

# ROBERT GREENE

CONNY-CATCHING LAST PART  
1592 : A DISPVATION BETWEENE  
A HEE CONNY-CATCHER AND A  
SHEE CONNY-CATCHER. ~ 1592

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ROBERT GREENE

THE THIRDE AND LAST PART  
OF CONNY-CATCHING 1592

A DISPVATION BETWEENE A  
HEE CONNY-CATCHER AND  
A SHEE CONNY-CATCHER 1592

III

BODLEY HEAD QUARTOS

## *Note*

THE ORIGINAL of this text is in the Bodleian Library (Malone 575). A very few misprints have been corrected in the text: these are noted on page 57.

G. B. H.

THE BODLEY HEAD QUARTOS

EDITED BY G. B. HARRISON

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ROBERT GREENE, M.A.

THE THIRDE & LAST  
Part of Conny-catching.

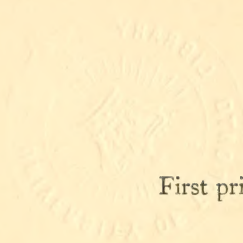
With the new devised knauish  
Art of Foole-taking. The like  
Cosenages and Villenies neuer be-  
fore discovered.

A DISPVTATION BE-  
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and a Shee Conny-catcher.



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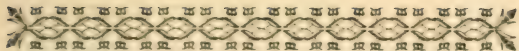
By R. G.



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Cutberd Burbie and are to be folde at his shoppe in the  
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✠ TO ALL  
SVCH AS HAVE  
receiued either pleasure or profit  
by the two former published bookes of this  
Argument, and to all beside, that desire  
to know the wonderful slie de-  
*uises of this hellish crew of*  
*Cony-catchers.*



*I*N the time of king Henrie the fourth, as our  
English Chronyclers haue kept in remembrance,  
liued diuerse sturdie and loose companions, in  
sundrie places about the Citie of London, who gaue  
themselues to no good course of life, but because the  
time was somewhat troublesome, watched diligently,  
when by the least occasion of mutinie offered, they  
might praiſe vpon the goods of honest Citizens, and so  
by their spoile enrich themselues. At that time likewise  
liued a worthie Gentleman, whose many very famous  
deedes (whereof I am sorie I may here make no re-  
hearsal, because neither time nor occasion will permitte  
me) renoune his name to all ensuing posterities: he,  
being called sir Richard Whittington, the founder of  
Whittington Colledge in London, and one that bare

*the office of Lord Maior of this Citie three seuerall times. This worthie man wel noting the dangerous disposition of that idle kinde of people, tooke such good and discreete order (after hee had sent diuers of them to serue in the kings warres, and they loath to doe so well returned to their former vomite) that in no place of or about London they might haue lodging, or entertainment, except they applied themselues to such honest trades and exercises, as might witnesse their maintaining was by true and honest meanes. If any to the contrarie were founde, they were in iustice so sharply proceeded against, as the most hurtfull and dangerous enemies to the commonwealth.*

*In this quiet and most blissefull time of peace, when all men (in course of life) should shew themselues most thankfull for so great a benefit, this famous citie is pestered with the like, or rather worse kinde of people, that beare outward shew of ciuill, honest, and gentlemanlike disposition, but in very deed their behaiour is most infamous to be spoken of. And as now by their close villanies they cheate, cosen, prig, lift, nippe, and such like tricks now used in their Conie-catching Trade, to the hurt and vndoing of many an honest Citizen, and other : So if God should in iustice be angrie with vs, as our wickednesse hath well deserued, and (as the Lorde forsend) our peace should be molested as in former time, euen as they did, so will these be the first in seeking domesticall spoile and ruine : yea so they may haue it, it skilles not how they*

come by it. God raise such another as was worthe Whittington, that in time may bridle the headstrong course of this hellish crew, and force them liue as becommeth honest Subiects, or els to abide the reward due to their loosenesse.

By reading this little treatise ensuing, you shall see to what marueylous subtill pollicies these deceiuers haue atteyned, and how daylie they practise strange driftes for their purpose. I say no more, but if all these forewarnings may be regarded, to the benefite of the well minded, and iust controll of these carelesse wretches, it is all I desire, and no more  
then I hope to see.

Yours in all he may  
R. G.





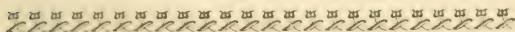
The third and last part of Conny-  
CATCHING WITH THE NEW  
*devised knauish Arte of Foole-  
taking.*

**B**EING by chance inuited to supper, where were present diuers, both of worship and good accompt, as occasion serued for enter-course of talke, the present trecheries and wicked deuises of the world was called in question. Amongest other most hatefull and well worthy reprehension, the woondrous villanies of loose and lewd persons, that beare the shape of men, yet are monsters in condition, was specially remembred, and not only they, but their complices, their confederates, their base natured women and close compacters were noted: Namely, such as tearme themselues Conny-catchers, Crosse-biters with their appertayning names to their seuerall coosening qualities, as already is made knowne to the worlde, by two seuerall imprinted books, by meanes whereof, the present kind of conference was occasioned. Quoth a Gentleman sitting at the Table, whose deepe step into age deciphered his experience, and whose grauitie in speeche reported his discretion, quoth he, by the two published bookes of Conny-catching: I haue seene diuers

things wherof I was before ignorant, notwithstanding, had I beene acquainted with the author: I could haue giuen him such notes of notorious matters that way intending, as in neither of the pamphlets are the like set downe. Beside, they are so necessarie to be knowne, as they will both forearme anie man against such trecherous vipers, and forewarne the simpler sort from conuersing with them. The Gentleman being knowne to be within commission of the peace, and that what hee spake of either came to him by examinations, or by riding in the circuits as other like officers do: was intreated by one man aboute the rest (as his leisure serued him) to acquaint him with those notes, and hee woulde so bring it to passe, as the writer of the other two bookes, should haue the sight of them, and if their quantitie would serue, that hee should publishe them as a third, and more necessarie part then the former were. The Gentleman replied, all suche notes as I speake, are not of mine owne knowledge, yet from suche men haue I receiued them, as I dare assure their truth: and but that by naming men wronged by such mates, more displeasure would ensue then were expedient, I coulde set downe both time, place and parties. But the certaintie shall suffice without anie such offence. As for such as shall see their iniuries discouered, and (byting the lip) say to themselues, thus was I made a Conny: their names being



shadowed, they haue no cause of anger, in that the example of their honest simplicitie beguiled, may shield a number more endangered from tasting the like. And seeing you haue promised to make them knowne to the author of the former two Bookes, you shall the sooner obtaine your request: assuring him thus muche vpon my credite and honestie, that no one vntrueth is in the notes, but euerie one credible, and to be iustified if neede serue. Within a fortnight or thereabout afterward, the Gentleman performed his promise, in seuerall papers sent the notes, which heere are in our booke compiled together: when thou hast read, say, if euer thou heardest more notable villanies discovered. And if thou or thy friends receiue anie good by them, as it cannot be but they will make a number more carefull of themselues: thanke the honest Gentleman for his notes, and the writer that published both the other and these, for generall example.



*A pleasant tale howe an honest substantiall Citizen was made a Connie, and simply entertained a knaue that carried awaie hys goods very politickely.*

WHAT lawes are vsed among this hellish crew, what words and termes they giue themselues and their copesmates, are at large set

downe in the former two bookes: let it suffice yee then in this, to read the simple true discourses of suche as haue by extraordinarie cunning and trecherie beene deceiued, and remembring their subtle meanes there, and slie practises here, be prepared against the reaches of any such companions.

Not long since, a crewe of Conny-catchers meeting together, and in conference laying downe such courses as they seuerally should take, to shunne suspect, and returne a common benefit among them: the Carders receiued their charge, the Dicers theirs, the hangers about the court theirs, the followers of Sermons theirs, and so the rest to their offices. But one of them especiallie, who at their woonted meetinges, when reporte was made howe euerie purchase was gotten, and by what pollicie eache one preuailed: this fellowe in a kinde of priding scorne, would vsuallie saye.

In faith Maisters, these things are pretily done, common sleights, expressing no deep reach of wit, and I wonder men are so simple to be so beguiled. I would fain see some rare artificiall feat indeed, that som admiration and fame might ensue the doing thereof: I promise ye, I disdaine these base and pettie paltries, and may my fortune iumpe with my resolution, ye shal heare my boies with in a day or two, that I will accomplish a rare stratagem indeed, of more value then forty of yours, and when it is done shall cary some credit with it.

They wondring at his wordes desired to see the successe of them, and so dispersing themselues as they were accustomed, left this frolicke fellow pondering on his affaires. A Cittizens house in London, which he had diligently eied and aimed at for a fortnights space, was the place wherein he must performe this exploit, and hauing learned one of the seruant maids name of the house, as also where shee was borne and her kindred: Vpon a Sonday in the afternone, when it was her turne to attend on her maister and mistres to the garden in Finsbury fields, to regard the children while they sported about, this craftie mate hauing dulie watched their comming forth, and seeing that they intended to goe downe S. Laurence lane, stepped before them, euer casting an eie back, least they should turn some contrarie way. But their following still fitting his owne desire, neere vnto the Conduit in Alderman-bury, hee crossed the waye and came vnto the maid, and kissing her said: Cosen Margaret, I am very glad to see you well, my vnckle your father, and all your friends in the Countrey are in good health God be praised. The Maid hearing herselfe named, and not knowing the man, modestly blushed, which hee perceiuing, helde way on with her amongst her fellowe Apprentises, and thus began a gaine. I see Cosen you knowe mee not, and I doe not greatlie blame you, it is so long since you came forth of the

Countrey: but I am such a ones sonne, naming her Vncle right, and his sonnes name, which shee very well remembred, but had not seene him in eleuen yeares. Then taking foorth a bowed groat, and an olde pennie bowed, hee gaue it her as being sent from her Vncle and Aunt, whome hee tearmed to bee his Father and Mother: Withall (quoth hee) I haue a Gammon of bacon and a Cheese from my Vncle your Father, which are sent to your Maister and Mistresse, which I receiued of the Carrier, because my Vncle enioynde mee to deliuer them, when I must intreat your mistres, that at Whitsontide next shee will giue you leaue to come downe into the Countrey. The Maide thinking simplie all hee sayd was true, and as they so farre from their parents, are not onely glad to heare of their welfare, but also reioyce to see any of their kindred: so this poore Maid, well knowing her Vncle had a sonne so named as hee called himselfe, and thinking from a boy, (as he was at her leauing the Countrey) hee was now growen such a proper handsome young man, was not a little ioyfull to see him: beside, shee seemed proud that her kinsman was so neat a youth, and so shee helde on questioning with him about her friendes: hee soothing each matter so cunningly, as the maide was confidently perswaded of him. In this time, one of the children stepped to her mother and sayd, Our marget (mother) hath a fine coosen

come out of the Country, and he hath a Cheese for my Father and you: whereon shee looking backe, said: maid, is that your kinsman? Yea forsooth mistres, quoth shee, my Vncles son, whome I left a litle one when I came forth of the countrey.

The wily Treacher, beeing maister of his trade, woulde not let slippe this opportunitie, but courteously stepping to the Mistresse, (who louing her maid well, because indeed shee had beene a very good seruant, and from her first comming to London had dwelt with her, tould her husband thereof) coyned such a smooth tale vnto them both, fronting it with the Gammon of Bacon and the Cheese sent from their maides Father, and hoping they would giue her leaue at Whitsontide to visite the countrey, as they with verie kinde wordes entertained him, inuiting him the next night to supper, when he promised to bring with him the Gammon of bacon and the cheese. Then framing an excuse of certaine busines in the town, for that time hee tooke his leaue of the Maister and Mistresse, and his newe Cosen Magaret, who gaue manie a looke after him (poore wench) as hee went, ioying in her thoughts to haue such a kinseman.

On the morrow hee prepared a good Gammon of bacon, which he closed vp in a soiled linnen cloath, and sewed an old card vpon it, whereon he wrote a superscription vnto the Maister of the

Maide, and at what signe it was to be deliuered, and afterward scraped some of the letters halfe out, that it might seeme they had bene rubd out in the carriage. A good Cheese hee prepared likewise, with inscription accordingly on it, that it could not bee discerned, but that some vnskilfull writer in the Country had done it, both by the grosse proportiō of the letters, as also the bad Ortographie which amongst plaine husband-men is verie common, in that they haue no better instruction. So hiring a Porter to carrie them betweene fve and sixe in the euening hee comes to the Cittizens house, and entring the shop, receiues them of the Porter, whome the honest meaning Cittizen woulde haue paied for his paines, but this his maids new-found Cosen saide hee was satisfied alreadie, and so straining courtesie would not permit him: well, vp are carried the Bacon and the Cheese, where God knowes, Margaret was not a little busie, to haue all things fine and neat against her Cosens comming vp, her mistresse likewise, (as one well affecting her seruauant) had prouided verie good cheere, set all her plate on the Cubboorde for shewe, and beautified the house with Cusheons, Carpets, stools and other deuises of needle worke, as at such times diuers will doo, to haue the better report made of their credite amongst their seruants friends in the Countrey, albeit at this time (God wot) it turned to their

owne after-sorrowing. The maister of the house, to delay the time while Supper was readie, hee likewise shewes this dissembler his shop, who seeing thinges fadge so pat to his purpose, could question of this sort, and that wel enough I warrant you, to discerne the best from the worst and their appointed places, purposing a further reach then the honest Cittizen dreamed of: and to bee plaine with ye, such was this occupiers trade, as though I may not name it, yet thus much I dare vtter, that the worst thing he could carry away, was worth about 20 nobles, because hee dealt altogether in whole and great sale, which made this companion forge this kindred and acquaintance, for an hundred pound or twaine was the very least hee aimed at. At length the mistresse sendes worde supper is on the Table, where vpon vppe hee conducts his guest, and after diuers welcomes, as also thankes for the Cheese and Bacon: To the Table they sit, where let it suffice, hee wanted no ordinarie good fare, wine and other knackes, beside much talke of the Countrey, how much his friendes were beholding for his Cosen Margaret, to whome by her mistresse leaue hee dranke twise or thrise, and shee poore soule dooing the like againe to him with remembrance of her Father and other kindred, which he still smoothed very cunningly. Countenance of talke made them careles of the time, which slipped from them

faster then they were aware of, nor did the deceiuer hasten his departing, because he expected what indeed followed, which was, that being past tenne of the clocke, and hee feigning his lodging to be at Saint *Gyles* in the field, was intreated both by the good man and his wife, to take a bed there for that night, for fashion sake (though verie glad of this offer) hee said he would not trouble them, but giuing thẽ many thanks, would to his lodging though it were further. But woonderfull it was to see howe earnest the honest Citizen and his wife laboured to perswade him, that was more willing to stay then they could bee to bidde him, and what dissembled willingnesse of departure hee vsed on the other side, to couer the secret villanie intended. Well, at the length, with much ado, he is contented to stay, when *Margaret* and her mistresse presently stirred to make ready his bed, which the more to the honest mans hard hap, but all the better for this artificiall Conny-catcher, was in the same rounge where they supped, being commonly called their hall, and there indeede stode a verie faire bed, as in such sightly rounes it may easily bee thought, Citizens vse not to haue anie thing meane or simple. The mistresse, least her guest shoulde imagine she disturbed him, suffered all the plate to stand still on the cupbord: and when she perceiued his bed was warmed, and euery thing els according to her mind, she and her



husband bidding him good night: tooke themselves to their chamber, which was on the same floore, but inward, hauing another chamber betweene them and the hall, where the maides and children had their lodging. So desiring him to call for anything hee wanted, and charging *Margaret* to looke it should be so, to bed are they gone: when the Apprentises hauing brought vp the keyes of the street dore, and left them in their maisters chamber as they were woont to do, after they had said praiers, their euening exercise, to bed go they likewise, which was in a Garret backward ouer their maisters chamber. None are nowe vp but poore *Margaret* and her counterfeit coosen, whom she loth to offend with long talke, because it waxed late: after some fewe more speeches, about their parentes and friendes in the countrey, she seeing him laid in bed, and all such thinges by hym as shee deemed needfull, with a low courtesie I warrant ye, commits him to his quiet, and so went to bed to her fellowes the maidseruantes. Well did this hypocrite perceiue the keyes of the doores carried into the good mans chamber, whereof he being not a little glad, thought now they would imagine all things sure, and therefore doubtlesse sleep the sounder: as for the keyes, hee needed no helpe of them, because such as he go neuer unprouided of instrumèts fitting their trade, and so at this time was this notable trecher. In the

dead time of the night, when sound sleep makes y<sup>e</sup> eare vnapt to heare the verie least noyse, he forsaketh his bed, & hauing gotten all the plate bound vp together in his cloke, goeth downe into the shop, where well remembering both the place and percels, maketh vp his pack with some twenty pounds-worth of goods more. Then setting to his engin, he getteth the doore off the hindges, and being foorth, lifteth close to againe, and so departes, meeting within a dozen paces, three or foure of his companions that lurked therabouts for the purpose. Their word for knowing ech other, as is said, was *Quest*, and this villaines comfortable newes to them, was *Twag*, signifying he had sped: ech takes a fleece for easier carriage, and so away to *Bell brow*, which, as I haue heard is as they interpret it, the house of a theefe receiuer, without which they can do nothing, and this house with an apt porter to it, stands redie for them all houres of the night: too many such are there in London, the maisters whereof beare countenance of honest substantiall men, but all their liuing is gotten in this order, the end of such (though they scape awhile) will be sayling westward in a Cart to Tiborn. Imagine these villaines there in their iollitie, the one reporting point by point his cunning deceit, and the other (fitting his humour) extolling the deede with no meane commendations. But returning to the honest Citizen, who

finding in the morning how deerly he paid for a gammon of Bacon, and a cheese, and how his kinde courtesie was thus trecherously requited: blames the poore maid, as innocent herein as himselfe, and imprisoning her, thinking so to regaine his owne: grieffe with ill cherishing there shortens her life: And thus ensueth one hard hap vpon another, to the great grieffe both of maister and mistresse, when the trueth was knowne, that they so wronged their honest seruant: how it may forewarne others, I leaue to your own opinions, that see what extraordinary deuises are now adayes, to beguile the simple and honest liberall minded.

*Of a notable knaue, who for his cunning deceiuing a Gentleman of his purse: scorned the name of a Conny-catcher, and woulde needes be termed a Foole-taker, as master and beginner of that new found Arte.*

A CREW of these wicked companions being one day met together in Pauls Church, (as that is a vsuall place of their assembly, both to determine on their driftes, as also to speede of manie a bootie) seeing no likelihood of a good afternoone, so they tearme it either forenoone or after, when ought is to be done: some dispersed themselues to the plaies, other to the bowling Allies, and not past two or three stayed in the

Church. Quoth on of them, I haue vowed not to depart but something or other Ile haue before I go: my minde giues me, that this place yet will yeelde vs all our suppers this night, the other holding like opinion with him there likewise walked vp and downe, looking when occasion would serue for some Cash. At length they espied a Gentleman toward the lawe entring in at the litle North doore, and a countrey Clyent going with him in very hard talke, the Gentleman holding his gowne open with his armes on either side as verie manie doe, gaue sight of a faire purple veluet purse, which was halfe put vnder his girdle: whiche I warrant you the resolute fellowe that would not depart without some thing, had quickly espied. A game, qd. he to his fellows, marke the stand, and so separating themselues walked aloofe, the Gentleman going to the nether steppe of the staires that ascend vp into the Quire, and there he walked still with his clyent. Oft this crew of mates met together, and said there was no hope of nipping the boung because he held open his gowne so wide, and walked in such an open place. Base knaues, quoth the frolicke fellowe, if I say I will haue it, I must haue it, though hee that owes it had sworne the contrarie. Then looking aside, hee spied his trugge or queane comming vp the Church: Away, quoth he to the other, go looke you for some other purchase, this wench and I are

sufficient for this. They go, he lessons the drab in this sorte, that shee should to the Gentleman, whose name shee verie well knew, in that shee had holpe to coosen him once before, & pretēding to be sent to him frō one he was wel acquainted with for his counsell, shoulde giue him his fee for auoiding suspition, and so frame some wrong done her, as well inough she coulde: when her mate (taking occasion as it serued) would worke the meane, she should strike, & so they both preuaile. The queane well inured with such courses, because she was one of y<sup>e</sup> most skilfull in that profession, walked vp and downe alone in the Gentlemans sight, that he might discern shee staid to speake with him, and as he turned too-ward her, he saw her take money out of her purse, whereby he gathered some benefite was toward him: which made him the sooner dispatch his other clyent, when shee stepping to him, tolde such a tale of commendations from his verie friend, that had sent her to him as shee said, that hee entertained her very kindly, and giuing him his fee, which before her face he put vp into his purse, and thrust it vnder his girdle againe: she proceeded to a verie sound discourse, whereto he listened with no litle attention. The time seruing fit for the fellows purpose, he came behind the Gentleman, and as many times one friend will familiarly with another, clap his handes ouer his

eyes to make him guesse who he is, so did this companion, holding his handes fast ouer the Gentlemans eyes, saide: who am I? twise or thrise, in whiche time the drab had gotten the purse and put it vp. The Gentleman thinking it had beene some merrie friend of his, reckened the names of three or foure, when letting him go, the craftie knaue dissembling a bashfull shame of what he had done, said: By my troth sir I crie ye mercy, as I came in at the Church doore, I tooke ye for such a one (naming a man) a verie friend of mine, whome you very much resemble: I beseech ye be not angrie, it was verie boldly done of me, but in penance of my fault, so please ye to accept it, I will bestow a gallon or two of wine on ye, and so laboured him earnestly to go with him to the tauerne, still alledging his sorrow for mistaking him. The Gentleman litle suspecting how who am I had handled him, seeing how sorie he was, and seeming to be a man of no such base condition: tooke all in good part, saying: No harme sir, to take one for another, a fault wherein any man may easily erre, and so excusing the acceptation of his wine, because he was busie there with a Gentlewoman his friend: the Trecher with courtesie departed, and the drab (hauing what shee would) shortning her tale, he desiring her to com to his chamber the next morning, went to the place where her copes-mate & she met, and not long

after, diuers other of the crew, who hearing in what manner this act was performed, smiled a good threat, that she had both got the Gentlemans purse, her owne money againe, and his aduise for iust no thing. He that had done this tall exploit, in a place so open in view, so hardly to be com by, and on a man that made no mean esteeme of his wit: bids his fellowes keepe the woorthlesse name of a Conny-catcher to themselves: for hee henceforth would be tearmed a Foole-taker, and such as could imitate this quaint example of his, (which hee would set downe as an entrance into that art) should not thinke scorne to become his schollers.

Night drawing on apace, the Gentleman returned home, not all this while missing his purse, but heeing set at supper, his wife intreated a pint of Secke, which hee minding to send for: drewe to his purse, and seeing it gone, what strange lookes (beside sighs) were between him and his wife, I leaue to your supposing, and blame them not: for as I haue heard, there was seven pound in Golde, beside thirty shillings and odde white money in the purse. But in the midst of his grieffe, hee remembered him that said, who am I? Wherewith hee brake fourth into a great laughter, the cause whereof his wife heeing desirous to know, hee declared all that passed betweene him and the deceiver, as also how some afterward the queene abreviated her discourse and followed: so by troth

wife (quoth he) betweene who am I and the drab, my purse is gone: let his losse teach others to looke better to theirs.

*An other Tale of a coosening companion, who would needs trie his cunning in this new inuented art, and how by his knauery (at one instant) he beguiled half a dozen and more.*

OF late time there hath a certaine base kind of trade been vsed, who though diuers poor men, & doubtles honest apply themselues to, only to relieue their need: yet are there some notorious varlets do the same, beeing compacted with such kind of people, as this present treatise manifesteth to the worlde, and what with outward simplicity on the one side, and cunning close trechery on the other, diuers honest Cittizens and day-labouring men, that resort to such places as I am to speake of, onely for recreation as opportunity serueth, haue bin of late sundry times deceiued of their purses. This trade, or rather vnsufferable loytring qualitie, in singing of Ballets, and songs at the doores of such houses where plaies are vsed, as also in open markets and other places of this Cittie, where is most resort: which is nothing els but a sly fetch to draw many together, who listning vnto an harmelesse dittie, after warde walke home to their houses with heauie hearts: from such as



are heereof true witnesses to their cost, do I deliuer this example. A subtil fellow, belike imboldned by acquaintance with the former deceit, or els beeing but a beginner to practise the same, calling certaine of his companions together, would try whether he could attaine to be maister of his art or no, by taking a great many of fools with one traine. But let his intent and what els beside, remaine to abide the censure after ye mater is heard, & com to Gracious street, wher this villanous pranke was performed. A roging mate, & such another with him, were there got vpō a stal singing of balets which belike was som prety toy, for very many gathered about to heare it, & diuers buying, as their affections serued, drew to their purses & paid the singers for thẽ. The slye mate and his fellowes, who were dispersed among them that stode to heare the songes: well noted where euerie man that bought, put vp his purse againe, and to such as would not buy, counterfeit warning was sundrie times giuen by the rogue and his associate, to beware of the cut pursse, and looke to their purses, which made them often feel where their purses were, either in sleeue, hose, or at girdle, to know whether they were safe or no. Thus the craftie copesmates were acquainted with what they most desired, and as they were scattered, by shouldring, thrusting, feigning to let fall something, and other wilie tricks fit for their

purpose: heere one lost his purse, there another had his pocket pickt, and to say all in briefe, at one instant, vpon the complaint of one or two that sawe their purses were gone, eight more in the same companie, found themselues in like predicament. Some angrie, others sorrowfull, and all greatly discontented, looking about them, knewe not who to suspect or challenge, in that the villaines themselues that had thus beguiled them, made shewe that they had sustained like losse. But one angrie fellow, more impacient then al the rest, he falles vpon the ballade singer, and beating him with his fists well faoueredly, sayes, if he had not listened his singing, he had not lost his purse, and therefore woulde not be other wise perswaded, but that they two and the cutpurses were compacted together. The rest that had lost their purses likewise, and saw that so may complaine together: they iumpe in opinion with the other fellow, & begin to tug & hale the ballad singers, when one after one, the false knaues began to shrinke awaie with y<sup>e</sup> purses. By means of some officer then being there presēt, the two roges wer had before a Iustice, and vpon his discrete examination made, it was found, that they and the Cutpurses were compacted together, and that by this vnsuspected villanie, they had deceiued many. The fine Foole-taker himselve, with one or two more of that companie, was not long after apprehended:

when I doubt not but they had their reward answerable to their deservings: for I heare of their journey westward, but not of their returne: let this forewarne those that listen singing in the streets.

*Of a craftie mate, that brought two young men vnto a Tauerne, where departing with a Cup, he left them to pay both for the wine and Cup.*

A FRIEND of mine sent me this note, and assuring me the truth therof, I thoght necessary to set it downe amongst the rest: both for the honest simplicitie on the one side and most cunning knauerye vsed on the other, and thus it was. Two young men of familiar acquaintaunce, who delighted much in musicke, because themselves therein were somewhat expert, as on the virginals, Bandora, Lute and such like: were one euening at a common Inne of this town (as I haue heard) where the one of them shewed his skill on the Virginals, to the no little contentment of the hearers. Nowe as diuers guests of the house came into the room to listen, so among the rest entered an artificiall Conny-catcher, who as occasion serued, in the time of ceissing betweene the seueral toyes and fancies hee plaid: very much commended his cunning, quicke hand, and such qualities praiseworthy in such a professour. The time being come, when these young men craued leaue to depart, this politique varlet stepping to

them, desired that they would accept a quart of wine at his hand, which he would most gladlie he would bestow vpon them: besides, if it liked him that played on the Virginals to instruct, he would helpe him to so good a place, as happily might aduantage him for euer. These kind words, deliuered with such honest outward shew, caused the yoong men, whose thoughts were free from any other opinion, than to be as truely and plainly dealt withall as themselues meant, accepted his offer, because he that played on the Virginalles was desirous to haue some good place of seruice, and here vpon to the Tauerne they goe, and being set, the wily companion calleth for two pintes of wine, a pinte of white, and a pinte of claret, casting his cloake vpon the Table, and failing to his former communication of preferring the yoong man. The wine is brought, and two cuppes withall, as is the vsuall manner: when drinking to them of the one pinte, they pledge him, not vnthankfull for his gentlenesse. After some time spent in talke, and as he perceiued fit for his purpose, hee takes the other cup, and tastes the other pinte of wine: wherewith he finding fault, that it dranke somewhat harde, sayde, that Rose-water and Sugar would do no harme, whereupon he leaues his seate, saying he was well acquainted with one of the seruants of the house, of whom he could haue two pennyworth of Rose-water for a peny, and so

of Sugar likewise, wherefore he would step to the barre vnto him, so taking the cup in his hand, he did, the yong men neuer thinking on any such treachery as ensued, in that he seemed an honest man, and beside left his cloke lying on the table by them. No more returnes the yonker with Rose-water and Sugar, but stepping out of doores, vn-seene of any, goes away roundly with the cup. The yong men not a little wondering at his long tarrying, by the comming of the seruants to see what they wanted, who tooke no regarde of his sudden departure, find themselues there left, not onelie to pay for the wine, but for the Cuppe also, beeing rashly supposed by the maister and his seruantes to be copartners with the treacherous villaine: but their honest behauiour well knowen, as also their simplicitie too much abused well witnessed their innocencie: notwithstanding they were faine to pay for the cuppe, as afterward they did, hauing nothing towards their charge but a threede bare cloake not woorth two shillings. Take heede howe you drinke wine with any such companions.

*Of an honest housholder which was cunningly deceyued by a subtile companion, that came to hire a Chamber for his Maister.*

**N**OT farre from Charing crosse dwelleth an honest yong man, who beeing not long since married, and hauing more roomes in his

house than himselfe occupyeth, eyther for terme time, or the Court lying so neere, as diuers do, to make a reasonable commoditie, and to ease house-rent, which (as the worlde goeth now is none of the cheapest) letteth foorth a chamber or two, according as it may be spared. In an euening but a while since, came one in the manner of a Seruing man to this man and his wife, and he must needs haue a Chamber for his Maister, offering so largely, as the bargaine was soone concluded betweene them. His intent was to haue fingered some bootie in the house, as by the sequelle it may be likeliest gathered: but belike no fit thing lying abroad, or hee better regarded then happily he woulde be, his expectation that way was frustrate: yet as a resolute Conny-catcher indeede, that scorneth to attempt without some successe, and rather will pray vpon small commodity, then returne to his fellows disgraced with a lost labour: he summons his wits together, and by a smooth tale ouer-reached both the man and his wife. He tels them, that his Maister was a captaine late come from the Sea, and had costly apparell to bring thither, which for more easie carriage, he entreats them lend him a sheet to binde it vp in: they suspecting no ill, because hee required their boy should goe with him to helpe him cary the stuffe, the good wife steppes vnto her Chest, where her linnen lay finelic sweetned with

Roseleaues and Lauender, and lends him a very good sheet in deed.

This successe made him bolde to venter a little further, and then he tels them, his Maister had a great deal of broken Sugar, and fine spices that lay negligently abroad in his lodging as it was brought from the Shippe, all which hee was assured his Maister would bestow on them, so hee could deuise howe to get it brought thither.

These liberall promises, preuailing with them that lightlie beleued, and withall were somewhat couetous of the Sugar and spices: The woman demaunded if a couple of pillow-beeres would not serue to bring the Sugar and spices in? Yes marry (quoth hee) so the Sugar may best be kept by it selfe, and the spices by themselues. And (quoth hee) because there are many craftie knaues abroad, (greeuing that any should bee craftier then himselfe) and in the euening the linnen might quicklie bee snatched from the boy: For the more safety, hee would carry the sheet and pillow-beeres himselfe, and within an hower or little more, returne with the boye againe, because he would haue all things ready before his Maister came, who (as hee said) was attending on the Councill at the court. The man and his wife crediting his smooth speeches, sends their boy with him, and so along toward Iuie-bridge goe they. The Conny-catcher

seeing himselfe at free libertie, that hee had gotten a very good sheet, and two fine pillow-beeres: steps to the wall, as though he would make water, bidding the boy go faire and softlie on before. The boy doubting nothing, did as hee willed him, when presently he stept into some house hard by fit to entertaine him: and neuer since was hee, his Maister, the Sugar, spices, or the linnen heard off. Manie haue beene in this manner deceiued, as I heare, let this then giue them warning to beware of any such vnprofitable guests.

*Of one that came to buy a knife, and made first prooffe of his trade on him that solde it.*

ONE of the Conning Nippes about the Towne, came vnto a poore Cutler to haue a Cuttle made according vnto his owne mind, and not about three inches would hee haue both the knife and the haft in length: yet of such pure mettall, as possible may be. Albeit the poore man neuer made the like before, yet being promised foure times the value of his stuffe and paines, he was contented to doe this, and the day beeing come that hee should deliuer it, the partie came, who liking it exceedingly, gaue him the mony promised, which the poore man gladly put vp into his purse, that hung at a button hole of his wascoat before his brest smiling that he was so wel paid for



so small a trifle. The partie perceiuing his merry countenance, and imagining hee gest for what purpose the knife was, sayde, honest man, whereat smile you? By my troth sir (quoth the Cutler) I smile at your knife, because I neuer made one so little before: and were it not offensive vnto you, I would request to knowe to what vse you will put it too: Wilt thou keepe my counsaile (quoth the Nip?) yea on mine honestie (quoth the Cutler.) Then hearken in thy eare saide the Nip, and so rounding with him, cut the poore mans purse that houg at his bosome, he neuer feeling when hee did it: with this knife (quoth the Nippe) meane I to cut a purse: marry GOD forbid (quoth the Cutler) I cannot thinke you to be such a kind of man, I see you loue to iest, and so they parted.

The poore man, not so wise as to remember hys owne purse, when by such a warning he might haue taken the offendour dooing the deede, but rather proud (as it were) that his money was so easily earned: walkes to the Alehouse, which was within a house or two of his owne, and finding there three or foure of his neighbors, with whome hee began to iest very pleasantly: swears by cocke and pie hee would spend a whole groat vppon them, for hee had gotten it and more, cleerly by a good bargaine that morning.

Though it was no maruel to see him so liberall, because indeede hee was a good companion: yet

they were loth to put him vnto such cost, notwithstanding he would needs doe it, and so farre as promise stretcht, was presently fild in and set vpon the boord. In the drinking time often he wisht to meet with more such customers as hee had done that morning, and commended him for a verie honest Gentleman I warraunt you. At length, when the reckoning was to be paied, hee drawes to his purse, where finding nothing left but a peece of the string in the button hole: I leaue to your iudgement, whether hee was now as sorie as he was merrie before.

Blancke and all amort sits the poore Cutler, and with suche a pittifull countenaunce, as his neighbours did not a little admire his solemn alteration, & desirous to know the cause thereof, from point to point he discourseth the whole maner of the tragedie, neuer naming his new customer, but with such a farre fetcht sigh, as soule and body would haue parted in sunder. And in midst of all his grieffe, he brake forth into these tearmes. Ile beleue a man the better by his worde while I knowe him, the knife was bought to cut a purse indeed, and I thank hym for it he made the first prooue of the edge with me. The neighbours greewing for his losse, yet smiling at his folly to be so ouerreached, were faine to pay the groat the cutler called in, because he had no other money about him, and spent as much more beside to driue away his heauinesse.

This tale, because it was somewhat misreported before, vpon talke had with the poore Cutler himsele, is set downe now in true forme and maner howe it was done, therefore is there no offence offered, when by better consideration, a thing may be enlarged or amended, or at least the note be better confirmed. Let the poore Cutlers mishap example others, that they brag not ouer hastily of gaine easily gotten, least they chance to pay as deerely for it, as he did.

*Of a yoong Nip that cunningly beguiled an antient professor of that trade, and his queane with hym, at a play.*

A GOOD fellowe that was newly entered into the nipping craft, and had not as yet attained to any acquaintance with ye chiefe and cunning maisters of that trade: In the Christmas holydaies last came to see a play at the Bull within Bishops gate, there to take his benefit as time and place would permit him. Not long had hee staid in the prease, but he had gotten a yoong mans purse out of his pocket, which when he had, hee stepped into the stable to take out the mony, and to conuey away the purse. But looking on his commoditie, he found nothing therin but white counters, a thimble and a broken threepence, which belike the fellowe that ought it, had done of purpose to

deceiue the cutpurse withall, or else had plaid at the cardes for counters, and so carried his winnings about him till his next sitting to play. Somewhat displeas'd to be so ouertaken, he looked aside, and spied a lustie youth entring at the doore, and his drab with him: this fellow he had heard to be one of the finest Nippers about the towne, and euer carried his queane with him, for conueiance when the stratageme was performed: he puts vp the counters into the purse againe, and follows close to see some peece of their seruice. Among a companie of seemely men was this lustie companion and hys minion gotten, where both they might best beholde the play, and worke for aduantage, and euer this yoong Nip was next to him, to marke when he should attempt any exploit, standing as it were more then halfe betweene the cunning Nip and his drab, onely to learne some part of their skill. In short time the deed was performed, but how, the yoong Nip could not easily discerne, onely he felt him shift his hand toward his Trug, to conuey the purse to her, but she being somewhat mindfull of the play, because a merriment was then on the stage, gaue no regard: whereby thinking hee had puld her by the coat, he twitcht the yoong Nip by the cloke, who taking aduantage of this offer, put downe his hand and receiued the purse of him. Then counting it discourtesie to let him loose all his labour, he softly

pluckt the queane by the coate, which she feeling, and imagining it had beene her companions hand: receiued of him the first purse with the white counters in it. Then fearing least his stay should hinder him, and seeing the other intended to haue more purses ere he departed: away goes the yoong Nip with the purse he got so easily, wherin (as I haue heard) was xxxvii. shillings, and odde mony, which did so much content him, as that he had beguiled so ancient a stander in that profession. What the other thought when he found the purse, and could not guesse how hee was coosened: I leaue to your censures, onely this makes me smile, that one false knaue can beguile another, whiche biddes honest men looke the better to their purses.

*How a Gentleman was craftily deceiued of a Chaîne of Golde and his pursse, in Paules Church in London.*

A GENTLEMĀ of the Cuntrye, who (as I haue heard since the time of his mishap, wherof I am now to speake) had about halfe a yeer before buried his wife & belike thinking well of some other Gentlewomā, whom he ment to make account of as his second choise: vpō good hope or otherwise perswaded, he came vp to London to prouide himselfe of such necessaries as the Cuntry

is not vsually stored withall. Besides, silkes, veluets, cambrickes and such like, he bought a Chaine of Golde that cost him lvij. pounds and odde money, wher of because he would haue the mayden-head or first wearing himselfe, he presently put it on in the Gold smiths shop, and so walked therwith about London as his occasions serued. But let not the Gentleman be offended, who if this Booke come to his handes, can best auouch the trueth of this discourse, if here by the way I blame his rash pride, or simple credulitie: for betweene the one and other, the Chaine he paide so deere for about ten of the clock in the morning, the Cunny catchers the same day ere night shared amongst them, a matter wheratt he may well greeue, and I be sorie, in respect he is my very good freend: but to the purpose. This Gentleman walking in Paules, with his Chaine faire glittering about his necke, talking with his man about some busines: was well viewed and regarded by a crewe of Cony catchers, whose teeth watred at his goodly Chaine, yet knew not how to come by it hanging as it did, and therefore entred into secret conspiracy among themselues, if they could not come by all the Chain, yet how they might make it lighter by halfe a score poundes at the least. Still had they their eyes on the honest Gentleman, who little douted any such treason intended againste his so late bought bargaine: and

they hauing laid their plot, eche one to be assistant in this enterprise, sawe when the Gentleman dismissed his seruant, to go about such affaires as he had appointed him, him selfe still walking there vp and downe the middle Isle. One of these mates, that stode most on his cunning in these exploytes, folowed the seruingman foorth of the Church calling him by diuers names, as Iohn, Thomas, William, &c. as though he had knowne his right name, but could not hit on it: which whether he did or no I know not, but well I wot the seruingmã turned back againe, and seeing him that called him seemed a Gentleman, booted and cloaked after the newest fashion, came with his hat in his hand to him, saying: Sir, do ye call me? Marie do I my freend quoth the other, doost not thou serue such a Gentleman? and named one as himselfe pleased. No truely Sir, answered the seruingman, I knowe not any such Gentleman as you speake of. By my troth replied the Connycatcher, I am assured I knew thee and thy Master, though now I cannot suddenly remember my selfe. The seruingman fearing no harme, yet fitting the humour of this trecherous companion, tolde right his Masters name whome he serued, and that his Master was euen then walking in Paules. O Gods will (quoth the Cony catcher, repeating his masters name) a very honest Gentleman, of such a place is he not? naming a shire of the Country: for he must knowe

both name, Country and somtimes what Gentlemen dwell neere the partie that is to be ouer reached, ere he can proceed. No in deed Sir (answered the seruingman, with such reuerence as it had beene to an honest Gentlemã in deed) my Master is of such a place, a mile from such a Towne, and hard by such a knights house: by which report the deceiuer was halfe instructed, because though he was ignorant of the fellows Master, yet well he knew the Country, and the knight named. So crauing pardon that he had mistaken him, he returnes againe into the Church, and the seruingman trudgeth about his assigned busines. Beeing come to the rest of the crewe, he appointes one of them (whome he knewe to be expert in deed) to take this matter in hand, for him selfe might not do it, least the seruingman should return and knowe him, he schooled the rest likewise what euery man should do when the pinch came, and changing his cloke with one of his fellowes, walked by him selfe attending the feate: and euery one being as ready, the apointed fellow makes his sallye foorth, and comming to the Gentleman, calling him by his name, giues him the courtesie and embrace, likewise thanking him for good cheere he had at his house, which he did with such seemly behaiour and protestatiõ, as the Gentleman (thinking the other to be no lesse) vsed like action of kindenes to him. Now as Country



Gentlemen haue many visiters both with neere dwelling neighbours, and freends that iourney from farre, whome they can hardly remember, but some principall one that serues as countenance to the other: so he not discrediting the cunning mates woordes, who still at euery point alleaged his kinred to the knight neighbour to the Gentleman, which the poor seruing man had (doubting no ill) reuealed before, and that both there and at his own house in hawking time with that knight and other Gentlemen of the Cuntrey he had liberally tasted his kindnes: desiring pardon that he had forgotten him, and offered him the curtesie of the Citie. The Conny catcher excused him selfe for that time, saying, at their next meeting he would bestow it on him. Then seeming to haue espyed his Chaine, and commending the fairenes and woorkmanship thereof: sayes, I pray ye sir take a litle coūsel of a freend, it may be you will returne thanks for it. I wonder quoth he, you dare weare such a costly Iewell so open in sight, which is euen but a baite to entice bad men to aduenture time and place for it, and nowhere sooner then in this Cittie, where (I may say to you) are such a number of Connycatchers, Cossoners and such like, that a man can scarcely keep any thing from them, they haue so many reaches and sleights to beguile withall: which a very especiall freend of mine found too true not many daies

since. Heervypon he tolde a very solemne tale, of villanies and knaueries in his owne profession, wherby he reported his freend had lost a watch of golde: shewing how closely his freende wore it in his bosome, and how strangely it was gotten from him, that the gentleman by that discourse waxed halfe affraide of his Chaine. And giuing him many thanks for this good warning, presently takes the Chaine from about his necke, and tying it vp fast in a handkercher, put it vp into his sleeue, saying. If the Connycatcher get it heere, let him not spare it. Not a little did the tretcher smile in his sleeue, hearing the rash securitie, but in deed simplicitie of the gentleman, and no sooner sawe he it put vp, but presently he counted it sure his owne, by the assistance of his complices, that lay in an ambuscado for the purpose, with embraces and courtesies on either side, the Conny catcher departes, leauing the gentleman walking there still: whereat the crew were not a little offended, that he still kept in the Church, and would not goe abroad. Well, at length (belike remembring some businesse) the Gentleman taking leaue of an other that talked with him, hasted to go forth at the furthest west doore of Paules, which he that had talked with him, and gaue him such counsell perceyuing, hied out of the other doore, and got to the entraunce ere he came forth, the rest following the gentleman at an inch. As hee was stepping out, the other

stept in, and lette fall a keie, hauing his hat so low ouer his eyes, that he could not wel discerne his face, and stooping to take vp the keie, kepte the gentleman from going backward or forward, by reason his legge was ouer the threshold. The foremost Conny-catcher behind, pretending a quarrell vnto him that stooped, rapping out an oath, and drawing his dagger, saide: Doe I meete the villaine? Nay, hee shall not scape mee now, and so made offer to strike him.

The gentleman at his standing vp, seeing it was hee that gaue him so good counsaile, and pretended himselfe his verie friend, but neuer imagining this traine was made for him: stept in his defence, when the other following tript vp his heeles: so that hee and his counsellour were downe together, and two more vppon them, striking with their daggers verie eagerly, marie indeede the gentleman had most of the blowes, and both his handkercher with the chaine, and also his purse with three and fiftie shillinges in it, were taken out of his pocket in this strugling, euen by the man that himselfe defended.

It was maruellous to behold, how not regarding the villanes wordes vttered before in the Church, nor thinking vppon the charge about him (which after hee had thus treacherously lost vnwittingly:) hee stands pacifying them that were not discontented but onely to beguyle him. But they vowing

that they would presently goe for their weapons, & so to the field, tolde the Gentleman he laboured but in vaine, for fight they must and would, and so going downe by Paules Chaine, left the Gentleman made a Conny going vp toward Fleet street, sorry for his new Counsellor and freend, and wishing him good lucke in the fight: which in deede was with nothing but wine pots, for ioy of their late gotten bootie. Neere to Saint Dunstones Church the Gentleman remembred himselfe, and feeling his pocket so light had suddenly more greefe at his hart, than euer happen to him or any man againe. Backe he comes to see if he could espie any of them, but they were farre inough frō him: God send him better happe when he goes next a wooing, and that this his losse may be a warning to others.

*How a cunning knaue got a Truncke well stuffed with linnen and certaine parcelles of plate out of a Cittizens house, and how the Master of the house holpe the deceiuer to carry away his owne goods.*

WITHIN the Cittie of London, dwelleth a worthy man who hath very great dealing in his trade, and his shop very well frequented with Customers: had such a shrewd mischaunce of late by a Conny catcher, as may well serue for an example to others leaste they haue the like. A Cunning villaine, that had long time haunted this

Cittizens house, and gotten many a cheat which he carried away safely: made it his custome when he wanted money, to helpe him selfe euer where he had sped so often, diuers thinges he had which were neuer mist, especially such as appertained to the Cittizens trade, but when anye were found wanting, they could not deuise which way they were gone, so pollitiquelye this fellow alwayes behaued himselfe, well knew he what times of greatest busines this Cittizen had in his trade, and when the shop is most stored with Chapmen: then would he step vp the staires (for there was and is another door to the house besides that which entreth into the shop) and what was next hand came euer away with. One time aboute the rest, in an euening about Candlemas, when daylight shuts in about six of the clock, he watched to do some feate in the house, and seeing the mistresse goe fourth with her maid, the goodman and his folkes very busie in the shop: vp the staires he goes as he was wonte to doo, and lifting vp the latch of the hall portall doore, sawe no body neere to trouble him, when stepping into the next chamber, where the Citizen and his wife vsually lay, at the beds feete there stood a hansom truncke, wherein was very good linnen, a faire gilt salte, two siluer french bowles for wine, two siluer drinking pots, a stone Iugge couered with siluer, and a dosen of siluer spoons. This trũcke he brings to the staires head,

and making fast the doore againe, drawes it downe the stepes so softlye as he could, for it was so bigge and heauy, as he could not easily carry it, hauing it out at the doore, vnseene of any neighbour or any body else, he stood strugling with it to lift it vp on the stall, which by reason of the weight trobled him very much. The goodman comming foorth of his shop, to bid a customer or two far well, made the fellowe affraide he should now be taken for all together: but calling his wittes together to escape if he could, he stood gazing vp at the signe belonging to the house, as though he were desirous to knowe what signe it was: which the Cittizen perceiuing, came to him and asked him what he sought for? I looke for the signe of the blew bell sir, quoth the fellowe, where a gentleman hauing taken a chamber for this tearme time, hath sent me hether with this his Troncke of apparell (quoth the Citizen) I know no such signe in this streete, but in the next (naming it) there is such a one indeede, and there dwelleth one that letteth foorth the chambers to gentlemen. Truely sir quoth the fellowe, thats the house I should goe to, I pray you sir lend me your hand, but to help the Trunke on my back, for I thinking to ease me a while vpon your stall, set it shorte, and now I can hardly get it vp againe. The Citizen not knowing his owne Trunke, but indeede neuer thinking on any such notable deceite: helps him vp with the

Truncke, and so sends him away roundly with his owne goods. When the Truncke was mist, I leaue to your conceits what housholde greefe there was on all sides, especiallye the goodman himselfe, who remembring how hee helpt the fellow vp with a Truncke, perceiued that heereby hee had beguyled himselfe, and loste more then in haste hee should recouer againe. How this may admonish others, I leaue to the iudgement of the indifferent opinion, that see when honest meaning is so craftily beleagerd, as good foresight must be vsed to preuent such daungers.

*How a broker was cunninglie ouer-reached by a craftie a knaue as himselfe, and brought in danger of the Gallowes.*

**I**T hath beene vsed as a common byword, a craftie knaue needeth no Broker, wherby it shoulde appeare that there can hardlie bee a craftier knaue then a Broker. Suspende your iudgements till you haue heard this Discourse ensuing, & then as you please censure both the one and the other.

A Ladie of the Countrie sent vp a seruant whom she might well put in trust, to prouide her of a gowne answerable to such directions as she had geuen him, which was of good price, as may appeare by the outside and lace, wherto doubtles was euery other thing agreeable. For the Tayler had seunteene yardes of the best black satten

could be got for monie, and so much gold lace, beside spangles, as valued thirteene pound, what els was beside I know not, but let it suffice thus much was lost, and therefore let vs to the maner how.

The satten and the lace beeing brought to the Tayler that should make the gown, and spred abroad on the shop boord to be measured, certain good felows of the Conny-catching profession chaunced to goe by, who seeing so rich lace, and so excellent good satten, began to commune with themselues how they might make some purchase of what they had seene: and quickly it was to be done or not at all. As euer in a crewe of this qualitie, there is some one more ingenious and politick then the rest, or at leastwise that couets to make himselfe more famous then the rest, so this instant was there one in this companie that did swear his cunning should deepelie deceiue him, but he would haue both the lace and satten. When hauing layd the plot with his companions, how and which way their helpe might stand him in stead, this way they proceeded.

Wel noted they the seruingman that stood in the shop with the Tailer, and gathered by his diligent attendance, that he had some charge of the gowne there to be made, wherefore by him must they worke their trecherie intended, and vse him as an instrument to beguile himselfe. One of them sitting on a seate neere the Tailers stal, could easilie



heare the talke that passed between the seruingman and the Tayler, where among other communication, it was concluded that the gowne should be made of the selfesame fashion in euery poynt, as another Ladies was who then lay in the Citie, and that measure being taken by her, the same would fitlie serue the Lady for whom the gown was to be made. Now the seruingman intended to go speake with the Ladie, and vppon a token agreed betweene them (which he careleslie spake so lowd, that the Conny-catcher heard it) hee would as her leysure serued, certifie the Tayler, and hee shoulde bring the stuffe with him, to haue the Ladies opinion both of the one and the other.

The seruingman being gone about his affaires, the subtil mate that had listned to al their talke, acquaints his felows both with the determination and token appointed for the Tailers comming to y<sup>e</sup> Lady. The guid and leader to al the rest for villanie, though there was no one but was better skilde in such matters then honestie: he appoints that one of them should go to the tauern, which was not farre off, and laying two fagots on the fire in a roome by himselfe, and a quart of wine filled for countenance of the trecherie: another of that crue should geue attendance on him, as if he were his master, being bareheaded, and Sir, humblie answering at euery worde. To the tauern goes this counterfet gentleman, and his seruant waiting

on him, where euery thing was performed as is before rehearsed. When the master knaue calling the drawer, demanded if there dwelt neere at hand a skilful Tayler, that could make a suite of veluet for himselfe, mary it was to be done with very great speed.

The Drawer named the Tayler that wee nowe speake of, and vpon the drawers commending his cunning, the man in all hast was sent for to a gentleman, for whom he must make a sute of veluet foorthwith. Vpon talke had of the stuffe, how much was to be bought of euery thing appertayning thereto: hee must immediatly take measure of this counterfette gentleman, because hee knewe not when to returne that way againe: afterward they woulde goe to the Mercers.

As the Tayler was taking measure on him bare headed, as if he had been a substantiall gentleman indeede, the craftie mate had cunningly gotten his purse out of his pocket, at the one string whereof was fastened a little key, and at the other his signet ring: This bootie he was sure of alreadie, whether he should get any thing els or no of the mischife intended, stepping to the window he cuts the ring from the purse, and by his supposed man (rounding him in the eare) sends it to the plot-layer of this knauerie, minding to trayne the tayler along with him, as it were to the mercers, while he the mean time took order for y<sup>e</sup> other matter.

Afterwarde speaking alowd to his man, Sirrha, quoth he, dispatch what I bad you, and about foure of the clock meete me in Paules, by that time I hope the Tayler and I shal haue dispatcht. To Cheapside goeth the honest Tailer with this notorious dissembler, not missing his purse for the space of two houres after, in lesse then halfe which time the satten and golde lace was gotten likewise by the other villaine from the Taylers house in this order.

Being sure the Tayler should be kept absent, hee sends another mate home to his house, who abused his seruants with this deuise: That the Ladies man had met their master abroad, and had him to the other Ladie to take measure of her, and lest they should delay the time too long, hee was sent for the satten and lace, declaring the token appointed, and withall geuing their masters signet ring for better confirmation of his message. The seruants could doe no lesse then deliuer it, being commaunded (as they supposed) by so credible testimonie: Neither did the leysure of any one serue to goe with the messenger, who seemed an honest young Gentleman, and caried no cause of distrust in his countenance: Wherefore they deliuered him the lace and satten fouled vp together as it was, and desired him to will their master to make some speede home, both for cutting out of worke, and other occasions.

To a Broker fit for their purpose, goes this deceiuer with the Satten lace, who knowing wel they could not come honestly by it, nor anie thing else hee bought of that crew, as often before he had delt much with them: either gaue them not so much as they would haue, or at least as they iudged they could haue in another place, for which the ring-leader of this coosnage, vowed in his minde to be reuenged on the Broker. The maister knaue, who had spent two houres and more in vaine with the Tailer, & would not like of anie veluet hee sawe, when hee perceiued that he mist his purse, and coulde not deuise howe or where he had lost it, shewed himselfe very sory for his mishap, and said in the morning hee would sende the veluet home to his house, for he knew where to speed of better than anie he had seene in the shops. Home goes the Tailer verie sadly, where he was entertayned with a greater mischance, for there was the Ladies seruing-man swearing and stamping, that hee had not seene their maister since the morning they parted, neither had he sent for the satten and lace, but when the seruants iustified their innocencie, beguiled both with the true token rehearsed, and their maisters signet ring, it exceedeth my cunning to sette downe answerable wordes, to this exceeding grieffe and amazement on either part, but most of all the honest Tailer, who spead the better by the Brokers wilfulnes, as

afterward it happened, which made him the better brooke the losse of his purse. That night all meanes were vsed that could bee, both to the Mercers, Brokers, Goldsmiths, Goldfiners, and such like, where happelie such things doe come to bee sold: but all was in vaine, the only helpe came by the inuenter of this villanie, who scant sleeping al night, in regard of the brokers extreame gayning, both by him, and those of his profession: the next morning he came by the Taylers house, at what time hee espyed him with the Ladies seruingman, comming foorth of the dores, and into the tauern he went to report what a mishap he had vpon the sending for him thether the day before.

As he was but newlie entred his sad discourse, in comes the partie offended with the Broker, and hauing heard all, (whereof none could make better report then himselfe) he takes the Tayler & seruingman aside, and pretending great grieffe for both their causes, demaunds what they would thinke him worthie off that could help them to their good again. On condition to meet with such a frende offer was made of five pound, and after sundry speeches passing between them alone, he seeming that he would worke the recouerie thereof by arte, and they promising not to disclose the man that did them good, he drew foorth a litle booke out of his bosom, whether it were latin or english it skilled not, for he could not read a worde on it,

then desiring them to spare him alone a while, they should perceiue what he would do for them. Their hearts encouraged with some good hope, kept all his words secrete to themselues: and not long had they sitten absent out of the roome, but he called them in againe, and seeming as though he had bin a scholler indeed, said he found by his figure that a Broker in such a place had their goods lost, and in such a place of the house they should find it, bidding them goe thether with al speed, and as they found his wordes, so (with reseruing to themselues how they came to knowledge thereof) to meet him there againe in the euening, and reward him as he had deserued.

Away in hast goes the tayler and the seruingmã, and entring the house with the constable, found them in the place where he that reueald it, knew the broker alway laid such gotten goods. Of their ioy againe, I leaue you to coniecture, and think you see the Broker with a good paire of bolts on his heeles, readie to take his farewel of the world in a halter, when time shall serue. The counterfette cunning man, and artificiall Cony-catcher, as I heard, was payd his fīue pounce that night. Thus one craftie knaue beguiled another, let each take heede of dealing with any such kinde of people.



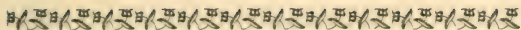
# ERRATA

The following emendations have been made in the original text :—

Page	Line		In the Original reads:
20	7	'setling'	'fetling'
21	10	'seruant : how it may'	'seruant how may'
45	27	'vnwittingly :)'	'vnwittingly :'
47	29	'spoons. This'	'spoons This'
48	19	'Citizen)'	'Citizen'
49	3	'greefe'	'greeefe'

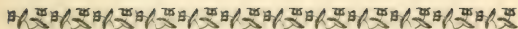






*A*  
*Disputation betweene a*  
*Hee Conny-catcher and a Shee*  
*Conny-catcher.*

1592



## *Note*

THE ORIGINAL of this text is in the Bodleian Library (Malone 574). A very few misprints have been corrected in the text : these are noted on page 83.

G. B. H.

A DISPUTATION,  
Betweene a Hee Conny-catcher, and a  
Shee Conny-catcher, whether a Heefe or a Whoore, is  
most hurtfull in Coufonage, to the Com-  
mon-wealth.

DISCOVERING THE SECRET VILLA-  
*nies of alluring Strumpets.*

With the Conuerſion of an English Courtizen, reformed  
this preſent year, 1592.

Reade, laugh, and learne.

*Naschimur propatria.*

R. G.



Imprinted at London, by A. I. for T. G. and are to be ſolde at  
the Weſt ende of Paules. 1592.



To all Gentlemen, Marchants, Appren-  
*tises, and Countrey Farmers health.*

**G**ENTLEMEN, Countrey men, and kinde friends, for so I value all that are honest and enemies of bad actions, although in my bookes of Conny-catching I haue discovered diuers formes of cosonings, and painted out both the sacking and crosbyting lawes, which strumpets vse, to the destruction of the simple, yet willing to search all the substance, as I haue glauncst at the shadow, & to enter into the nature of villanie, as I haue broacht vp the secretes of vice, I haue thought good to publish this Dialogue or disputation, betweene a hee Conny-catcher, and a shee Conny-catcher, whether of them are most preiuditiall to the Common-wealth, discoursing the base qualities of them both, and discovering the inconuenience that growes to men, through the lightnes of inconstant wantons, who being wholly giuen to the spoyle, seeke the ruine of such as light into their companie. In this Dialogue, louing Countrey-men, shall you finde what preiudice ensues by haunting of whore-houses, what dangers grows by dallying with common harlottes, what inconuenience follows the inordinate pleasures of vnchast Libertines, not onely by their consuming of their

wealth, and impouerishment of their goods and landes, but to the great indangering of their health. For in conuersing with them they aime not simply at the losse of goods, and blemish of their good names, but they fish for diseases, sicknesse, sores incurable, vlcers brusting out of the ioyntes, and sault rhumes, which by the humour of that villanie, lepte from Naples into Fraunce, and from Fraunce into the bowels of Englande, which makes many crye out in their bones, whilest goodman Surgion laughs in his purse: a thing to be feared as deadly while men liue, as hell is to be dreaded after death, for it not only infecteth the bodie, consumeth the soule, and waste wealth and worship, but ingraues a perpetuall shame in the forehead of the partie so abused. Whereof Maister Huggins hath well written in his Myrror of Magistrates, in the person of Memprycaius, exclaiming against harlots, the verses be these:

*Eschue vile Venus toyes shee cuts off age,  
And learne this lesson oft, and tell thy frend,  
By Pockes, death sodaine, begging, Harlots end.*

Besides, I haue here layde open the wily wisdom of ouerwise Curtizens, that with their cunning, can drawe on, not only poore nouices, but such as hold themselues maisters of their occupation. What flatteries they vse to bewitch, what sweet words to inueagle, what simple holines to

intrap, what amorous glaunces, what smirking Ocyliades, what cringing curtesies, what stretching Adios, following a man like a blood-hound, with theyr eyes white, laying out of haire, what frowning of tresses, what paintings, what Ruffes, Cuffes, and braueries, and all to betraie the eyes of the innocent nouice, whom when they haue drawne on to the bent of their bow, they strip like the prodigall childe, and turne out of doores like an outcast of the world. The Crocodile hath not more teares, Proteus, more shape, Ianus more faces, the Hieria, more sundry tunes to entrap the passengers, then our English Curtizens, to bee plaine, our English whores: to set on fire the hearts of lasciuious and gazing strangers. These common, or rather consuming strumpets, whose throathes are softer then oyle, and yet whose steppes leade vnto death. They haue their Ruffians to rifle, when they cannot fetch ouer with other cunning, their crosbiters attending vpon them, their foysts, their bufts, their nippes, and such like. Being wayted on by these villaines, as by ordinary seruantes, so that who thinkes himselfe wise inough to escape their flatteries, him they crosbyte, who holdes himselfe to rule, to be bitten with a counterfeyt Apparater, him they rifle, if hee be not so to bee verst vpon, they haue a foyst or a nyppe vpon him, and so sting him to the quicke. Thus he that medles with pitch, cannot but be

defiled, and he that acquainteth himselfe or conuerseth with any of these Connycatching strumpets, cannot but by some way or other bee brought to confusion: for either hee must hazard his soule, blemish his good name, loose his goods, light vpon diseases, or at the least haue been tyed to the humor of an harlot, whose quiuer is open to euery arrow, who likes all that haue fat purses, and loues none that are destitute of pence. I remember a Monke in *Diebus illis*, writ his opinion of the end of an Adulterer, thus:

*Quatuor his casibus sine dubio cadet adulter,  
Aut hic pauper erit, aut hic subito morietur,  
Aut cadet in causum qua debet iudice vinci,  
Aut aliquod membrum casu vell crimine perdet,*

Which I Englished thus:

*He that to Harlots lures do yeeld him thrall,  
Through sowre misfortune too bad end shall fall:  
Or sodaine death, or beggerie shall him chance,  
Or guilt before a Iudge his shame inhance:  
Or els by fault or fortune he shall leese,  
Some member sure escape from one of these.*

Seeing then such inconuenience grows from the caterpillers of the Common-wealth, and that a multitude of the monsters here about London, particularly & generally abroad in England, to the great ouerthrow of many simple men that are




inueagled by their flatteries, I thought good not only to discover their villanies in a Dialogue, but also to manifest by an example, howe preiudiciall their life is, to the state of the land, that such as are warned by an instance, may learne and looke before they leape, to that end kind Country-men, I haue set downe at the ende of the disputation, the wonderful life of a Curtezin, not a fiction, but a truth of one that yet liues not now in an other forme repentant. In the discourse of whose life, you shall see how dangerous such truls be to all estates that be so simple as to trust their fained subtilties: heere shall parents learne, how hurtfull it is to cocker vp their youth in their follies, and haue a deepe insight how to bridle their daughters, if they see them any waies grow wantons, wishing therfore my labors may be a caueat to my country-men, to auoyde the companie of such cousoning Courtezins.

Farewell.

R. G.





A disputation between Laurence a Foist  
and faire Nan a Traffique, whether a Whore  
or a Theefe is most preiuditiall.

*Laurence.*

**F**AIRE *Nan* well met, what newes about your Vine Court that you looke so blythe, your cherry cheekes discouers your good fare, and your braue apparell bewraies a fat purse, is Fortune now alate growne so fauourable to Foystes, that your husband hath lighted on some large purchase, or hath your smooth lookes linckt in some yong Nouice to sweate for a fauour all the byte in his Bounge, and to leaue himselfe as many Crownes as thou hast good conditions, and then hee shall bee one of Pierce penillesse fraternitie: how is it sweet wench, goes the worlde on wheelles, that you tread so daintily on your typtoes?

*Nan.* Why Laurence are you pleasant or peeuish, that you quip with such breefe girdes, thinke you a quarterne winde cannot make a quicke saile, that easie lystes cannot make heauy burthens, that women haue not wiles to compasse crownes as wel as men, yes & more, for though they be not so strong in the fists, they bee more ripe in their wittes, and tis by wit that I liue and will liue, in dispight of that peeuish scholler, that thought with

his conny-catching bookes to haue crosbyt our trade. Doest thou maruell to see me thus briskt, fayre wenches cannot want fauours, while the world is so full of amorous fooles, where can such girles as my selfe bee blemisht with a threedbare coat, as long as country Farmers haue full purses, and wanton Citizens pockets full of pence.

*Laur.* Truth if fortune so fauour thy husband, that hee be neither smoakt nor cloyed, for I am sure all thy brauery comes by his Nipping, Foysting, and lifting.

*Nan.* In faith sir no, did I get no more by mine own wit, then I reap by his purchase, I might both go bare & penillesse the whole yere, but mine eyes are stauls, & my hands lime twigs (elswere I not worthie the name of a she Connycatcher). *Cyrces* had neuer more charms, *Calipso* more enchantments the *Syrens* more subtil tunes, thē I haue crafty slightes to inueagle a Conny, and fetch in a country Farmer. Laurence beleeeue mee; you men are but fooles, your gettings is vncertaine, and yet you still fish for the gallowes, though by some great chance you light vppon a good bounge, yet you fast a great while after, whereas, as we mad wenches haue our tennants (for so I call euerie simple letcher and amorous Fox) as wel out of Tearme as in Tearme to bring vs our rentes, alas, were not my wits and my wanton pranks more profitable then my husbands foysting, we might

often go to bed supperlesse for want of surfetting, and yet I dare sweare, my husband gets a hundredreth pounds a yeare by bounqs.

*Laur.* Why Nan, are you growne so stiffe, to thincke that your faire lookes can get as much as our nimble fingers, or that your sacking can gaine as much as our foysting; no, no, Nan, you are two bowes downe the wind, our foyst will get more then twentie the proudest wenches in all London.

*Nan.* Lye a litle further & giue mee some roome, what Laurence your toong is too lauish, all stands vpon prooffe, and sith I haue leisure and you no great busines, as being now when Powles is shut vp, and all purchasies and Connies in their burrowes, let vs to the Tauerne and take a roome to our selues, and there for the price of our suppers, I will proue that women, I meane of our facultie, a trafficque, or as base knaues tearme vs strumpets, are more subtile, more dangerous, in the commonwealth, and more full of wyles to get crownes, then the cunningest Foyst, Nip, Lift, Praggess, or whatsoeuer that liues at this day.

*Laur.* Content, but who shall be moderater in our controuersies, sith in disputing *pro & contra*, betwixt our selues, it is but your yea and my nay, and so neither of vs will yeeld to others victories.

*Nan.* Trust me Laurence, I am so assured of the conquest, offering so in the strength of mine

owne arguments, that when I haue reasoned, I will referre it to your iudgement and censure.

*Laur.* And trust mee as I am an honest man, I will bee indifferent.

*Nan.* Oh sweare not so deeply, but let mee first heare what you can say for your selfe.

*Laur.* What? why more Nan, then can be painted out in a great volume, but briefly this, I need not discribe the lawes of villanie, because R. G. hath so amply pend them downe in the first part of Conny-catching, that though I be one of the facultie, yet I cannot discover more then hee hath layde open. Therefore first to the Gentlemen Foyst, I pray you what finer qualitie? what Art is more excellent either to trie the ripenes of the wit, or the agilitie of the hand, then that for him that wil be maister of his Trade, must passe the proudest Iugler aliue, the poynts of *Leger de maine*, he must haue an eye to spye the boung or pursse, and then a heart to dare to attempt it, for this by the way, he that feares the Gallowes shal neuer be good theefe while he liues, hee must as the Cat watch for a Mouse, and walke Powles, Westminster, the Exchange, and such common haunted places, and there haue a curious eye to the person, whether he be Gentleman, Citizen or Farmer, and note, either where his boung lyes, whether in his hoase or pockets, and then dogge the partie into a presse where his staule with heauing and shouing shall

so molest him, that hee shall not feele when wee strip him of his bounge, although it bee neuer so fast or cunningly coucht about him, what poore Farmer almost can come to plead his case at the barre, to attend vpon his Lawyers at the bench, but looke he neuer so narrowly to it we haue his pursse, wherin some time there is fat purchase, twentie or thirtie poundes, and I pray you how long would one of your Traffiques be earning so much with your Chamber worke. Besides in faires and markets, and in the circuites after Iudges, what infinit mony is gotten from honest meaning men, that either busie about their necessarie affaires, or carelesly looking to their Crownes, light amongst vs that be foysts, tush wee dissemble in show, we goe so neat in apparrell, so orderly in outward appearance, some like Lawyers Clarkes, others lyke Seruingmen, that attended there about their maisters businesse, that wee are hardly smoakt, versing vpon all men with kinde courtesies and faire wordes, and yet being so warily watchfull, that a good purse cannot be put vp in a faire, but wee sigh if wee share it not amongst vs, and though the bookes of Conny-catching hath somewhat hindred vs, and brought many braue foystes to the haulter, yet some of our Country farmers, nay of our Gentlemen and Citizens, are so carelesse in a throng of people, that they shew vs the praie, and so draw on a theefe, and bequeath vs their

purses, whether we will or no, for who loues wyne so ill, that hee will not eate grapes if they fall into his mouth, and who is so base, that if he see a pocket faire before him, wil not foyst in if he may, or if foysting will not serue, vse his knife and nip, for although there bee some foysts that will not vse their kniues, yet I hold him not a perfect worke-man or maister of his Mysterie, that will not cut a purse as well as Foyst a pocket, and hazard any limme for so sweet a gaine as gold, how answere you me this breefe obiection Nan, can you compare with either our cunning to get our gaines in purchase.

*Nan.* And haue you no stronger arguments goodman Laurence, to argue your excellencie in villanie but this, then in faith put vp your pipes, and giue mee leaue to speake, your choplodgicke hath no great subiltie for simple, you reason of foysting, & appropriate that to your selues, to you men I meane, as though there were not women Foysts and Nippes, as neat in that Trade as you, of as good an eye, as fine and nimble a hand, and of as resolute a heart, yes Laurence, and your good mistresses in that mystery, for we without like suspition can passe in your walkes vnder the couler of simplicitie to Westminster, with a paper in our hand, as if we were distressed women, that had some supplication to put vp to the Iudges, or some bill of information to deliuer to our Lawyers, when



God wot, we shuffle in for a boung as well as the best of you all, yea as your selfe Laurence, though you bee called King of Cutpurses, for though they smoke you, they will hardly mistrust vs, and suppose our stomacke stand against it to foyst, yet who can better playe the staule or the shadowe then wee, for in a thrust or throng if we shoue hard, who is hee that will not fauour a woman, and in giuing place to vs, giue you free passage for his purse. Againe, in the market, when euerie wife hath almost her hand on her boung, and that they crie beware the Cutpurse and Conny-catchers, then I as fast as the best with my hand basket as mannerly as if I were to buye great store of butter and egges for prouision of my house, do exclaime against them with my hand on my purse, and say the worlde is badde when a woman cannot walke safely to market for feare of these villanous Cutpurses, when as the first boung I come to, I either nip or foyst, or els staule an other while hee hath stroken, dispatcht and gone, now I pray you gentle sir, wherin are we inferiour to you in foysting, and yet this is nothing to the purpose. For it is one of our most simplest shifts, but yet I pray you what thinke you when a farmer, gentleman, or Citizen, come to the Tearme, perhaps hee is wary of his purse, and watch him neuer so warily, yet he will neuer be brought to the blow, is it not possible for vs to pinch him ere hee passe, hee that

is most charie of his crownes abroad, and will cry ware the Conny-catchers, will not be afraide to drinke a pinte of wine with a prety wench, and perhaps goe to a trugging house to ferry out one for his purpose, then with what cunning we can feede the simple fop, with what fayre words, sweete kisses, fained sighes, as if at that instant we fell in loue with him that we neuer saw before, if we meet him in an euening in the street, if the farmer or other whatsoeuer, bee not so forward as to motion some curtesie to vs, we straight insinuate into his company, and claime acquaintance of him by some meanes or other, and if his minde be set for lust, and the diuell driue him on to match him selfe with some dishonest wanton, then let him looke to his purse, for if he do but kisse me in the streete Ile haue his purse, for a farwell, although hee neuer commit any other act at all. I speake not this onely by my selfe Lawrence, for there bee a hundreth in London more cunning then my selfe in this kinde of cunny-catching. But if hee come into a house then let our trade alone to verse vpon him, for first we faine ourselues hungry, for the benefit of the house, although our bellies were never so ful, and no doubt the good Pander or Bawde shee comes foorth like a sober Matron, and sets store of Cates on the Table, and then I fall aboard on them, and though I can eate little, yet I make hauocke of all, and let him be sure euerie

dish is well saucst, for hee shall pay for a pipping Pye that cost in the Market four pence, at one of the Trugging houses xviii. pence, tush what is daintie if it bee not deare bought, and yet he must come off for crownes besides, and when I see him draw to his purse, I note the putting vp of it well, and ere wee part, that worlde goes hard if I foyst him not of all that hee hath, and then suppose the woorst, that he misse it, am I so simply acquainted or badly prouided, that I haue not a friend, which with a few terrible oathes and countenance set, as if he were the proudest Souldado that euer bare armes against *Don Iohn of Austria*, will face him quite out of his money, and make him walke lyke a woodcocke homeward by weeping crosse, and so buy repentance with all the crownes in his purse. How say you to this Lawrence, whether are women Foystes inferiour to you in ordinarie cousonage or no.

*Laur.* Excellently well reasoned Nan, thou hast told mee wonders, but wench though you be wily and strike often, your blowes are not so big as ours.

*Nan.* Oh but note the subiect of our disputation, and that is this, which are more subtill and daungerous in the Common-wealth, and to that I argue.

*Laur.* I and beshrow me, but you reason quaintly, yet wil I proue your wittes are not so ripe as ours, nor so readie to reach into the subtilties of

kinde cousonage, and though you appropriate to your selfe the excellencie of Conny-catching, and that you doo it with more Art then we men do, because of your painted flatteries and sugred words, that you flourish rethorically like nettes to catch fooles, yet will I manifest with a merry instance, a feate done by a Foyst, that exceeded any that euer was done by any mad wench in England.

*A pleasant Tale of a Country Farmer, that tooke it in scorn to haue his purse cut or drawne from him, and how a Foyst serued him.*

**I**T was told me for a truth that not long since here in London, there laie a country Farmar, with diuers of his neighbours about Law matters, amongst whom, one of them going to Westminster-Hall, was by a Foyst stript of all the pence in his purse, and comming home, made great complaint of his misfortune, some lamented his losse, and others exclaimed against the Cutpurses, but this Farmer he laught loudly at the matter, and said such fooles as could not keep their purses no surer, were well serued, and for my part quoth hee, I so much scorne the Cutpurses, that I would thanke him hartily that would take paines to foyst mine, well saies his neighbor, then you may thank me, sith my harmes learns you to beware, but if it be true, that many things fall out between the cup and

the lip, you know not what hands Fortune may light in your owne lap, tush quoth the Farmar, heeres fortie pounds in this purse in gold, the proudest Cutpurse in England win it and weare it, as thus he boasted, there stood a subtill Foyst by and heard all, smiling to himselfe at the folly of the proude Farmar, and vowed to haue his purse or venture his necke for it, and so went home and bewrayed it to a crue of his companions, who taking it in dudgion, that they should be put down by a Pesant, met either at Laurence Pickerings, or at Lambeth: let the Blackamore take heede I name him not, least an honorable neighbor of his frowne at it, but wheresoeuer they met they held a conuocation, and both consulted and concluded all by a generall consent, to bend all their wits to bee possessers of this Farmers Bounge, and for the execution of this their vow, they haunted about the Inne where he laie, and dogd him into diuers places, both to Westminster Hall and other places, and yet could neuer light vpon it, he was so watchfull and smoakt them so narrowly, that all their trauell was in vaine, at last one of them fledde to a more cunning pollicie, and went and learnde the mans name and where hee dwelt, and then hyed him to the Counter and entered an Action against him of trespasse, damages two hundreth pounds, when hee had thus done, hee feed two Sargiants, and carried them downe with him to the mans

lodging, wishing them not to arrest him till he commaunded them, well agreed they were, and downe to the Farmers lodging they came, where were a crue of Foystes, whom he had made priuy to the end of his practise, stood wayting, but he tooke no knowledge at all of them, but walkt vp and downe, the Farmer came out and went to Powles, the Cutpurse bad staie, and would not yet suffer the Officers to meddle with him, til he came into the West end of Paules Churchyard, and there he willed them to do their Office, and they stepping to the Farmer arrested him, the Farmer amazed, beeing amongst his neighbors, asked the Sargiant at whose suite hee was troubled, at whose suite soeuer it be, sayd one of the Cutpurses that stood by, you are wrongd honest man, for hee hath arested you here in a place of priuiledge, where the Sherifes nor the Offices haue nothing to do with you, and therefore you are vnwise if you obey him, tush saies an other Cutpurse, though the man were so simple of himselfe, yet shall hee not offer the Church so much wrong, as by yeelding to the Mace, to imbollish Paules libertie, and therefore I will take his part, and with that hee drew his sword, another tooke the man and haled him away, the Officer he stooke hard to him, and sayd hee was his true prisoner, and cride Clubbes, the Prentises arose, and there was a great hurly burly, for they tooke the Officers part, so that the poore

Farmer was mightily turmoyle amongst them, and almost haled in peeces, whilst thus the strife was, one of the Foystes had taken his purse away, and was gone, and the Officer carried the man away to a Tauerne, for he swore he knew no such man, nor any man that he was indebted too, as then they satte drinking of a quart of wine, the Foyst that had caused him to be arrested, sent a note by a Porter to the Officer that he should release the Farmer, for he had mistaken the man, which note the Officer shewed him, and bad him pay his fees and go his waies: the poore Country-man was content with that, and put his hand in his pocket to feele for his purse, and God wot there was none, which made his heart far more cold then the arrest did, and with that fetching a great sigh he sayd, alas maisters I am vndone, my purse in this fraie is taken out of my pocket and ten pounds in gold in it besides white money. Indeed sayd the Sargiant, commonly in such brawles the cutpurses be busie, and I pray God the quarell was not made vpon purpose by the pickpockets, well saies his neighbor, who shall smile at you now, the other day when I lost my purse you laught at mee, the Farmer brooke all, and sat malecontent, and borrowed money of his neighbors to paye the Sargiant, and had a learning I beleeeue euer after to braue the cutpurse.

How say you to this mistresse Nan, was it not

well done, what choyce witted wench of your facultie, or the Foyst, hath euer done the like, tush Nan, if we begin once to apply our wittes, all your inuentions are follies towards ours.

*Nan.* You say good goodman Laurence, as though your subtilties were sodaine as womens are, come but to the olde Prouerbe, and I put you downe, Tis as hard to finde a Hare without a Muse, as a woman without a scuse, and that wit that can deuise a cunningg lye, can plot the intent of deep villanies. I grant this fetch of the foyst was prettie, but nothing in respect of that we wantons can compasse, and therefore to quit your tale with an other, heare what a mad wench of my profession, did alate to one of your facultie.

*A passing pleasant Tale, how a whore Conny-catcht a Foyst.*

**T**HERE came out of the country a Foyst, to trie his experience, here in Westminster Hall, and strooke a hand or two, but the diuell a snap hee would giue to our citizen Foystes, but wrought warily, and could not bee fetcht off by no meanes, and yet it was knowne he had some twentie poundes about him, but hee had planted it so cunningly in his doublet, that it was sure inough for finding. Although the cittie Foyst layde all the plottes they could, as well by discoueryng



him to the Gaylors as otherwayes, yet hee was so pollitique, that they could not verse vpon him by any meanes, which greeued them so, that one day at a dinner, they held a counsaile amongst themselves how to couzen him, but in vain, til at last a good wench that sat by, vndertooke it, so they would sweare to let her haue all that hee had, they confirmed it sollemply, and she put it in practise thus, she subtilly insinuated her selfe into this Foysts company, who seeing her a prettie wench, began after twise meeting to waxe familiar with her, and to question about a nights lodging, after a little nyce louing & bidding she was content for her supper and what els hee would of curtesie bestowe vppon her, for she held it scorne shee sayd, to set a salarie price on her bodie, the Foyst was gladde of this, and yet hee woulde not trust her, so that hee put no more but tenne shillings in his pocket, but hee had aboue twentie poundes twilted in his doublet, well to be short, suppertime came, and thither comes my gentle Foyst, who making good cheere, was so eagar of his game, that hee would straight to bedde by the leaue of dame Bawde, who had her fee too, and there hee laye till about midnight, when three or foure old Hacksters whom she had prouided vpon purpose came to the doore and rapt lustely, who is there sayes the Bawde looking out of the window, marry say they, such a Iustice, and named one about the

Cittie that is a mortall enemy to Cutpurses, who is come to search your house for a Iesuite and other suspected persons, alas sir sayes shee I haue none heere, well quoth they, oape the doore, I will sayes shee, and with that shee came into the Foystes Chamber, who heard all this, and was afraide it was some search for him, so that hee desired the Bawde to helpe him that hee might not be seene, why then quoth shee, steppe into this Closet, hee whipt in hastely and neuer remembred his cloathes, she lockt him in safe, and then let in the crue of Rakehels, who making as though they searcht euerye chamber, came at last into that where his Lemman laie, and asked her what shee was, shee as if she had beene afrayde, desired their worshippes to bee good to her, shee was a poore Countrey mayde come vp to the Tearme, and who is that quoth they, that was in bedde with you, none forsooth saies shee, no saies one, that is a lye, here is the print of two, and besides, wheresoeuer the Foxe is, here is his skinne, for this is his doublet and hoase, then downe she falles vppon her knees, and saies indeed it was her husband, your husband quoth they, nay that cannot be so Minion, for why then wold you haue denied him at the first, with that one of them turnde to the Bawd, and did question with her what he was and where hee was, truly sir sayes she, they came to my house and sayd they were man and wife, and for my part I know

them for no other, and hee being afrayd, is indeed to confesse the troth, shut vp in the Closset. No doubt if it please your worships saies one rakehell, I warrant you hee is some notable Cutpurse or pickpocket, that is afrayd to shew his face, come and open the Closet, and let vs looke on him, nay sir saies she not for to night I beseech your worship carry no man out of my house, I will giue my word hee shall bee foorth comming to morrow morning, your word dame Bawde saies one, tis not worth a straw, you huswife that saies ye are his wife, ye shall go with vs, and for him that we may be sure hee may not start, Ile take his doublet, hoase and cloake, and tomorrow Ile send them to him by one of my men, were there a thousand poundes in them, there shall not be a peny diminisht, the whore kneeled downe on her knees and fayned to cry pittifully, and desired the Iustice which was one of her companions, not to carry her to prison, yes huswife quoth he, your mate and you shall not tarry together in one house, that you may make your tales all one, and therefore bring her away, and after ye dame Bawde see you lend him no other cloaths, for I wil send his in the morning betimes, and come you with him to answer for lodging him. I will sir saies she, and so away goes the wench & her companions laughing, and left the Bawde and the Foyst, assoone as the Bawde thought good, shee vnlockt the Closet and curst

the time that euer they came in her house, now quoth shee, here wil be a fayre adoo, how will you answeere for your selfe, I feare mee I shall be in danger of the Cart, well quoth he, to be short, I would not for fortie poundes come afore the Iustice, marry no more would I quoth she, let me shift if you were conueyed hence, but I haue not a rag of mans apparell in the house, why quoth he, seeing it is early morning, lend me a blanket to put about me, and I wil scape to a friends house of mine, then leaue me a pawne quoth the Bawde, alas I haue none saies he but this ring on my finger, why that quoth she, or tarry while the Iustice comes, so he gaue it her, tooke the blanket and went his waies, whether I know not, but to some friends house of his. This was this wily Foyst by the wit of a subtill wench, cunningly stript of all that hee had and turnde to grasse to get more fat.

*Nan.* How say you to this deuce Lawrence, was it not excellent? What thinke you of a womans wit if it can woorke such woonders.

*Laur.* Marry I thinke my mother was wiser then all the honest women of the parish besides.

*Nan.* Why then belike shee was of our facultie, and a Matrone of my profession, nimble of her handes, quicke of toong, and light of her taile, I should haue put in sir reuerence, but a foule word is good inough for a filthie knaue.

*Laur.* I am glad you are so pleasant Nan, you were not so merry when you went to Dunstable, but indeede I must needes confesse that women Foysts if they be carefull in their trades are (though not so common) yet more daungerous then men Foystes, women haue quicke wittes, as they haue short heeles, and they can get with pleasure, what wee fish for with danger, but now giuing you the bucklers at this weapon, let me haue a blow with you at another.

*Nan.* But before you induce any more arguments, by your leaue in a litle by talke, you know Laurence that though you can foyst, nyp, prig, lift, courbe, and vse the blacke Art, yet you cannot crosbite without the helpe of a woman, which crosbiting now adaaies is growne to a maruellous profitable exercise, for some cowardly knaues that for feare of the gallowes, leaue nipping and foysting, become Crosbites, knowing there is no danger therein but a litle punishment, at the most the Pillorie, and that is saued with a litle *Vnguentum Aureum*, as for example, *Iacke Rhoades* is now a reformed man, whatsoeuer he hath been in his youth, now in his latter daies hee is growne a correcter of vice, for whom soeuer hee takes suspicious with his wife, I warrant you he sets a sure fine on head, though he hath nothing for his mony but a bare kisse, and in this Art wee poore wenches are your surest props and staie. If you will not beleeeue

mee, aske poore *A. B.* in Turnmill street, what a sawcie Signor there is, whose purblind eyes can scarcely discern a Lowse from a Flea, and yet hee hath such insight into the mysticall Trade of Crosbiting, that hee can furnish his boord, with a hundreth poundes worth of Plate, I doubt the sandeyde Asse, will kicke like a Westernne Pugge: if I rubbe him on the gaule, but tis no matter if hee finde himselfe toucht and stirre, although hee boastes of the chiefe of the Clargies fauour, yet Ile so set his name out, that the boyes at Smithfield barres shall chalke him on the backe for a Crosbite, tush you men are foppes in fetching nouices ouer the coales, hearken to me Lawrence, Ile tell thee a woonder. Not far off from Hogsdon, perhaps it was there, and if you thinke I lye, aske master Richard Chot, and maister Richard Strong, two honest gentlemen that can witnesse as well as I, this prooffe of a womans witte. There dweltt here somtimes a good auncient Matron that had a faire wench to her daughter, as yong and tender as a morrow masse priests Lemman, her shee set out to sale in her youth, and drew on sundrie to bee suters to her daughter, some woovers, and some speeders, yet none married her, but of her bewtie they made a profite, and inueagled all, till they had spent vpon her what they had, and then forsooth, she and her yong Pigion turne them out of doores like prodigall children, she was acquainted with

Dutch & French, Italian & Spaniard as wel as English, & at last, as so often the Pitcher goes to the brooke that it comes broken home, my faire daughter was hit on the master vaine and gotten with childe, now the mother to colour this matter to saue her daughters marriage, begins to weare a Cushion vnder her owne kirtle, and to faine her selfe with child, but let her daughter passe as though she ailde nothing, when the fortie weekes were come, & that my young mistres must needs cry out forsooth, this olde *B.* had gotten huswifes answerable to her selfe, and so brought her daughter to bed, and let her go vp and downe the house, and the old Croane lay in child bed as though shee had been deliuered, and sayd the childe was hers, and so saued her daughters scape, was not this a wittie wonder maister Lawrence, wrought by an olde Witch, to haue a childe in her age, and make a yoong whoore seeme an honest virgin, tush this is litle to the purpose, if I should recite all, how many shee had cousoned vnder the pretence of marriage, well poore plaine *Signor, See,* you were not stiffe enough for her, although it cost you many crownes and the losse of your seruice. Ile say no more, perhaps she will amend her maners. Ah Lawrence how lyke you of this geare, in Crosbyting wee put you downe, for God wot it is little lookt too in and about London, and yet I may say to thee, many a good Citizen is Crosbyt in the

yeare by odde *Walkers* abroad, I heard some named the other day as I was drinking at the Swanne in Lambeth Marshe, but let them aloane, tis a foule byrd that defiles the owne neast, and it were a shame for me to speake against any good wenches or boon Companions, that by their wittes can wrest mony from a Churle, I feare me *R. G.* will name them too soone in his blacke booke, a pestilence on him, they say, hee hath there set downe my husbandes pettigree, and yours too Lawrence, if he do it, I feare me your brother in law *Bull*, is like to be troubled with you both.

*Laur.* I know not what to say to him Nan, hath plagued mee already, I hope hee hath done with mee, and yet I heard say, hee would haue about at my Nine hoales, but leauing him as an enemy of our trade, againe to our disputation. I cannot deny Nan, but you haue set down strange Presidents of womens preiudicial wits, but yet though you be Crosbites, Foysts, and Nips, yet you are not good Lifts, which is a great helpe to our facultie, to filche a boulte of Satten or Veluet.

*Nan.* Stay thee a word, I thought thou hadst spoken of *R. B.* of Long Lane and his wife, take heed they be parlous folks and greatly acquainted with keepers and Gaylers, therefore meddle not you with them, for I heare say, *R. G.* hath sworne in despite of the brasill staffe, to tell such a fowle



Tale of him in his blacke Booke, that it will cost him a daungerous Ioynt.

*Laur.* Nan, Nan, let *R. G.* beware, for had not an ill fortune false to one of *R. B.* his friends, he could take little harme.

*Nan.* Who is that Lawrence?

*Laur.* Nay I will not name him.

*Nan.* Why then I prythie what misfortune befell him?

*Laur.* Marry Nan, hee was strangely washt alate by a French Barbar, and had all the haire of his face miraculously shauen off by the Sythe of Gods vengeance, in so much that some sayd he had that he had not, but as hap was, how soeuer his haire fell off, it stoad him in some stead when the brawle was alate, for if hee had not cast off his beard and so being vnknowne, it had cost him some knockes, but it fell out to the best.

*Nan.* The more hard fortune that hee had such ill hap, but hastie iournies breed dangerous sweates, and the Phisitions call it the Ale *Peria*, yet omitting all this, againe to where you left.

*Laur.* You haue almost brought me out of my matter, but I was talking about the Lift, commending what a good quallitie it was, and how hurtfull it was, seeing we practise it in Mercers shops, with Haberdashers of small wares, Haberdashers of Hattes and Cappes, amongst Marchaunt Taylors for Hoase and Doublets, and in

suche places getting much gains by Lifting, when there is no good purchase abroad by Foysting.

*Nan.* Suppose you are good at the lift, who be more cunning thē we women, in that we are more trusted, for they little suspect vs, and we haue as close conueyance as you men, though you haue Cloakes, we haue skirts of gownes, handbaskets, the crownes of our hattes, our plackardes, and for a need, false bagges vnder our smockes, wherein we can conuey more closely then you.

*Laur.* I know not where to touch you, you are so wittie in your answeres, and haue so many starting hoales, but let mee bee pleasant with you a little, what say you to priggion or horse stealing, I hope you neuer had experience in that facultie.

*Nan.* Alas simple sot, yes and more shift to shunne the gallowes then you.

*Laur.* Why tis impossible.

*Nan.* In faith sir no, and for prooffe, I will put you downe with a storie of a madde, merry, little, dapper, fine wench, who at Spilsby Fayre had three horse of her owne or an other mans to sell, as shee her husband and an other good fellow, walkt them vp and downe the faire, the owner came and apprehended them all, and clapt them in prison, the Taylor not keeping them close prisoners, but letting them lye all in a Chamber, by her wit she so instructed them in a formall tale, that she saued all their liues thus. Being brought the next morrow

after their apprehension, before the Iustices, they examined the men how they came by those horses, and they confest they met her with them, but where shee had them they knewe not, then was my prettie peace brought in, who being a handsome Trul, blusht as if she had been full of grace, and being demanded where she had the horses, made this answere, may it please your worships, this man being my husband, playing the vnthrif as many more haue done, was absent from mee for a quarter of a yeare, which greeued me not a little, insomuch that desirous to see him, and hauing intelligence he wold be at Spilsby faire, I went thither euen for pure loue of him on foote, and beeing within some tenne myles of the Towne, I waxed passing weary and rested me often and grew very faynt, at last there came ryding by me a Seruingman in a blew coat, with three horses tyed one at anothers tayle, which he led as I gest to sell at the faire, the Seruingman seeing mee so tyred, tooke pitie on me, and asked me if I would ride on one of his emptie horses, for his owne would not beare double, I thankt him hartily, and at the next hill got vp, and roade till wee came to a Towne within three miles of Spilsby, where the Seruingman alighted at a house, and bad me ride on afore and he would presently ouertake mee, well forward I road halfe a myle, and looking behinde mee could see no bodie, so being alone, my heart began to

rise, and I to thinke on my husband, as I had ridde a little farther, looking downe a lane, I saw two men comming lustily vp as if they were weary, & marking them earnestly, I saw one of them was my husband, which made my heart as light as before it was sad, so staying for them, after a little vnkinde greeting betwixt vs, for I chid him for his vnthriftinesse, he asked me where I had the horse, and I tolde him how curteously the Seruingman had vsed me, why then saies hee, staie for him, nay quoth I, lets ryde on, and get you two vp on the emptie horses, for he will ouertake vs ere we come at the Towne, hee rydes on a stout lustie yoong gelding, so forward wee went, and lookt often behinde vs, but our Seruingman came not, at last we comming to Spilsby alighted, & broake our fast, and tied our horses at the doore, that if he passed by, seeing them, hee might call in, after wee had broake our fast, thinking hee had gone some other way, wee went into the horse faire, and there walkt our horses vp and downe to meete with the Seruingman, not for the intent to sell them. Now may it please your worship, whether hee had stolne the horses from this honest man or no, I knowe not, but alas, simply I brought them to the horse faire, to let him that deliuered me them haue them againe, for I hope your worships doth imagine, if I had stolne them as it is suspected, I would neuer haue brought them into so publicke a place to sell,

yet if the law bee any way dangerous for the foolish deed because I know not the Seruingman, it is, I must bide the punishment, and as guiltlesse as any heere, and so making a low courtsie shee ended. The Iustice holding vp his hand and wondring at the womans wit that had cleared her husband and his friend, and saued her selfe without compasse of law. How like you of this Lawrence, cannot we wenches prigge well.

*Laur.* By God Nan, I thincke I shall bee faine to giue you the bucklars.

*Nan.* Alas good Lawrence, thou art no Logitian, thou canst not reason for thy selfe, nor hast no wittie arguments to draw me to an exigent, and therefore giue mee leaue at large to reason for this supper, remember the subiect of our disputation, is this positiue question, whether whores or theeues are most preiudiciall to the Commonwealth, alas, you poore theeues do only steale and purloine from men, and the harme you do is to imbolish mens goods, and bring them to pouertie, this is the only end of mens theeuery, and the greatest preiudice that growes from robbing or filching, so much do we by our theft, and more by our lecherie, for what is the end of whoredome but consuming of goods and beggery, and besides perpetuall infamie, we bring yoong youthes to ruine and vtter destruction, I pray you Lawrence whether had a Marchants sonne hauing wealthie parents, better

light vpon a whoore then a Cutpurse, the one only taking his money, the other bringing him to vtter confusion, for if the Foyst light vpon him or the Conny-catcher, he looseth at the most some hundred pounds, but if hee fall into the companie of a whoore, shee flatters him, shee inueagles him, shee bewitcheth him, that hee spareth neither goods nor landes to content her, that is onely in loue with his coyne, if he be married, hee forsakes his wife, leaues his children, despiseth his friendes, onely to satisfie his lust with the loue of a base whoore, who when he hath spent all vpon her and hee brought to beggerie, beateth him out lyke the Prodigall childe, and for a small reward, brings him if to the fairest ende to beg, if to the second, to the gallowes, or at the last and worst, to the Pockes, or as preiuditiall diseases. I pray you Lawrence when any of you come to your confession at Tyborne, what is your last sermon that you make, that you were brought to that wicked and shamefull ende by following of harlots, for to that end doo you steale to maintaine whoores, and to content their bad humors. Oh Lawrence enter into your owne thoughts, and thinke what the faire wordes of a wanton will do, what the smiles of a strumpet will driue a man to act, into what ieopardie a man will thrust himselfe for her that he loues, although for his sweete villanie, he be brought to loathsome leprosie, tush Lawrence they

say the Poxe came from Naples, some from Spaine, some from France, but whersoever it first grew, it is so surely now rooted in England, that by S. (*Syth*) it may better be called *A Morbus Anglicus* then *Gallicus*, and I hope you will graunt, all these Frenche fauours grewe from whoores, besides in my high louing or rather creeping, I mean where men and women do robbe together, there alwaies the woman is most bloodie, for she alwayes vrgeth vnto death, and though the men wold only satisfie themselues with the parties coyne, yet shee endeth her theft in blood, murthuring parties so deeply as she is malicious. I hope gentle Lawrence you cannot contradict these reasons they bee so openly manifestly probable. For mine owne part, I hope you doo not imagine but I haue had some friendes besides poore George my husband, alas, hee knowes it, and is content lyke an honest simple suffragan, to bee corriual with a number of other good companions, and I haue made many a good man, I meane a man that hath a housholde, for the loue of mee to goe home and beate his poore wife, when God wotte I mocke him for the money hee spent, and hee had nothing for his pence, but the waste beleauings of others beastly labours. Lawrence, if Concubines could inueagle Salomon, if Dalilah could betraie Sampson, then wonder not if we more nice in our wickednes then a thousand such Dalilahs, can seduce poore yoong

Nouices to their vtter destructions. Search the Gayles, there you shall heare complaintes of whoores, looke into the Spittles and Hospitalles, there you shall see men diseased of the Frenche Marbles, giuing instruction to others that are sayd to beware of whoores, bee an Auditor or eare wnesse at the death of any theefe, and his last Testament is, Take heed of a whoore, I dare scarce speake of Bridewell because my shouldes tremble at the name of it, I haue so often deserued it, yet looke but in there, and you shall heare poore men with their handes in their Pigger hoales crye, Oh fie vpon whoores, when Foulcr giues them the terrible lash, examine beggars that lye lame by the highway, and they say they came to that miserie by whoores, some threedbare citizens that from Marchants and other good trades, growe to bee base Infourmers and Knightes of the Poste, crye out whē they dine with Duke Humfrey. Oh what wickednes comes from whoores, Prentises that runnes from their maisters, cryes out vpon whoores. Tush Lawrence, what enormities proceedes more in the Common-wealth then from whooredome. But sith tis almost supertime, and myrth is the friend to digestion, I meane a little to bee pleasaunt, I praie you how many badde profittes againe growes from whoores, Bridewell woulde haue verie fewe Tenants, the Hospitall would want Patientes, and the Surgians much



woorke, the Apothecaries would haue surphaling water and Potato rootes lye deade on theyr handes, the Paynters coulde not dispatche and make away theyr Vermiglion, if tallowe faced whoores vsde it not for their cheekes, how should sir Iohns Broades men doo if wee were not? why Lawrence the Gally would bee moord and the blewe Boore so leane, that he would not be mans meate, if we of the Trade were not to supply his wants, doo you thinke in conscience the Peacocke could burnish his faire tayle, were it not the whore of Babilon and such like, makes him lustie with crownes, no no, though the Talbot hath bitten some at the game, yet new fresh huntsmen shake the she crue out of the cupples. What should I say more Lawrence, the Suberbes should haue a great misse of vs, and Shordish wold complaine to dame Anne a Cleare, if wee of the sisterhood should not vphold her iollitie,—who is that Lawrence comes in to heare our talke, Oh tis the boy Nan that tels vs supper is readie, why then Lawrence what say you to me? haue I not prooued that in foysting and nipping we excell you, that there is none so great inconuenience in the Common wealth, as growes from whores, first for the corrupting of youth, infecting of age, for breeding of brawles, whereof ensues murther, insomuch that the ruine of many men comes from vs, and the fall of many youthes of good hope, if they were not seduced by vs, doo

proclaime at Tyborne, that wee be the meanes of their miserie, you men theeues touch the bodie and wealth, but we ruine the soule, and indanger that which is more pretious then the worldes treasure, you make worke onely for the gallowes, we both for the gallowes and the diuel, I and for the Surgian too, that some liues like loathsome laizers, and die with the French Marbles. Whereupon I conclude, that I haue wonne the supper.

*Laur.* I confesse it Nan, for thou hast tolde mee such wonderous villanies, as I thought neuer could haue been in women, I meane of your profession, why you are Crocodiles when you weepe, Basilisks when you smile, Serpents when you deuise, and the diuels cheefest broakers to bring the world to distruction. And so Nan lets sit downe to our meate and be merry.

THUS Country men, you haue heard the disputation between these two cousoning companions, wherein I haue shakte out the notable villany of whores, although mistresse Nan this good Oratresse, hath sworne to weare a long Hamborough knife to stabbe mee, and all the crue haue protested my death, and to prooue they ment good earnest, they belegard me about in the Saint Iohns head within Ludgate beeing at supper, there were some fourteene or fifteene of them met, and

thought to haue made that the fatall night of my ouerthrowe, but that the courteous Cittizens and Apprentises tooke my part, and so two or three of them were carryed to the Counter, although a Gentleman in my company was sore hurt. I cannot deny but they beginne to waste away about London, and Tyborne (since the setting out of my booke) hath eaten vp many of them, and I will plague them to the extremitie, let them doe what they dare with their bilbowe blades, I feare them not: and to giue them their last adue, looke shortly Countrimen for a Phamphet against them, called *The blacke Booke*, contayning foure newe Lawes neuer spoken of yet, *The creeping Law* of petty theeues, that rob about the Suburbes. *The lymitting Lawe*, discoursing the orders of such as followe Iudges, in their circuites, and goe about from Fayre to Fayre. *The Iugging Law*, wherein I will set out the disorders at Nyneholes and Ryfling, how they are onely for the benefite of the Cut-purses. *The stripping Lawe*, wherein I will lay open the lewde abuses of sundry Iaylors in England. Beside, you shall see there what houses there bee about the Suburbes and townes ende, that are receyuers of Cut purses stolne goods, Lifts, and such like. And lastly, looke for a Bed-roll or Catalogue, of all the names of the Foystes, Nyps, Lifts, and Priggars, in and about London: and although some say, I dare not doe it, yet I will

shortly set it abroach, and whosoeuer I name or touch, if hee thinke himselfe greeued, I will aunswere him before the Honourable priuie Counsayle.

*The conuersion of an English  
Courtizan.*

SITH to discouer my parentage, woulde double the grieffe of my lyuing Parents, and reuiue in them, the memory of my great amisse, and that my vntoward fall, would be a dishonour to the house from whence I came. Sith to manifest y<sup>e</sup> place of my birth, would be a blemish (through my beastly life so badly misledde) to the Shyre where I was borne: sith to discourse my name, might be holden a blot in my kindreds browe, to haue a sinew in their stocke of so little grace. I will conceale my parents, kin, and Country, and shroude my name with silence, least enuie myght taunt others for my wantonnesse. Knowe therefore, I was borne about threescore miles from London, of honest and welthy parents, who had many children, but I their onely daughter, and therefore the Iewell wherein they most delighted, and more, the youngest of all, and therefore the more faouored: for beeing gotten in the wayning of my parents age, they doted on me aboue the rest, and so set theyr harts the more on fire. I was the fairest of all, and yet not more beautifull then I was witty, in so

much that beeing a pretty Parrat, I had such quaint conceipts, and witty words in my mouth, that the neighbours said, I was too soone wise, to be long olde. Woulde to God, eyther the Prouerbe had been authentically, or their sayings prophecies, then had I by death in my nonage, buried many blemishes that my riper yeeres brought me to. For the extreme loue of my parents, was the very efficient cause of my follies, resembling heerin the nature of the Ape, that euer killeth that young one which he loueth most, with embracing it to feruētly. So my father and mother, but she most of all, although he to much, so cockered me vp in my wantonnes, that my wit grew to the worst, and I waxed vpward with the ill weedes: what soeuer I dyd, were it neuer so bad, might not be found fault withall, my Father would smyle at it and say, twas but the tricke of a child, and my Mother allowed of my vnhappy parts, alluding to this prophane and olde prouerbe, an vntowarde gyrl makes a good Woman.

But now I find, in sparing the rod, they hated the chyld, that ouer kind fathers, make vnruely daughters. Had they bent the wand while it had beene greene, it woulde haue beene plyant, but I, ill growne in my yeeres, am almost remediles. The Hawk that is most perfect for the flight and will, seldome proueth hagarde, and children that are vertuously nurtured in youth, will be honestly

natured in age: fie vpon such as say, young Saints, olde deuils, it is no doubt a deuillish and damnable saying, for what is not bent in the Cradle, will hardly be bowed in the Sadle. My selfe am an instance, who after I grew to be sixe yeeres olde, was sette to Schoole, where I profited so much that I writ and read excellently well, playd vpon the virginals, Lute & Cytron, and could sing prick-song at the first sight: in so much, as by that time I was twelue yeeres olde, I was holden for the most faire, and best qualited young girle in all that Countrey, but with this, bewailed of my wel-wishers, in that my parents suffered me to be so wanton.

But they so tenderly affected mee, and were so blinded with my excellent quallities, that they had no insight into my ensuing follies. For I growing to be thirteene yeere old, feeling the rayne of liberty loose on myne owne necke, began with the wanton Heyfer, to ayme at mine own wil, and to measure content, by the sweetnes of mine owne thoughts, in so much, that pryde creeping on, I beganne to prancke my selfe with the proudest, and to holde it in disdain, that any in the Parish, should exceede me in brauery. As my apparrell was costly, so I grew to be licencious, and to delight to be lookt on, so that I haunted and frequented all feasts and weddings, & other places of merry meetings, where, as I was gazed on of many,

so I spared no glaunces to suruiew all with a curious eye-fauour: I obserued *Ouids* rule right: *Spectatum veniunt, veniunt spectentur vt ipse.*

I went to see & be seene, and deckt my selfe in the highest degree of brauerie, holding it a glory when I was wayted on with many eyes, to make censure of my birth. Beside, I was an ordinary dauncer, and grewe in that quality so famous, that I was noted as the chiefest thereat in all the Country, yea, and to soothe me vp in these follies, my Parents tooke a pride in my dauncing, which afterward prooued my ouerthrow, and their hart breaking.

Thus as an vnbridled Colte, I carelesly led fourth my youth, and wantonly spent the flower of my yeeres, holding such Maidens as were modest, fooles, and such as were not as willfully wanton as my selfe, puppies, ill brought vppe and without manners, growing on in yeeres, as tyde nor tyme tarrieth no man, I began to waxe passion-proud, and think her not worthy to lyue y<sup>t</sup> was not a little in loue, that as diuers young men began to fauour me for my beautie, so I beganne to censure of some of them partially, and to delight in the multitude of many wooers, beeing ready to fall from the Tree, before I was come to the perfection of a blossome, which an Vnckle of myne seeing, who was my Mothers brother, as carefull of my welfare as nie to me in kinne, finding fit oportunitie

to talke with mee, gaue mee this wholesome exhortation.

*A watch-word to wanton Maidens.*

COZEN, I see the fayrest Hawke hath oftentimes the sickest feathers, that y<sup>e</sup> hottest day hath the most sharpest thunders, the brightest sunne, the most suddaine showre, & the youngest Virgins, the most dangerous fortunes, I speake as a kinsman, and wish as a friend, the blossome of a Maidens youth, (such as your selfe) hath attending vpon it many frosts to nyp it, and many cares to consume it, so that if it be not carefully lookt vnto, it will perrish before it come to any perfection.

A Virgins honour, consisteth not onely in the gyfts of Nature, as to be fayre and beautifull, though they bee fauours that grace Maidens much, for as they be glistering, so they be momentary, readie to be worne with euery winters blast, and parched with euery Summers sunne, there is no face so fayre, but the least Moale, the slenderest skarre, the smallest brunt of sicknesse, will quickly blemishe.

Beauty Cozen, as it florisheth in youth, so it fadeth in age, it is but a folly that feedeth mans eye, a painting that Nature lendes for a tyme, and men allowe on for a while, in so much, that such



as onely ayme at your faire lookes, tye but their loues to an apprentishippe of beauty, which broken eyther with cares, mis-fortune, or yeeres, their destinies are at liberty, and they beginne to lothe you, and like of others.

*Forma bonum fragile est quantumque accedit ad  
Annos,*

*Fit minor et spacio Carpitur ipsa suo.*

Then Cozin, stand not too much on such a slippery glorie, that is as brittle as glasse, bee not proude of beauties painting, that hatched by tyme, perrisheth in short tyme, neyther are Women the more admirable of wise men for theyr gay apparrell, though fooles are fed with gards, for a womans ornaments, is the excellencie of her vertues: and her inward good qualities, are of farre more worth then her outward braueries, imbroydred hayre, bracelets, silkes, rich attire, and such trash, doo rather bring the name of a young Maide in question, then adde to her fame any title of honour.

The *Vestall* Virgins were not reuerenced of the Senators for their curious clothing, but for their chastitie. *Cornelia* was not famozed for ornaments of golde, but for excellent vertues. Superfluity in apparrell, sheweth rather lightnes of mind, then it importeth any other inward good quality: and men iudge of Maydens rarenesse, by the modestie of their rayment, holding it rather garish then

glorious, to be trickt vp in superfluous and exceeding braueries. Neither Cozen is it seemely for Maydes, to iet abroade, or to frequent too much company.

For shee that is looked on by many, cannot chuse but bee hardly spoken of by some, for report hath a blister on her tongue, and Maydens actions are narrowly measured. Therefore woulde not the auncient Romaines, suffer theyr Daughters, to goe any further then theyr Mothers lookes guided them. And therefore *Diana* is painted with a Tortuse vnder her feete, meaning, that a Maid shoulde not be a stragler, but like the Snayle, carry her house on her heade, and keepe at home at her worke, so to keepe her name without blemish, and her vertues from the slaunder of enuie.

A maide that hazards herselfe in much company, may venture the freedome of her hart by the folly of her eye, for so long the pot goes to the water, that it comes broken home, and such as looke much must needs like at last: the Fly dallies with a flame, but at length she burneth, flax and fire put together will kindle, a maid in companie of yonge men shall be constrayned to listen to the wanton allurements of many cunning speeches: if she hath not eyther with *Vlisses* tasted of Moly, or stopt her eares warily, shee may either bee entised with the *Syrens*, or enchanted by

*Cyrce*, youth is apt to yeeld to sweet perswasions, and therefore cozen thinke nothing more daungeous than to gad abroade, neither cozen doe I allowe this wanton dauncing in younge virgins, tis more comendation for them to moderate their manners, than to measure their feete, and better to heare nothing than to listen vnto vnreuerent Musicke: Sylence is a precious Iewell, and nothing so much worth as a countenaunce full of chastitie, light behauour is a signe of lewd thoughts, and men will say, there goes a wanton that will not want one, if a place and person were agreeable to her desires: if a maidens honor be blemisht, or her honestie cald in question, she is halfe deflowred, and therefore had maidens neede to bee chary, least enuy report them for vnchast. Cozen I speake this generally, which if you apply particularly to your selfe, you shall find in time my words were well saide.

I gaue him slender thankes, but with such a frump that he perceiued how light I made of his counsayle: which hee perceiuing, shakt his head, and with teares in his eyes departed. But I whom wanton desires had drawne in delight, still presume in my former follies, and gaue my selfe either to gad abroad, or else at home to read dissolute Pamphlets, which bred in mee many ill affected wishes, so that I gaue leaue to loue and lust to enter into the center of my heart, where

they harboured tyll they wrought my finall and fatall preiudice.

Thus leading my life loosely, and being soothed vp with the applause of my too kind and louing parents, I had many of euey degree that made loue vnto me, as wel for my beauty, as for the hope of wealth that my father would bestowe vpon mee: sundry sutors I had, and I allowed of all, though I particularly graunted loue to none, yeelding them friendly fauors, as being proud I had more wooers then any maid in the parish beside: amongst the rest there was a welthy Farmer that wished me well, a man of some forty yeeres of age, one too worthy for one of so little worth as my selfe, and him my father, mother, and other friendes, would haue had mee match my selfe withall: but I that had had the raynes of lybertie too long in mine owne hands, refused him and would not bee ruled by their perswasions, and though my mother with teares entreated mee to consider of mine owne estate, & how wel I sped if I wedded with him, yet carelesly I despised her counsayle, and flatly made aunswere that I would none of him: which though it pinched my Parentes at the quicke, yet rather than they would displease me, they left me in mine own liberty to loue. Many there were beside him, mens sons of no meane worth, that were wooers vnto mee, but in vaine, either my fortune or destenie droue me to

a worsor ende, for I refused them all, and with the Beetle, refusing to light on the sweetest flowers all day, nestled at night in a Cowsheard.

It fortun'd that as many sought to win me, so amongst the rest there was an od companion that dwelt with a Gentleman hard by, a fellowe of small reputation, and of no luying, neither had he any excellent quallities but thrumming on the gittron: but of pleasant disposition he was, and could gawill out many quaint & ribadrous Iigges & songs, and so was fauoured of the foolish sect for his foppery. This shifting companion, sutable to my selfe in vanitie, would oft times be iesting with me, and I so long dallying with him, that I beganne deeply (oh let me blush at this confession) to fall in loue with him, and so construed of all his actions, that I consented to mine owne ouerthrowe: for as smoake will hardly be concealed, so loue will not bee long smothred, but will bewray her owne secrets, which was manifest in mee, who in my sporting with him, so bewrayed my affection, that hee spying I fauoured him, began to strike when the yron was hotte, and to take opportunitie by the forehead, and one day finding me in a merry vaine, began to question with me of loue, which although at the first I slenderly denyed him, yet at last I graunted, so that not onely I agreed to plight him my faith, but that night meeting to haue farther talke, I lasciuiously consented that he cropt the flower of

my virginity. When thus I was spoyled by such a base companion, I gaue my selfe to content his humor, and to satisfie the sweet of mine owne wanton desires. Oh heere let me breath and with teares bewaile the beginning of my miseries, and to exclaime against the folly of my Parents, who by too much fauouring mee in my vanitie in my tender youth, layde the first plot of my ensuing repentance: Had they with due correction chastised my wantonnesse, and supprest my foolish will with their graue aduise, they had made mee more vertuous and themselues lesse sorrowfull. A fathers frowne is a bridle to the childe, and a mothers checke is a stay to the stubborne daughter. Oh had my parents in ouerlouing mee not hated me, I had not at this time cause to complaine. Oh had my father regarded the saying of the wise man, I had not beene thus woe begone.

*If thy daughter bee not shamefast holde her straightly, least shee abuse her selfe through ouermuch libertie.*

*Take heede of her that hath an vnshamefast eye, & maruell not if she trespasse against thee.*

*The daughter maketh the father to watch secretly, and the carefullnesse he hath for her, taketh away his sleepe.*

*In her virginittie, least shee should be deflowred in her fathers house.*

*If therefore thy daughter be vnshamefast in her youth, keepe her straightlie, least shee cause thine enemies to laugh thee to scorne, and make thee a common talke in the Cittie, and defame thee among the people, and bring thee to publique shame.*

Had my parentes with care considered of this holy counsaile, and leuelled my life by the loadstone of vertue: had they lookt narrowly into the faultes of my youth, and bent the tree while it was a wand, and taught the hound while he was a puppie, this blemish had neuer befortuned me, nor so great dishonour had not befallen them. Then by my example, let all Parents take heed, least in louing their children too tenderly, they subuert them vtterly, least in manuring the ground too much with the vnskilful husbandman, it waxe too fat, and bring foorth more weeds then floures, least cockering their children vnder their winges without correction, they make them carelesse, and bring them to destruction, as their nurture is in youth, so will their nature grow in age. If the Palme tree be suppress while it is a sien, it wil contrary to nature be crooked when it is a Tree.

*Quo semel est imbuta recens seruabit odorentesta diu.*

If then vertue be to be ingrafted in youth, least they prooue obstinate in age, reforme your children betimes both with correction and counsaile, so

shall you that are parentes glorie in the honour of their good indeuours, but leauing this digression, againe to the loosenesse of mine owne life, who now hauing lost the glorie of my youth, and suffered such a base slaue to possesse it, which many men of woorth had desired to enioy, I waxed bold in sin & grew shameles, in so much he could not desire so much as I did grant, whereupon, seeing hee durst not reueale it to my father to demand me in marriage, hee resolued to carry me away secretly, and therefore wisht me to prouide for my selfe, and to furnish mee euery way both with money and apparrell, hoping as he sayd, that after we were departed, and my father saw wee were married, and that no meanes was to amend it, he would giue his free consent, and vse vs as kindly, and deale with vs as liberally as if wee had matcht with his good wil. I that was apt to any il, agreed to this, and so wrought the matter, that hee carried mee away into a straunge place, and then vsing me a while as his wife, when our mony began to wax low, he resolued secretly to go into the Country where my father dwelt, to heare not only how my father tooke my departure, but what hope we had of his ensuing fauour, although I was loath to be left alone in a strange place, yet I was willing to heare from my friendes, who no doubt conceiued much heart sorrow for my vnhappy fortunes, so that I parted with a few teares,



and enioyned him, to make all the hast he might to returne, hee being gone, as the Eagles alwaies resort where the carrion is, so the brute being spread abroad of my bewtie, and that at such an Inne laie such a faire yoong Gentlewoman, there resorted thither many braue youthfull Gentlemen and cutting companions, that tickled with lust, aymed at the possession of my fauour, and by sundry meanes sought to haue a sight of me, which I easily graunted to all, as a woman that counted it a glory to be wondred at by many mens eyes, insomuch that comming amongst them, I set their harts more and more on fire, that there rose diuers brawles who should bee most in my company, beeing thus haunted by such a troupe of lustie Rufflers, I beganne to finde mine owne folly, that had placst my first affection so losely, and therefore beganne as deeply to loath him that was departed, as earst I likte him, when hee was present, vowing in my selfe though hee had the spoyle of my virginitie, yet neuer after should he triumph in the possession of my fauour, and therefore beganne I to affection these new come guests, and one aboue the rest, who was a braue yoong Gentleman, and no lesse addicted vnto mee, then I deuoted vnto him, for daily hee courted mee with amorous Sonnets and curious proude letters, and sent me Jewels, and all that I might grace him with the name of my seruant, I returned him as louyng

lines at last, and so contented his lusting desire, that secretly and vnknowne to all the rest, I made him sundry nights my bedfellow, where I so bewitcht him with sweet wordes, that the man began deeply to doate vpon me, insomuch that selling some portion of land that he had, hee put it into readie money, and prouiding Horse and all things conuenient, carried mee secretly away, almost as farre as the Bathe. This was my second choyce and my second shame, thus I went forward in wickednesse and delighted in change, hauing left mine olde loue to looke after some other mate more fit for her purpose, how hee tooke my departure when hee returned I little cared, for now I had my content, a Gentleman, yoong, lustie, and indued with good quallities, and one that loued mee more tenderly then himselfe, thus liued this new entertained friend and I together vnmarried, yet as man and wife for a while, so louingly as was to his content and my credite, but as the Tygre though for a while shee hide her clawes, yet at last shee will reueale her crueltie; and as the Agnus Castus leafe when it lookes most drye, is then most full of moysture, so womens wantonnesse is not quallified by their warinesse, nor doe their charinesse for a moneth, warrant their chastitie for euer, which I prooued true, for my supposed husband beeing euery way a man of worth could not so couertly hide himselfe in the country, though a

stranger, but that he fel in acquaintance with many braue Gentlemen whom he brought home to his lodging, not only to honour them with his liberall courtesie, but also to see mee being proude of any man of woorth, applawded my beautie. Alas poore Gentleman, too much bewicht by the wilinesse of a woman, had hee deemed my heart to bee a harbour for euery new desire, or mine eye a sutor to euerie new face, hee would not haue beene so fonde as to haue brought his companions into my company, but rather would haue mewed mee up as a Henne, to haue kept that seuerall to himselfe by force, which hee could not retaine by kindnesse, but the honest minded Nouice little suspected my change, although I God wot placed my delight, in nothing more then the desire of new choyce, which fell out thus. Amongst the rest of the Gentlemen that kept him company, there was one that was his most familiar, and hee reposed more trust and confidence in him then in all the rest, this Gentleman beganne to bee deeply inamoured of mee, and shewed it by many signes which I easily perceiued, and I whose eare was pliant to euery sweete word, and who so allowed of all that were bewtifull, affected him no lesse, so that loue preuailing aboue friendship, hee broake the matter with mee, and made not many suites in vaine before hee obtained his purpose, for hee had what hee wisht, and I had what contented mee, I will

not confesse that any of the rest had some sildome fauours, but this Gentleman was my second selfe, and I loued him more for the time at the heele, then the other at the heart, so that though the other youth beare the charges and was made sir pay for all, yet this newe friend was hee that was maister of my affections, which kindnesse betwixt vs, was so vnwisely cloaked, that in short time it was manifest to all our familiars which made my supposed husband to sigh and others to smile, but hee that was hit with the horne was pincht at the heart, yet so extreame was the affection hee bare to mee, that he had rather conceale his greefe, then any way make me discontent, so that hee smothered his sorrow with patience, and brookt the iniurie with silence, till our loues grew so broad before, that it was a woonder to the worlde, whereupon one day at dinner, I being verie pleasant with his chosen friend and my choyce louer, I know not how, but either by fortune, or it may be some set match, there was by a gentleman, there present a question popt in about womens passions, and their mutabilitie in affection, so that the controuersie was defended, *pro & contra*, which arguments, whether a woman might haue a second friend or no, at last it was concluded, that loue and Lordshippe brookes no fellowship, and therefore none so base minded to beare a riuall. Hereupon arose a question about friendes that were put in trust,

how it was a high point of treason, for one to betray an other, especially in loue, in so much that one gentleman at the boord, protested by a solemne oath, that if any friend of his made priuie and fauoured with the sight of his mistresse whom hee loued, whether it were his wife or no, should secretly seeke to inroach into his roome and offer him that dishonour to partake his loue, he would not vse any other reuenge, but at the next greeting stabbe him with his Poynado, though hee were condemned to death for the action. All this fitted for the humor of my supposed husband, and strooke both mee and my friend into a quandarie, but I scornfully iested at it, when as my husband taking the ball before it fel to the ground, began to make a long discourse what faithlesse friends they were that would faile in loue, especially where a resolved trust of the partie beloued was committed vnto them, and here vpon to make the matter more credulous, and to quip my folly, and to taunt the basenesse of his friends minde, that so he might with curtesie both warne vs of our wantonnes, and reclaime vs from ill, he promised to tell a pleasant storie performed as hee sayd not long since in England, and it was to this effect.

*A pleasant discourse, how a wife wanton by her husbands gentle warning, became to be a modest Matron.*

THERE was a Gentleman (to giue him his due) an Esquire heere in England, that was married to a yoong Gentlewoman, faire and of a modest behaiour, vertuous in her lookes, howsoeuer she was in her thoughts, and one that euery way with her dutifull indeuour and outward apparance of honestie, did breed her husbands content, insomuch that the Gentleman so deeply affected her, as he counted al those houres ill spent which he past not away in her company, besotting so himselfe in the beautie of his wife, that his onely care was to haue her euery way delighted, liuing thus pleasantly together, he had one spetiall friend amongst the rest, whom he so dearly affected, as euer *Damon* did his *Pythias*, *Pilades* his *Orestes*, or *Tytus* his *Gisippus*, he vnfolded all his secrets in his bosome, and what passion hee had in his minde that either ioyed him or perplexed him, he reuealed vnto his friend, & directed his actions according to the sequel of his counsailes, so that they were two bodies and one soule. This Gentleman for all the inward fauour showne him by his faithful friend, could not so withstand the force of fancy, but he grew enamoured of his friendes wife, whom he courted with many sweet words and faire promises, charms

that are able to inchant almost the chastest eares, and so subtilly couched his arguments, discovered such loue in his eyes, and such sorrow in his lookes, that dispaire seemed to sit in his face, and swore, that if shee granted not him *Le don du merci*, the end of a louers sighes then would present his hart as a Tragick sacrifice to the sight of his cruel mistresse, the Gentlewoman waxing pitifull, as women are kinde harted and are loth Gentlemen should die for loue, after a few excuses, let him dub her husband knight of the forked order, and so to satisfie his humor, made forfeit of her owne honor. Thus these two louers continued by a great space in such pleasures as vnchast wantons count their felicitie, hauing continually fit opportunitie to exercise their wicked purpose, sith the gentleman himself did giue them free libertie to loue, neither suspecting his wife, or suspecting his friend, at last, as such traytrous abuses will burst foorth, it fell so out, that a mayd who had been an old seruant in the house, began to grow suspitious, that there was too much familiaritie betweene her mistresse and her maisters friend, and vpon this watcht them diuers times so narrowly, that at last she found them more priuate then either agreed with her maisters honor, or her owne honestie, and thereupon reuealed it one day vnto her maister, he little credulous of the light behaiour of his wife, blamed the mayd and

bad her take heed, least she sought to blemish her vertues with slaunder, whom hee loued more tenderly then his owne life, the mayd replied, that she spake not of enuy to him, but of meere loue she beare vnto him, and the rather that hee might shadow such a fault in time, and by some meanes preuent it, least if others should note it as well as shee, his wiues good name and his friends should bee cald in question, at these wise words spoken by so base a drug as his mayd, the Gentleman waxed astonished and listened to her discourse, wishing her to discouer how she knew or was so priuy to the folly of her mistresse, or by what meanes he might haue assured prooffe of it, shee tolde him that to her, her owne eyes were witnesses, for shee saw them vnlawfully together, and please it you sir quoth shee, to faine your selfe to go from home, and then in the backhouse to keepe you secret, I will let you see as much as I haue manifested vnto you, vpon this the maister agreed, and warnd his mayd not so much as to make it knowne to any of her fellowes. Within a day or two after, the Gentleman sayd, hee would goe a hunting and so rise verie early, and causing his men to couple vp his Houndes, left his wife in bed and went abroad, assoone as he was gone a myle from the house, he commanded his men to ryde afore and to start the Hare and follow the chase, and wee will come faire and softly after,



they obeying their maisters charge, went their wayes, and he returned by a backway to his house, and went secretly to the place where his mayd and he had appointed. In the meane time, the mistresse thinking her husband safe with his Houndes, sent for her friend to her bed chamber, by a trustie seruant of hers, in whom shee assured that was a secret Pander in such affaires, and the Gentleman was not slacke to come, but making all the haste hee could, came and went into the chamber, asking for the Maister of the house very familiarly, the old mayd noting all this, assoone as she knew them together, went and cald her maister and carried him vp by a secret pair of staires to her mistresse chamber doore, where peeping in at a place that the mayd before had made for the purpose, he saw more then he lookt for, and so much as pincht him at the very heart, causing him to accuse his wife for a strumpet, and his friend for a traytor, yet for all this, valuing his owne honour more then their dishonestie, thinking if he should make an vprore, he should but ayme at his owne discredite, and cause himself to be a laughing game to his enemies, he concealed his sorrow with silence, and taking the mayd apart, charged her to keepe all secret, whatsoeuer she had seene, euen as she esteemed of her owne life, for if shee did bewray it to any, hee himselfe would with his Swoord make an ende of her daies, and with that putting

his hand in his sleeue, gaue the poore mayd sixe Angels to buy her a new gowne, the wench glad of this gift, swore solemnely to tread it vnder foote, and sith it pleased him to conseale it, neuer to reueale it as long as she liued, vpon this they parted, she to her drudgery, and he to the field to his men, where after hee had kild the Hare, hee returned home, and finding his friend in the Garden, that in his absence had been grafting hornes in the Chimnies, and entertained him with his woonted familiaritie, and shewed no bad countenance to his wife, but dissembled al his thoughts to the full. Assoone as dinner was done, and that he was gotten solitarie by himselfe, he beganne to determine of reuenge, but not as euerie man would haue done, how to haue brought his wife to shame, & her loue to confusion, but he busied his braines how hee might reserue his honour inuiolate, reclaime his wife, and keep his friend, meditating a long time how he might bring all this to passe, at last a humour fell into his head, how cunningly to compasse all three and therefore he went & got him a certaine slips, which are counterfeyt peeces of mony being brasse, & couered ouer with siluer, which the common people call slips, hauing furnished himselfe with these, hee put them in his purse, and at night went to bed as he was wont to doo, yet not vsing the kind familiaritie that he accustomed, notwithstanding

he abstained not from the vse of her body, but knew his wife as aforetimes, and euery time hee committed the act with her, he layd the next morning in the window a slip, where hee was sure shee might finde it, and so many times as it pleased him to be carnally pleasant with his wife, so many slips he still layd down vpon her cushnet. This he vsed for the space of a fortnight, till at last, his wife finding euery day a slip, or sometime more or lesse, wondred how they came there, and examining her wayting maydes, none of them could tell her anything touching them, wherevpon shee thought to question with her husband about it, but being out of her remembrance, the next morning as he & she lay dallying in bed, it came into her minde, and she asked her husband if he layd those slippes on her cushnet, that she of late found there, hauing neuer seene any before. I marry did I quoth hee, and I haue layd them there upon speciall reason, and it is this. Euer since I haue been married to thee, I haue deemed thee honest, and therefore vsed and honored thee as my wife, parting coequall fauours betwixt vs as true loues, but alate finding the contrary, & with these eyes seeing thee play the whore with my friend in whom I did repose all my trust, I sought not as many would haue done, to haue reuenged in blood, but for the safetic of mine own honor, which otherwise would haue been blemisht by thy

dishonestie, I haue bin silent, and haue neyther wronged my quandom friend, nor abused thee, but still do hold bed with thee, that the world should not suspect any thing, and to quench the desire of lust I do vse thy bodie, but not so lovingly as I would a wife, but carelesly as I would a strumpet, and therefore euen as to a whoore, so I giue thee hyer, which is for euerie time a slip, a counterfeet coyne, which is good inough for such a slipperie wanton, that will wrong her husband that loued her so tenderly, and thus wil I vse thee for the safetie of mine owne honour, till I haue assured prooffe that thou becommest honest, and thus with teares in his eyes and his heart readie to burst with sighes, he was silent, when his wife striken with remorse of conscience, leaping out of her bedde in her smocke, humbly confessing all, craued pardon, promising if he should pardon this offence which was new begun in her, shee would become a new reformed woman, and neuer after so much as in thought, giue him any occasion of suspition of ielousie, the patient husband not willing to vrge his wife, tooke her at her word, and told her that when he found her so reclaimed, he would as afore he had done, vse her louingly and as his wife, but till he was so perswaded of her honestie, he wold pay her stil slips for his pleasure, charging her not to reueale any thing to his friend, or to make it knowne to him that hee was priuy

to their loues. Thus the debate ended, I gesse in some kinde greeting, and the Gentleman went abroad to see his pastures, leauing his wife in bed full of sorrow and almost renting her heart asunder with sighs, assoone as he was walked abroad, the Gentleman his friend came to the house and asked for the goodman, the pander that was priuy to all their practises, said, that his maister was gone abroad to see his pastures, but his mistresse was in bed, why then saies he, I will go and raise her vp, so comming into the chamber and kissing her, meaning as hee was wont to have vsed other accustomed dalliance, shee desired him to abstaine with broken sighes & her eyes full of teares, he wondering what should make her thus discontent, asked her what was the cause of her sorrow, protesting with a solemne oath, that if any had done her iniury, he wold reuenge it, were it with hazard of his life, she then tolde him scarce being able to speake for weeping, that shee had a sute to mooue him in, which if he granted vnto her, she would hold him in loue and affection without change next her husband for euer, he promised to do whatsoever it were, then saies she, swear vpon a Byble you will do it without exception, with that he tooke a Byble that laie in the window & swore, that whatsoever she requested him to do, were it to the losse of his life, he would without exception performe it. Then she holding downe her head

and blushing, began thus. I need not quoth shee make manifest how grosly and greeuously you and I haue both offended God, and wronged the honest Gentleman my husband and your friend, hee putting a speciall trust in vs both, & assuring such earnest affiance in your vnfained friendship, that hee euen committeth me his wife, his loue, his second life, into your bosome, this loue haue I requited with inconstancy, in playing the harlot, that faith that he repositeth in you, haue you returned with trechery and falshood, in abusing mine honesty and his honor, now a remorse of conscience toucheth me for my sinnes, that I hartily repent, and vow euer hereafter to liue onely to my husband, and therefore my sute is to you, that from hencefoorth you shall neuer so much as motion any dishonest question vnto mee, nor seeke any vnlawfull pleasure or conuersing at my handes, this is my sute, and herevnto I haue sworne you, which oath if you obserue as a faithfull gentleman, I will conceale from my husband what is past, and rest in honest sort your faithfull friend for euer, at this shee burst afresh into teares, and vttered such sighes, that he thought for very grieffe her hart would haue claue asunder. The Gentleman astonied at this straunge Metamorphosis of his mistresse, sat a good while in a maze, and at last taking her by the hand, made this reply, so God helpe mee faire sweeting, I am glad of this

motion, and wondrous ioyfull that God hath put such honest thoughts into your mind, & hath made you the meanes to reclaime mee from my folly, I feele no lesse remorse then you doo, in wronging so honest a friend as your husband, but this is the frailnesse of man, and therefore to make amends, I protest a new, neuer hereafter so much as in thought, as to motion you of dishonestie, onely I craue you be silent, she promised that and so they ended. And so for that time they parted, at noone the gentleman came home and cheerfully saluted his wife and asked if dinner were ready, and sent for his friend, vsing him wonderfully familiarly, giuing him no occasion of mistrust, and so pleasantly they past away the day together, at night when his wife and he went to bed, shee told him all, what had past betweene her and his friend, and how she had bound him with an oath, and that hee voluntarily of himselfe swore as much being hartily sory that hee had so deeply offended so kinde a friend, the gentleman commended her wit, and found her afterward a reclaimed woman, shee liuing so honestly that she neuer gaue him any occasion of mistrust. Thus the wise gentleman reclaimed with silence a wanton wife, and retained an assured friend.

At this pleasant Tale all the boord was at a mutinie, and they said the gentleman did passing

wisely that wrought so cunningly for the safetie of his owne honor, but highly exclaiming against such a friend as would to his friend offer such villany, all condemning her that wold be false to so louing a husband. Thus they did diuersly descant & past away dinner, but this Tale wrought litle effect in me, for as one past grace, I delighted in change, but the gentleman that was his familiar and my Paramour, was so touched, that neuer after hee would touch me dishonestly, but reclaimed himselfe, abstained from me and became true to his friend, I wondring that according to his woonted custome, he did not seeke my company, he and I being one day in the chamber alone, and he in his dumpes, I began to dally with him, and to aske him why he was so straunge, and vsed not his accustomed faouours to me. He solemnely made answere, that though he had playd the foole in setting his fancy vpon an other mans wife, & in wronging his friend, yet his conscience was now touched with remorse, & euer since he heard the Tale afore rehearsed, hee had vowed in himselfe neuer to do my husband the like wrong againe: my husband quoth I, he is none of mine, he hath brought me from my friends and keepes mee here vnmarried, and therefore am I as free for you as for him, & thus began to grow clamorous, because I was debard of my lust, the gentleman seeing me shamelesse, wisht me to be silent, and sayd,



although you be but his friend, yet he hold you as deare as his wife, and therefore I will not abuse him, neither would I wish you to be familiar with any other, seeing you haue a friend that loues you so tenderly, much good counsaile he gaue me, but all in vaine, for I scorned it, and began to hate him, and resolued both to be ridde of him and my supposed husband, for falling in an other familiar of my husbands, I so inueagled him with sweet words, that I caused him to make a peece of mony to steale me away, and so carry me to London, where I had not liued long with him, ere he seeing my light behauour, left mee to the world, and to shift for my selfe. Here by my example may you note the inconstant life of Courtezens and common harlots, who after they haue lost their honestie, care not who grow into their fauour, nor what villany they commit, they fancy all as long as crownes last, and only ayme at pleasure and ease, they cleaue like Caterpillars to the tree, and consume the fruit where they fall, they be Vultures that praie on men aliue, and like the Serpent sting the bosome wherein they are nourished. I may best discourse their nature, because I was one of their profession, but now beeing metamorphosed, I holde it meritorious for mee to warne women from being such wantons, and to giue a caueat to men, least they addict themselves to such stragling strumpettes, as loue none, though they like all, but

affectionate only for profit, and when he hath spent all, they beate him out of doores with the prodigall childe, but stopping heere, till occasion serue mee fitter to discouer the manner of Courtezins, to my selfe, who now being brought to London, and left here at randon, was not such a housedoue while any friend staid with me, but that I had visite some houses in London, that could harbour as honest a woman as my selfe, when as therefore I was left to my selfe, I remoued my lodging, and gat mee into one of those houses of good hospitalitie whereunto persons resort, commonly called a Trugging house, or to be plaine, a whore house, where I gaue my selfe to entertaine al companions, sitting or standing at the doore like a staule, to allure or draw in wanton passengers, refusing none that wold with his purse purchase me to be his, to satisfie the disordinate desire of his filthie lust, now I began not to respect parsonage, good qualities, to the gracious fauour of the man, when eye had no respect of person, for the oldest lecher was as welcom as the youngest louer, so he broght meate in his mouth, otherwise I pronounce against him,

*Si nihil attuleris ibis homere foras.*

I waxed thus in this hell of voluptuousnes, daily worse & worse, yet hauing as they terme it, a respect to the maine chance, as neare as I could to auoyd diseases, and to keepe my selfe braue

in apparell, although I payd a kind of tribute to the Bawde, according as the number and benefite of my companions did exceed, but neuer could I bee brought to be a pickpocket or theeuish, by any of their perswasions, although I wanted daily no instructions to allure me to that villany, for I thinke nature had wrought in me a contrary humor, otherwise my bad nourture, and conuersing with such bad company had brought me to it, mary in all their vices I carried a brazen face & was shamelesse, for what Ruffian was there in London, that would vtter more desperate oaths then I in mine anger, what to spet, quaffe, or carouse more diuelishly or rather damnable then my selfe, & for beastly communication *Messalyne* of Rome might haue bin wayting mayd, besides, I grew so grafted in sin, that *Consuetudo peccandi tollebat sensum peccati*, Custome of sin, tooke away the feeling of the sin, for I so accustomedly vse my selfe to all kinde of vice, that I accounted swearing no sinne, whordome, why I smile at that, and could prophanely saie, that it was a sin which God laught at, gluttony I held good fellowship, & wrath honor and resolution, I dispised God, nay in my conscience I might easily haue been persuaded there was no God, I contemned the preachers, and when any wisht mee to reforme my life, I bad away with the Puritan, and if any yoong woman refused to be as vitious euerie way as my selfe, I would

then say, gip fine soule, a yoong Saint will prooue an old diuel, I neuer would go to the Church and Sermons, I vtterly refused, holding them as needles Tales told in a Pulpit, I would not bend mine eares to the hearing of any good discourse, but still delighted in iangling Ditties of rybaudrie, thus to the greefe of my friendes, hazard of my soule, and consuming of my bodie, I spent a yeare or two in this base and bad kinde of life, subiect to the whistle of euerie desperate Ruffian, till on a time, there resorted to our house a Cloathier, a proper yoong man, who by fortune, comming first to drinke, espying mee, asked mee if I would drinke with him, there needed no great intreatie, for as then I wanted company, and so clapt me downe by him, and began verie pleasantly then to welcome him, the man being of himselfe modest and honest, noted my personage, and iuditally reasoned of my strumpetlike behaiour, and inwardly as after he reported vnto mee, greeued that so foule properties were hidden in so good a proportion, and that such rare wit and excellent bewtic, was blemisht with whoredomes base deformitie, in so much that hee began to think well of me, and to wish that I were as honest as I was bewtifull. Againe, see how God wrought for my conuersion, since I gaue my selfe to my loose kinde of life, I neuer liked any so well as him, insomuch that I began to iudge of euerie part, and me

thought he was the properest man that euer I saw, thus we sat both amorous of other, I lasciuously, & he honestly, at last he questioned with me what country woman I was, and why being so proper a woman, I would beseem to dwel or lie in a base Alehouse, especially in one that had a bad name, I warrant you hee wanted no knauish reply to fit him, for I tolde him the house was as honest as his mothers, marry if there were in it a good wench or two, that would pleasure their friends at a neede, I gesse by his noase what porredge hee loued, and that hee hated none such, well, seeing mee in that voice hee said little, but shaked his head, payd for the beere and went his way, only taking his leaue of me with a kisse, which me thought was the sweetest that euer was giuen mee, assoone as hee was gone, I began to thinke what a handsome man hee was, and wisht that he wold come and take a nights lodging with me, sitting in a dumpe to thinke of the quaintnes of his personage, til other companions came in, that shakte mee out of that melancholie, but assoone againe as I was secrete to my selfe, hee came into my remembrance, passing ouer thus a day or two, this Cloathier came againe to our house, whose sight cheared mee vp, for that spying him out at a Casement, I ranne downe the staires and met him at the doore, and hartily welcomed him, & asked him if he wold drinke, I come for that purpose

saies he, but I will drinke no more below but in a Chamber, marry sir quoth I you shal, and so brought him into the fairest roome, in their sitting there together drinking, at last the Cloathier fell to kissing and other dalliance, wherein he found me not coy, at last told mee that he would willingly haue his pleasure of mee, but the roome was too lightsome, for of all things in the world, he could not in such actions away with a light Chamber, I consented vnto him, and brought him into a room more darke, but still hee said it was too light, then I carried him into a farther Chamber, where drawing a buckeram curtain afore the window, and closing the curtaines of the bed, I asked him smiling, if that were close inough, no sweet loue saies he, the curtain is thin & not broad inough for the window, peraduenture some watching eye may espie vs, my heart misdoubts, & my credit is my life, good loue if thou hast a more close room then this, bring me to it, why then quoth I follow me, & with that I brought him into a backe loft, where stood a litle bed only appointed to lodge suspitious persons, so darke that at noone daies it was impossible for any man to see his owne hands, how now sir quoth I, is not this darke inough, he sitting him downe on the bed side, fetcht a deep sigh, & said indifferēt, so, so, but there is a glimpse of light in at the tyles, some bodie may by fortune see vs, in faith no quoth I,

none but God, God saies hee, why can God see vs here, good sir quoth I, why I hope you are not so simple, but Gods eyes are so cleare, and penetrating, that they can peirce through wals of brasse, and that were we inclosed neuer so secretly, yet we are manifestly seene to him, and alas quoth he sweet loue, if God see vs shal we not be more ashamed to doo such a filthy act before him then before men, I am sure thou art not so shameles but thou woldst blush & be afraid to haue the meanest commoner in London see thee in the actiõ of thy filthy lust, and doest thou not shame more to haue God, the maker of all thinges see thee, who reuengeth sin with death, he whose eyes are clearer then the Sun, who is the searcher of the heart, and holdeth vengeance in his handes to punish sinners. Consider sweete loue, that if man and wife would be ashamed to haue any of their friendes see them in the act of generation, or performing the rightes of marriage which is lawfull, and allowed before God, yet for modestie do it in the most couert they may, then how impudent or gracelesse should we bee, to fulfill our filthie lust before the eyes of the Almighty, who is greater then all kings or princes on the earth. Oh let vs tremble that we but once durst haue such wanton communication in the hearing of his diuine Maiesty, who pronounceth damnation for such as giue themselues ouer to adultery. It is not possible saith the Lorde, for any

whoremaister or lasciuious wanton, to enter into the kingdome of God, for such sinnes whole Cities haue suncke, kingdomes haue beene destroyed, and though God suffreth such wicked liuers to escape for a while, yet at length he payeth home, in this world with beggarie, shame, diseases, or infamy, and in the other life, with perpetuall dampnation, weigh but the inconuenience that growes through thy loose life, thou art hated of all that are good, despised of the vertuous, and only well thought of, of reprobats, raskals, ruffians, and such as the world hates, subiect to their lust, and gaining thy liuing at the hands of euey diseased leacher. Oh what a miserable trade of life is thine that liuest of the vomit of sin, in hunting after maladies, but suppose, while thou art yoong, thou art faouored of thy companions, when thou waxest old, and that thy beautie is vaded, then thou shalt be loathed and despised, euen of them that profest most loue vnto thee, then good sister call to minde the basenesse of thy life, the hainous outrage of thy sin, that God doth punish it with the rigor of his iustice, oh thou art made bewtifull, faire, and well fourmed, and wilt thou then by thy filthie lust make thy bodie, which if thou bee honest, is the Temple of God, the habitation of the diuel. Consider this, and call to God for mercy, and amend thy life, leaue this house, and I will become thy faithfull friend in all honestie,



and vse thee as mine owne sister, at this, such a remorse of conscience, such a fearefull terror of my sin strooke into my minde, that I kneeled downe at his feete, and with teares besought him he would helpe me out of that misery, for his exhortation had caused in me a loathing of my wicked life, and I wold not only become a reformed woman, but hold him as dear as my father that gaue me life, whereupon he kist me with teares, and so we went downe together, where wee had further communication, and presently he prouided me an other lodging, where I not only vsde my selfe so honestly, but also was so penitent euery day in teares for my former folly, that he tooke me to his wife, and how I haue liued since and loathed filthie lust, I referre my selfe to the Maies-  
tie of God, who knoweth the secrets of all hearts.

Thus Country men I haue publisht the conuersion of an English Courtizen, which if any way it bee profitable either to forewarne youth, or withdraw bad persons to goodnesse, I haue the whole end of my desire, only crauing euery father would bring vp his children with carefull nourture, and euery yoong woman respect the honour of her virginitie.

But amongst all these blythe and merry Iestes, a little by your leaue, if it be no farther then Fetterlane, oh take heed, thats too nye the Temple, what

then, I will draw as neare the signe of the white Hart as I can, and breathing my selfe by the bottle Ale-house, Ile tell you a merry Iest, how a Conny-catcher was vsed.

*A merry Tale taken not far from Fetter Lane end, of a new found Conny-catcher, that was Conny-catcht himselfe.*

SO it fell out, that a Gentleman was sicke and spurblinde, and went to a good honest mans house to sojourne, and taking vp his Chamber grew so sick, that the goodman of the house hired a woman to keep and attend day and night vpon the Gentleman, this poore woman hauing a good conscience, was carefull of his welfare and lookte to his dyet, which was so slender, that the man although sicke, was almost famisht, so that the woman would no longer staie, but bad his Hoste prouide him of some other to watch with him, sith it greeued her to see a man lye and starue for want of foode, especially being set on the score for meate and drinke in the space of a fortnight, foure poundes. The goodman of the house at last, hearing how that poore woman did finde fault with his scoring, the Gentleman not only put her out of doores without wages, but would haue arrested her, for taking away his good name, and defaming and slaundering him, and with that calling one of

his neighbours to him, sayd neighbour, whereas such a bad toongued woman hath reported to my discredite, that the Gentleman that lyes sicke in my house wants meat, and yet runnes very much on the score, I pray you iudge by his diet whether hee bee famisht or no, first in the morning, he hath a Cawdell next his heart, halfe an houre after that, a quart of Sugar sops, halfe an houre after that a neck of mutton in broath, halfe an houre after that Chickens in sorrell sops, and an houre after that, a Ioynt of rostmeat for his dinner, now neighbour, hauing this prouision, you may iudge whether he be spoyld for lacke of meate or no, and to what great charges his dyet will arise, whereas in truth, the poore Gentleman would haue beene glad of the least of these, for he could get none at all, but the cousoning knaue, thought to verse vpon him, and one day seeing mony came not briefly to the Gentleman, tooke some of his apparrell, his cloake I gesse, and pawnde it for fortie shillings, whereas God wot, all he eate in that time was not woorth a Crowne, well, the Gentleman seeing how the knaue went about to Conny-catch him, and that he had taken his cloake, smothered all for reuenge, and watcht opportunitie to do it, and on a time, seeing the goodman out, borrowed a cloake far better then his owne, of the boy, saying that he would goe to a friend of his to fetch money for his maister & discharge the house, the boy

lending it him, away walks the Gentleman though  
weake after this great diet, and neuer came at the  
Taylors house to answeere him cloake or  
mony. And thus was he Conny-catcht  
himselfe, that thought to haue verst  
vpon another.



# ERRATA

The following emendations have been made in the original text :—

Page	Line		In the Original reads:
3	26	'not'	'(not'
6	13	' <i>erit</i> '	' <i>eit</i> '
21	18	'in gold'	'in in gold'
23	25	'when'	'where'
28	11	'set'	'sec'
47	18	'silkes,'	'silkes :'
57	2	'whom'	'whem'
58	28	'a riuall.'	'ariuall.'
60	1	' <i>wife</i> '	' <i>wise</i> '
68	20	'you'	'yon'
71	21	'the fruit'	'th efruit'
73	12	'more desperate'	'mor edesperate'
80	22	'poundes'	'ponndes'













PR Greene, Robert  
2544 The thirde & last part of  
T5 conny-catching. [1923]  
1923

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