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THOMAS
OF
READING:

OR,
The sixe worthie Yeomen
of the West.

Now the sixth time corrected and enlarged
By *T. Dales*



LONDON,
Printed by ELIZ. ALLE for
ROBERT BIRD.
1632.




Reprinted, London, 1812

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The pleafant Historie of the Sixe worthy Yeomen of the Weft.

N the Dayes of King Henry the Firft, who was the firft King that instituted the High Court of Parliament, there lived nine Men, which for the Trade of Clothing, were famous thorowout all England. Which Art in thofe Dayes was held in high Reputation, both in refpect of the great Riches that thereby was gotten, as alfo of the Benefit it brought to the whole Common-wealth: the younger Sons of Knights and Gentlemen, to whom their Fathers would leaue no Lands, were moft commonly preferred to learne this Trade, to the End, that thereby they might liue in good Eftate, and driue forth their Dayes in Prosperity.

Among all Crafts this was the onely Chiefe, for that it was the greateft Merchandize, by the which our Country became famous thorowout all Nations. And it was verily thought, that the one Halfe the People

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ple in the Land lived in thofe Dayes thereby, and in fuch good Sort, that in the Common-wealth there were few or no Beggers at all : poore People, whom God lightly bleffed with moft Children, did by Means of this Occupation fo order them, that by the Time that they were come to be five or feuen Yeeres of Age, they were able to get their owne Bread : Idleneffe was then banifhed our Coaft, fo that it was a rare Thing to heare of a Thiefe in thofe Dayes. Therefore it was not without Caufe that Clothiers were then both honoured and loved, among whom thefe nine Perfons in this Kings Dayes were of great Credit, viz. *Tho. Cole* of Reading, *Gray* of Glocefter, *Sutton* of Salifburie, *Fitzallan* of Worcefter, (commonly called *William* of Worcefter) *Tom Doue* of Excefter, and *Simon* of Southampton, *alias Supbroth* : who were by the King called, The Sixe worthy Hufbands of the Weft. Then were there Three liuing in the North, that is to say, *Cutbert* of Kendall, *Hodgekins* of Hallifax, & *Martin Byram* of Manchester. Euery one of thefe kept a great Number of Seruants at Worke, Spinners, Carders, Weauers, Fullers, Dyers, Sheeremen, and Rowers, to the great Admiration of all thofe that came into their Houfes to behold them.

Now you fhall vnderftand, thofe gallant Clothiers, by Reafon of their dwelling Places, feperated themfelues in three feuerall Companies : *Gray* of Glocefter,

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ter, *William* of Worcester, and *Thomas* of Reading, because their Journey to London was all one Way, they conuerfed commonly together: And *Doue* of Excefter, *Sutton* of Salifburie, and *Simon* of Southampton, they in like Sort kept Company the one with the other, meeting euer all together at Bazingstoke: and the three Northerne Clothiers did the like, who commonly did not meet till they came to Bolomes Inne in London.

Moreouer, for the Love and Delight that these Westerne Men had each in others Companie, they did so prouide, that their Waines and themfelues would euer meet upon one Day in London at *Iarrats* Hall, surnamed the Gyant, for that hee furpassed all other Men of that Age, both in Stature & Strength: whose Meriments and memorable Deeds, I will fet downe vnto you in this following Discourse.

How King Henry sought the Fauour of all his Subjects, especially of the Clothiers. CHAP. 1.

THIS King *Henry*, who for his great Learning and Wifedome was called *Beauclarke*, beeing the third Son to the renowned Conquerour: after the Death of his Brother *William Ruffus*, tooke upon him the Government of this Land, in the Absence of his second Brother *Robert* Duke of Normandie, who at this Time
was

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was at Wars amongst the Infidels, and was chosen King of Jerufalem, the which he, for the Loue he bare to his owne Country, refused, and with great Honour returned from the Holy Land; of whose comming when King *Henry* vnderstood, knowing hee would make Claime to the Crowne, fought by all Meanes possible to winne the good Will of his Nobility, and to get the Fauor of the Commons by Courtesie: for the obtaining whereof hee did them many Fauours, thereby the better to strengthen himselfe against his Brother.

It chanced on a Time, as he, with one of his Sonnes, and diuers of his Nobilitie, rode from London towards Wales, to appease the Fury of the Welshmen, which then began to raise themselues in Armes against his Authority, that he met with a great Number of Waines loaden with Cloth, comming to London, and seeing them still driue one after another so many together, demanded whose they were: the Waine-men answered in this Sort: *Coles* of Reading (quoth they.) Then by and by the King asked another, saying, Whose Cloth is all this? Old *Coles*, quoth hee: and againe anon after he asked the same Question to others, & still they answered, Old *Coles*. And it is to be remembered, that the King met them in such a Place so narrow and streight, that hee with the Rest of
his

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his Traine, were faine to stand as clofe to the Hedge, whilest the Carts paffed by, the which at that Time being in Number about Two Hundred, was neere hand an Houre ere the King could get Roome to be gone : fo that by his long Stay, he began to be displeafed, although the Admiration of that Sight did much qualifie his Furie ; but breaking out in Discontent, by Reafon of his Stay, he faid, I thought Old *Cole* had got a Commiffion for all the Carts in the Country to cary his Cloth. And how if he haue (quoth one of the Wainmen) doth that grieue you, good Sir ? Yes, good Sir, faid our King, what fay you to that ? The Fellow feeing the King (in asking that Queftion) to bend his Browes, though he knew not what he was, yet being abafht, he answered thus : Why, Sir, if you be angry, no body can hinder you ; for poffible, Sir, you haue Anger at Commandement. The King feeing him in vttering of his Words to quier and quake, laughed heartily at him, as well in refpect of his fimple Anfwer, as at his Feare : and fo foone after the laft Wain went by, which gaue preſent Paſſage vnto him and his Nobles : and thereupon entring into Communication of the Commoditie of Cloathing, the King gaue Order at his Home Returne, to haue Old *Cole* brought before his Maieftie, to the Intent he might haue Conference with him, noting him to be a Subject of great Ability : but by that Time
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he came within a Mile of Stanes, he met another Company of Waines in like Sort laden with Cloth, whereby the King was driuen into a further Admiracion: and demanding whose they were, anfwere was made in this Sort: They be Good-man *Suttons* of Salifbury, good Sir: and by that Time a Score of them were past, he asked againe, faying: whose are these? *Suttons* of Salifburie, qd. they, and so still, as often as the King asked that Question, they answered, *Suttons* of Salifburie. God fend me many such *Suttons*, said the King. And thus the farther he trauelled Westward, more Waines and more he met continually: upon which Occasion he said to his Nobles, That it would neuer grieue a King to die for the Defence of a fertile Countrie and faithfull Subiects. I alwayes thought (quoth he) that Englands Valor was more then her Wealth, yet now I see her Wealth sufficient to maintaine her Valour, which I will seeke to cherish in all I may, and with my Sword keepe my selfe in Possession of that I haue, Kings and Louers con brooke no Partners: and therefore let my Brother *Robert* thinke, that although hee was Heire to England by Birth, yet I am King by Possession. All his Fauourers I must account my Foes, and will serue them as I did the vngratefull Earle of Shrewsbury, whose Lands I have seized, and banisht his Body. But now we will leaue the King to his Iourney into Wales, and waiting his
Home

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Home Returne, in the meane Time tell you the Meeting of these iolly Clothiers at London.

How William of Worcester, Gray of Glocester, and Old Cole of Reading, met all together at Reading, and of their Communication by the Way as they rode to London. CHAP. 2.

WHEN *Gray* of Glocester and *William* of Worcester were come to Reading, according to their Custome, they always called old *Cole* to haue his Companie to London, who also duely attended their comming, hauing prouided a good Breakefast for them : and when they had well refreshed themselues, they tooke their Horfes and rode on towards the Cittie : and in their Iourney *William* of Worcester asked them if they had not heard of the Earle of Morigne his Escape out of the Land? What is he fled? qd. *Gray*. I muse much at this Matter, being in such great Regard with the King as he was : but I pray you, doe you not know the Cause of his going? qd. *Cole*. The common Report, quoth *Gray*, is this, that the couetous Earle, who through a greedy Desire, neuer left begging of the King for one Thing or other, and his Request being now denied him, of meere Obstinacy and wilfull Forwardnesse, hath banished himselfe out of the Land, & quite forsaken the Country of Cornwall, hauing made

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a Vow neuer to fet Foote within England againe, and, as Report goeth, he with the late banifht Earle of Shrewsbury, haue ioyned themfelues with *Robert Duke* of Normandy, againft the King, the which Action of theirs hath inflamed the Kings Wrath, that their Ladies with their Children are quite turned out of Doores fuccourleffe and friendleffe, fo that it is told me, they wander up and downe the Country like forlorne People, and although many doe pitie them, yet few doe releue them.

A lamentable Hearing, qd. *William* of Worcester, & with that cafting their Eyes afide, they efpyed *Tom Doue* with the Reft of his Companions come riding to meete them, who as foone as they were come thither, fell into fuch pleafant Difcourfes, as did fhorten the long Way they had to Colebroke, where alwayes at their comming towards London they dined ; and being once entred into their Inne, according to olde Cuf-tome, good Cheere was provided for them : for thefe Clothiers were the chiefest Guests that trauailed along the Way : and this was fure as an Act of Parliament, that *Tom Doue* could not digeft his Meat without Mu-ficke, nor drinke Wine without Women, fo that his Hofteffe being a merry Wench, would oftentimes call in Two or Three of her Neighbours Wiues to keepe him Company, where, ere they parted, they were made

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as pleafant as Pies. And this being a continuall Cuf-
tome amongft them when they came thither, at length
the Womens Husbands beganne to take Exceptions at
their Wives going thither : whereupon great Contro-
uerfie grew betweene them, in fuch Sort, that when
they were moft reftained, then they had moft Defire
to worke their Wills : now gip (quoth they) muft we
be fo tyed to our Tafke, that wee may not drinke with
our Friends? fie, fie, vpon thefe yellow Hofe , will
no other Die ferue your turne? haue wee thus long
bin your Wiues, and doe you now miftruff vs? verily
you eate too much Salt, and that makes you grow
cholericke, badde Liuers iudge all Others the like,
but in Faith you fhall not bridle us fo like Affes, but
wee will goe to our Friends, when we are fent for,
and doe you what you can. Well, quoth their Huf-
bands, if you be fo head-ftiong, we will tame you :
it is the Duty of honeft Women to obey their Huf-
bands Sayings. And of honeft Men (quoth they) to
thinke well of their Wives ; but who doe fooner im-
peach their Credit, then their Husbands charging
them, if they doe but fmile, that they are subtill ; and
if they doe but winke, they account them wily : if sad
of Countenance, then fullen : if they be froward, then
they are counted Shrewes : and fheepifh if they bee
gentle : if a Woman keepe her Houfe, then you will
fay fhe is melancholy, if fhee walke abroade, then you
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call her a Gadder ; a Puritane, if ſhe be precife ; and a Wanton, if ſhee be pleafant : fo there is no Woman in the World that knowes how to pleaſe you : that we think our felues accurſt to be married Wiues, liuing with ſo many Woes. Theſe men, of whoſe Company you forewarne vs, are (for aught that euer we ſaw) both honeſt and courteous, and in Wealth farre beyond your felues : then what Reaſon is there, why we ſhould reſtraine to viſit them ? is their Good-will ſo much to be requited with Scorne, that their Coſt may not be counteruailed with our Company ? if a Woman be diſpoſed to play light of Love, alas, alas, doe you thinke that you can preuent her ? Nay, wee will abide by it, that the Reſtraint of Liberty inforceth Women to be lewd : for where a Woman cannot be truſted, ſhe cannot thinke her ſelfe beloved, and if not beloved, what Cauſe hath ſhe to care for ſuch a One ? therefore, Huſbands, reforme your Opinions, and doe not worke your owne Woes, without our Diſcredit. The Clothiers, we tell you, are jolly Fellows, and but in reſpect of our Courteſie, they would ſcorne our Company.

The Men hearing their Wiues ſo well to plead for themſelues, knew not how to answer, but ſaid, they would put the Burden on their Conſciences, if they deale vniuſtly with them, and ſo left them to their owne Wills. The Women hauing thus conquered
their

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their Husbands Conceits, would not leaue the Fauour of their Friends for Frownes, and as aboute the Rest *Tom Doue* was the most pleafantest, fo was he had in most Reputation with the Women, who for his Sake made this Song :

Welcome to Towne, *Tam Doue, Tom Doue,*
The merriest Man aliue,
Thy Company still we loue, we loue,
God grant thee well to thriue.
And neuer will depart from thee,
For better or worfe, my Ioy,
For thou shalt still haue our good Will,
Gods Blessing on my sweet Boy.

This Song went vp and downe through the whole Country, and at length became a Dance among the common Sort, so that *Tom Doue*, for his Mirth and good Fellowship, was famous in euery Place. Now when they came to London, they were welcome to the vast *Iarrat* the Gyant, & as soone as they were alighted, they were saluted by the Merchants, who waited their comming thither, and alwayes prepared for them a costly Supper, where they commonly made their Bargaine, and vpon euery Bargaine made, they still vsed to fend some Tokens to the Clothiers Wiues. The next Morning they went to the Hall, where they met the Northerne Clothiers, who greeted one another
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in this Sort. What, my Masters of the West, well met : what Cheere ? what Cheer ? Euen the best Cheere our Merchants could make vs, (quoth *Gray*.) Then you could not chuse but fare well, quoth *Hodgekins* : and you be weary of our Company, adieu, quoth *Sutton* : Not so, said *Martin*, but shall wee not haue a Game ere we goe ? Yes faith for an Hundred Pounds. Well said, Old *Cole*, said they : and with that *Cole* and *Gray* went to the Dice with *Martin* and *Hodgekins* ; and the Dice running on *Hodgekins* Side, *Coles* Money began to waste. Now by the Masse, quoth *Cole*, my Money shines as bad as Northerne Cloth. When they had played long, *Gray* stept to it, and recouered againe the Money that *Cole* had lost. But while they were thus playing, the Rest being delighted in contrary Matters, euery Man satisfied his owne Humour.

Tom Doue called for Musicke, *William* of Worcester for Wine, *Sutton* set his Delight in hearing Merry Tales, *Simon* of South-hampton got him into the Kitchen, and to the Pottage Pot he goes, for he esteemed more a Messie of Pottage, than of a Venizon Pastie. Now, Sir, *Cutbert* of Kendall was of an other Mind, for no Meate pleased him so well as Mutton, such as was laced in a red Petticoate. And you shall vnderstand, that alwayes when they went to Dice, they got into
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Bofomes Inne ; which was so called of his Name that kept it, who being a foule Slouen, went alwayes with his Nose in his Bosome, and one Hand in his Pocket, the other on his Staffe, figuring forth a Description of cold Winter, for he alwayes wore two Coates, two Caps, two or three Paire of Stockings, and a high Pair of Shooes, ouer the which he drew on a great Pair of lined Slippers, and yet would oft complaine of Cold : wherefore of all Men generally he was called Old Bosome, and his Houfe Bofomes Inne.

This Lump of cold Ice had lately married a young Wife, who was as wily as she was wanton, and in her Company did *Cutbert* onely delight, and the better to make Passage to his Loue, he would often thus commune with her : I muse, good Wife, quoth he. Good Wife ? quoth she : Verily, Sir, in mine Opinion, there is none good but God, and therefore call me Mistresse. Then said *Cutbert*, Faire Mistris, I haue often mused, that you being a proper Woman, could find in your Heart for to match with such a greazie Carle as this, an euill mannered Mate, a foule Lump of Kitchen-Stuffe, and such a One as is indeede a Scorne of Men ; how can you like him that all Women mislikes ; or loue such a loathsome Creature ? me thinks verily it should grieue you to lend him a Kisse, much more to lie with him. Indeed, Sir, quoth she, I had but hard Fortune in this respect, but my Friends would have it
fo,

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fo, and truly my Liking and my Love towards him are alike, he neuer had the one, nor neuer fhall get the other: yet I may fay to you, Before I married him, there were diuers proper young Men that were Sutors vnto me, who loued mee as their Liues, and glad was he that could get my Company; thofe were my golden Dayes, wherein my Pleafure abounded, but thefe Yeeres of Care and Griefe, wherein my Sorrowes excede. Now no Man regards mee, no Man cares for me, and albeit in fecret they might beare mee Good-will, yet who dares fhew it? and this is a double Griefe, he carries ouer me fo iealous a Minde, that I cannot looke at a Man, but prefently he accufeth me of Inconftancy, although (I proteft) without Caufe.

And in troth, qd. *Cutbert*, he fhould haue Caufe to complaine for fomewhat, were I as you. As fure as I live, and fo he fhall, quoth ſhe, if he doe not change his Byas. *Cutbert* hearing her fay fo, began to grow further in requeſting her Fauour, wiſhing he might be her Seruant and fecret Friend, and the better to obtaine his Deſire, he gaue her diuers Gifts, infomuch that ſhe began Something to liſten vnto him: and albeit ſhe liked well of his Speeches, yet would ſhe blame him, and take him up very ſhort ſometimes for the ſame, till in the End, *Cutbert* fhewed himſelfe to be desperate, ſaying hee would drowne himſelfe rather than

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then liue in her Difsaine. O my fweet Heart not fo, quoth ſhee, God forbid I ſhould be the Death of any Man : Comfort thy ſelfe, kind *Cutbert*, and take this Kiſſe in Token of further Kindneſſe, and if thou wilt haue my Fauour, thou muſt be wife and circumſpect, and in my Hutbands Sight I would alwayes haue thee to find Fault with my Doings, blame my bad Hufwifries, diſpraiſe my Perſon, and take Exceptions at every Thing, whereby he will be as well pleaſed, as *Simon* of South-hampton with a Meſſe of Pottage.

Deare Miſtreſſe, quoth he, I will fulfill your Charge to the vttermoſt, ſo that you will not take my Left in earneſt. ſhee answered, Thy fouleſt Speeches I will eſteeme the faireſt, and take euery Diſpraiſe to be a Praise from thee, turning each Word to the contrary : and ſo for this Time adieu, good *Cutb.* for Supper Time drawes neere, & it is meet for me to looke for my Meat. With that down comes old Boſome, calling his Wife, ſaying, Ho, *Winifred*, is Supper ready ? they haue done playing aboute : therefore let the Chamberlaine couer the Table. By & by Huſband, qd. ſhe, it ſhall be done ſtraight-way. How now, my Maſters, who wins ? qd. *Cutbert*. Our Money walkes to the Weſt, qd. *Martin : Cole* hath woone 40 Pounds of me, and *Gray* hath gotten well : the beſt is, qd. *Hodgekins*, they will pay for our Supper : then let vs

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haue good Store of Sacke, qd. *Sutton*. Content, said *Cole*, for I promise you, I strue not to grow rich by Dice-playing, therefore call for what you will, I will pay for all. Yea, said *Simon*! Chamberlaine, I pray thee bring a whole Bottle of Pottage for me. Now *Tom Doue* had all the Fidlers at a Becke of his Finger, which follow him up and down the City, as diligent as little Chickens after a Hen, and made a Vow, that there should want no Musicke. And at that Time there liued in London a Musician of great Reputation, named *Reior*, who kept his Seruants in such costly Garments, that they might seeme to come before any Prince. Their Coates were all of one Colour; and it is said, that afterward the Nobility of this Land, noting it for a seemely Sight, vsed in like Maner to keepe their Men all in one Liuary. This *Reior* was the most skilfullest Musician that liued at that Time, whose Wealth was uery great, so that all the Instruments whereon his Seruants plaid, were richly garnished with Studdes of Siluer, and some Gold: the Bowes belonging to their Violines were all likewise of pure Siluer. Hee was also for his Wifedome called to great Office in the City, who also builded (at his owne Cost) the Priory & Hospitall of S. Bartholomew in Smithfield. His Seruants being the best Conforts in the City, were by *Tom Doue* appointed to play before the young Princes. Then Supper being brought
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to the Boord, they all fat down, and by and by after comes vp their Oast, who tooke his Place among them : and anon after, the Good-wife in a red Peti-cote & a Wastcoate, comes among them as white as a Lilly, saying, My Masters, you are welcome, I pray you be merry. Thus falling close to their Meate, when they had well fed, they found Leyfure to talke one with another : at that Time *Cu'b.* began thus to find Fault, Ywis, my Oast, quoth he, you haue a wife Hufwife to your Wife, heere is Meate drest on a new Fashion? God sends Meate, and the Deuill sends Cooks. Why what ailes the Meate, quoth she, serues it not your Turnes? better Men then your selfe are content withall, but a paultry Companion is euer worst to please. Away, you sluttish Thing, qd. *Culbert*, your Husband hath a sweet Jewell of you : I maruell such a graue ancient Man would match himselfe with such a young Giglot, that hath as much Handsomenes in her as good Hufwifry, which is iust nothing at all. Well, Sir, said shee, in regard of my Husbands Pre- sence I am loth to aggrauate Anger, otherwise I would tell thee thy owne. Goe to, what needs all this, quoth the Company? in good Faith, *Cu'bert*, you are to b'ame, you find Fault where none is. Tush, I must speake my Mind, quoth *Cu'bert*, I cannot dissemble, I trust the good Man thinkes neuer the worse of me : so I have his good Will, what the foule Euill care I
for

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for his Wifes. Enough, quoth *Tom Doue*, let us with Muficke remoue thefe Brabbles, we meane to be merry, and not melancholy. Then, faid old *Cole*, Now truft me, *Cutbert*, we will haue your Oaffeffe and you Friends ere we part : here, Woman, I drinke to you, and regard not his Words, for he is babbling wherefoeuer he comes. Quoth the Woman, Nothing grieues me fo much, as that hee should thus openly checke mee : if he had found any Thing amiffe, he might haue fpied a better Time to tell me of it than nowe, ywis he need not thruft my bad Hufwifrie into my Hufbands Head, I liue not fo quietly with him, God wot : and with that ſhe wept. Come, *Cutbert*, quoth they, drinke to her, and ſhake Hands and be Friends. Come on, you puling Baggage, quoth he, I drinke to you, here will you pledge mee and ſhake Hands ? No, (quoth ſhee) I will ſee thee choackt firſt, ſhake Hands with thee ? I will ſhake Hands with the Deuill as ſoon. Goe to, faid her Husband, you ſhall ſhake Hands with him then : If you will not ſhake Hands, Ile ſhake you : what, you young Hufwife ? Well, Husband, faid ſhe, it becomes a Woman to obey her Husband, in regard whereof I drink to him. Thats well faid, quoth the Company : & ſo ſhe tooke her Leaue & went downe. And within a while after they paid the Shot, and departed thence to *Iarrats Hall*, where they went to their Lodging ; and the
next

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next Day they tooke their way homewards all together : and comming to Colebroke, they tooke vp their Lodging : and it was *Coles* Custome to deliuer his Money to the Goodwife of the House to keepe it till Morning, which in the End turned to his utter Destruction, as hereafter shall be shewed.

How Grayes Wife of Gloucester, with One or Two more of her Neighbours, went to the Faire, where Seruants came to be hired, & how she tooke the Earle of Shrewsburies Daughter into her Seruice. CHAP. 3.

IT was wont to be an old Custome in Gloucestershire, that at a certaine Time in the Yeere, all such young Men and Maidens as were out of Service, resorted to a Faire that was kept neere Gloucester, there to be ready for any that would come to hire them, the young Men stood all on a Row on the one Side, and the Maidens on the other. It came to passe, that the Earle of Shrewsburies Daughter, whose Father was lately banished, being driven into great Distresse, and weary with Trauell, as one whose delicate Life was neuer vsed to such Toyle, fate her downe vpon the High-way Side, making this Lamentation :

O false and deceitfull World ! quoth she ; who is in thee that wishes not to be rid of thee, for thy Extremities are great ? Thou art deceitfull to all, and trusty to none. Fortune is thy Treasurer, who is like thy selfe,

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felfe, wauering and vnconstant, ſhe fetteth up Tyrants, beateth down Kings ; giveth Shame to ſome, and Renowne to others : Fortune giveth theſe Evils, and we ſee it not : with her Hands ſhe toucheth vs, & we feele it not : ſhe treads vs vnder Foot, and we know it not : ſhe ſpeakes in our Eares, and we heare her not : ſhe cries aloud, and we vnderſtand her not : And why ? becauſe we know her not, until Miſery doth make her manifeſt.

Ah, my deare Father, well maiſt thou doe. Of all Miſfortunes it is moſt vnhappy to be fortunate : and by this Miſfortune came my fall. Was euer good Lady brought to this Extremity ? What is become of my rare Jewels, my rich Aray, my ſumptuous Fare, my waiting Seruants, my many Friends, and all my vaine Pleaſures ? my Pleaſure is baniſht by Diſpleaſure, my Friends fled like Foes, my Seruants gone, my feaſting turned to faſting, my rich Array confumed to Raggies, and my Jewels decke out my chiefeſt Enemies : therefore of all Things the meaneſt State is beſt, Pouerty with Surety is better then Honour mixed with Feare : ſeeing God hath allotted me to this Miſery of Life, I will frame my Heart to embrace Humility, and carry a Mind anſwerable to my Miſfortunes : ſie on this vaine Title of Ladyſhip, how little doth it auaille the diſtreſſed ? No, no, I muſt therefore forget my Birth and Parentage, and think no
more

of Thomas of Reading.

more on my Fathers Houfe. Where I was wont to bee ferued, now will I learne to ferue, and plaine *Meg* fhall be my Name ; good Lord grant I may get a good Seruice, nay any Seruice fhall ferue, where I may haue Meat, Drinke, and Apparell. She had no fooner fpoken thefe Words, but ſhe fpied a Couple of Maidens more comming towards her, who were going to the Faire ; and bidding her good Morrow, asked her if ſhe went to the Faire. Yea, mary, qd. ſhe, I am a poore Mans Child that is out of Seruice, and I heare that at the Statute, Folkes doe come of Purpoſe to hire Seruants. True it is, ſaid the Maidens, and thither goe we for the ſame Purpoſe, and would be glad of your Company. With a good Will, and I am right glad of yours, ſaid ſhe, beſeeching you, good Maidens, you will doe me the Fauour, to tell me what Service were beſt for me : for the more too blame my Parents, they would neuer put me forth to know any Thing. Why what can you doe ? (quoth the Maidens) can you brew and bake, make Butter and Cheefe, and reape Corne well ? No verily, ſaid *Margaret*, but I would be right glad to learne to doe any Thing whatſoever it be. If you could ſpin or card, ſaid another, you might do excellent well with a Clothier, for they are the beſt Seruices that I know ; there you ſhall be ſure to fare well, and ſo live merrily.

Then

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Then *Margaret* wept, faying, alas, what fhall I doe? I was neuer brought vp to thefe Things. What, can you doe nothing? quoth they. No truly (quoth ſhe) that is good for any Thing, but I can read and write, and fowe, ſome Skill I haue in my Needle, and a little on my Lute: but this, I fee, will profit me nothing. Good Lord, quoth they, are you bookiſh? wee did neuer heare of a Maide before that could reade and write. And although you can doe no other Thing, yet poſſible you may get a Seruice, if you can behaue your ſelfe manerly. I pray you, qd. another, ſeeing you are bookiſh, will you doe ſo much as to reade a Love-Letter that is ſent me? for I was at a Friends of mine with it, and he was not at Home, and ſo I know not what is in it. I pray you let me ſee it, quoth *Margaret*, and I will ſhew you. Whereupon ſhe readeth as followeth.

O *Ienny*, my Joy, I die for thy Loue,
And now I heare ſay that thou doſt remoue:
And therefore, *Ienny*, I pray thee recite,
Where ſhall I meete thee ſoone at Night?

For why, with my Maſter no more will I ſtay,
But for thy Loue I will runne away:
O, *Ienny*, *Ienny*, thou putteſt me to paine,
That thou no longer wilt here remaine.

I will

of Thomas of Reading.

I will weare out my Shooes of Neats-Leather,
But thou and I will meete together,
And in spight of Fortune, Rat, or Mousse,
We will dwell together in one Houfe.

For who doth not Esteeme of thee,
Shall haue no Seruice done of me :
Therefore, good *Jenny*, haue a Care,
To meete poore *Fragment* at the Faire.

Now, alas, good Soule (quoth *Jenny*) I thinke he be the kindest young Man in the World. The Rest answered, that he seemed no lesse, and surely it appeareth that he is a pretty witty Fellow, quoth one of them, how finely hee hath written his Letter in Rime ; trust me, I will giue you a good Thing, and let me haue a Copy of it to fend to my Sweet-heart : that you shall with all my Heart : & so comming to the Faire, they tooke vp their Standing.

Within a while after, Goodwife *Gray* of Glocester came thither to store her selfe of diuers Commodities : and when she had bought what she would, she told her Neighbour she had great Need of a Maid-Servant or Twaine : therefore, qd. she, good Neighbour goe with me, and let me haue your Opinion. With a good Will, said her Neighbour, and together they went, and looking and viewing the Maidens ouer, she tooke speciall

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ſpeciall Notice of *Margaret*. Belieue me, quoth ſhe, there ſtands a very proper Maiden, and one of a mo-deſt and comely Countenance. Verily, ſaid her Neigh-bour, ſo ſhe is, as ever I looket upon.

The Maiden ſeeing them to view her ſo well, was ſo abaſhed, that a ſcarlet Colour ouerſpred her lilly Cheekes, which the Woman perceiuing, came vnto her, and aſked if ſhe were willing to ſerue. The Maid with a low Curteſie, and a moſt gentle Speech, anſwered, it was the onely Cauſe of her comming. Can you ſpinne or card? ſaid Good-wife *Gray*. Truly, Dame, ſaid ſhe, though my Cunning therein be but ſmall, my Good-will to learne is great, and I truſt my Diligence ſhall content you. What Wages will you take? quoth Good-wife *Gray*. I will referre that, ſaid *Margaret*, to your Conſcience and Courteſie, deſiring no more then what I ſhall deſerue. Then aſking what Coun-try-woman ſhe was, the Maiden wept, ſaying, Ah, good Dame, I was untimely borne in Shropſhire, of poore Parents, and yet not ſo needy as unfortunate, but Death hauing ended their Sorrowes, hath left me to the Cruelty of theſe enuious Times, to finiſh my Parents Tragedy with my Troubles. What, Maiden, ſaid her Dame, haue you a Care to doe your Buſines, and to live in God's Feare, and you ſhall haue no Care to regard Fortunes Frownes, and ſo they went Home together.

Now,

of Thomas of Reading.

Now, so soone as the Good-man saw her, hee asked his Wife where she had that Maiden? She said, at the Faire. Why then, quoth he, thou hast brought all the Faire away, and I doubt it were better for vs, to send the Faire to another Towne, than to keepe the Faire here. Why, Man, quoth she, what mean you by that? Woman, I meane this, that she will prove a Loadstone, to draw the Hearts of all my Men after her, & so we shall have wife Seruice done of all Sides. Then said his Wife, I hope, Husband, *Margaret* will haue a better Care both to her owne Credit, and our Commodity then so, and so let her alone to looke to such Matters. Is thy Name *Margaret*? quoth her Master: proper is thy Name to thy Person, for thou art a Pearle indeed, orient, and rich in Beauty.

His Wife hearing him say so, began to change her Opinion: What, Husband (quoth she) is the Wind at that Doore? Begin you to like your Maid so well? I doubt I had most need to looke to your selfe: before God, I had rather then an Angell I had chosen some other: but heare you, Maid, you shall packe hence, I will not nourish a Snake in my Bosome, and therefore get you gone, I will none of you, provide a Service where you may.

The Maiden hearing her say so, fell downe on her Knees, and besought her, saying, O, sweet Dame, be not so cruell to me, to turne me out of Doores, now:
alas,

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alas, I know not where to goe, or what to doe, if you forsake me. O let not the fading Beauty of my Face dispoile me of your Fauour : for rather then that shall hinder my Seruice, this my Knife shall soone disfigure my Face, and I will banish Beauty as my greatest Enemy. And with that her aboundant Tears stopped her Speech, that she could not utter one Word more.

The Woman seeing this, could not harbour any longer, nor could her Master stay in the Roome for weeping. Well, *Margaret*, said her Dame (little knowing that a Lady kneeled before her) vsing thyselfe well, I will keepe thee, and thou shalt haue my Good-will if thou gouern thyselfe with Wifedome ; & so she sent her about her Businesse. Her Husband comming to Supper said, How now, Wife, art thou so doubtfull of me, that thou hast put away thy Maiden ? I wis (qd. she) you are a wise Man, to stand praising of a Maidens Beauty before her Face ; & you a wise Woman, qd. he, to grow iealous without a Cause. So to Supper they went, and because *Margaret* shewed her selfe of finest Behaviour about the Rest, she was appointed to waite on the Table. And it is to be vnderstood, that *Gray* did neuer eate his Meat alone, but still had some of his Neighbours with him, before whom he called his Maid, saying, *Margaret*, come hither. Now because there was another of the same Name in the Houe, shee made Answer, I call not you,
Maiden,

of Thomas of Reading.

Maiden, quoth he, but *Margaret* with the lilly-white Hand. After which Time she was euer called fo.

How the Kings Maiestie sent for the Clothiers, and of the sundry Fauours which he did them. CHAP. 4.

KING *Henry* providing for his Voyage into France, against King *Lewis* and *Robert* Duke of Normandie his owne Brother, committed the Gouvernement of the Realme in his Absence, to the Bishop of Salisbury, a Man of great Wisdome and Learning, whom the King esteemed highly, and afterward he thought good to send for the chiefe Clothiers of England, who according to the Kings Appointment came to the Court, and hauing Licence to come before his Maiestie, he spake to this Effect.

The Strength of a King is the Loue and Friendship of his People, and he gouernes ouer his Realme most surely, that ruleth Justice with Mercy: for he ought to feare many, whom many doe feare: therefore the Gouvernours of the Commonwealth ought to obserue two speciall Precepts: the One is, that they so maintaine the Profit of the Commons, that whatsoeuer in their Calling they doe, they referre it thereunto: the other, that they be alwayes as well carefull ouer the whole Common-wealth, as ouer any Part thereof; left, while they uphold the one, the other be brought to vtter Decay.

And

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And forasmuch as I doe vnderstand, and haue partly seene, that you the Clothiers of England are no small Benefit to the Wealth-publike, I thought it good to know from your owne Mouthes, if there be any Thing not yet granted that may benefit you, or any other Thing to be remoued that doth hurt you.

The great Desire I haue to maintaine you in your Trades, hath moued me hereunto. Therefore boldly say what you would haue in the one Thing or the other, & I will grant it you.

With that, they all fell downe vpon their Knees, and desired God to faue his Maiestie, and withall, requested three Dayes Respit to put in their Answer: which was granted. And thereupon they departed.

When the Clothiers had well considered of these Matters, at length they thought meete to request of his Maiestie for their first Benefit, that all the Cloth-Measures thorow the Land might be of one Length, whereas to their great Disadvantage before, euery good Towne had a feuerall Measure, the Difficulty thereof was such, that they could not keepe them in Memory, nor know how to keepe their Reckonings. The second Thing whereof they found themselves grieved, was this, that the People would not take crackt Money, though it were neuer so good Silver; whereupon it came to passe, that the Clothiers and diuers Others, receiuing great Summes of Money, doe
take

of Thomas of Reading.

take among it much crackt Money, it serued them to no Use, because it would not goe current, but lay upon their Hands without Profit or Benefit, whereof they prayed Reformation. The Third was a Griefe, whereof *Hodgekins* of Halifax complained, and that was, That whereas the Towne of Halifax lived altogether upon Cloathing, and by the Reason of false Borderers, and other euill-minded Persons, they were oft robbed, and had their Clothes carried out of their Fields, where they were drying: That it would please his Maiestie to graunt the Towne this Priuiledge, That whatsoeuer he was that was taken stealing their Cloth, might presently without any further Tryall be hanged vp. When the Day of their Appearance approached, the Clothiers came before the King, and deliuered vp their Petition in writing, which his Maiestie most graciously perusing, said, hee was ready to fulfill their Request: and therefore for the first Point of their Petition, he called for a Staffe to be brought him, and measuring thereupon the iust Length of his own Arme, delivered it to the Clothiers, saying, This Measure shall be called a Yard, and no other Measure thorow-out all the Realme of England shall be vsed for the same, and by this shall Men buy and sell, and we will so provide, that whosoever he be that abuseth our Subjects by any false Measure, that he shall not onely pay a Fine for the same to the King, but also haue his
Body

The pleafant Hiftorie

Body punished by Imprifonment. And as concerning the fecond Point of your Petition, becaufe of my fudden Departure out of the Land, I know not better how to eafe you of this Griefe, (of crackt Money) this Decree I make, becaufe they account crackt Money not current, I fay, none fhall be current but crackt Money. And therefore I will give prefent Charge, that all the Money thorow the Land fhall be flit, and fo you fhall fuffer no Loffe.

But now for your laft Request for the Towne of Halifax : where by Theeves your Clothes are fo often ftolne from you, feeing the Lawes already provided in that Cafe, are not fufficient to keepe Men in awe, it is indeed high Time to haue sharper Punifhment for them.

With that *Hodgekins* vnmanly interrupted the King, faying in broad Northerne Speech, Yea, gude Faith, mai Liedg, the faule Eule of mai Saule, giff any Thing will keepe them whiat, till the Karles be hanged up by the Cragge. What the Dule care they for boaring their Eyne, fea lang as they may gae groping vp and downe the Country like faufe lizar Lownes, begging and cracking ?

The King fmiling to heare this rough-hewne Fellow make this Reply : Content thee, *Hodgekins*, for we will have Redreffe for all : and albeit that hanging of Men was neuer feene in England, yet feeing the
corrupt

of Thomas of Reading.

corrupt World is growne more bold in all Wickednesse, I think it not amisse to ordaine this Death for such Malefactors : and peculiarly to the Towne of Halifax I give this Priviledge, That whofoeuer they finde stealing their Cloth, being taken with the Goods, that without further Iudgement, they shall be hanged vp.

Thus (said our King) I haue granted what you request, and if hereafter you find any other Thing that may be good for you, it shall be granted ; for no longer would I desire to liue among you, than I haue Care for the good of the Commonwealth : at which Words ended, the King rose from his royall Throne, while the Clothiers on their Knees prayed for both his Health and happy Successe, and shewed themselves most thankfull for his Highnesses Fauour. His Maiestie bending his Body towards them, that at his Home Returne, he would (by the Grace of God) visit them.

How the Clothiers had provided a sumptuous Feast for the Kings Sonnes, Prince William and Prince Robert, at Gerrards Hall : shewing also what Chance befell Cutbert of Kendall at that same Instant. CHAP. 5.

THE Clothiers departing from the Court in a merry Mind, ioyfull of their good Successe, each one to other praised and magnified the Kings great Wife-

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dome and Vertue, commending alfo his Affability and gentle Difpofition, fo that *Hodgekins* affirmed on his Faith, that hee had rather fpeake to the Kings Maieftie, than to many Iuftices of Peace. Indeed (faid *Cole*) he is a moft mild and mercifull Prince, and I pray God he may long raigne ouer us. Amen faid the Reft.

Then faid *Cole*, My Mafters, fhall we forget the great Courtefie of the Kings Sonnes, thofe fweet and gentle Princes, that ftill fhewed us Fauour in our Suite? In my Opinion, it were Reafon to gratifie them in fome Sort, that we may not vtterly bee condemned of Ingratitude: wherefore (if you thinke good) we will prepare a Banquet for them at our Oaft *Garrats*, who, as you know, hath a faire Houfe, and goodly Roomes: Befides, the Man himfelfe is a moft couragious Mind and good Behaviour, fufficient to entertain a Prince; his Wife alfo is a dainty fine Cooke: all which confidered, I know not a fitter Place in London. Tis true, quoth *Sutton*, and if the Reft be content, I am pleafed it fhall be fo. At this they all answered, Yea; for, quoth they, it will not be paffing Forty Shillings a Piece, and that we fhall recouer in our crackt Money.

Being thus agreed, the Feaft was prepared. Tom Doue, quoth they, we will commit the prouiding of Muficke to thee: and I, faid *Cole*, will inuite diuers
of

of Thomas of Reading.

of our Merchants and their Wiues to the fame. That is well remembred, said *Gray*. Vpon this they called to their Oast and Oastesse, shewing their Determination, who most willingly said, all Things should be made ready, but I would haue two Dayes Liberty, said the Good-wife, to prepare my House and other Things. Content, said the Clothiers, in the meane Space we will bid our Guests, and dispatch our other Affaires. But *Simon* of Southhampton charged his Oastesse, that in any Cafe she should not forget to make good Store of Pottage. It shall be done, quoth she.

It is to be remembered, that while this Preparation was in hand, that *Cutb.* of Kendall had not forgot his Kindnes to his Oastesse of Bosoms Inne. Therefore finding Time conuenient when her Husband was overseeing his Hay-makers, hee greeted her in this Sort, Sweet Oastesse, though I were the last Time I was in Towne over-bold with you, yet I hope it was not so offensive to you as you made shew for. Bold, my *Cutbert*? quoth she, thou hast vowed thy self my Seruant: and so being, you are not to bee blamed for doing what I wild you. By my Honesty, I could not chuse but smile to my selfe, so soone as I was out of their Sight, to thinke how prettily you began to brabble. But now, quoth he, we will change our Chidings

to

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to Kiffings, and it vexeth me that thefe Cherry Lipps fhould be fubieft to fuch a Lobcocke as thy Husband.

Subieft to him? quoth ſhe; in faith, Sir, no, I will haue my Lips at as much Liberty as my Tongue, the one to fay what I liſt, and the other to touch whom I like: In Troth, ſhall I tell thee, *Cutbert*, the Charles Breath ſmeles ſo ſtrong, that I care as much for kiſſing of him, as for looking on him: it is ſuch a miſ-shapen Miſer, and ſuch a Bundle of Beaſtlineſſe, that I can neuer thinke on him without ſpitting. Fie upon him, I would my Friends had carried me to my Grave, when they went with me to the Church, to make him my Husband. And ſo ſhedding a few diſſembling Teares, ſhe ſtopt. What, my ſweet Miſtreſſe, (quoth he) weepe you? Nay, fit downe by my Side, and I will ſing thee one of my Countrey Jigges to make thee merry. Wilt thou in Faith? (quoth ſhe.) Yes, verily, ſaid *Cutbert*: And in Troth, quoth ſhe, if you fall a ſinging, I will ſing with you. That is well, you can ſo ſuddenly change your Notes, quoth *Cutbert*, then haue at it.

Man. **L**ONG haue I lou'd this bonny Laſſe,
Yet durſt not ſhew the fame.

Wom. Therein you proue your ſelfe an Affe,

Man. I was the more to blame.

Yet

of Thomas of Reading.

Yet still will I remaine to thee,
Trang dilly do, trang dilly :
Thy Friend and Louer secretly,

Wom. Thou art my owne sweet Bully.

Man. But when shall I enjoy thee,
Delight of thy faire Loue?

Wom. Euen when thou seest that Fortune doth
All manner Lets remoue.

Man. O, I will fold thee in my Armes,
Trang dilly do, trang dilly,
And keepe thee fo from sudder Harmes,

Wom. Thou art my owne sweet Bully.

Wom. My Husband he is gone from Home,
You know it very well.

Man. But when will he returne againe?

Wom. In Truth I cannot tell.
If long he keepe him out of Sight,
Trang dilly do, trang dilly,
Be fure thou shalt haue thy Delight,

Man. Thou art my bonny Laffie.

While they were finging this Song, her Husband being on a sudder come Home, stood secretly in a Corner and heard all, and blessing himselfe with both his Hands, said, O abominable Diffimulation! monstrous Hypocrisie! and are you in this Humour? can

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you brawle together and sing together? Well, qd. hee, I will let them alone, to see a little more of their Knauery. Neuer did Cat watch Moufe so narrowly as I will watch them. And so going into the Kitchen, he asked his Wife if it were not Dinner-time. Euen by and by, Husband, (quoth she) the Meat will be ready. Presently after comes in *Hodgekins* and *Martin*, who straight asked for *Cutbert* of Kendall. Answer was made, that he was in his Chamber. So when they had called him, they went to Dinner: then they requested that their Oast and Oastesse would sit with them.

Husband, said she, you may goe if you please: but as for me, I will desire Pardon. Nay, Good-wife, goe vp, said her Husband. What, Woman, you must beare with your Guests. Why, Husband, qd. she, doe you thinke that any can beare the Flirts and Fromps which that Northerne Tike gaue me the last Time he was in Towne; now, God forgiue me, I had as lief see the Diuell as to see him: therefore, good Husband, goe vp your selfe, & let me alone, for in Faith, I shall neuer abide that Jacke while I liue. Vpon these Words away went her Husband, and though he said little, he thought the more. Now when he came up, his Guests bade him welcome. I pray you sit downe, good mine Oast, quoth they; where is your Wife? What will she sit with vs? No, verily, said he, the foolish Woman

of Thomas of Reading.

man hath taken such a Displeasure against *Cutbert*, that she sweares she will neuer come in his Company. Is it so? said the other, then trust me we are well agreed: and I sweare by my Fathers Sole, qd. hee, that were it not meere for Good-will to you, then Loue to her, I would neuer come to your House meere. I belieue it well, said old *Bosome*. And so with other Communication they droue out the Time, till Dinner was ended.

After they were risen, *Martin & Hodgekins* got them forth about their Affaires, but *Cutb.* took his Oast by the Hand, saying, My Oast, Ile goe talke with your Wife: for my Part I thought we had bin Friends: but seeing her Stomacke is so big, and her Heart so great, I will see what she will say to me; and with that he stept into the Kitchen, saying, God speed you, Oastis. It must be when you are away then, said she. What is your Reason? said the other. Because God neuer comes where Knaues are present. *Gip*, goodly Draggletaile, qd. he, had I such a Wife, I would present her Tallow-Face to the Deuill for a Candle. With that she bent her Browes, & like a fury of Hell began to flie at him, saying, Why, you gag-tooth Jacke, you blinking Companion, get thee out of my Kitchen quickly, or with my powdred Beefe-Broth I will make your Pate as bald as a Fryers.

Get

The pleafant Historie

Get me gone? quoth he, thou fhalt not bid me twice: out, you dirty Heeles! you will make your Husbands Haire growe thorow his Hood I doubt: and with that he got him into the Hall, and fat him downe on the Bench by his Oaft, to whom hee faid, 'Tis pittie, my Oaft, that your aged Yeeres, that loues Quietneffe, fhould be troubled with fuch a fcolding Queane. I, God help me, God help me, quoth the old Man, and fo went towards the Stable: which his Wife watching, fuddenly ftept out and gaue *Cutbert* a Kiffe.

Within an Hour after, the old Man craftily called for his Nag to ride to Field: but as foone as he was gone, *Cutbert* and his Oafteffe were fuch good Friends, that they got into one of the Ware-houfes, and lockt the Doore to them: but her Husband hauing fet a Spie for the Purpofe, fuddenly turned backe, and called for a Capcafe which lay in the Warehouse. The Seruant could not find the Key by any Meanes. Whereupon hee called to haue the Locke broke open. Which they within hearing, opened the Doore of their owne Accord. So foone as her Husband efpied her in that Place, with Admiration he faid, O Paffion of my Heart, what doe you here? what, you Two that cannot abide one another, what make you fo clofe together? is your Chiding and Rayling, Brabbling and
Brauling,

of Thomas of Reading.

Brauling, come to this? O what Diffemblers are these! Why, my Oast, qd. *Cutbert*, what need you take the Matter so hot? I gaue a Cheefe to my Country-man, *Hodgekins*, to lay vp, and deliuered it to your Wife to be kept; and then is it not Reason that she should come and seeke me my Cheefe? O, quoth the old Man, belike the Dore was lockt, because the Cheefe should not run away. The Doore, said his Wife, unknown to vs clapt to it selfe, and hauing a Spring-Locke, was presently fast. Well, Hufwife, qd. he, I will giue you as much Credit as a Crocadile, but as for your Companion, I will teach him to come hither to looke Cheefes.

And with that he caused his Men to take him presently, and to bind him Hand and Foot. Which being done, they drew him vp in a Basket into the Smoky Louer of the Hall, and there they did let him hang all that Night, euen till the next Day Dinner-time, when he should haue beene at the Banquet with the Princes: for neither *Hodgekins* nor *Martin* could intreat their inflamed Oast to let him downe.

And in such a Heate was hee driuen with drawing him vp, that he was faine to cast off his Gownes, his Coates, and two Paire of his Stockings, to coole himselfe, making a Vow, he should hang there seven Yeeres, except the Kings Sons came in Person to beg his Pardon, which most of all grieved *Cutb.* When

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Cole and the Rest of the Western Yeomen heard here-of, they could not chuse but laugh, to thinke that he was so taken tardy.

The young Princes hauing giuen Promise to be with the Clothiers, kept their Houre, but when all the Rest went to giue them Entertainment, *Simon* was so busie in supping his Pottage, that he could not spare so much Time. Which when the Princes saw, with a smiling Countenance they said, Sup, *Simon*, theres good Broth : Or else beshrew our Oastesse, quoth he, neuer looking behind him to see who spake, till the Prince clapt him on the Shoulder. But, good Lord, how blanke he was when hee spied them, knowing not how to excuse the Matter.

Well, the Princes hauing ended their Banket, *Gar-rat* comes, and with One of his Hands tooke the Table of Sixteen Foote Long quite from the Ground ouer their Heads, from before the Princes, and set it on the other Side of the Hall, to the great Admiration of all them that beheld it.

The Princes being then ready to depart, the Clothiers moued them in pleafant Maner, to be good to One of their Company, that did neither sit, lie, nor stand. Then he must needs hang, qd. the Princes. And so he doth, most excellent Princes, qd. they ; and therewithall told them the whole Matter. When they heard the Storie, downe to *Bosomes* Inne they goe,
where

of Thomas of Reading.

where looking vp into the Roofe, spied poore *Cutbert* pinned vp in a Basket, and almost smoaked to Death, who although he were greatly ashamed, yet most pitifully desired that they would get him Release.

What is his Trespasse? said the Prince. Nothing, if it shall like your Grace, qd. he, but for looking for a Cheefe : But hee could not find it without my Wife, said the Good-man : the Villaine had lately dined with Mutton, and could not digest his Meate without Cheefe, for which Cause I haue made him to fast these twenty Houres, to the End he may haue a better Stomacke to eate his Dinner, then to vse Dalliance.

Let me intreate you, quoth the Prince, to release him : and if euer hereafter you catch him in the Corne, clappe him in the POUND. Your Grace shall request or command any Thing at my Hand, said the old Man : and so *Cutbert* was let downe vnbound, but when he was loose, he vowed neuer to come within that House more. And it is said, the old Man *Bosome* ordained, that in Remembrance of this Deed, euery Yeere once all such as came thither to ask for Cheeses, should be so serued : which Thing is to this Day kept.

How

The pleafant Historie

How Simons Wife of Southampton, being wholly bent to Pride and Pleasure, requested her Husband to see London, which being granted, how ſhe got Good-wife Sutton of Salifbury to goe with her, who tooke Crab to go along with them, and how he propheſied of many Things. CHAP. 6.

THE Clothiers being all come from London, *Suttons* Wife of South-hampton, who was with her Husband very mery and pleafant, brake her Mind vnto him in this Sort :

Good Lord, Husband, will you neuer be ſo kind as let me goe to London with you? ſhall I be pend vp in South-hampton, like a Parrat in a Cage, or a Capon in a Coope? I would requeſt no more of you in Lieu of all my Paines, Carke and Care, but to haue one Weeks Time to ſee that faire City: what is this Life, if it be not mixt with ſome Delight? and what Delight is more pleaſing then to ſee the Fashions and Maners of unknowne Places? Therefore, good Husband, if thou loueſt me, deny not this ſimple Requeſt. You know I am no common Gadder, nor haue oft troubled you with Trauell. God knowes, this may be the laſt Thing that euer I ſhall requeſt at your Hands.

Woman, quoth he, I would willingly ſatſifie your Deſire, but you know it is not conuenient for both of vs to be Abroad, our Charge is ſo great, and therefore

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fore our Care ought not be small. If you will goe your selfe, One of my Men shall goe with you, and Money enough you shall haue in your Purse: but to goe with you my selfe, you see my Businesse will not permit me.

Husband, said she, I accept your gentle Offer, and it may be I shall intreat my Gossip, Sutton, to goe along with me. I shall be glad, qd. her Husband, prepare your selfe when you will.

When she had obtained this Licence, she sent her Man *Wesell* to Salisbury, to know of Good-wife *Sutton* if shee would keepe her Company to London. *Suttons* Wife being as willing to goe, as she was to request, neuer rested till shee had gotten Leau of her Husband; the which when she had obtained, casting in her Mind their Pleasure would bee small, being but they Twaine: thereupon the wily Woman sent Letters by collicke *Cracke*, her Man, both to *Grays* Wife, and *Fitzallens* Wife, that they would meet them at Reading, who liking well of the Match, consented, and did so prouide, that they met according to Promise at Reading, and from thence with *Coles* Wife they went altogether, with each of them a Man to London, each one taking vp their Lodging with a severall Friend.

When the Merchants of London vnderstood they were in Towne, they inuited them euery Day Home
to

The pleafant Historie

to their owne Houfes, where they had delicate good Cheere: and when they went Abroad to fee the Commodities of the City, the Merchants Wiues euer bore them Company, being attired moft dainty and fine: which when the Clothiers Wiues did fee, it grieved their Hearts they had not the like.

Now when they were brought into Cheapfide, there with great Wonder they beheld the Shops of the Goldfmiths; and on the other Side, the wealthy Mercers, whose Shops fhined with all Sorts of coloured Silkes: in Watling-ftreet they viewed the great Number of Drapers: in Saint *Martins*, Shoemakers: at Saint *Nicholas* Church, the Flefh Shambles: at the End of the Old Change, the Fifh-mongers: in Candleweeke-ftreet, the Weauers: then came into the Jewes-ftreet, where all the Jewes did inhabite: then came they to Blackwel-hall, where the Country Clothiers did vfe to meete.

Afterwards they proceeded, and came to S. *Pauls* Church, whose Steeple was fo hie, that it feemed to pierce the Clowdes, on the Top whereof was a great and mighty Weather-cocke of cleane Silver, the which notwithstanding feemed as fmall as a Sparrow to Mens Eyes, it flood fo exceeding High, the which goodly Weathercocke was afterwards ftolen away by a cunning Cripple, who found Meanes one Night to climb vp to the Top of the Steeple, and tooke it downe:
with

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with the which, and a great Summe of Money which he had got together by begging in his Life-time, he builded a Gate on the North-side of the City, which to this Day is called Cripple-gate.

From thence they went to the Tower of London, which was builded by *Iulius Cesar*, who was Emperour of Rome. And there they beheld Salt and Wine, which had lyen there euer since the Romanes inuaded this Land, which was many Yeeres before our Sauour Christ was borne; the Wine was growne so thicke, that it might haue beene cut like a Jelly. And in that Place also they saw the Money that was made of Leather, which in ancient Time went current amongst the People.

When they had to their great Contentation beheld all this, they repaired to their Lodgings, hauing also a sumptuous Supper ordained for them, with all Delight that might be. And you shall vnderstand, that when the Country Weauers, which came vp with their Dames, saw the Weauers of Candlewike-street, they had great Desire presently to haue some Conference with them; & thus one began to challenge the other for Workmanship: quoth *Weafell*, Ile worke with any of you all for a Crowne, take if you dare, and he that makes his Yard of Cloth soonest, shall haue it. You shall be wrought withall, said the other, and if it were for ten Crownes: but we will make this Bargaine,

The pleafant Historie

gaine, that each of vs fhall winde their owne Quilles. Content, quoth *Weafell*: and fo to worke they went, but *Weafell* loft. Whereupon another of them tooke the Matter in Hand, who loft likewise: fo that the London Weauers triumphed againft the Country, cafting forth diuers Frumps.

Alas, poore Fellowes, quoth they, your Hearts are good, but your Hands are ill. Tush, the Fault was in their Legs, quoth another: Pray you, Friend, were you not borne at Home? Why doe you afke? quoth *Weafell*. Because, faid hee, the biggeft Place of your Legge is next to your Shooe.

Cutbert hearing this, being cholericke of Nature, chafed like a Man of Law at the Barre, & he wagers with them foure Crownes to twaine: the Others agreed, to worke they goe: but *Crab* conquered them all. Whereupon the London Weauers were nipt in the Head like Birds, and had not a Word to fay.

Now, faith *Crab*, as we haue loft Nothing, fo you haue wonne Nothing, & becaufe I know you cannot be right Weauers, except you be Good-fellowes, therefore if you will goe with us, we will beftow the Ale vpon you. That is fpoken like a Good-fellow and like a Weauer, quoth the other. So along they went as it were to the Signe of the Red Crosse.

When they were fet downe, & had drunke well, they began merrily to prattle, and to extoll *Crab* of the
the

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the Skies. Whereupon *Crab* protested, that hee would come and dwell among them. Nay, that must not be, said a London Weauer : the King hath giuen us Priuiledge, that none should live among vs, but such as ferue feuen Yeeres in London. With that *Crab*, according to his old Maner of prophesying, said thus :

THE Day is very neere at Hand,
When as the King of this faire Land,
Shal priuiledge you more then so :
Then Weauers shall in Skarlet goe,

And to one Brotherhood be brought,
The First is in London wrought,
When other Tradefmen by your Fame,
Shall couet all to doe the fame.

Then shall you all live wondrous well,
But this one Thing I shall you tell :
The Day will come before the Doome,
In Candleweeke-street shall stand no Loome.

Nor any Weauer dwelling there,
But Men that shall more Credit beare :
For Clothing shall be fore decayde,
And Men vndone that vse that Trade.

And

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And yet the Day fome Men fhall fee,
This Trade againe fhall raifed be.
When as Bayliffe of Sarum Towne,
Shall buy and purchafe Bifhops Downe.

When there neuer Man did fow,
Great Store of goodly Corne fhall grow ;
And Woad, that makes all Colours found,
Shall fpring vpon that barren Ground.

At that fame Day, I tell you plaine,
Who fo aliue doth then remaine,
A proper Maiden they fhall fee,
Within the Towne of Salifburie,

Of Fauour fweet, and Nature kind,
With goodly Eyes, and yet ftarke Blind,
This poore blind Maiden, I doe fay,
In Age fhall goe in rich Array.

And he that takes her to his Wife,
Shall lead a ioyfull happy Life,
The wealthieft Clothier fhall he be
That euer was in that Country.

But Clothing kept as it hath beene,
In London neuer fhall be feene :

For

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For Weauers then the most shall win,
That worke for Clothing next the Skin.

Till Pride the Common-wealth doth peelee,
And caufeth Hufwiues leaue their Wheele.
Then Pouerty vpon each Side,
Vnto thofe Workemen shall betide.

At that Time, from Eagles Nef,
That proudly builded in the Weft,
A Sort fhall come with cunning Hand,
To bring ftrange Weauing in this Land,

And by their Gaines that great will fall,
They fhall maintaine the Weauers Hall :
But long they fhall not flourish fo,
But Folly with them ouerthrow.

And Men fhall count it mickle Shame,
To beare that Kind of Weauers Name :
And this as fure fhall come to paffe,
As here is Ale within this Glaffe.

When the filly Soules that fate about him heard
him fpeake in this Sort, they admired and honoured
Crabbe for the fame. Why, my Mafters, faid *Weafell*,
doe you wonder at thefe Words? he will tell you

Twenty

The pleafant Historie

Twenty of thefe Tales, for which Caufe we call him our Canuas Prophet. His Attire fits his Title, faid they, and we neuer heard the like in our Liues : and if this fhould be true, it would be ftrange. Doubt not but it will be true, qd. *Weafell* ; for Ile tell you what, he did but once fee our *Nicke* kiffe *Nel*, and prefently he powred out this Rime :

That Kiffe, O *Nel*, God giue thee Ioy,
Will nine Months hence breed thee a Boy.

And Ile tell you what, you fhall heare: we kept Reckoning, and it fell out as iuft as *Iones* buttocks on a Clofe-ftoole ; for which Caufe our Maids durft neuer kiffe a Man in his Sight : vpon this they broke Company, & went euery One about his Bufines, the London Weauers to their Frames, and the Country Fellowes to their Dames, who, after their great Banqueting and Merriment, went euery one Home to their own Houfes, though with leffe Money then they brought out, yet with more Pride.

Efppecially *Simons* Wife of South-hampton, who told the Reft of her Goffips, that fhe faw no Reafon, but that their Husbands fhould maintain them as well as the Merchants did their Wiues : for I tell you what, quoth fhe, we are as proper Women (in my Conceit,) as the proudeft of them all, as handfome of Body, as faire of Face, our Legs as well made, and our Feete as fine : then what Reafon is there (feeing our Hufbands

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bands are of as good Wealth) but we should be as well maintained?

You say true, Gossip, said *Suttons* Wife: trust me, it made me blush, to see them braue it out so gallantly, and wee to goe so homely: but before God, said the other, I will haue my Husband to buy me a London Gowne, or in Faith he shall haue little Quiet: so shall mine, said another: and mine too, qd. the Third: and all of them sing the same Note: so that when they came Home, their Husbands had no little to doe: especially *Simon*, whose Wife daily lay at him for London Apparell, to whome he said, Good Woman, be content, let vs goe according to our Place and Ability: what will the Bailiffes thinke, if I should prancke thee vp like a Peacocke, and thou in thy Attire surpasse their Wiues? they would either thinke I were mad, or else that I had more Money then I could well use: consider, I pray thee, good Wife, that such as are in their Youth Masters, doe proue in their Age starke Beggars.

Beside that, it is enough to raise me vp in the Kings Booke, for many Times Mens Coffers are iudged by their Garments: why, we are Country Folks, and must keepe our selues in good Compasse: gray Ruffet, and good Hempe-spun Cloth doth best become vs; I tell thee, Wife, it were as vndecent for vs to goe like Londoners as it is for Londoners to goe like Courtiers.

What

The pleafant Hiftorie

What a Coyle keepe you? quoth ſhe, are not we Gods Creatures as well as Londoners? and the Kings Subiects, as well as they? then, finding our Wealth to be as good as theirs, why ſhould we not goe as gay as Londoners? No, Huſband, no, here is the Fault, wee are kept without it, onely becauſe our Huſbands be not ſo kind as Londoners: why, Man, a Cobler there keeps his Wife better then the beſt Clothier in this Countrey: nay, I will affirm it, that the London Oyfter-wiues, and the very Kitchen-ſtuffe Cryers, doe exceed vs in their Sundaies Attire: nay, more then that, I did ſee the Water-bearers Wife, which belongs to One of our Merchants, come in with a Tankerd of Water on her Shoulder, and yet Half a Dozen Gold Rings on her Fingers. You may then thinke, Wife, (quoth he) ſhe got them not with Idleneſſe.

But, Wife, you muſt conſider what London is, the chiefe and capitall City of all the Land, a Place on the which all Strangers caſt their Eyes, it is (Wife) the Kings Chamber and his Maieſties royall Seate: to that City repaires all Nations vnder Heauen. Therefore it is moſt meete and conuenient, that the Citizens of ſuch a City ſhould not goe in their Apparell like Peafants, but for the Credit of our Country, weare ſuch ſeemely Habits as doe carry Grauity and Comelineſſe in the Eyes of all Beholders. But if wee of the Country went ſo (quoth ſhe) were it not as great Credit

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dit for the Land as the other? Woman, qd. her Husband, it is altogether needlesse, and in diuers Respects it may not be. Why then, I pray you, quoth she, let us goe dwell at London. A Word soone spoken, said her Husband, but not so easie to be performed : therefore, Wife, I pray thee hold thy Prating, for thy Talke is foolish : yea, yea, Husband, your old churlish Conditions will neuer be left, you keepe me here like a Drudge and a Droile, and so you may keepe your Money in your Purse, you care not for your Credit, but before I will goe so like a Shepheardesse, I will first goe naked : and I tell you plaine, I fcorne it greatly, that you should clap a gray Gowne on my Backe, as if I had not brought you Two-pence : before I was married, you swore I should haue any Thing that I requested, but now all is forgotten. And in faying this, she went in, and soone after she was so ficke, that needes she must goe to Bed : and when she was laid, she draue out that Night with many grievous Groanes, Sighing and Sobbing, and no Rest she could take God wot. And in the Morning when she should rise, the good Soule fell downe in a Swowne, which put her Maidens in a great Fright, who running downe to their Master, cryed out, Alas, alas, our Dame is dead ! our Dame is dead ! The Good-man hearing this, ran vp in all Haft, and there fell to rubbing and chafing

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chafing of her Temples, sending for *aqua vita*, and saying, Ah, my Sweet-heart, speake to me, Good-wife, alacke, alacke! call in the Neighbours, you Queanes, quoth he. With that she lift vp her Head, fetching a great Groane, and presently fwounded againe, and much a doe ywis, he had to keepe Life in her: but when she was come to her selfe, How dost thou, Wife? qd. he. What wilt thou haue? for Gods sake tell me if thou hast a Mind to any Thing, thou shalt haue it. Away, Dissembler! (qd. she) how can I beleeu thee? thou hast said to me as much a hundred Times, and deceiued me; it is thy Churlishnesse that hath killed my Heart, neuer was Woman matcht to so unkind a Man.

Nay, Good-wife, blame me not without Cause: God knoweth how heartily I loue thee. Loue me? no, no, thou didst neuer carry my Loue but on the Tip of thy Tongue, quoth she; I dare sweare thou desirest Nothing so much as my Death, and for my Part, I would to God thou hadst thy Desire: but be content, I shall not trouble thee long: and with that fetching a Sigh, she fwounded and gaue a great Groane. The Man seeing her in this Case, was woundrous woe: but so soone as they had recouered her, he said, O my deare Wife, if any bad Conceit hath ingendered this Sickenesse, let me know it; or if thou knowst any Thing that may procure thy Health,
let

of Thomas of Reading.

let me vnderstand thereof, and I protest thou shalt haue it, if it cost me all that ever I haue.

O Husband, quoth she, how may I credit your Words, when for a paltry Sute of Apparell you denyed me? Well, Wife, quoth he, thou shalt haue Apparell or any Thing else thou wilt request, if God send thee once Health. O Husband, if I may find you so kind, I shall think my selfe the happiest Woman in the World, thy Words haue greatly comforted my Heart, mee thinketh if I had it, I could drink a good Draught of Renish Wine. Well, Wine was sent for: O Lord, said she, that I had a Piece of a Chicken, I feele my Stomacke desirous of some Meate. Glad am I of that, said her Husband; and so the Woman within a few Dayes after that was very well.

But you shall vnderstand, that her Husband was faine to dresse her London-like, ere he could get her quiet, neither would it please her except the Stuffe was bought in Cheapside: for out of Cheapside nothing would content her, were it neuer so good: infomuch, that if she thought a Taylor of Cheapside made not her Gowne, she would sweare it were quite spoiled.

And hauing thus wonne her Husband to her Will, when the Rest of the Clothiers Wiues heard thereof, they would be futed in the like Sort too: so that euer since, the Wiues of South-hampton, Salisbury, of Gloucester,

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ester, Worcester, and Reading, went all as gallant
and as braue as any Londoners Wiues.

*How the Clothiers sent the King Aide into France, and
how he ouercame his Brother Robert, and brought
him into England, and how the Clothiers feasted his
Maiefty and his Sonne at Reading.* CHAP. 7.

THE Kings Maieftie being at the Warres in France,
against *Lewis* the French King, and Duke *Robert*
of Normandy, sending for diuers Supplies of Souldiers
out of England, the Clothiers at their owne proper
Coft fet out a great Number, and sent them ouer to
the King.

Which *Roger* Bifhop of Salifbury, who gouerned
the Realme in the Kings Absence, did certifie the
King thereof, with his Letters written in their Com-
mendations.

And afterward it came to paffe, that God sent his
Highness Victory ouer his Enemies, and hauing taken
his Brother Prifoner, brought him most ioyfully with
him into England, and appointed him to be kept in
Cardife Castle Prifoner, yet with this Fauour, that he
might hunt and hawke where he would vp and downe
the Country, and in this Sort he liued a good while,
of whom we will speake more at large hereafter.

The King being thus come Home, after his Winters
Rest,

of Thomas of Reading.

Rest, he made his Summers Progreffe into the West-countray, to take a View of all the chief Townes : whereof the Clothiers being aduertised, they made great Preparation against his comming, because he had promised to visit them all.

And when his Grace came to Reading, he was entertained and receiued with great Ioy and Triumph : *Thomas Cole* being the chief Man of Regard in all the Towne, the King honoured his House with his princely Prefence, where during the Kings Abode, he and his Sonne and Nobles were highly feasted.

There the King beheld the great Number of People, that was by that one Man maintained in Worke, whose hearty Affection and Loue towards his Maiestie did well appeare, as well by their outward Countenances, as their Gifts presented vnto him. But of *Cole* himselfe the King was so well perswaded, that he committed such trust in him, and put him in great Authority in the Towne. Furthermore the King said, That for the Loue which those People bore him liuing, that hee would lay his Bones among them when he was dead. For I know not, said he, where they may be better bestowed, till the blessed Day of Refurrection, than among these my Friends, which are like to be happy Partakers of the same.

Whereupon his Maiesty caused there to be builded a most goodly and famous Abbey : in which he might
shew

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shew his Deuotion to God, by increasing his Seruice, and leaue Example to other his Successors to doe the like. Likewise within the Towne he after builded a faire and goodly Castle, in the which he often kept his Court, which was a Place of his chiefe Residence during his Life, saying to the Clothiers, that seeing he found them such faithfull Subiects, he would be their Neighbour, and dwell among them.

After his Maiesties royall Feasting at Reading, he proceeded in Progresse, till he had visited the whole West-countries, being wondrously delighted to see those People so diligent to apply their Businesse: and comming to Salisbry, the Bishop receiued his Maiefty with great Ioy, and with Triumph attended on his Grace to his Palace, where his Highnesse lodged.

There *Sutton* the Clothier presented his Highnesse with a Broad Cloth, of so fine a Threed, and exceeding good Workmanship, and therewithall of so faire a Colour, as his Grace gaue Commendation thereof, and, as it is said, he held it in such high Estimation, that thereof he made his Parliament Robes, & the first Parliament that was euer in England was graced with the Kings Person in those Robes, in Requitall whereof his Highnes afterward yeilded *Sutton* many princely Fauours.

And it is to be remembered, that *Simon* of Southampton (seeing the King had ouerpast the Place
where

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where he dwelt) came with his Wife and Seruants to Salisbury, and against the K. going forth of that City, hee caused a most pleafant Arbour to be made vpon the Toppe of the Hill leading to Salisburie, beset all with red and white Rofes, in fuch Sort, that not any Part of the Timber could be feene, within the which sat a Maiden attired like a Queen, attended on by a faire Traine of Maidens, who at the Kings Approach presented him with a Garland of sweet Flowres, yeelding him fuch Honour as the Ladies of Rome were wont to doe to their Princes after their Victories: which the King tooke in gracious Part, and for his Farewell from that Country, they bore him Company ouer Part of the Plaine, with the Sound of diuers sweet Instruments of Musicke. All which, when his Grace vnderstood was done at the Cost of a Clothier, he said he was the most honoured by those Men, about all the meane Subiects in his Land: & so his Highnes past on to Exceter, hauing giuen great Rewards to these Maidens.

Thomas Doue and the Residue of the Clothiers, against his Graces comming thither, had ordained diuers sumptuous Shewes; first, there was One that presented the Person of *Augustus Cesar* the Emperour, who commanded after the Romane Inuasion, that their City should be called *Augustus*, after his owne Name,
which

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which before Time was called *Ifca*, and of later Yeeres Exeter.

There his Maiefty was royally feasted feuen Dayes together, at the onely Coft of Clothiers, but the diuers Delightes and fundry Paftimes which they made there before the King, and his Nobles, is too long here to be rehearfed, and therefore I will ouerpaffe them to auoid Tedioufneffe.

His Grace then coasting along the Country, at laft came to Glocefter, an ancient City, which was builded by *Glouc*, a Britifh King, who named it after his owne Name, Glocefter. Here was his Maiefty entertained by *Gray* the Clothier, who profest himfelfe to be of that ancient Family of Grayes, whose firft Originall iffued out of that ancient and honorable Caftle and Towne of Rithin.

Here was the King moft bountifully feasted, hauing in his Company his Brother *Robert* (although his Prifoner the fame Time.) And his Grace being defirous to fee the Maidens card and fpinne, they were of Purpofe fet to their Worke: among whom was faire *Margaret* with her white Hand, whose excellent Beauty hauing pierct the Eyes of the amorous Duke, it made fuch an Impreffion in his Heart, that afterward he could neuer forget her: and fo vehemently was his Affection kindled, that he could take no Reft, till by
writing

of Thomas of Reading.

writing he had bewrayed his Minde : but of this we will speake more in another Place : and the King at his Departure said, that to gratifie them, hee would make his Sonne *Robert* their Earle, which was the first Earle that euer was in Gloucester.

Now when his Grace was come from thence, he went to Worcester, where *William Fitz-allen* made Preparation in all honourable Sort to receiue him, which Man being borne of great Parentage, was not to learne how to entertaine his Maieftie, being descended of that famous Family, whose Patrimony lay about the Towne of Ofwestrie, which Towne his Predeceffors had inclosed with stately Walls of Stone.

Although aduerse Fortune had so grieuouly frowned on some of them, that their Children were faine to become Tradefmen, whose Hands were to them instead of Lands, notwithstanding God raised againe the Fame of this Man, both by his great Wealth, and also in his Posterity, whose eldest Son *Henry*, the Kings God-son, became afterward the Maior of London, who was the first Maior that euer was in that City, who gouerned the same 23 Yeeres : and then his Son *Roger Fitz-allen* was the second Maior.

The princely Pleasures that in Worcester were shewn the King, were many and maruelous, and in no Place had his Maiefty receiued more Delight then here : for the which at his Departure he did shew
himselfe

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himselfe very thankfull. Now when his Grace had thus taken View of all his good Townes west-ward, and in that Progressse had visited these Clothiers, he returned to London, with great Ioy of his Commons.

How Hodgekins of Hallifax came to the Court, and complained to the King, that his Priuiledge was nothing worth, because when they found any Offender, they could not get a Hangman to execute him: and how by a Fryer a Gin was deuised to chop off Mens Heads of it selfe. CHAP. 8.

AFTER that *Hodgekins* had got the Priuiledge for the Towne of Halifax, to hang vp such Theeues as stole their Cloth in the Night, presently without any further Iudgement, all the Clothiers of the Towne were exceeding glad, and perswaded themselues, that now their Goods would be safe all Night, without watching them at all, so that whereas before, the Towne maintained certaine Watchmen to keepe their Cloth by Night, they were hereupon dismissed as a Thing needlesse to be done, supposing with themselves, that seeing they should be straight hanged that were found faulty in this Point, that no Man would be so desperate to enterprise any such Act. And indeed the Matter being noysed through the whole Country, that they were straight to be hanged that
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vſe ſuch Theeuery, it made many lewd Liuers to reſtraine ſuch Theeuery.

Neuertheles, there was at that ſame Time liuing, a notable Theefe named *Wallis*, whom in the North they called *Mighty Wallis*, in regard of his Valour and Manhood : This Man being moſt ſubtile in ſuch Kind of Knauery, hauing heard of this late Priuiledge, and therewithall of the Townes Security, ſaid that once he would venture his Necke for a Packe of Northerne Cloth : and therefore comming to One or Two of his Companions, he asked if they would be Partners in his Aduenture, and if (quoth he) you will herein hazard your Bodies, you ſhall be Sharers in all our Booties.

At length by many Perſwaſions the Men conſented : whereupon late in the Night, they got them all into a Farriours Shop, and called vp the Folkes of the Houſe. What the foule ill wald you haue (quoth they) at this Time of the Night? *Wallis* answered, ſaying, Good-fellowes, we would haue you to remoue the Shooes of our Horſes Feete, and ſet them on againe, and for your Paines you ſhall be well pleaſed. The Smith at length was perſwaded, and when he had pluckt off all the Shooes from their Horſes Feete, they would needs haue them all ſet on againe, quite contrary with the Cakins forward, that ſhould ſtand backward. How? fay, fay, Man, qd. the Smith, are ye ſike Fules? what the Deelee doe you meane to breake
your

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your Crags? gud Faith, I tro the Men be wood. Not so, Smith, qd. they, do thou as we bid thee, & thou shalt haue thy Money : for it is an old Prouerbe,

Be it better, or be it worfe,

Please you the Man that beares the Purse.

Gud Faith and see I fall, qd. the Smith, and so did as hee was willed. When *Wallis* had thus caused their Horfes to be shod, to Hallifax they went, where they without any Let, laded their Horfes with Cloth, and so departed contrary Way.

In the Morning, so soone as the Clothiers came to the Field, they found that they were robt, whereupon one ranne to another to tell these Things. Now when *Hodgekins* heard thereof, rising up in Haste, he wild his Neighbors to marke and see, if they could not descry either the Foot-steppes of Men or Horfes. Which being done, they perceiued that Horfes had benee there, and seeking to pursue them by their Foot-steppes, they went a cleane contrary Way, by Reason that the Horfes were shodde backward : and when in vaine they had long pursued them, they returned, being neuer the neere. Now *Wallis* vsed his Feate so long, that at length he was taken, and Two more with him : whereupon, according to the Priuledge of the Towne, they put Halters about the Theeues Neckes presently to hang them vp.

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When they were come to the Place appointed, *Wallis* and the Rest being out of Hope to escape Death, prepared themselves patiently to suffer the Rigor of the Law. And there with the Rest laying open the Lewdnesse of his Life, grievously lamenting for his Sinnes, at length commending their Soules to God, they yeelded their Bodies to the Graue, with which Sight the People were greatly mooued with Pity, because they had neuer seene Men come to hanging before: but when they should haue beene tyed vp, *Hodgekins* willed one of his Neighbours to play the Hang-mans Part, who would not by any Meanes doe it, although he was a very poore Man, who for his Paines should haue beene possesst of all their Apparell. When he would not yeeld to the Office, one of those which had his Cloth stolen, was commanded to doe the Deed; but he in like Maner would not, saying, When I haue the Skill to make a Man, I will hang a Man, if it chance my Workemanship doe not like me.

And thus from one to another, the Office of the Hang-man was posted off. At last a Rogue came by, whom they would haue compelled to haue done that Deed. Nay, my Masters, qd. he, not so: but as you haue got a Priuiledge for the Towne, so you were best to procure a Commission to make a Hang-man, or else you are like to be without for me. Neighbor *Hodgekins*,

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kins, quoth one, I pray you doe this Office your felfe, you haue had moft Loffe, and therefore you fhould be the moft ready to hang them your felfe. No, not I, (quoth *Hodgekins*,) though my Loffe were ten Times greater than it is ; notwithstanding look which of thefe Theeues will take upon him to hang the other, fhall haue his Life faued, otherwife they fhall all to Prifon till I can prouide a Hangman.

When *Wallis* faw the Matter brought to this paffe, he began stoutly to reply, faying, My Mafters of the Towne of Halifax, though your Priuiledge stretch to hang Men vp prefently that are found stealing of your Goods, yet it giues you no Warrant to imprifon them till you prouide them a Hang-man : my felfe, with thefe my Fellowes, haue here yeilded our felues to fatisfie the Law, and if it be not performed, the Fault is yours, and not ours, and therefore we humbly take our Leauē : from the Gallowes the xviii. of Auguft. And with that he leapt from the Ladder, and hurl'd the Halter at *Hodgekins* Face.

When the Clothiers faw this, they knew not what to fay, but taking them by the Sleeues, entreated to haue their owne againe. Not fo, qd. *Wallis*, you get not the Value of a Placke or a Bawby : we haue stolne your Cloth, then why do you not hang vs ? here we haue made our felues ready, and if you will not hang vs, chufe. A Plague upon you, quoth he, you haue
hindred

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hindred me God knowes what: I made Account to dine this Day in Heauen, and you keepe me here on Earth, where there is not a Quarter of that good Cheare. The foule Euill take you all; I was fully prouided to giue the Gallowes a Boxe on the Eare, and now God knowes when I shall be in so good a Minde againe: and so he, with the Rest of his Companions, departed.

When *Hodgekins* saw, that notwithstanding their Theeuery, how they flowted at their Lenity, he was much moued in Minde: and as he stood in his Dumps chewing his Cud, making his Dinner with a Dish of Melancholy, a Gray Fryer reuerently saluted him in this Sort: All haile, good-man *Hodgekins*, Happineffe and Health be euer with you, and to all Suppressors of lewd Liuers, God send euerlasting Ioyes.

I am sorry, Good-man *Hodgekins*, that the great Priuiledge which our King gaue to this Towne comes to no greater Purpofe: better farre had it beene that it had neuer beene granted, then so lightly regarded: the Towne hath suffered through their owne Peeuifhneffe, an euerlasting Reproch this Day, onely becaufe foolish Pitty hath hindred Iustice.

Confider, that Compassion is not to be had vpon Theeues and Robbers: Pity onely appertaineth to the vertuous Sort, who are ouerwhelmed with the Waues
of

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of Mifery and Mifchance. What great Caufe of Boldneffe haue you giuen to bad Liuers, by letting thefe Fellowes thus to efcape, and how fhall you now keepe your Goods in Safety, feeing you fulfill not the Law, which fhould be your Defence? neuer thinke that Theeues will make any Confcience to carry away your Goods, when they find them felues in no Danger of Death, who haue more Caufe to praife your Pity, then commend your Wifedome: wherefore in Time feeke to preuent the enfuing Euill.

For my owne Part, I haue that Care of your Good, that I would worke all good Meanes for your Benefit, and yet not fo much in refpect of your Profit, as for the Defire I haue to vphold Iuftice, and feeing I finde you and the Reft fo womanifh, that you could not find in your Hearts to hang a Theefe, I haue deuifed how to make a Gin, that fhall cut off their Heads without Mans Helpe, and if the King will allow thereof.

When *Hodgekins* heard this, he was fomewhat comforted in Mind, and faid to the Fryer, that if by his cunning he would performe it, he would once againe make Sute to the King to haue his Grant for the fame. The Fryer willed him to haue no Doubt in him: and fo when he had deuifed it, he got a Carpenter to frame it out of Hand.

Hodgekins in the meane Time pofted vp to the Court, and told his Maiefty that the Priuiledge of
Hallifax

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Hallifax was not worth a Pudding. Why so? said the King. Because, quoth *Hodgekins*, we can get neuer a Hangman to trusse our Theeues: but if it shall like your good Grace, (quoth he) there is a feate Fryer, that will make vs a Deuice, which shall without the Hand of Man cut off the Cragges of all such Carles, if your Maiefty will please to allow thereof.

The King vnderstanding the full Effect of the Matter, at length granted his Petition: whereupon till this Day it is obserued in Hallifax, that such as are taken stealing of their Cloth, haue their Heads chopt off with the same Gin.

How the Bailiffes of London could get no Man to bee a Catchpole, and how certaine Flemings took that Office vpon them, whereof many of them were fledde into this Realme, by Reason of certaine Waters that had drowned a great Part of their Country. CHAP. 9.

THE City of London being at that Time gouerned by Bailiffes, it came to passe, that in a certaine Fray two of their Catch-poles were killed, for at that Time they had not the Name of Sergeants: and you shall vnderstand, that their Office was then so much hated and detested of Englishmen, that none of them would take it vpon him: so that the Bailiffes were glad to get any Man whatsoever, and to giue him certain Wages to performe that Office.

It

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It came to passe, as I said before, that Two of their Officers by arresting of a Man, were at one Instant slaine, by Meanes whereof the Bailiffes were enforced to seek Others to put in their Roomes, but by no Meanes could they get any, wherefore according to their wonted Manner, they made Proclamation, that if there were any Man that would present himselfe before them, he should not onely be settled in that Office during their Liues, but also should haue such Maintenance and Allowance, as for such Men was by the City provided: & notwithstanding that it was an Office most necessary in the Commonwealth, yet did the poorest Wretch despise it, that liued in any Estimation among his Neighbours.

At last, a Couple of Flemings, which were fled into this Land, by Reason that their Country was drowned with the Sea, heering the Proclamation, offered themselves vnto the Bayliffes, to serue in this Place, who were presently receiued and accepted, & according to order had Garments giuen them, which were of 2 Colors, blue & red their Coates, Breeches, & Stockings, whereby they were known and discerned from other Men.

Within Halfe a Yeere after it came to passe, that *Thomas Doue* of Exeter came vp to London, who hauing by his Iollity and Goodfellowship brought himselfe greatly behind Hand, was in Danger to diuers
Men

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Men of the Cite, among the Rest, one of his Creditors feed an Officer to arrest him. The Dutchman, that had not beene long experienced in such Matters, and hearing how many of his Fellows had beene killed for attempting to arrest Men, stood quiuering and quaking in a Corner of the Street to watch for *Thomas Doue*, and hauing long waited, at length he espied him: whereupon he prepared his Mace ready, and with a pale Countenance proceeded to his Office; at what Time comming behind the Man, suddenly with his Mace he knockt him on the Pate, saying, I arrest you, giuing him such a Blow, that he fell him to the Ground.

The Catchpole thinking he had killed the Man, he left his Mace behind him and ranne away: the Creditor he ran after him, calling and crying that he should turne againe: But the Fleming would not by any Meanes turne backe, but got him quite out of the City, and tooke Sanctuary at Westminster.

Doue being come to himselfe, arose and went to his Inne, no Man hindring his Passage, being not a little glad he so escaped the Danger. Yet, neuerthelesse, at his next comming to London, another Catchpole met with him, and arrested him in the King's Name.

Doue being dismayed at this mischieuous Mischance, knew not what to doe: at last hee requested the Catchpole that hee would not violently cast him in Prison,

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but ftay till fuch Time as he could fend for a Friend to be his Surety ; and although Kindneffe in a Catchpole be rare, yet was he won with faire Words to doe him this Fauour : whereupon *Doue* defired one to goe to his Oaft *Iarrat*, who immediately came with him, & offered himfelfe to be *Doues* Surety.

The Officer, who neuer faw this Man before, was much amazed at his Sight : for *Iarrat* was a great and mighty Man of Body, of Countenance grim, and exceeding high of Stature, fo that the Catchpole was wonderfully afraid, asking if he could find neuer a Surety but the Deuill, moft fearefully intreating him to coniure him away, and he would doe *Doue* any Fauour. What, will you not take my Word ? qd. *Iarrat*. Sir, qd. the Catchpole, if it were for any Matter in Hell, I would take your Word as foone as any Diuels in that Place, but feeing it is for a Matter on Earth, I would gladly haue a Surety.

Why, thou whorfon Cricket ! (quoth *Iarrat*,) thou Maggat-apie ! thou Spinner ! thou paultry Spider ! doft thou take me for a Deuill ? Sirra, take my Word, I charge thee, for this Man, or elfe, goodman Butterfly, Ile make thee repent it. The Officer, while he was in the Houfe, faid he was cōtent, but as foon as he came into the Street he cryed, faying, Helpe, helpe, good Neighbors, or elfe the Deuill will carry away my Prifoner : notwithstanding, there was not one Man
would

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would stirre to be the Catchpoles Aide. Which when he saw, he tooke fast hold on *Thomas Doue*, and would not by any Meanes let him goe.

Iarrat seeing this, made no more adoe, but coming to the Officer, gaue him such a Fillop on the Forehead with his Finger, that he fell the poore Fleming to the Ground: and while he lay in the Street stretching his Heeles, *Iarrat* tooke *Doue* vnder his Arme and carried him Home, where he thought himselfe as safe as King *Charlemaine* in Mount-Albon.

The next Morning *Iarrat* conueyed *Doue* out of Towne, who afterward kept him in the Country, and came no more in the Catchpoles Clawes.

How Duke Robert came a wooing to Margaret with the white Hand, and how he appointed to come and steale her away from her Masters. CHAP. 10.

THE beautifull *Margaret*, who had now dwelt with her Dame the Space of foure Yeeres, was highly regarded and secretly beloued of many gallant and worthy Gentlemen of the Country, but of Two most especially, Duke *Robert*, and Sir *William Ferris*. It chanced on a Time that faire *Margaret*, with many Others of her Masters Folkes, went a Hay-making, atired in a red Stammell Peticoate, and a broad Strawne Hat vpon her Head; she had also a Hay-forke, and in her Lappe she did carry her Breake-fast. As she
went

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went along, Duke *Robert*, with One or Two of his Keepers, met with her, whose amiable Sight did now anew re-inkindle the secret Fire of Loue, which long lay smothering in his Heart. Wherefore meeting her so happily, he saluted her thus friendly.

Faire Maid, good Morow; are you walking so diligently to your Labour? Needes must the Weather be faire, when the Sun shines so cleare, and the Hay wholesome that is dried with such splendent Rayes. Renowned and most notable Duke, (qd. she) poore Haruest Folkes pray for faire Weather, and it is the Laborers Comfort to see his Worke prosper, and the more happy may we count the Day that is blessed with your princely Prefence. But more happy, said the Duke, are they which are conuersant in thy Company. But let me intreat thee to turne backe to thy Masters with me, and commit thy Forke to some that are fitter for such Toyle: trust me, me thinkes thy Dame is too much ill-aduised in setting thee to such homely Busines. I muse thou canst indure this vile befeeming Seruitude, whose delicate Lims were neuer framed to proue such painefull Experiments.

Albeit, quoth she, it becommeth not me to controule your iudicial Thoughts, yet, were you not the Duke, I would say, your Opinion deceiued you: though your faire Eyes seeme cleare, yet I deemed them vnperfect, if they cast before your Mind any Shadow or Sparke
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of Beauty in me : But I rather thinke, because it hath beene an old Saying, that Women are proud to heare themfelues praised, that you either speake this to driue away the Time, or to wring me from my too apparant Imperfections. But I humbly intreate Pardon ; too long haue I fore-flowed my Bufineffe, and shewne my selfe ouer-bold in your Prefence ; and therewith, with a courtly Grace, bending her Knees to the courteous Duke, shee went forward to the Field, and the Duke to the Towne of Glocester.

When he came thither, he made his Keepers great Cheare, intreating them they would giue him Respit to be awhile with old *Gray* ; for we Twaine must haue a Game or Two, quoth he : and for my safe Return, I gage to you my princely Word, that as I am a true Knight and a Gentleman, I will returne safe to your Charge againe.

The Keepers being content, the Duke departed, and with old *Gray* goes to the Field, to peruse the Worke-folkes, where while *Gray* found himselfe busie in many Matters, he tooke Opportunity to talke with *Margaret* ; shee who by his Letters before was priuie to his Purpose, guest beforehand the Cause of his comming : to whom he spake to this effect :

Faire Maid, I did long since manifest my Loue to thee by my Letter ; tell me, therefore, were it not better to be a Dutches then Drudge? a Lady of high Reputation,

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Reputatione, then a Seruant of fimple Degree? With me thou mighteft liue in Pleafure, where here thou draweft thy Dayes forth in Paine; by my Loue thou fhouldft be made a Lady of great Treafures: where now thou art poore and beggerly: all Manner of Delights fhould then attend on thee, and whatfoeuer thy Heart defireth, thou fhouldft haue: wherefore feeing it lyes in thy owne Choice, make thy felfe happy, by confenting to my Suite.

Sir, (quoth ſhe) I confeſſe your Loue deferues a Ladies Fauour, your Affection a faithfull Friend, ſuch a One as could make but one Heart and Mind of two Hearts & Bodyes; but farre unfit it is that the Turtle ſhould match with the Eagle, though her Loue be neuer ſo pure, her Wings are unfit to mount ſo high. While *Thales* gazed on the Starres, he ſtumbled in a Pit. And they that clime unaduifedly, catch a Fall ſuddenly: what auaieth high Dignity in Time of Adverſity? it neither helpeth the Sorrow of the Heart, nor remoues the Bodies Miſery: as for Wealth and Treafure, what are they, but Fortunes Baits to bring Men in Danger? good for nothing but to make People forget themſelues: & whereas you alleadge Poverty to be a Hinderer of the Hearts Comfort, I find it my ſelfe contrary, knowing more Surety to reſt vnder a ſimple Habit, then a royall Robe: and verily there is none in the World poore, but they that think themſelues poore: for ſuch as are indued with

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Content are rich, hauing nothing else ; but he that is possessed with Riches without Content, is most wretched and miserable. Wherefore, most noble Duke, albeit I account my Life vnworthy of your least Fauour, yet I would desire you to match your Loue to your Like, and let me rest to my Rake, and vse my Forke for my Liuing.

Consider, faire *Margaret*, (quoth he) that it lyes not in Mans Power to place his Loue where he list, being the Worke of an high Deity. A Bird was neuer seene in Pontus, nor true Loue in a fleeting Mind : neuer shall remoue the Affection of my Heart, which in Nature resembleth the Stone Abiston, whose Fire can neuer be cooled : wherefore, sweet Maiden, giue not obstinate Denial, where gentle Acceptance ought to be receiued.

Faire Sir, (quoth she) consider what high Displeasure may rise by a rash Match, what Danger a Kings Frownes may breed ; my worthlesse Matching with your Royalty may perhaps regaine your Liberty, and hazard my Life : then call to Mind how little you should enjoy your Loue, or I my wedded Lord.

The Duke at these Words made this Reply, that if she consented, she should not dread any Danger. The Thunder (quoth he) is driuen away by ringing of Belles, the Lions Wrath qualified by a yeelding Body : how much more a Brothers Anger with a Brothers Intreaty ?

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Intreaty? By me he hath receiued many Fauors, and neuer yet did he requite any One of them: and who is ignorant that the princely Crown which adorneth his Head is my Right? all which I am content he fhall ftill enjoy, fo he requite my Kindneffe. But if he fhould not, then would I be like thofe Men, (that eating of the Tree Lutes) forget the Country where they were borne; and neuer more fhould this Clime couer my Head, but with thee would I liue in a ftange Land, being better content with an Egge in thy Company, then with all the Delicates in England.

The Maiden hearing this, who with many other Words was long wooed, at laft confented; where yeelding to him her Heart with her Hand, he departed, appointing to certifie her from Cardiffe Caftle, what Determination he would follow: fo taking his Leau of *Gray*, he went to his Brothers, and with them pofted to Cardiffe.

Now it is to be remembered, that Sir *William Ferrers*, within a Day or two after, came vnto *Grayes* Houfe, as it was his ordinary Cuf tome, but not fo much ywis for *Grayes* Company, as for the Minde he had to *Margaret* his Maiden, who although he were a married Man, and had a faire Lady to his Wife, yet he laid hard Siege to the Fort of this Maidens Chaf tity, hauing with many faire Words fought to allure her, and by the Offer of fundry rich Gifts to tempt her.

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her. But when she saw, that by a hundred Denials she could not be rid of him, she now chanced on a Sudden to give him such an Answer, as drove him from a Deceit into such a Conceit, as neuer after that Time he troubled her.

Sir *William Ferrers* being very importunate to haue her grant his Desire, and when after sundry Assaults she gaue him still the Repulse, hee would needs know the Reason why shee would not loue him; quoth he, If thou didst but consider who he is that seeketh thy Fauour, what Pleasure he may doe thee by his Purse, and what Credit by his Countenance, thou wouldst neuer stand on such nice Points. If I be thy Friend, who dareth be thy Foe? and what is he that will once call thy Name in Question for any Thing? therefore, sweet Girle, be better aduised, and refuse not my Offer, being so large.

Truly, Sir *William* (quoth she) though there be many Reasons to make me deny your Suite, yet is there one about the Rest that causes me I cannot loue you. Now I pray thee, my Wench, let me know that, quoth he, and I will amend it, whatsoever it be. Pardon me, Sir, said *Margaret*; if I should speake my Mind, it would possibly offend you, and doe me no Pleasure, because it is a Defect in Nature, which no Phisicke can cure. Sir *William* hearing on her so, being abashed at her Speech, said, Faire *Margaret*,

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let me (if I may obtaine no more at thy Hands) yet intreat thee to know what this Defect fhould be : I am not wry-neckt, crook-legd, ftub-footed, lame-handed, nor bleare-eyed : what can make this Mif-like ? I neuer knew any Body that tooke Exceptions at my Perfon before.

And the more forry am I, quoth ſhe, that I was fo mala-pert to ſpeake it ; but pardon me my Prefumption, good Sir *William* ; I would I had beene like the Storke, tongueleſſe, then ſhould I neuer haue cauſed your Diſquiet. Nay, ſweet *Margaret*, quoth he, tell me, deare Loue, I commend thy Singleneſſe of Heart, good *Margaret*, ſpeake. Good Sir *William*, let it reſt, quoth ſhe ; I know you will not beleeuẽ it when I haue reuealed it, neither is it a Thing that you can helpe : and yet ſuch is my Fooliſhneſſe, had it not beene for that, I thinke verily I had granted your Suite ere now. But ſeeing you vrge me ſo much to know what it is, I will tell you : it is, Sir, your ill-fauoured great Noſe, that hangs fagging ſo lothſomely to your Lips, that I cannot finde in my Heart ſo much as to kiſſe you.

What, my Noſe ! quoth he, is my Noſe ſo great and I neuer knew it ? certainly I thought my Noſe to be as comely as any Mans : but this it is, we are all apt to thinke well of our felues, and a great deale better than we ought : but let me ſee, my Noſe ! by the Maſſe, tis true, I doe now feele it my ſelfe : Good Lord,

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Lord, how was I blinded before? Hereupon it is certaine, that the Knight was driuen into such a Conceit, as none could perfwade him but his Nose was so great indeed: his Lady, or any other that spake to the contrarie, he would say they were Flatterers, and that they lied, infomuch that he would be ready to strike some of them that commended and spake well of his Nose. If they were Men of Worship, or any other that contraried him in his Opinion, he would sweare they flowted him, and be ready to challenge them the Field. He became so ashamed of himselfe, that after that Day he would neuer goe Abroad, whereby *Margaret* was well rid of his Company.

On a Time, a wife and graue Gentleman seeing him grounded in his Conceit so strongly, gaue his Lady Counsell, not to contrary him therein, but rather say that she would seeke out some cunning Physician to cure him: for, said he, as Sir *William* hath taken this Conceit of himselfe, so is he like neuer to heare other Opinion, till his owne Conceit doth remoue it, the which must be wifely wrought to bring it to passe.

Whereupon the Lady, hauing conferred with a Physician that beare a great Name in the Countrey, hee vndertooke to remoue this fond Conceit by his Skill. The Day being appointed when the Phifician should come, and the Knight being told thereof, for
very

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very Ioy he would goe forth to meete him, when a Woman of the Towne saw the Knight, hauing heard what Rumor went becaufe of his Nofe, fhee looked very ftedfaftly vpon him: the Knight cafting his Eye vpon her, feeing her to gaze fo wiftly in his Face, with an angry Countenance faid thus to her, Why, how now, good Hufwife, cannot you get you about your Bufines? The Woman being a fhrewifh Queane, answered him cuttedly, No, mary can I not, qd. fhe. No, you Drab, what is the Caufe? faid the Knight. Becaufe, quoth fhe, your Nofe ftands in my Way: wherewith the Knight, being uery angry and abafhed, went back againe to his Houfe.

The Phyfician being come, he had filled a certaine Bladder with Sheeps Blood, and conueyed it into his Sleeue, where at the Iffue of the Bladder he had put in a Piece of a Swans Quill, through the which the Blood fhould runne out of the Bladder fo clofe by his Hand, that hee, holding the Knight by the Nofe, it might not be perceiued but that it iffued thence. All Things being prepared, he told the Knight, that by a foule corrupt Blood wherewith the Veines of his Nofe were ouer-charged, his Impediment did grow, therefore, quoth he, to haue Redrefle for this Difeaſe, you muſt haue a Veine opened in your Nofe, whence this foule Corruption muſt be taken: whereupon it will follow,

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follow, that your Nose will fall againe to his naturall Proportion, and neuer shall you be troubled with this Griefe any more, and thereupon will I gage my Life.

I pray you, Master Doctor, said the Knight, is my Nose so big as you make it? With Reuerence I may speake it, said the Physician, to tell the Truth, and auoid Flattery, I neuer saw a more mishapen Nose so foule to Sight. Lo you now, Madam, quoth the Knight, this is you that said my Nose was as well, as handsome, and as comely a Nose as any Mans.

Alas, Sir, qd. she, I spake it (God wot) because you should not grieue at it, nor take my Words in ill Part, neither did it indeed become me to mislike of your Nose.

All this we will quickly remedy, said the Physician, haue no doubt: and with that he uery orderly prickt him in the Nose, but not in a Veine whereby he might bleed: and presently hauing a Tricke finely to vnstop the Quill, the Blood ranne into a Bafon in great Aboundance: and when the Bladder was empty, and the Bafon almost full, the Physician seemed to close the Veine, and asked him how he felt his Nose, shewing the great Quantite of filthy Blood which from thence he had taken.

The Knight beholding it with great Wonder, said, he thought that no Man in the World had beene troubled with such Aboundance of corrupt Blood in his
whole

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whole Body as lay in his mif-shapen Nofe, and therewithall he began to touch and handle his Nofe, faying, that he felt it mightily affwaged. Immediately a Glaffe was brought, wherein he might behold himfelfe. Yea, mary, qd. he, now I praife God, I fee my Nofe is come into fome reasonable Proportion, and I feele my felfe very well eafed of the Burthen thereof; but if it continue thus, thats all. I will warrant your Worſhip, faid the Phyſician, for euer being troubled with the like againe. Whereupon the Knight receiued great Ioy, and the Doctour a high Reward.

How Thomas of Reading was murdered at his Oaſts Houſe of Colebrooke, who alſo had murdered many before him, and how their Wickedneſſe was at length reuealed. CHAP. 11.

THOMAS of Reading hauing many Occaſions to come to London, as well about his own Affaires, as alſo the Kings Buſineſſe, being in a great Office vnder his Maieſtie, it chanced on a Time, that his Oaſt and Oaſteſſe of Colebrooke, who through Couetouſneſſe had murdered many of the Gueſts, and hauing euery Time he came thither great Store of his Money to lay vp, appointed him to be the next fat Pig that ſhould be killed: For it is to be vnderſtood, that when they plotted the Murder of any Man, this was alwaies their Terme, the Man to his Wife, and the Woman to her

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her Husband : Wife, there is now a fat Pig to be had if you want one. Whereupon she would answer thus, I pray you put him in the Hogstie till To-morrow. This was when any Man came thither alone without Others in his Company, and they saw he had great Store of Money.

This Man should be then laid in the Chamber right over the Kitchen, which was a faire Chamber, & the better set out than any other in the House : the best Bedstead therein, though it were little and low, yet was it most cunningly carued, and faire to the Eye, the Feet whereof were fast naild to the Chamber Floore in such Sort, that it could not in any wise fall ; the Bed that lay therein was fast sowed to the Sides of the Bedstead : Moreouer, that Part of the Chamber whereupon this Bed and Bedstead stood was made in such Sort, that by the pulling out of Two Yron Pinnes below in the Kitchen, it was to be let downe and taken vp by a Draw-bridge, or in Manner of a Trap-doore : moreouer in the Kitchen, directly vnder the Place where this should fall, was a mighty great Caldron, wherein they vsed to seethe their Liquor when they went to Brewing. Now the Men appointed for the Slaughter were laid into this Bed, and in the dead Time of the Night, when they were found asleepe, by plucking out the foresaid Yron Pinnes, downe will the Man fall out of his Bed into the boyling Caldron, and
all

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all the Cloaths that were vpon him: where being suddenly scalded and drowned, he was neuer able to cry or speake one Word.

Then had they a little Ladder euer standing ready in the Kitchen, by the which they presently mounted into the said Chamber, and there closely take away the Mans Apparell, as also his Money, in his Male or Cap-case: and then lifting vp the said Falling-Floore, which hung by Hinges, they made it fast as before.

The dead Body would they take presently out of the Caldron, and throw it down the River, which ran neere vnto their House, whereby they escaped all Danger.

Now if in the Morning any of the Rest of the Guests that had talkt with the murdered Man ore Eue, chanc't to aske for him, as hauing Occasion to ride the same Way that he should haue done, the Good-man would answere, that he tooke Horse a good while before Day, and that he himselfe did set him forward: the Horse the Good-man would also take out of the Stable, & conuey him by a Hay-barne of his, that stood from his House a Mile or Two, whereof himselfe did alwaies keepe the Keies full charily, and when any Hay was to be brought from thence, with his owne Hands he would deliuer it: then before the Horse should goe from thence, he would difmarke him: as if he ware a long Taile, he would make him curtall: or else
crop

of Thomas of Reading.

crop his Eares, or cut his Mane, or put out One of his Eies; and by this Meanes hee kept himselfe vnknowne.

Now, *Thomas* of Reading, as I said before, being markt, & kept for a fat Pig, he was laid in the same Chamber of Death, but by Reason *Gray* of Glocester chanced also to come that Night, he escaped scalding.

The next Time he came, he was laid there againe, but before he fell asleepe, or was warme in his Bed, one came riding thorow the Towne, and cryed piteously, that London was all on a Fire, and that it had burned downe *Thomas Beckets* House in West-cheape, and a great Number more in the same Street, and yet (quoth he) the Fire is not quencht,

Which Tidings when *Thomas* of Reading heard, he was very sorrowfull, for of the same *Becket* that Day he had receiued a great Peece of Money, and had left in his House many of his Writings, and some that appertained to the King also: therefore there was no way but he would ride backe againe to London presently, to see how the Matter stood, thereupon making himselfe ready, departed. This crosse Fortune caused his Oast to frowne, neuerthelesse the next Time (qd. he) will pay for all.

Notwithstanding God so wrought that they were prevented thē likewise, by Reason of a great Fray that hapned

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happed in the Houfe betwixt a Couple that fell out at Dice, infomuch as the Murderers themfelues were enforced to call him vp, being a Man in great Authority, that he might fet the Houfe in Quietneffe, out of the which, by Meanes of this Quarrell, they doubted to lofe many Things.

Another Time, when hee fhould haue beene laid in the fame Place, he fell fo ficke, that he requested to haue fome body to watch with him, whereby alfo they could not bring their vile Purpose to paffe. But hard it is to efcape the ill Fortunes whereunto a Man is allotted : for albeit that the next Time that he came to London, his Horfe stumbled & broke One of his Legs as he fhould ride homeward, yet hired he another to haften his owne Death ; for there is no Remedy but he fhould goe to Colebrooke that Night : but by the Way he was heauy afleepe, that he could fcant keepe himfelfe in the Saddle ; and when he came neere vnto the Towne, his Nofe burft out fuddenly a Bleeding.

Well, to his Inne he came, and fo heauy was his Heart that he could eate no Meat : his Oaft and Oafteffe hearing he was fo melancholy, came vp to cheare him, faying, Jefus, Mafter *Cole*, what ayles you to-night ? neuer did we fee you thus fad before : will it pleafe you to haue a Quart of burnt Sacke ? With a good Will (quoth he) and would to God *Tom Doue* were

of Thomas of Reading.

were here, he would surely make me merry, and we should lacke no Musicke : but I am sorry for the Man with all my Heart, that he is come so farre behind Hand : but, alas, so much can euery Man say, but what Good doth it him? No, no, it is not Words can helpe a Man in this Cafe, the Man had need of other Reliefe then so. Let me see : I haue but one Child in the World, and that is my Daughter, and Half that I haue is hers, the other Halfe my Wifes. What then? shall I be good to no body but them? In Conscience, my Wealth is too much for a Couple to possesse, and what is our Religion without Charity? And to whom is Charity more to be shewne, then to decayd Householders?

Good my Oast, lend me a Pen and Inke, and some Paper, for I will write a Letter vnto the poore Man straight; & Something I will giue him: That Almes which a Man bestowes with his owne Hands, he shall be sure to haue deliuered, and God knowes how long I shall liue.

With that, his Oastesse dissemblingly answered, saying, Doubt not, Master *Cole*, you are like enough by the Course of Nature to liue many Yeeres. God knowes (quoth he) I neuer found my Heart so heauy before. By this Time Pen, Inke, and Paper was brought, setting himselfe in writing as followeth.

In

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IN the Name of God, Amen. I bequeath my Soule to God, and my Body to the Ground, my Goods equally betweene my Wife *Elenor*, and *Ifabel* my Daughter. Item, I giue to *Thomas Doue* of Exeter, One Hundred Pounds ; nay, that is too little, I giue to *Thomas Doue* Two Hundred Pounds in Money, to be paid vnto him presently vpon his Demand thereof, by my said Wife and Daughter.

Ha, how say you, Oast, (qd. he) is not this well? I pray you reade it. His Oast looking thereon, said, Why, Master *Cole*, what haue you written here? you said you would write a Letter, but me thinks you haue made a Will; what need haue you to doe thus? Thanks be to God, you may liue many faire Yeeres. Tis true, (quoth *Cole*) if it please God, and I trust this Writing cannot shorten my Daies; but let me see, haue I made a Will? Now, I promise you, I did verily purpose to write a Letter: notwithstanding, I haue written that that God put into my Mind: but looke once againe, my Oast, is it not written there, that *Doue* shall haue Two Hundred Pounds, to be paid when he comes to demand it? Yes, indeed, said his Oaste. Well then, all is well, said *Cole*, and it shall goe as it is for me. I will not bestow the new Writing thereof any more.

Then

of Thomas of Reading.

Then folding it vp, he sealed it, desiring that his Oast would send it to Exeter : he promised that he would, notwithstanding *Cole* was not satisfied : but after some Pause, he would needs hire one to carry it. And so fitting downe sadly in his Chaire againe, vpon a sudden he burst forth a weeping ; they demanding the Cause thereof, he spake as followeth :

No Cause of these Feares I know : but it comes now into my Minde, (said *Cole*) when I set toward this my last Iourney to London, how my Daughter tooke on, what a Coyle she kept to haue me stay : and I could not be rid of the little Baggage a long Time, she did so hang about me ; when her Mother by Violence tooke her away, she cried out most mainly, O my Father, my Father, I shall neuer see him againe.

Alas, pretty Soule, said his Oastesse, this was but meere Kindnesse in the Girle, and it seemeth she is very fond of you. But, alas, why should you grieve at this ? you must consider that it was but Childishnesse. I, it is indeed, said *Cole*, and with that he began to nod. Then they asked him if he would goe to Bed. No, said he, although I am heauy, I haue no Mind to goe to Bed at all. With that certaine Musicians of the Towne came to the Chamber, and knowing Master *Cole* was there, drue out their Instruments, and very solemnly began to play.

This

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This Musicke comes verry well (said *Cole*) and when he had listned a while thereunto, he said, Me thinks these Instrumēt's sound like the Ring of St. *Mary Queries* Bells ; but the Base drowns all the Rest : & in my Eare it goes like a Bell that rings a frozen Ones Knell, for Gods Sake let them leaue off, and beare them this simple Reward. The Musicians being gone, his Oast asked, if now it would please him to go t Bed ; for (quoth he) it is wel neere Eleuen of the Clocke.

With that *Cole*, beholding his Oast & Oastesse earnestly, began to start backe, saying, What aile you to looke so like pale Death ? good Lord ! what haue you done, that your Hands are thus bloody ? What, my Hands ? said his Oast ; why you may see they are neither bloody nor foule : either your Eyes doe greatly dazell, or else Fancies of a troubled Minde doe delude you.

Alas, my Oast, you may see, said hee, how weake my Wits are ; I neuer had my Head so idle before. Come, let me drinke once more, and then I will to Bed, and trouble you no longer. With that hee made himselfe vnready, and his Oastesse was very diligent to warme a Kerchiffe, and put it about his Head. Good Lord ! said he, I am not sicke, I praise God ; but such an Alteration I finde in my selfe as I neuer did before.

With

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With that the Scritch-Owle cried pitiously, and anon after the Night-Rauen fate croking hard by his Window. *Jesu*, haue Mercy upon me, quoth hee, what an ill-fauoured Cry doe yonder Carrion-Birds make, and therewithall he laid him downe in his Bed, from whence he neuer rose againe.

His Oast and Oasteffe, that all this while noted his troubled Mind, began to commune betwixt themfelues thereof. And the Man said, he knew not what were best to be done. By my Consent (quoth he) the Matter should passe, for I thinke it is not best to meddle on him. What, Man, quoth she, faint you now? haue you done so many, and doe you shrinke at this? Then shewing him a great deale of Gold which *Cole* had left with her, she said, Would it not grieue a Bodies Heart to lose this? Hang the old Churle, what should he doe liuing any longer? he hath too much, and we haue too little: tut, Husband, let the Thing be done, and then this is our owne.

Her wicked Counsell was followed, and when they had liftned at his Chamber-Doore, they heard the Man found asleepe: All is safe, quoth they, and downe into the Kitchen they goe, their Seruants being all in Bed, and pulling out the Yron Pins, downe fell the Bed, and the Man dropt out into the boyling Caldron. He being dead, they betwixt them cast his Body into the Riuer; his Clothes they made away, & made all
Things

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Things as it should be : but when he came to the Stable to conuey thence *Coles* Horfe, the Stable-doore being open, the Horfe had got loose, and with a Part of the Halter about his Necke, and Straw truffed vnder his Belly, as the Ostlers had dressed him ore Eue, he was gone out at the Back-side, which led into a great Field ioyning to the House, and so leaping diuers Hedges, being a lustie stout Horfe, had got into a Ground where a Mare was grazing, with whom he kept such a Coile, that they got into the High-way, where One of the Towne meeting them, knew the Mare, and brought her and the Horfe to the Man that owed her.

In the meane Space the Musicians had bene at the Inne, and in Requittall of their Euenings Gift, they intended to giue *Cole* some Musicke in the Morning. The Good-man told them he tooke Horfe before Day : likewise there was a Guest in the House that would haue bore him Company to Reading, vnto whom the Oast also answered, that he himselfe fet him vpon Horsebacke, and that he went long agoe. Anon came the Man that owed the Mare, inquiring vp and downe, to know and if none of them missed a Horfe, who said no. At the last he came to the Signe of the Crane, where *Cole* lay : and calling the Oastlers, he demanded of them if they lackt none, they said no : Why then, said the Man, I perceiue my Mare is good for
Something

of Thomas of Reading.

Something, for if I fend her to Field fingle, ſhe will come Home double. Thus it paſſed on all that Day and the Night following : but the next Day after, *Coles* Wife, muſing that her Huſband came not Home, ſent one of her Men on Horſe-backe, to ſee if he could meet him : and if (quoth ſhe) you meet him not betwixt this and Colebrooke, aſke for him at the Crane ; but if you find him not there, then ride to London, for I doubt he is either ſicke, or elſe ſome Miſchance hath fallen vnto him.

The Fellow did ſo, and aſking for him at Colebrooke, they answered, hee went homeward from thence ſuch a Day. The Seruant muſing what ſhould be become of his Maſter, and making much Inquiry in the Towne for him, at length One told him of a Horſe that was found on the High-way, and no Man knew whence he came. He going to ſee the Horſe, knew him preſently, and to the Crane he goes with him. The Oaſt of the Houſe perceiuing this, was blanke, and that Night fled ſecretly away. The Fellow going vnto the Juſtice, deſired his Helpe : preſently after Word was brought that *Iarman* of the Crane was gone ; then all the Men ſaid, he had ſure made *Cole* away : & the Muſicians told what *Iarman* ſaid to them, when they would haue giuen *Cole* Muſicke. Then the Woman being apprehended & examined, confeſſed the Truth. *Iarman* ſoone after was taken in Windſor
N Foreſt,

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Foreft, he and his Wife were both hangd, after they had laid open al thefe Things before expreffed. Also he confefled, that he being a Carpenter, made that falfe Falling-Floore, and how his Wife deuifed it. And how they had murdered by that Meanes lx. Perfons. And yet, notwithstanding all the Money which they had gotten thereby, they prospered not, but at their Death were found very farre in Debt.

When the King heard of this Murder, he was for the Space of vii. Dayes fo forrowfull and heauie, as he would not heare any Suite, giuing alfo Commandment, that the Houfe fould quite be confumed with Fire wherein *Cole* was murdered, and that no Man fould euer build vpon that curfed Ground.

Coles Substance at his Death was exceeding great; hee had daily in his Houfe an Hundred Men Seruants and xl. Maides; hee maintained befide about Two or Three Hundred People, Spinners and Carders, and a great many other Houfe-holders. His Wife neuer after married, and at her Death fhee beftowed a mightie Summe of Money toward the maintaining of the new-builed Monaftery. Her Daughter was moft richly married to a Gentleman of great Worfhip, by whom fhe had many Children. And fome fay, that the Riuer whereinto *Cole* was caft, did euer fince carrie the Name of *Cole*, being called, The Riuer of *Cole*, and the Towne of Colebrooke.

How

of Thomas of Reading.

*How diuers of the Clothiers Wiues went to the Churching
of Suttons Wife of Salisbury, & of their Merriment.*

CHAP. 12.

SVTTONS Wife of Salisbury, which had lately bin deliuered of a Sonne, against her going to Church prepared great Cheare : at what Time *Simons* Wife of Southampton came thither, and so did diuers others of the Clothiers Wiues, onely to make merry at this Churching Feast : and whilest these Dames fate at the Table, *Crab*, *Weafell*, and *Wren*, waited on the Boord ; and as the old Prouerbe speaketh, Many Women many Words, so fell it out at that Time : for there was such Prattling that it passed : some talkt of their Husbands Frowardnes, some shewed their Maids Sluttishnes, other some deciphered the Costlines of their Garments, some told many Tales of their Neighbours : and, to be briefe, there was none of them but would haue talke for a whole Day.

But when *Crab*, *Weafell*, and *Wren* saw this, they concluded betwixt themselves, that as oft as any of the Women had a good Bit of Meate on their Trenchers, they offering a clean one, should catch that Commodity, and so they did : but the Women, being busie in Talke, marked it not, till at the last one found Leisure to misse her Meat : whereupon she said, that
their

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their Boldnesse exceeded their Diligence. Not so, forfooth, said *Weafell*, there is an Hundred bolder than we. Name me One, said the Woman, if you can. A Flea is bolder, quoth *Crabbe*. How will you proue that? said the Woman. Because, quoth he, they will creepe vnder your Coates, where we dare not come, and now and then bite you by the Buttocks, as if they were Brawne. But what becomes of them? qd. the Woman; their sweet Meat hath fowre Sauce, and their Lustines doth often cost them their Liues, therefore take Heed. A good Warning of a faire Woman, said *Wren*, but I had not thought so fine a Wit in a fat Belly.

The Women seeing their Men so merry, said it was a Signe there was good Ale in the Houfe. Thats as fit for a Churching, quoth *Weafell*, as a Cudgell for a curst Queane. Thus with pleasant Communication and merry Quips they droue out the Time, till the Fruit and Spice-Cakes were set on the Boord: At what Time one of them began to ask the other, if they heard not of the cruell Murder of *Thomas* of Reading? What, said the Rest, is old *Cole* murdred? when, I pray you, was the Deed done? The other answered, On Friday last. O good Lord! said the Woman, how was it done, can you tell?

As Report goes, said the other, he was roasted aliue. O pitifull! was hee roasted? Indeed I heard one say,
a Man

of Thomas of Reading.

a Man was murdred at London, and that hee was fodden at an Inholders Houfe, and ferued it to the Guests in ftead of Porke.

No, Neighbour, it was not at London, faid another : I heare fay twas comming from London, at a Place called Colebrooke ; and it is reported for Truth, that the Inholder made Pies of him and Penny Pafties, yea, and made his owne Seruant eate a Piece of him. But I pray you, good Neighbour, can you tell how it was knowne : fome fay that a Horfe reuealed it.

Now, by the Maffe, (quoth *Graves* Wife) it was told one of my Neighbours, that a certaine Horfe did fpeake, and told great Things. That founds like a Lie, faid one of them. Why, faid another, may not a Horfe fpeake, as well as *Balaams* Affe ? It may be, but it is vnlikely, faid the Third. But where was the Horfe when he fpake ? As fome fay, qd. fhe, he was in the Field, and had broke out of the Stable, where he ftood faft locked in mighty ftrong Yron Fetters, which hee burft in Peeeces, as they had beene Strawes, and broke downe the Stable-Doore, and fo got away. The Goodman comming in at thefe Speeches, afked what that was they talkt of. Marry, faid his Wife, wee heare that *Cole* of Reading is murdred. I pray you is it true ? I, faid *Sutton*, it is true ; that vile Villaine his Oaft murdered him, in whofe Houfe the Man had fpent many a Pound. But did they make Pies of him ?
faid

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faid his Wife. No, no, quoth her Husband; he was fcalded to death in a boiling Caldron, and afterward throwne into a running Riuer that is hard by. But, good Husband, how was it knowne? By his Horfe, quoth hee. What, did he tell his Mafter was murdered? could the Horfe fpeake Englifh? Jefus, what a foolifh Woman are you, quoth he, to afke fuch a queftion. But, to end this, you are all heartily welcome, good Neighbours, and I am forry you had no better Cheere. So with Thanks the Women departed. Thus haue yee heard the diuers Tales that will be fpreed Abroad of an euil Deed.

How Duke Robert deceiued his Keepers, & got from them: how he met faire Margaret, and in carrying her away was taken, for the which he had his Eyes put out. CHAP. 13.

DUKE *Robert* hauing, as you heard, obtained the Loue of faire *Margaret*, did now caft in his Mind how hee might delude his Keepers, and carry her quite away. In the End, he being abfolutely refolued what to doe, fent his Letter vnto her, wherein he requested, that fhe would be readie to meet him in the Forreft, betwixt Cardiffe and Glocefter.

The young Lady, hauing fecretly received his Mef-
fage, vnknowne to her Mafter or Dame, in a Morning
betime

of Thomas of Reading.

betime made her ready and got forth, walking to the appointed Place, where her Loue should meet her.

During her Abode there, and thinking long ere her Loue came, she entred into diuers Passions, which indeed presaged some disaſter Fortune to follow. O my deare Loue, ſaid ſhe, how ſlacke art thou in performing thy Promiſe! Why doe not thy Deedes agree with thy Inditing? See, theſe are thy Words, Come, my deare *Margaret*, and with *Cupids* ſwift Wings flie to thy Friend; be now as nimble in thy Footing as the Camels of Baſtria, that runne an Hundred Miles a Day: I will waite and ſtay for thee, ſo I ſtay not too long. There is no Country like Auſtria for ambling Horſes, & to carry thee I haue got one.

O my Loue, (quoth ſhe) here am I, but where art thou? O why doeſt thou play the Trewant with Time, who like the Wind ſlides away vnſeene? An ambling Gennet of Spaine is too ſlow to ſerue our Turnes. A flying Horſe for flying Louers were moſt meete. And thus caſting many Lookes thorow the Siluane Shades vp and downe to eſpie him, ſhe thought euery Minute an Houre, till ſhe might ſee him: ſometimes ſhe would wiſh her ſelfe a Bird, that ſhe might fly through the Ayre to meete him; or a pretty Squirill, to clime the higheſt Tree to deſcry his comming: but finding her Wiſhes vaine, ſhe began thus to excuſe him, and perſwaded her ſelfe, ſaying,

How

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How much to blame am I, to finde fault with my Friend? Alas, Men that lacke their Liberty, must come when they can, not when they would; poore Prifoners cannot doe what they desire; and then why should I be so hastie? Therefore, if safely I may lay me downe, I will beguile vnquiet Thoughts with quiet Sleepe: it is said that *Galino* breeds no Serpents, nor doth Englands Forrests nourish Beares or Lyons, therefore, without Hurt I hope I may rest awhile. Thus leauing faire *Margaret* in a sweet Slumber, we will returne to Duke *Robert*, who had thus plotted his Escape from his Keepers.

Hauing Liberty of the King to hawke and hunt, hee determined on a Day, as hee should follow the Chase, to leaue the Hounds to the Hart, and the Hunters to their Hornes, and being busie in their Sport, himselfe would flie, which hee performed at that Time when he appointed *Margaret* to meete him, and so comming to the Place, his Horfe all on a Water, and himselfe in a Sweat, finding his Loue asleepe, he awaked her with a Kisse, saying, Arise, faire *Margaret*, now comes the Time wherein thou shalt be made a Queene: and presently setting her on Horfe-backe, he posted away.

Now when the Keepers saw they had lost his Company, and that at the killing of the Game hee was not present, they were among themselues in such a Mutiny, that

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that they were ready one to stabbe another. It was thy Fault, said one, that hee thus escaped from vs, that hadst more mind of thy Pleasure then of thy Prisoner, and by this Meanes we are all undone. The other said as much to him, that he had thought he had followed him in the Chase: but leauing at last this Contention, the one posted vp to the King, while the Others coasted vp and downe the Country to search for the Duke, who hauing kild his Horse in travelling, was most vnhappily mette on Foot with faire *Margaret*, ere he could come to any Towne, where he might for Money haue another. But when he espyed his Keepers come to take him, he desired *Margaret* to make Shift for her selfe, and to seeke to escape them. But she being of a contrary Mind, said, she would liue and die with him.

The Duke, seeing himselfe ready to be surprized, drew out his Sword, and said, he would buy his Liberty with his Life, before he would yeeld to be any more a Prisoner; and thereupon began a great Fight betwixt them, infomuch that the Duke had killed Two of them: but himselfe being fore wounded, and faint with ouermuch bleeding, at length fell downe, being not able any longer to stand: and by this Meanes the good Duke was taken with his faire Loue, & both of them committed to Prison.

But in the meane Space, when *Grays* Wife had
o missed

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miffed her Maide, and faw ſhe was quite gone, ſhe made great Lamentation for her among her Neighbours, for ſhe loued her as dearely as any Child that euer ſhe bore of her owne Body. O *Margaret*, (quoth ſhee) what Cauſe hadſt thou thus to leaue me? If thou didſt miſlike any Thing, why didſt thou not tell me? If thy Wages were too little, I would haue mended it: If thy Apparell had beene too ſimple, thou ſhouldſt haue had better: If thy Worke had bin too great, I would haue had Helpe for thee.

Farewell, my ſweet *Meg*, the beſt Seruant that euer came in any Mans Houſe; many may I haue of thy Name, but neuer any of thy Nature: thy Diligence is much; in thy Hands I laid the whole Gouernment of my Houſe, and thereby eaſed my ſelfe of that Care which now will cumber me.

Heere ſhee hath left me my Keyes vnto my Cheſts, but my Comfort is gone with her Prefence: euery gentle Word that ſhe was wont to ſpeake, comes now into my Mind; her courteous Behaviour ſhall I neuer forget: with how ſweet and modeſt a Countenance would ſhe qualifie my ouer-haſtie Nature? It repents my Heart that euer I ſpoke foule Word vnto her. O *Meg*, wert thou here againe, I would neuer chide thee more: but I was an vnworthy Dame for ſuch a Seruant. What will become of me now, if I ſhould
chance

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chance to be ficke, seeing she is gone, that was wont to be both my Apoticary and Phyfician ?

Well, quoth her Neighbours, there is no Remedy now but to reft content ; you fhall one Day heare of her, doubt you not ; and thinke this, that she was not fo good but you may get another as good, and therefore do not take it fo heuily. O Neighbour, blame me not to grieue, seeing I haue loft fo great a Iewell, and fure I am perfwaded, that fcant in a Bodies Lifetime they fhall meet with the like. .

I proteft I would circuit England round about on my bare Feet to meet with her againe. O, my *Meg* was furely ftolen away from me, elfe would she not haue gone in fuch Sort. Her Husband, on the other Side, grieved as much, & refted not Night nor Day, riding vp and downe to feeke her : but she, poore Soule ! is faft lockt vp in Prifon, and therefore cannot be met withall.

But when the King vnderftood of his Brothers Escape, hee was maruelous wroth, giuing great Charge and Commandement when he was taken, that both his Eyes fhould be put out, and be kept in Prifon till his dying Day : appointing alfo that the Maid fhould lofe her Life for Prefumption of louing him.

This Matter being rumored ouer all England, it came to the Eares of *Gray* & his Wife, who hearing that *Margaret* alfo was there in Prifon appointed to
die,

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die, the good aged Woman neuer rested till she came to the Court, where kneeling before the King, with many Teares she besought his Maiestie to spare the Maidens Life, saying, Most royall King, consider, I humbly beseech you, that the Duke your Brother was able to intice any Woman to his Loue, much more a filly Maiden, especially promising her Marriage, to make her a Lady, a Dutchesse, or a Queene, who would refuse such an Offer, when at the Instant they might get both a princely Husband and a high Dignity? If Death be a Louers Guerdon, then what is due to Hatred? I am in my Heart perswaded, that had my poore *Margaret* thought it would haue bred your Highnes Displeasure, she would neuer haue bought his Loue so deare. Had your Grace made it known to your Commons, that it was unlawfull for any to marry the Duke your Brother, who would haue attempted such an Action? If she had wilfully disobeyed your Graces Commandement, she might haue been thought worthy of Death; but seeing ignorantly she offended, I beseech your Grace to recall the Sentence, and let me still enioy my Seruant, for neuer will I rise till your Majestie haue granted my Petition.

His Highnes, who was of Nature mercifull, beholding the Womans abundant Tears, tooke Pitie on her, and granted her Suite: which being obtained, shee went Home in all Hastē possible. And from thence
shee,

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hee, with her Husband, taking their Journey to Cardiffe Castle, they came at that very Instant when the Maiden was led toward her Death, who went in most ioyfull Sort to the fame, faying, that they were not worthy to be accounted true Louers that were not willing to die for Loue: and fo with a fmiling Countenance ſhe paſſed on, as if ſhe had eaten *Apium Rifus*, which cauſeth a Man to die laughing: but her Dame *Gray* ſeeing her, fell about her Necke, and with many Kiſſes imbraced her, faying, Thou ſhalt not die, my Wench, but goe Home with me; and for thy Deliuery behold here the Kings Letters; and with that ſhe deliuered them vp to the Gouvernour of the Caſtle, who reading them, found theſe Words written, Wee pardon the Maids Life, and grant her Liberty; but let her not paſſe till ſhe ſee her Louers Eyes put out, which we will haue you doe in ſuch Sort, that not onely the Sight may periſh, but the Eye continue faire, for which Cauſe I haue ſent downe Doctour *Piero*, that he may execute the fame.

The Gouvernour of the Caſtle hauing read the Kings Letter, ſaid thus to the Maiden, The Kings Maieſtie hath pardoned thy Life, and allowed thy Liberty: but you muſt not paſſe before you ſee your Louers Eyes put out. O Sir, ſaid the Maiden, miſtake not yourſelfe, they are my Eyes that muſt be put out, and not
the

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the Dukes : as his Offence grew by my Meanes, fo I being guilty, ought to receiue the Punifhment.

The Kings Commandement muft be fulfilled, faid the Gouvernour : and therewithall Duke *Robert* was brought forth, who hearing that he muft lofe his Eyes, faid thus : The noble Mind is neuer conquered by Griefe, nor ouercome by Mifchance : but as the Hart reneweth his Age by eating the Serpent, fo doth a Man lengthen his Life with deuouring Sorrow : my Eyes haue offended the King, and they muft be punifhed : my Heart is in great Fault, why is not that killed ?

The Kings Maiesty, faid the Gouvernour, fpare your Life of meere Loue, and onely is content to fatisfie the Law with the Loffe of your Eyes ; wherfore take in good Part this Punifhment, and thinke you haue deserued greater then is granted.

With this *Margaret* cryed out, faying, O my deare Loue, moft gentle Prince, well may you wifh that I had neuer bin borne, who by feeing of mee muft lofe your Sight : but happie fhould I count my felfe, if it fo pleafe the King, that I might redeeme thy Eyes with my Life : or elfe, that being an equall Offendor, I might receiue equall Punifhment : hadft thou fufained this Smart for fome Queene or Princeffe of high Blood, it might with the more Eafe be borne, but to indure

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indure it for such a one as I, it must needs cause a treble Grief to be increased.

Content thee, faire *Margaret*, said the Duke ; for Honor ought to be giuen to Virtue, & not Riches : for Glory, Honor, Nobility and Riches, without Vertue, are but Clokes of Malicioufnes. And now let me take my Leauē of thy Beauty, for neuer must I behold thy Face : notwithstanding I account my Eyes well lost, in that I doe forgoe them for so peereles a Paragon. Now, faire Heauens, farewell ! the Sunne, Moone, and Starres shall I in this World neuer behold againe ; and farewell also the fruitfull Earth : well may I feele thee, but those poore Windowes of my Body are now denyed to view thee any more : and though the World hath euer bin my Foe, yet will I bid thee farewell too, & farewell all my Friends : whiles I liue here in this World, I must suppose to sleepe, & wake when I come in Heauen, where I hope to see you all againe. Yet had it pleased the King, I had rather haue lost my Life then my Eyes. Life, why, what is it but a Flowre, a Bubble in the Water, a Spanne long, and full of Miserie ? Of such small Account is Life, that euery Souldier will sell it for Sixpence. And trust me, I do now detest Life worfe then a Goat doth hate Basill.

With that the Doctōr prepared his Instrument, and being ready to set to the Dukes Eyes, he said, O stay,
Master

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Mafter Doct̄or, till I haue conueyed my Loues Countenance downe into my Heart : Come hither, my Sweet, and let me giue thee my laft Kiffe, while mine Eyes may direct me to thy Cherry Lips. Then imbracing her in his Armes, he faid, O that I might giue thee a Kiffe of xx. Yeeres long, and to fatisfie my Eyes with thy Sight : yet it doth fomewhat content me, becaufe thou art present at my Punifhment, that I may hold thee by the Hand, to comfort my Heart, at the fudden Pricke of my Eye.

This being faid, the Doctor performed his Duty, and fo put out the chriftall Sight : at what Time D. *Robert* started up, and with a moft manly Courage faid, I muft thank his Maieftie, that though hee deprive me of my Sight, yet he leaueth me Eyes to weepe for my Sinnes. But fo foone as *Margaret* beheld the Deed, ſhe fell downe in a Swoune, and much a doe her Dame had to recouer her Life : which when the Duke underftood, hee was wondrous woe, groaping for her with his bleeding Eyes, faying, O where is my Loue ? for Gods Sake haue regard to her. And I pray you moft heartily, good Wife *Gray*, let her haue this Fauour for my Sake, that ſhe may be vfed kindly. And with that the Keepers led him into the Caſtle, and *Margaret* was carried away wondrous fick and ill : but her Dame was moft tender ouer her ; and would fuffer her to lacke nothing. When ſhe was
fomewhat

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fomewhat well recouered, her Dame *Gray* fet her on *Horfebacke*: and at her comming to *Glocefter*, there was no small Ioy.

How Thomas Doue, being fallen to Decay, was forsaken of his Friends, & despised of his Seruants: and how in the End he was raised againe through the Liberality of the Clothiers. CHAP. 14.

S VCH as feeke the Pleasure of the World follow a Shadow wherein is no Substance: and as the Adder *Aspis* tickleth a Man to Death, so doth vaine Pleasure flatter vs, till it makes vs forget God, and consume our Substance, as by *Tom Doue* it is apparent, who had, through a free Heart and a liberall Minde, waisted his Wealth; and looke how his Goods consumed, so his Friends fled from him: And albeit he had beene of great Ability, and thereby done good vnto many, yet no Man regarded him in his Pouerty, but casting a scornfull Countenance vpon him, they passed by him with slender Salutation: neither would any of his former Acquaintance do him Good or pleasure him with the Value of a Farthing; his former Friendship done to them was quite forgot, and he made of as much Account as *Iob* when he fate on the *Dunghill*.

Now when his wicked Seruants saw him in this

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Disgrace with the World, they on the other Side began to difdaine him. Notwithstanding that hee (to his great Coft) had long Time brought them vp, yet did they Nothing regard it, but behind his Backe in moft fcornefull Sort derided him, and both in their Words and Actions greatly abufe him ; Reuerence they would doe none vnto him, but when they fpake, it was in fuch malapert Sort, as would grieue an honeft Minde to heare it.

At laft it came to paffe, that breaking out into meere Contempt, they faid they would ftay no longer with him, and that it was a great Difcredit for them to ferue a Perfon fo beggerly : whereupon they thought it conuenient to feeke for their Benefits elfewhere. When the diftreffed Man found the Matter fo plaine, being in great Griefe, he fpake thus vnto them : Now do I find, to my Sorrow, the fmall Truft that is in this falfe World. Why, my Masters, (quoth he) haue you fo much forgotten my former Profperity, that you Nothing regard my prefent Necessity ? In your Wants I forfooke you not, in your Sickneffe I left you not, nor defpised you in your great Pouerty : it is not vnknowne, though you do not confider it, that I tooke fome of you vp in the High-way, otherfome from your needy Parents, & brought the Reft from meere Beggery to a Houfe of Bounty ; where from paltrie Boyes, I brought you vp to Mans State, and haue, to my great Coft, taught you a Trade, whereby you may
live

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live like Men. And in Requittall of all my Courtesie, Coft, and Goodwill, will you now on a sudden forsake me? Is this the best Recompence that you can find your Hearts to yeeld me?

'This is farre from the Minds of honest Seruants. The fierce Lion is kind to those that doe him Good : plucke but one Thorne out of his Foot, and for the same he will shew manifold Fauors. The wild Bull will not ouerthrow his Dam : and the very Dragons are dutifull to their Nourishers. Be better aduised, and call to Mind, I beseech you, that I haue not pluckt a Thorne out of your Feet, but drawne your whole Bodies out of Perils, and when you had no Meanes to helpe your selues, I onely was your Support, and he that, when all other forfooke you, did comfort you in all your Extremities.

And what of all this? quoth one of them ; because you tooke vs vp poore, doth it therefore follow that we must be your Slaves? We are young Men, and for our Part, we are no further to regard your Profit then it may stand with our Preferment. Why should we lose our Benefit to pleasure you? If you taught vs our Trade, and brought vs vp from Boies to Men, you had our Seruice for it, whereby you made no small Benefit, if you had as well vsed it as we got it. But if you be poore, you may thanke your selfe, being a iust Scourge for your Prodigalitie, and is my Opinion

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nion plaine, that to ftay with you is the next Way to make vs like you, neither able to help ourfelves nor our Friends : therefore in briefe, come pay me my Wages, for I will not ftay ; let the Reft do as they will, for I am refolued.

Well, faid his Mafter, if needs thou wilt be gone, here is Part of thy Wages in Hand, & the Reft as foone as God fends it thou fhalt haue it : & with that, turning to the Reft, he faid, Let me yet intreat you to ftay, and leaue me not altogether deftitute of Helpe : by your Labours muft I liue, and without you I know not what to doe. Confider, therefore, my Need, and regard my great Charge. And if for my Sake you will doe nothing, take Compaffion of my poore Children ; ftay my fliding Foote, and let me not vtterly fall through your flying from me.

Tush, (quoth they) what do you talke to vs ? We can haue better Wages, and ferue a Man of Credit, where our Farre fhall be farre better, & our Gaines greater : therefore the World might count us right Coxcomes, if we fhould forfake our Profit to pleafure you : therefore adieu ; God fend you more Money, for you are like to haue no more Men : and thus they departed.

When they were gone, within a while after they met one with another, faying, What Cheare ? are you all come away ? In faith I, what fhould we doe elfe ?
quoth

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quoth they. But hear'ft thou, Sirra, haft thou got thy Wages? Not yet, faith the Other, but I fhall haue it, and that is as good; tis but x. Shillings. Saift thou fo? (faid he) now I fee thou art one of God Almightyes Idiots. Why fo? faid the Other. Because (quoth he) thou wilt be fed with Shales: but Ile tell thee one Thing; twere better for thee quickly to arreft him, left fome other doing it before, and there be Nothing left to pay thy Debt: hold thy Peace, faire Words make Fooles faire, and it is an old Saying, One Bird in Hand is worth Two in Bush: if thou doft not arreft him prefently, I will not giue thee Two-pence for thy x. Shillings. How fhall I come by him? quoth the Other: giue me but two Pots of Ale, and Ile betray him, faid he. So they being agreed, this finooth-faced *Iudas* comes to his late Master, and told him that a Friend of his at the Doore would fpeake with him. The vnmiftrusting Man, thinking no Euill, went to the Doore, where prefently an Officer arrefted him at his Man's Suite.

The poore Man feeing this, being ftrucken into a fudden Sorrow, in the Griefe of his Heart, spake to this Effect: Ah thou lewd Fellow, Art thou the first Man that seekes to augment my Miferie? Haue I thus long giuen thee Bread, to breed my Ouerthrow? And nourisht thee in thy Neede, to work my Destruction? Full little did I thinke, when thou fo often diddest dip
thy

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thy falfe Fingers in my Dish, that I gaue Food to my chiefest Foe : but what boote Complaints in these Extremes ? Goe, Wife, (quoth he,) unto my Neighbours, and see if thou canst get any of them to be my Baile. But in vaine was his Paines spent. Then he sent to his Kinsfolkes, and they denied him : to his Brother, and he would not come at him, so that there was no Shift, but to Prison he must : but, as he was going, a Messenger met him with a Letter from Master *Cole*, wherein, as you heard, hee had promised him Two Hundred Pounds ; which when the poore Man read, hee greatly rejoyced, and shewing the same to the Officer, hee was content to take his owne Worde. Whereupon *Tom Doue* went presently to Reading, where, upon his coming, he found all the Rest of the Clothiers lamenting *Cole's* vntimely Death, where the woefull Widdou paid him the Money, by which Deed all the Rest of the Clothiers were induced to doe Something for *Doue*. And thereupon one gaue him Ten Pounds, another Twenty, another Thirtie Pounds, to begin the World anew : and by this Meanes (together with the Blessing of God) he grew into greater Credit than euer hee was before. And Riches being thus come upon him, his former Friends came fawning vnto him ; and when he had no Neede of them, then euerie one was readie to proffer him Kindnesse. His wicked Seruants also that disdained him in his Distresse, were after glad to come creeping vnto him, in-
treating

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treating with Cap and Knee for his Fauour and Friendship. And albeit hee seemed to forgiue their Trespaffes done against him, yet hee would often say, he would neuer trust them for a Straw. And thus he euer after liued in great Wealth and Prosperitie, doing much Good to the Poore, and at his Death left to his Children great Lands.

How faire Margaret made her Estate and high Birth known to her Master and Dame; & for the intire Loue she bore to Duke Robert, made a Vow neuer to marry, but became a Nun in the Abbey at Gloucester.
Chap. 15.

AFTER faire Margaret was come againe to Gloucester, neuer did she behold the cleare Day, but with a weeping Eye: and so great was the Sorrow which she conceiued for the Loffe of Duke *Robert*, her faithfull Louer, that she vtterly despiseth all the Pleasure of this Life, and at last bewrayed her felse in this Sort vnto her Dame.

O, my good Master and Dame, too long haue I difsembled my Parentage from you, whom the froward Destinies doe pursue to deserued Punishment. The wofull Daughter am I of the vnhappy Earl of *Shrewsburie*, who, euer since his Banishment, haue done Nothing but drawne Mischance after mee: wherefore let
me

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me intreat you (deare Master and Dame) to haue your Good-wills to fpend the Remnant of my Life in fome bleffed Monafterie.

When *Gray* and his Wife heard this, they wondred greatly, as well at her Birth as at her ftrange Demand. Whereupon her Dame knew not how to call her, whether Maiden or Madam, but faid, O good Lord, are you a Ladie, and I know it not? I am forrie that I knew it not before. But when the Folkes of the Houfe heard that *Margaret* was a Lady, there was no fmall Alteration; and moreouer, her Dame faid, that fhe had thought to haue had a Match betweene her and her Son; and, by many Perfwaſions, did feeke to withdraw her from being a Nun, ſaying, in this Manner: What, *Margaret*, thou art young and faire, the World (no Doubt) hath better Fortune for thee, whereby thou maift leaue an honourable Iſſue behind thee, in whom thou mayft liue after Death.

Theſe, and many other Reaſons, did they alledge unto her, but all in vaine, ſhe making this Reply, Who knowes not that this World giueth the Pleaſure of an Houre, but the forrow of many Daies? For it paieth euer that which it promiſeth, which is Nothing elſe but continuall Trouble and Vexation of the Minde. Do you think, if I had the Offer and Choice of the mightieſt Princes of Chriſtendom, that I could match my ſelfe better then to my Lord Jeſus? No, no, hee
is

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is my Husband, to whom I yeeld my selfe, both Body and Soule, giuing to him my Heart, my Loue, and my most firme Affections : I haue ouerlong loued this vile World, therefore I beseech you farther dissuade me not.

When her Friends by no Meanes could alter her Opinion, the Matter was made knowne to his Maiestie, who, against the Time that she should be receiued into the Monasterie, came to Glocester with most Part of his Nobilitie, to honour her Action with his princely Prefence.

All Things being therefore prepared, the young Lady was in most princely-wise attired in a Gowne of pure white Sattin, her Kirtle of the same, embroidered with Gold about the Skirts, in most curious Sort ; her Head was garnished with Gold, Pearles, and precious Stones, hauing her Haire like Thrids of burnisht Gold, hanging downe behind in Manner of a princely Bride ; about her Yuory Necke, Jewels of inestimable Price were hung, and her Handwrests were compassed about with Bracelets, or bright-shining Diamonds.

The Streets thorow the which she should passe were pleasantly deckt with greene Oaken Boughs ; then came the young Lady, most like an heauenly Angell, out of her Master's House, at what Time all the Bells in Glocester were solemnly rung ; she being

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led betwixt the Kings Maieftie, hauing on his Royal Robes and Imperiall Crowne, and the Chiefe Bifhop wearing his Mitre, in a Cope of Cloth of Gold, over her Head a Canopy of white Silke, fringed about in princely Manner ; before her went an Hundred Priests finging, and after her all the chiefe Ladies of the Land ; then all the Wiues and Maidens of Glocefter followed, with an innumerable Sort of People on euery Side ftanding to behold her. In this Sort ſhe paſſed on to the Cathedrall Church, where ſhe was brought to the Nunry Gate.

The Lady Abbeſſe receiued her, where the beautifull Maiden, kneeling downe, made her Prayer in Sight of all the People ; then, with her owne Hands, ſhe vndid her Virgins faire Gowne, and took it off, and gaue it away to the Poore, after that, her Kirtle, then her Jewels, Bracelets, and Rings, ſaying, Farewell the Pride and Vanitie of this World. The Ornaments of her Head were the next ſhee gaue away, and then was ſhe led on one Side, where ſhe was ſtripped, and, in Stead of her Smoke of ſofte Silke, had a Smoke of rough Haire put upon her.

Then came one with a Paire of Sheares, and cut off her Golden-coloured Locks, and with Duſt and Aſhes all beſtrewed her Head and Face ; which being done, ſhe was brought againe into the Peoples Sight, bare foot and bare-leg'd, to whom ſhe ſaid, Now, Farewell
the

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the World, Farewell the Pleasures of this Life, Farewell my Lord the King, and to the Dukes sweet Love farewell; now shall my Eyes weepe for my former Transgressions, and no more shall my Tongue talke of Vanity; Farewell my good Master and Dame, and Farewell all good People.

With which Words she was taken away, and neuer after seene abroad. When Duke *Robert* heard thereof, he desired that at his Death his Body might be buried in Glocester; in that Towne, quoth he, where first my cleare Eyes beheld the heauenly Beauty of my Loue, and where, for my Sake, shee forfooke the World; which was performed accordingly.

The King also, at his Death, requested to be buried at Reading, for the great Loue he bare to that Place, among those Clothiers, who, liuing, were his Hearts Comfort. *Gray*, dying wondrous wealthy, gaue Land to the Monasterie whereinto *Margaret* was taken. *William Fitzallen* also dyed a most rich Man, hauing builded many Houses for the Poore; whose Sonne, Henry, was the first Mayor that was euer in London.

Sutton of Salisbury did also, at his Death, much Good, and gaue an Hundred li. to be yeerly lent to poore Weauers of the Towne, to the Worlds End. *Simon* of South-hampton gave a most bounteous Gift towards the Building of a Monastery at Winchester. *Hodgkins* of Hallifax did also great Good; and so did *Cutbert*
of

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of Kendall, who had married xxiii. Couples out of his owne Houfe, giuing each of them x.li. to beginne the World withall. *Martin Briam* of Manchester gaue toward the Building of a Free-School in Manchester, a great masse of Money. And thus (gentle Reader) haue I finished my Storie of these worthy Men, desiring thee to take my Paines in good Part, which will ingage me to greater Matters, perceiuing this courteously accepted.

FINIS.

Edinburgh: Printed by James Ballantyne and Co.

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