well furnished in this Point.

Cob. Can there be such a base *Iago* alive?

Cur. As sure as you are, *Thomas*.

Cob.

Cob. But, Sir, don't you think such a one deserves the Contempt of Mankind? Or can you think it quite sweet in you to encourage such hellish Hypocrisy?

Cur. Oh! thou old *Simpleton*. Don't you know that a *Spy* is a Trade allowed of in Time of War? Victory frequently depends upon the Encouragement of them. One *Spy* at a Siege will sometimes do more good than many Days cannonading the Walls: And if they were not Masters of the deepest Hypocrisy, they would be Fools in their Profession, and unfit for Business:—So that we readily consent to their wearing our Enemies Regimentals, that they may have the Opportunity of deceiving them the more *artfully*.

Cob. Well! if this be the Case, I'll be *Tom* still—Honest *Tom*, with the old leathern Apron. You'll excuse me, if I don't come into your Scheme, Sir.

Cur. Come, *Thomas*, here's my Service to you.

Cob. Thank you, Sir, but your Love's sufficient.—Pray, whose Tobacco is this? I fancy, by the smoaking of it, you have it from honest *George Tomkins* in the *Corn-Market*.

Cur. No, my Friend, mine's much better Tobacco than his. He's *Old Interest*, Tooth and Nail, I am told. I love to encourage the Party, *Thomas*: So I send for these odd Matters of Grocery from a *New Interest* Man at *Watlington*, recommended to me by my Lord P——r. And
you

you know, we are obliged to go where we are sent, in order to promote the Interest.

Cob. Upon my word, Sir, 'twas but *Saturday* last I saw him pay off his old Score, and give fresh Orders for more : But, says he, *Mr. Tomkins*, you must not send it me in any of your printed Papers, because you know there is a Reason for it at present ; but let me have it neat, and I'll make it up myself in some Papers I have got printed, and mark'd, *New Interest Tobacco*.

Cur. If I thought you was serious, *Thomas*, I assure you I would write to my L—d about it ; for I have no Notion that his L——p or myself should be thus grossly imposed upon.

Cob. Why, Sir, I would not have you injure *your* Chap ; neither would I have *my* Friend in the *Corn-Market* lose a Customer.—For, look you, Master, I can't think the smoaking good Tobacco should move me to leave the Shop, because the Retailer in the Country buys it of an honest *Old Interest* Freeholder in this Town. Should People know upon what Occasion you left him, they would be apt to talk pretty freely about it, and say,—Aye ! he's one that will *stick at nothing*, you see, for a Party !

Cur. Well, hang the Tobacco Story : I want to hear what you think yourself, concerning what I have done with your Friend *Lubberkin*, and some others, *Thomas*, who were to come open mouth'd against me, had not I stop'd them.

Cob.

Cob. Come, Sir, I'll compromise this Affair with you.—As I merrily pop'd out a Truth that ought not to have been spoken, I find, at this Time, about the Tobacco; if you'll promise to take no further Notice of it at any Time whatever,—then I'll be very open, and tell you (what I'd rather you'd excuse in me) my Opinion about the silencing these Witnesses.

Cur. Well then, I will do a little Violence to myself for once; and I assure you I will say no more about it.

Cob. But, Sir, *Saying* and *Doing* are two Things: You can't keep, I find, out of your old *Sophistry*, as you call it:—Won't you turn him off yourself, Sir? Come, that's a fair Question.

Cur. I don't, at present, intend it, *Thomas*.—Is not that as fair an Answer.

Cob. No Answer at all, I think:—You don't intend *at present!* What, I suppose you intend to do it To-morrow, do you, Sir?—Why then, as you are upon the quibbling Order, I can assure you, if you thus shew your Zeal for a paltry Cause, in such a low-lived Instance of Revenge, I'll cancel all future Friendship with you, and never mend a Pair of Shoes or Pumps for you as long as I live.—And now, Sir, tell me how you relish that.

Cur. Why so warm, my Friend?

Cob. Nay, I'll carry it a little further too! If you, or my L—d, either of you, give off smoaking this Man's Tobacco, upon this Ac-

count, I'll deal with him myself: And I'm sure he'll find the Advantage of it; for, look you, I use more than both of you, and always pay *ready Money*: And that's no bad Article to a Tradesman, I can tell you, my Master.

Cur. Can't you do just as *you* will, and let *me* do as *I* please?

Cob. Yes, Sir, I can; but, Sir, I must insist on it, with *humble Submission*, (as poor *P—nt—n* has it always) that it is as wrong in you to make this ill Use of my private Conversation, as you said at one of our Meetings, it was in a saucy Fellow who published what passed between us, as we thought, in private Talk: And that's my *Opinion*, Sir.

Cur. But that is not the *Opinion* I want, my Friend: I tell you once more, I want to know your own real Sentiments about my Conduct with your Friend Mr. *Lubberkin*, and others.

Cob. I had rather be excused, Sir; and I think you had better not insist upon it: For you know I love to speak the Truth *freely*, if I shame the very Devil by it: And when I have done what every honest Man ought to do in the same Case, I suppose you'll abuse poor *Thomas*, or get some of your low *scarlet-nos'd Mirmidons* and *Scouts* (when they are touch'd in any sore Part of their Characters) to say, *Poh! Thomas's Word* is no Scandal.—And this, I apprehend, I shall have as a Reward for speaking what every Body thinks, and is satisfied is true.

Cur.

Cur. I give you my Honour for it, *Thomas*, that I shall not be so ungrateful to you : I shall never abuse any one for speaking the Truth ; and you know I always desired you to take that Liberty with me, and fancy you always found me pleased with you for it.

Cob. Why then, Sir, I'll keep you in Suspence no longer.—You must know, Sir, that I came to spend this Evening with you out of pure Friendship : I thought we should have the Opportunity of a more private Conference in your Chamber than at my little House, where we are over-heard by every Body ; and I have really something to impart to you, of a more serious Nature than our jocosse Conversation about an Election.

Cur. Now, *Thomas*, I should be oblig'd to you for it.

Cob. I was last Night, when it was dark, and I fancy not suspected to be the *Cobler* who was so much acquainted with the *Curate*, at my Door smoaking my Bed Pipe, and two elderly grave Divines stop'd a little Way from me—(I suppose they had been discoursing it over as they came up the Street) “ But,” says one of them, “ I apprehend all that is done will signify nothing as to the *Reality* of cleansing his Character.” “ I hope, said the other, “ though it will not in *Reality*, it will place him in a little better Light ; it will give some room for Argument, whether he be *really* guilty or not ; and so he will have some little Respite

“ from the Censure which is thrown upon him
 “ at present. — I am quite of another way of
 “ thinking,” said the other, “ and am very well
 “ satisfied, that the World will never be blinded
 “ by such thin Pretences to Innocence. But
 “ supposing it otherwise ; for Heaven’s sake,
 “ what Pleasure can any Man have (should he
 “ know himself guilty) in thus fluttering in-
 “ judiciously, which tends to no End but to
 “ hamper him in more Guilt? Should he en-
 “ deavour, as I am inform’d he is advis’d to
 “ do, to stifle the Witneses, and by Money to
 “ prevail with them not to swear positively to
 “ him or his Horse, what will be the Effect of
 “ it? — Why, he will then add the Guilt of
 “ suborning *Perjury* to hide *Whoring*; and this,
 “ I’m afraid, will lead the hot-headed Wretch
 “ into a Prosecution of the poor injur’d Girl.”

Cur. Why these, I fancy, *Thomas*, were not
 of the *Jacobite* Sor, were they, think ye?

Cob. Master, ’tis not a time to talk about
Party. You shall hear their whole Discourse
 faithfully, I’ll assure you. “ For my own part,”
 says one of them, “ was it my Case, I should
 “ take quite other Measures; I would be upon
 “ the *Husbing* Order; I am confident it will do
 “ better than Violence; and I’ll ev’n fend to
 “ him, and see what I can do in it: Such a
 “ Scene of Iniquity may otherwise be opened,
 “ as will astonish Mankind; especially if con-
 “ triv’d by a Priest of the *Church of England*.
 “ Nay, I should not wonder to hear it retorted,
 “ that

“ that the Whigs are most likely to introduce
“ Popery, if any one of them can possibly be
“ guilty of such Jesuitism.”

Cur. So, *Thomas*, did you know these Gentlemen ?

Cob. Upon my word, Sir, it was too dark to see their Faces : But it gave me an Opportunity of running the whole over when my Head was upon the Bolster ; and from the great Concern I had for you, I thought I could not do better than acquaint you with it.

Cur. I acknowledge myself greatly obliged to you, believe me. But I cannot think it will ever take Air.—What think you, *Thomas* ?

Cob. There's but little Hopes, I think, that it should not, Sir ; when you consider that even these, your Friends, were so unguarded, as not to know they were over-heard by me last Night.—Besides, if I may speak my mind, I think a publick Prosecution will expose, rather than defend you ; and I'd have you consider one Serious Point, and, I fancy, you'll be inclin'd to take other Methods.—If you know you are guilty,—what a horrid Situation must your Mind be always in, should you (to escape the Shame of a little Guilt) add to it Subornation of Perjury, and afterwards, by Corruption, detain in Jail a poor begging Creature ; especially if you are convinced that you had before prevailed with her to be wicked.—These are the Sentiments you so earnestly sollicited me to give you.—I have done it, and I hope you will have that Regard
for

for your Quiet hereafter, as to abandon all such vile Thoughts, which will be your constant Torment here, and, when gone, will never forsake you.

Cur. But, *Thomas*, do you think Repentance will not set it aside?

Cob. According to what you teach us, Repentance will do great Feats. But I am afraid what generally passes for Repentance, proves a Cheat to too many poor Souls.—I'm a little cautious how I say any thing in this way, for fear you should upbraid me with going beyond my *Last*: Or else, Sir, I think it better for any Man to take Care not to do what *deserves* Repentance, than to be at the Trouble of it for *doing* any thing that requires it.

Cur. *Thomas*, I agree with you entirely: But you know we are frail Creatures, which makes Repentance necessary; and therefore I must endeavour to do the best I can for my self, when I stand in need of it.

Cob. But you need not do the most you can to call for more, Sir, I hope.

Cur. No, *Thomas*, 'tis very true: But I wou'd willingly avoid the Consequences of this Affair, if possible: And then you know, I can set about this grand Work in earnest.

Cob. Don't increase your Labour, Master, nor deceive yourself with a ragged Piece of Repentance. You know very well, Sir, that you must make the Girl a compleat Restitution for *all* the Injury done her; and therefore let me beg
you

you to lay aside the Thoughts of prosecuting her for what you know to be true.—Why the Devil himself (if he was not coal Black) wou'd blush at the Thoughts of it.—To call a poor Creature before a Judge, to employ Council to accuse her with a long premeditated Indictment, when you are conscious she deserves no such Usage; nay, when you know yourself to be guilty; and to suborn these Witnesses to prove *That* against her, who you are satisfied were Witnesses of *your* Guilt,—This (let me speak freely if it be Fact) in any one who does it, is such a complicated Piece of Villany, that *Hell from beneath*, I should conceive, was *open'd for him at his coming*—from the Place he did it in.

Cur. And this is your Opinion, is it? Why, *Thomas*, I shall be more guilty in the Eyes of Mankind, if I sit down tamely and do *Nothing* in it.

Cob. You will not indeed, Sir. Every prudent Man will commend you, and every serious Man, guessing that to be true, which perhaps you and I *know* to be, will applaud your Conduct; and then, Sir, consider you have the less Time to sit upon the Stool of Repentance.—And that's no small Advantage, I can tell you, Sir; for that same Stool is a plaguy hard Seat: I'd rather, for my own Part, ride the Wooden Horse, or stand upon the Piquet, as the poor Soldiers sometimes do for getting drunk.

Cur. Well but, my Friend, I find you are no Adept in Political Schemes: let Repentance take
its

its Chance; you know, 'tis never too late to repent.

Cob. True, Master; and if I ben't mightily mistaken in my Divinity, 'tis never too *soon* to set about it. What, I suppose you hope to go to Heaven for one *Lord have Mercy on you*, I warrant you? Don't be too confident in that, my Master.—This confounded hankering after Preferment has quite spoil'd you for a Christian; and they'll deceive you at last, you'll see. They only make Use of you, as I do my Awl; work him till he's worn out or broke, and then away with him out of my Shop-Window; and just so you'll be serv'd when you have spent your All for them.

Cur. Let me alone for that, *Thomas*: I am determin'd to go, be the Consequence as it may: So talk no more about my Affairs, unless you will lend me any Assistance in going thro' stich with it.

Cob. So you won't hearken to my Advice, I find, Sir.—Why then to gratify you, I'll put you forward your own Way; since nothing else will go down with you.

Cur. In that you'll oblige me, *Thomas*.

Cob. Why then, Sir, you say you are determin'd to prosecute the poor Wench.—Hang it—I wish you wou'd not.—But however, as it is your Inclination, and I find I can't beat you off on't, I think you should employ some devilish *honest Lawyer*, who is well vers'd in the acute Part of the Law: For you must know,
Sir,

Sir, there's a great deal of Nicety in well conducting bad Causes. Suppose you was to pitch upon Mr. —, I fancy you'll find him very expert at any Thing of this kind. He is your Man, Sir, every Inch of him. Ply him well with the *Corianders*, and never fear but your Business is done. — You'll want a Council too, Sir; and as I find you intend to proceed by way of Bill, in this Point, the Course and Nature of your Acquaintance must furnish you with better Instruction than I can advise. — But you'll want a Set of Under-strappers to do some necessary dirty Work: Suppose you hired honest *Robin Hobblefoot*; He'll swear any Thing you want, and has an excellent Nose at running a Man by the Foot, or catching him by the Shoulders!

Cur. I know he's ready to serve me; but I think I have one full as thorough-paced as He: You know him very well. I can't trust him indeed about my Chamber, because he's as Light-finger'd as *Blue-skin* ever was; but as for *Swearing*, or *Lying*, I don't think *Jonathan Wild* had ever a more faithful Disciple. His Christian Name is neither *Peter*, *Paul*, nor *Philip*, and yet it begins with a *P.* and ends with an *R.* Besides I am excellently provided with my B—r and his Journey-Man, who will stick at nothing to serve me.

Cob. Then you are right, Sir; you have a brave Pack of staunch Hounds; but you must instruct them well, Sir, else they will certainly

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be at fault, notwithstanding the Excellency of their Noses.

Cur. Let me alone for that: I'll put them into my Attorney's Hands, and I'm sure they will then want no proper Instructions.

Cob. Well, Sir, so far so good: What do you propose next?

Cur. Why I'll indite her for writing an Incendiary Letter to me, and leave the Rest to my Council, who (I warrant, *Thomas*) will fill his Paper as full as it can hold with Abuse and Ribaldry Accusations. You don't know the Man perhaps; but he's as good at that work as any petty Solicitor at the *Old Baily*, or *Hick's-Hall*. The Bill you know is already found; then let *Madam* face my Council if she can; for I am determin'd not to stay in the Court, at least not to be seen by her, for fear of further Discoveries.

Cob. It goes very hard against the Grain with me, Sir; but you say you are determin'd, and so I shall drop the Point.

Cur. Don't you know, *Thomas*, that when you embark in any Enterprize, you must determine first *to go thro' Stitch with it?*

Cob. That's confess'd, Sir. But then before your Resolution was thus fix'd, had not you some few Throws of Conscience, some Recoilings at the Horridness of such a Prosecution!

Cur. When you have any Occasion for any Help in this Way, I'll give you a Lift with all my Heart; but let's say no more of *Conscience* now. Things will go on, you shall see by and by,

by, swimmingly; and so I get rid of it, I don't care a Farthing for Conscience.

Cob. But, Sir, suppose the poor Creature should not only, by this Stratagem, be prevented from *seeing* you, but should be *starved* for want of *Necessaries*; or finding herself overcome by such Power as *her* poor Circumstances are incapable to resist, should be prompted to put a speedy, tho' bad End, to a miserable Life; which is not quite unlikely; if You should be so fortunate, as you call it, to confine her longer in Jail: For God's sake, shall you be able to sleep afterwards?

Cur. Should she have such Thoughts, and endeavour to put them in Practice, I think it will convince the World, that she is sensible of the Injury she has done my Character, and is willing to atone for it (in a Way to be sure she should not) by laying violent Hands on herself: What think you, *Thomas*?

Cob. I am again quite of another Mind, Sir; and really think the World will say, that the hard Usage of a Jail, and the torturing Feelings of suffering Innocence under the Crush of Riches and Power, may make the poor Creature delirious, and drive her into Extremes she never before thought of.

Cur. But come, we'll drop this Supposition, *Thomas*, and resume our former Confab. — To get rid of an Enemy, you must know, is a kind of *Opiate*: When Danger is removed, a Man sleeps soundly: it is the *Apprehension* of Thieves that disquiets the Nights of the *Usurer*; and I think I shall be very quiet, when I have got rid

of one that has given me so much Uneasiness about supplying her with Money for a trifling Gratification.

Cob. But, Sir, suppose her Ghost should haunt you in Bed, and when alone, for being instrumental in the Death of her? I beseech you consider this well before you proceed. It is a thousand to one but this may hasten your *own* End. I remember a Fellow of *E——r* College in *O—x—d*, who drank too deep a Draught of that same sleepy Stuff you mentioned just now, and never wak'd any more; and only from an Apprehension of having a Bailiff at his Door the next Day. And if the Dread of a Jail could put a Gentleman of Learning upon such desperate Doings, the *Spirit* of a Person whose dismal End I had been any way instrumental to, would make my Flesh tremble, and my Heart would sink into my very Breeches.—Take my Advice, Sir, I beg you, and shew Mercy: Don't take the Advantage of a poor Thing's Necessity; drop such a *wicked* Prosecution, and don't invite *Old Nick* to your Chamber-Door.

Cur. Well, *Thomas!* Don't you think I have been very attentive to your preaching? As for your *Spirits* and *Ghosts*, I don't care one Farthing for them, neither do I believe any Thing about them.

Cob. Hey-day! I'm afraid we shall have some here presently. Not believe any Thing of *Spirits!* Why, you pass for a Writer on the Reality of Ghosts and Apparitions, and yet not believe

lieve any such Thing? This is downright Infidelity indeed! Did you never read (I must clap the old Bible on your Back once more, Sir) how the Disciples were 'frighted when they saw their Master walking upon the Sea: And the Reason of their Terror, it is said, was this only, because they thought it was a *Spirit*, a *Ghost*, or *Apparition*.—These, sure, had a better Notion of *Spirits* than you have; and I shall always conclude, that it was a received Opinion, at that Time of Day, that there were such Things as Spirits; and I wish, for this intended Barbarity to the poor Girl, who may have been so good-natured as to oblige you in your *carnal* Necessity, that you don't find the Thing to be Fact; for punishing (instead of relieving) her in her begging your Alms. — I beg of you don't be in a Hurry in such a strange Prosecution.—If you have been *wicked with* her, don't be ungratefully *cruel to* her: It shocks the Nature of a Cobler but to conceive it; and it startles me to think how you can engage in such an Undertaking, when you preach up *Forgiveness*, *Gratitude*, *Compassion*, and all the other *Graces* of a *Christian Life*, and run greedily into the Prosecution of a good-natur'd poor *Thing*.

Cur. I tell you, *Thomas*, I am determin'd; and so preach no more to me upon that Subject.

Cob. Why, Master, I should not have taken such Liberties, I assure you, had not I valued you very much. What you are about to do, will always be a monstrous Blot in your 'Scutcheon;

cheon ; and if you carry your Coat of Arms along with you when you die, I'm sure Hell-fire itself won't burn this Blot out of it.

Cur. Poh ! Bugbears may serve to keep *Children* in Awe, but don't think *I* am to be so easily 'frighted.

Cob. Why, Master, don't you dread Hell-fire ? You believe such a Thing, don't you ? I'm sure, if there be no such Thing, your Trade would not be worth one Farthing to you.

Cur. That's nothing to you, *Thomas*.

Cob. That's true, Sir, indeed, as you say, whether you believe a Hell, or not : But as I have a Veneration for you, and, in some particular Cases, you know, have been your Friend, I should be sorry to see you do any base Thing, which, to be sure, must entitle you to the Punishment of it, if there be any such Place ; and, for my Part, *I* am verily persuaded there is, whatever *you* may think of it.

Cur. Prithee let us lay aside this Talk of *Apparitions* and *Devils*, and don't tease me any longer with your old-fashion'd Doctrine of *Spirits*.

Cob. Well, Sir, with all my Heart, I'll quit that Subject ; and think it almost Time to go homewards too. My old Dame will think me lost. Come, Sir, with a Bumper of Thanks I must take my Leave of you.

Cur. I insist upon t'other Pipe, *Thomas*, so sit down.

Cob. Well, Sir, one peremptory Pipe, and then——. I really forgot, in the Heat of our Discourse

Discourse about the Affize Business, to ask you one Thing about the Election.

Cur. What was that, *Thomas*?

Cob. I wonder what View you Gentry of the *New Interest* can have in publishing so much Scandal every Week: Why d'ye call Sir *J—s D—b—d* a *Papist*, another a *Jacobite*, and accuse almost every one of the *Old Interest* as Enemies to his present Majesty?

Cur. Why, calling Names, Scandal, and Abuse, are the necessary Attendants of all Elections, where there is any Opposition.—When we have no other Objection to Men's Characters, we must depreciate them, and make them odious, if we can, in order to forward the Election of our own Men. Our Friends would otherwise fall off from us: They would be apt to say else, "*Why, we don't find any Objection to the Old Members, and why then should we change for New Ones?*"—So that you see the Necessity we are under, of abusing and stigmatizing them (whether they deserve it or not) in order to keep *some* with us.

Cob. But, how do you reconcile this with Honour and Conscience?

Cur. I wonder, *Thomas*, you are so dull of Apprehension. *Honour* and *Conscience* have nothing to do with *Elections*, I tell you.

Cob. O my God! Is that your Principle?—To call a Gentleman a *Papist*, who you are satisfied is not one; who has abjured your great Bugbear, *the Pretender*, in as solemn a Manner as any *Whig* in *England*; who has taken the
Oaths

Oaths of *Allegiance* and *Supremacy* to his *present Majesty*; to be falsely accused as a *Papist*, an *Enemy* to the *Government*, and a *Subverter* of the *Constitution*; this is so provoking, that all the *Freeholders* you have got on your Side, will surely forsake you, as soon as they know in what *Manner* you impose upon them;—to make them your *Tools*, only to support *Lies*, and vote against *Gentlemen* of approved *Truth* and *Honour*.—
 In short, the *Old Interest Men*, without going upon such bad *Principles*, might with *Justice* say, that every *Whig* was a *Scoundrel*, who made no *Scruple* to vilify *Gentlemen* with the *Name* of *Papists*, whom they knew, at the same *Time*, to be true *Members* of the *Church of England*:
 And if you can feast thus, and regale after *Corruption*, the last *Thing* I told you may be a proper *Grace* after your *Gaudy*.

Cur. Well, *Thomas*, I see you are warm, and therefore I chuse to drop the *Discourse*.

Cob. With all my Heart, Sir; and I my Pipe and your *Acquaintance* for the future: So, *Master*, a good *Night* to you.—Thank you for what is past; for I'll never be in *Debt* to you for the future.

Cur. Will you have a *Lanthorn*, *Thomas*?

Cob. No, Sir, I thank you: I can clearly see my *Way* home, as I have now clearly seen thro' the *scheming Politics* of *Election Pack-Horses* and *Whiggism*.

T. P.

Feb. 1754.

F I N I S.