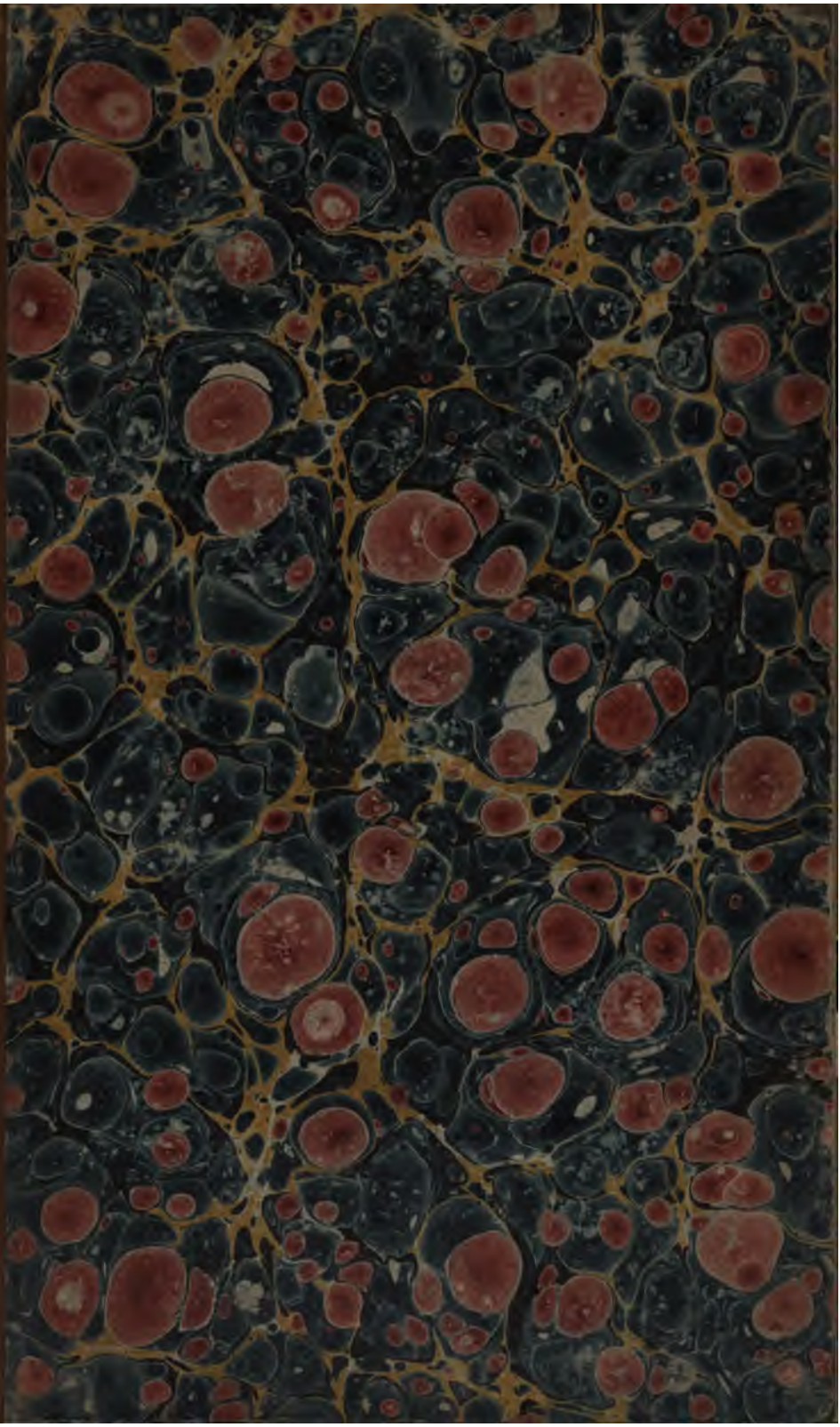

Poor Robin's

True

Character of a Scold:

or,

The Shrew's Looking-glass.

Dedicated to all

Domineering Dames, Wives Rampant, Cuckolds Couchant, and Hen-peckt Sneaks,

in City or Country.

LONDON: Printed for L. C. 1678.

WITH AN APPENDIX.

A very limited number printed.

TOTHAM:

Printed by Charles Clark (an Amateur) at his Private Press.

1848.

Poor Robin's

True Character of a SCOLD.

A Rank SCOLD is a Devil of the Feminine gender; a Serpent, perpetually hissing, and spitting of Venom; a Composition of Ill-nature and Clamour. You may call her animated Gun-powder, a walking Mount Etna that is always belching forth flames of Sulphur, or a Real Purgatory, more to be dreaded in this world, than the Pope's Imaginary Hot-house in the next. A Burr about the Moon, is not half so certain a Presage of a Tempest at Sea, as her Brow is of a Storm on Land. And though Laurel, Haw-thorn, and Seal-skin are held Preservatives against Thunder, Magick has not yet been able to finde any Amulet so Sovereign as to still her Ravings: for, like Oyl pour'd on Flames, Good words do but make her Rage the faster; and when once her Flag of Defiance, the Tippet, is unfurl'd, she cares not a straw for Constable nor Cucking-stool.

Her Tongue is the Clapper of the Devil's Saints-bell, that rings all-in to Confusion. It runs round like a Wheel, one spoak after another, and makes more Noise and Jangling, than Country-Steeples on the Fifth of November. She is never less at ease, than when she is quiet; never quiet, but when she is sleeping; nor then neither: for either she talks in her Dream, or awakes the whole house with a terrible fit of Snoring. She makes such a Pattering with her Lips when she walks the streets, as if she were possest; and so indeed she is, with the Spirit of Contention. The Dog-days, with her, continue all the year round; nor can she possibly take Cold: for she is ever

in an Heat, and holds neither Pox nor Plague so grievous a Disease, as being Tongue-ty'd.

She makes an Ass of Aristotle, and demonstrates, That though every man be, yet many a woman is not, A sociable Creature: for there is no Good humour can charm her to be Civil or Agreeable; no Company, how affable or complaisant soever, that can long content her. She seeks occasions for Railing, as eagerly as a Common Barretor does to go to Law. If you will not anger her, she will be angry with you for thus neglecting her: and you cannot vex her worse, than to be silent, unless you sing or whistle at her Folly. She interprets all she hears in the worst sense, and supplies the defect of real Affronts with jealous suspitions. She is more captious, than capable of Offence; and all her Neighbours bless themselves from her, wishing this Quotidian Feaver of her Tongue cur'd with a Razor. Yet is not that her onely weapon; for she has Hands to Clap with, and Nails to Scratch with, and Teeth to Bite with, and much more Furniture for War; so that being lookt upon as Invincible, her bad humour gets her a Priviledge: for whereever she comes, she may be sure to have the Room to her self; nor needs long Contest for priority of Walk, or precedency at Table, or opinion in Argument: for the proudest Gossip will quit Pretensions, rather than stand the shock of her well-known Rhetorick.

If she be of the preciser Cast, she abuses Sacred Language in her Railing, as Conjurers do in their Charms; calls her Neighbours Heathen Edomites, her Husband, Reprobate, or Son of Belial, and will not cudgel her Maid without a Text for't. But now I speak of Husband, methinks I see the creeping snail shibering in an Ague-fit when he comes in her presence. She is worse than Cow-itch in his Bed, and as good as a Chafing-dish at Board: but has either quite forgot his Name, or else she likes it not; which makes her Rebaptize him with more noble Titles, as White-liver'd Raskal, Drunken Sot, Sneaking

Ninkompoop, or **pitiful lowsy Tom Farthing**. Thus she worries him out of his senses at home, and then ferrets his Haunts abroad worse than a needy Bawd does a decay'd Bully's. Taverns and Ale-houses dread her single Alarm, more than the joynt Attaques of the Constable and Watch; and his Companions are content to pay his Club and dismiss him, on news of her approach, rather than be at the charge of so many Glasses and Bottles as she will quickly salute his Coxcomb with. A full Glass seasonably offered, may sometimes pacifie her for a moment; but immediately the Ill spirit returns, and she can be quiet onely just so long as she is drinking. Thus she clamours at him so long without occasion, that at last he gives her enough; and rails at him for keeping Ill Company, till she forces him to it; being asham'd to go into any Good Society, or they asham'd of him; which makes him seek blinde Bubbing-schools to hide himself in from her fury, and resolve to stay out all Night, rather than endure a double Rally.

In a word, (for I perceive our Character begins to be infected with the contagious Talkativeness of its subject) a **virulent Scold** is her Neighbour's perpetual Disquiet, her Families Evil Genius, her Husband's Ruine, and her own dayly Tormentor: And that you may the better know her Pedigree, I'll give you a serious Account of the Receipt or Method made use of for her Production into the world, lately found in a long-concealed Manuscript of **Theophrastus Bombastus Paracelsus**, as follows: **viz.**

That Nature long since finding many of her Sons oft-times bewitcht to their own Ruine by the Charms of Women, for their punishment contriv'd this Monster call'd **A Scold**: To form which,

She first took of the Tongues and Galls of Bulls, Bears, Wolves, Magpies, Parrets, Cuckows, and Nightingales, of each a like number: The Tongues and Tails of Vipers, Adders, Snakes and Lizards, Seven apiece: Aurum

Fulminans, Aqua Fortis and Gun-powder, of each one pound: The Clappers of Nineteen Bells, and the Pestles of a dozen Apothecaries Mortars. Which being all mixt, she calcin'd in Mount **Strombelo**, and dissolv'd the Ashes in a water distill'd just under **London** bridge at three quarters Flood, and filtrated it through the leaves of **Calepine's** Dictionary, to render the Operation more berbal. After which, she distill'd it again through a Speaking-Trumpet, and closed up the remaining Spirits in the mouth of a Cannon. Then she open'd the Graves of all new-deceased Pettifoggers, Mountebanks, Barbers, Coffee-newsmongers, and Fish-wives; and with the skin of their Tongues, made a Bladder cover'd o're with Drum-heads, and fill'd with Storms, Tempests, Whirlwinds, Thunders, Lightnings, &c. These, for better Incorporation, she set seven years in a rough Sea to ferment, and then mixing them with the rest, rectified the whole three times a day for a Twelbemonth in a Balneo of Quick-silber. Lastly, to irrabiate the whole Elixir, and make it more Churlish, she cut a bein under the Tongue of the Dog-star, drawing thence a pound of the most Cholerick blood; from which sublimating the Spirits, she mixt them with the Foam of a mad Dog: and then putting all together in the forementioned Bladder, stitcht it up with the Nerves of **Socrates's** Wife.

Out of this noble Preparation, and a **Crooked Rib** (Emblem of future Crosness) Dame Nature first composed a SHREW, whose Posterity (as is frequent with noxious Animals) has since so ober-spread the world, that scarce an **Alley** or **Village** is free from some of her Lineage.

But that you may see her End as well as Beginning, be pleased to peruse this

EPITAPH.

After some Threescore years of Catterwauling,
Here lies A SCOLD, stopt from above-ground Bawling,
Though Ill she liv'd, I dare not read her Doom;
But sure, go where she will, she's Troublesome,
I wish her, in Revenge, amongst the Blest:
For she'd as lief be Damn'd, as be at Rest.

The Benedict's Complaint.

A Parody.

Deserting home by noon of day,
Who often guides herself away,
And out my cash delights to lay?
Somebody!

Who "sets" invites, and fills each chair—
"Sets" of her own—and does not spare,
But lays for dinner covers there?
Somebody!

Who lets go out the once brisk fire,
Yet blames her cringing "Lord" with ire,
And brawls to have the scuttle nigher?
Somebody!

When deep in debt, and in a "mess,"
And heartless duns for cash me press,
Who still must "cut a dash" and dress?
Somebody!

When children bold against me rise,
Or fast each wine and spirit flies,
Who blinds me by her false replies?
Somebody!

When death's attacks at all are plain,
And quacks extract my little gain,
Who thoughts has of another swain?
Somebody!

Then I'm resolved, when *my* bonds break,
To wed no more—so great's the stake—
And for my *second* "help meet" take—
Nobody!!

C. C.

Great Totham.

Two Songs from a MS. of the Fifteenth Century.

Care away, away, away, care away for eber more.

ALL that I may swynk or swet,
My wyfe it wyll both drynk and ete,
And I sey ougt, she wyl me bete;
Carful ys my hart therfor.

If I sey ougt of hyr but good,
She loke on me as she war wod,
And wyll me clougt abougt the hod;
Carful ys my hart therfor.

If she wyll to the gud ale ryd,
Me must trot all by hyr syd,
And whan she drynk I must abyd;
Carful ys my hart therfor.

If I say it shal be thus,
She sey, Thou lyyst, charll, I wous,
Wenest thou to obercome me thus?
Carful ys my hart therfor.

If ony man habe such a wyfe to lede,
He shal know how *judicare* cam in the cred;
Of hys penans God do hym med:
Carful ys my hart therfor.

In soro and car he led hys lyfe,
That habe a schrow onto his wyfe.

YONG men, I red that ye be war,
That ye cum not in the snar;
For he is browt in meche car,
That habe a schrow onto his wyfe.

In a panter I am caute,
My fot his pennyd, I may not owt;
In sorow and car he his put,
That habe a schrow onto his wyf.

With a qwene yf that thou run,
Anon it is told into the town;
Sorow he hath both up and down,
That habe a schrow onto hys wyf.