



Gay, John

To a lady on her passion  
for old china

PR  
3473  
T6  
1725a



*John Gay*  
*To a Lady on her Passion*  
*for Old China*

1725

214363  
227-27









*Five hundred and fifty copies have been printed  
of which five hundred are for sale*





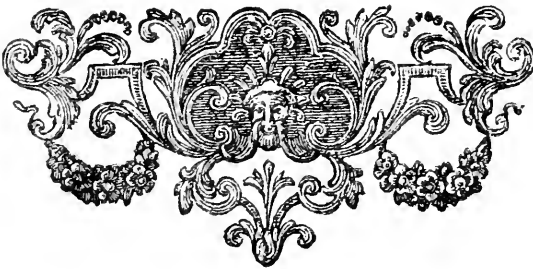
Printed by Frederick Hall M.A.  
at the Clarendon Press  
Oxford England  
1925

And sold by  
Humphrey Milford M.A.  
Publisher to the University  
of Oxford



RAY'S Epistle *To a Lady on her Passion for Old China* was published anonymously in 1725. The present reprint is from Mr. Thomas J. Wise's uncut copy, which, when he compiled the Catalogue of his library, Mr. Wise believed to be unique. A copy has since been unearthed in the British Museum, and the reprint has been checked by it.

The pamphlet consists of a half-sheet of two leaves followed by a sheet of four leaves. The last leaf is blank.





*John Gay*  
*To a Lady on her Passion*  
*for Old China*

1725





TO A  
L A D Y

ON

*Her* PASSION *for old* CHINA.







TO A  
L A D Y  
ON HER  
P A S S I O N  
FOR  
*O L D C H I N A.*

---

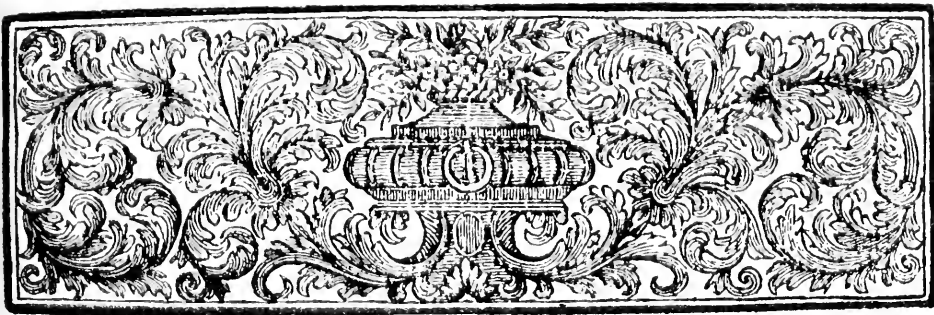


---

L O N D O N:  
Printed for J. T O N S O N in the *Strand*. 1725.

*Facsimile*  
*Printed from type at the*  
*Clarendon Press*  
1925

PR  
3473  
T6  
1725a



TO A  
L A D Y  
O N

*Her P A S S I O N for old C H I N A.*



W H A T ecstasies her bosom fire !  
How her eyes languish with desire !  
How blest, how happy should I be,  
Were that fond glance bestow'd on me !

New doubts and fears within me war :

What rival's near ? a *China* Jar.

B

*China's*

*China's* the passion of her soul ;  
 A cup, a plate, a dish, a bowl  
 Can kindle wishes in her breast,  
 In flame with joy, or break her rest.

Some gems collect ; some medals prize,  
 And view the rust with lovers eyes ;  
 Some court the stars at midnight hours ;  
 Some doat on Nature's charms in flowers !  
 But ev'ry beauty I can trace  
 In *Laura's* mind, in *Laura's* face ;  
 My stars are in this brighter sphere,  
 My lilly and my rose is here.

Philosophers more grave than wife  
 Hunt science down in Butterflies ;  
 Or fondly poring on a Spider,  
 Stretch human contemplation wider ;  
*Fossiles* give joy to *Galen's* soul,  
 He digs for knowledge, like a Mole ;

In shells so learn'd, that all agree  
 No fish that swims knows more than he !  
 In such pursuits if wisdom lies,  
 Who, *Laura*, shall thy taste despise ?

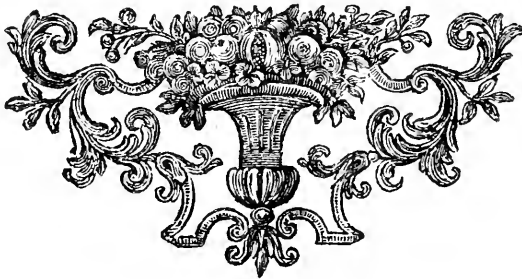
When I some antique Jar behold,  
 Or white, or blue, or speck'd with gold,  
 Vessels so pure, and so refin'd  
 Appear the types of woman-kind :  
 Are they not valu'd for their beauty,  
 Too fair, too fine for household duty ?  
 With flowers and gold and azure dy'd,  
 Of ev'ry house the grace and pride ?  
 How white, how polish'd is their skin,  
 And valu'd most when only seen !  
 She who before was highest priz'd  
 Is for a crack or flaw despis'd ;  
 I grant they're frail, yet they're so rare,  
 The treasure cannot cost too dear !

But Man is made of courser stuff,  
 And ferves convenience well enough ;  
 He's a strong earthen vefsel made,  
 For drudging, labour, toil and trade ;  
 And when wives lofe their other felf,  
 With eafe they bear the lofs of *Delf*.

Husbands more covetous than fage  
 Condemn this *China*-buying rage ;  
 They count that woman's prudence little,  
 Who fets her heart on things fo brittle.  
 But are thofe wife-men's inclinations  
 Fixt on more strong, more fure foundations ?  
 If all that's frail we muft despife,  
 No human view or fcheme is wife.  
 Are not Ambition's hopes as weak ?  
 They fwell like bubbles, fhine and break.  
 A Courtier's promife is fo flight,  
 'Tis made at noon, and broke at night.

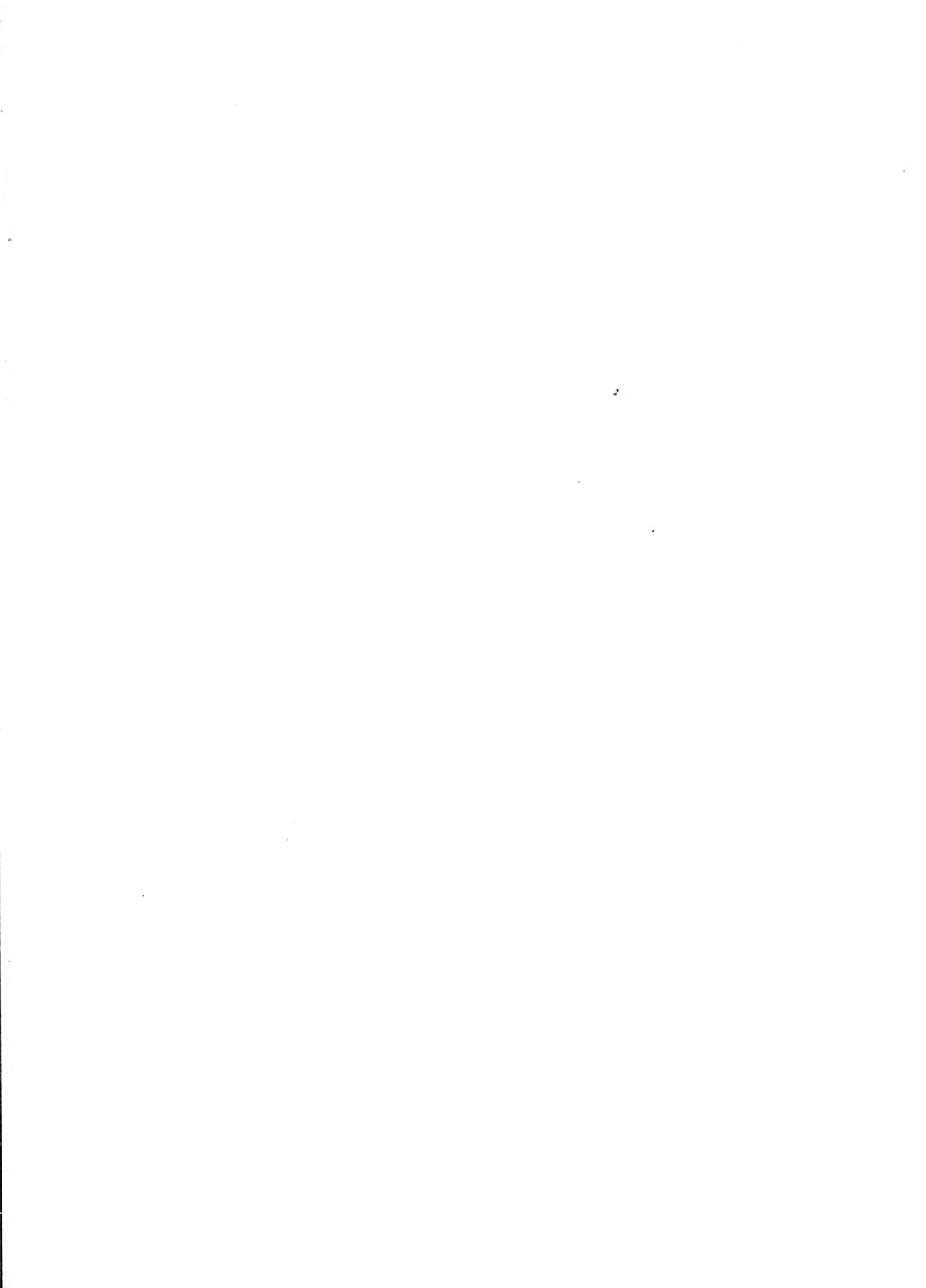
What pleasure's fure? The Mifs you keep  
Breaks both your fortune and your fleep.  
The man who loves a country life,  
Breaks all the comforts of his wife;  
And if he quit his farm and plough,  
His wife in town may break her vow.  
Love, *Laura*, love, while youth is warm,  
For each new winter breaks a charm;  
And woman's not like *China* fold,  
But cheaper grows in growing old;  
Then quickly chufe the prudent part,  
Or elfe you break a faithful heart.

F I N I S.





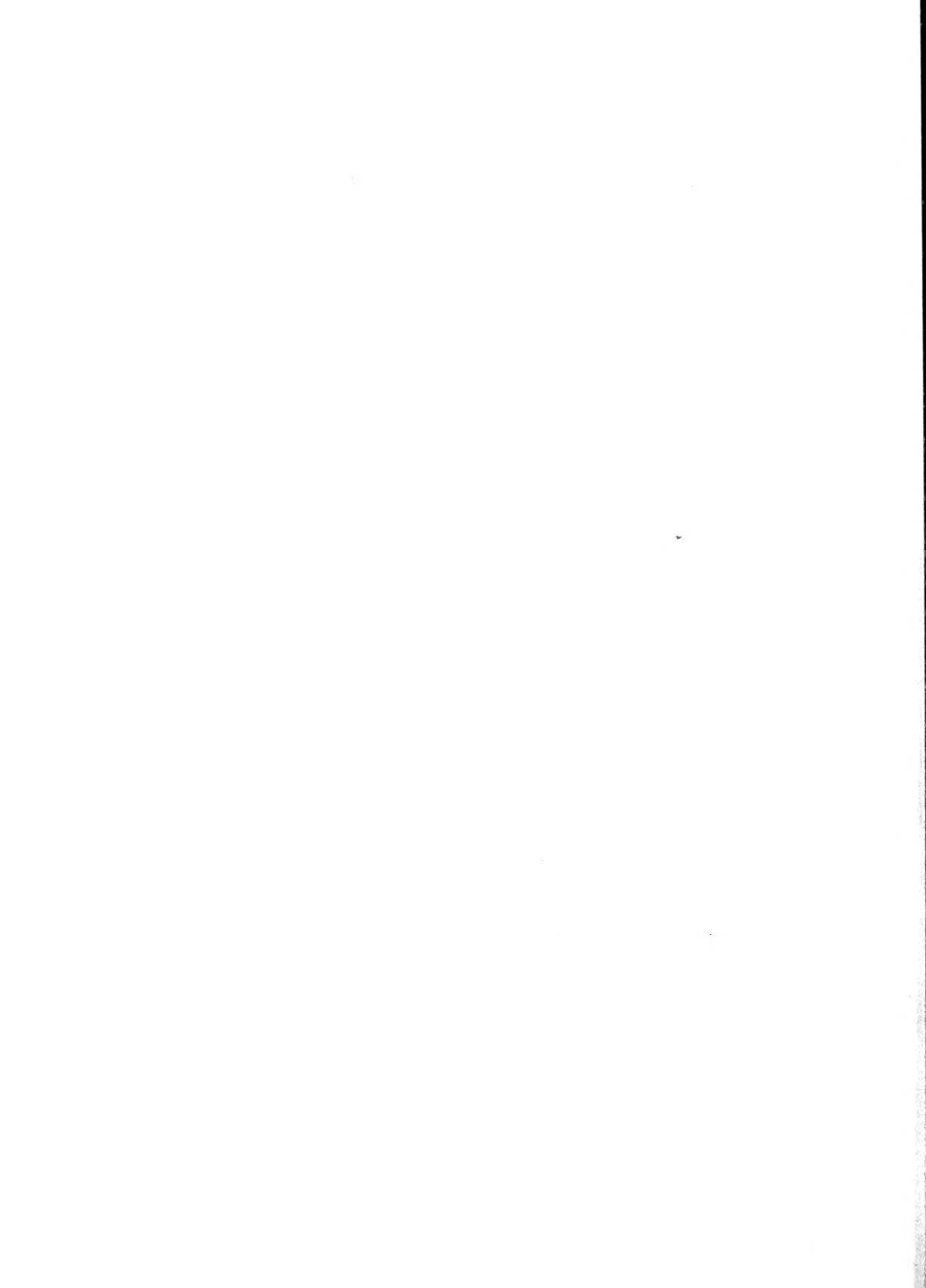




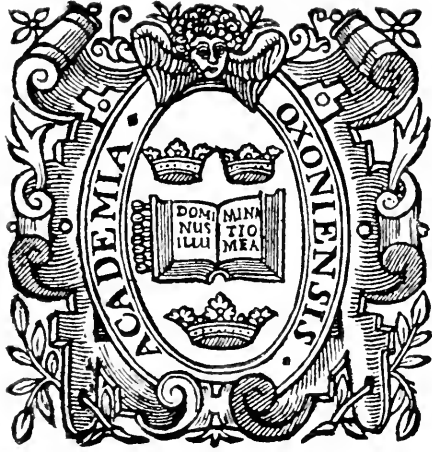


## NOTE

For the question of authorship see the forthcoming edition of Gay's Poems by Mr. G. C. Faber in the *Oxford Poets*, p. xxvii.





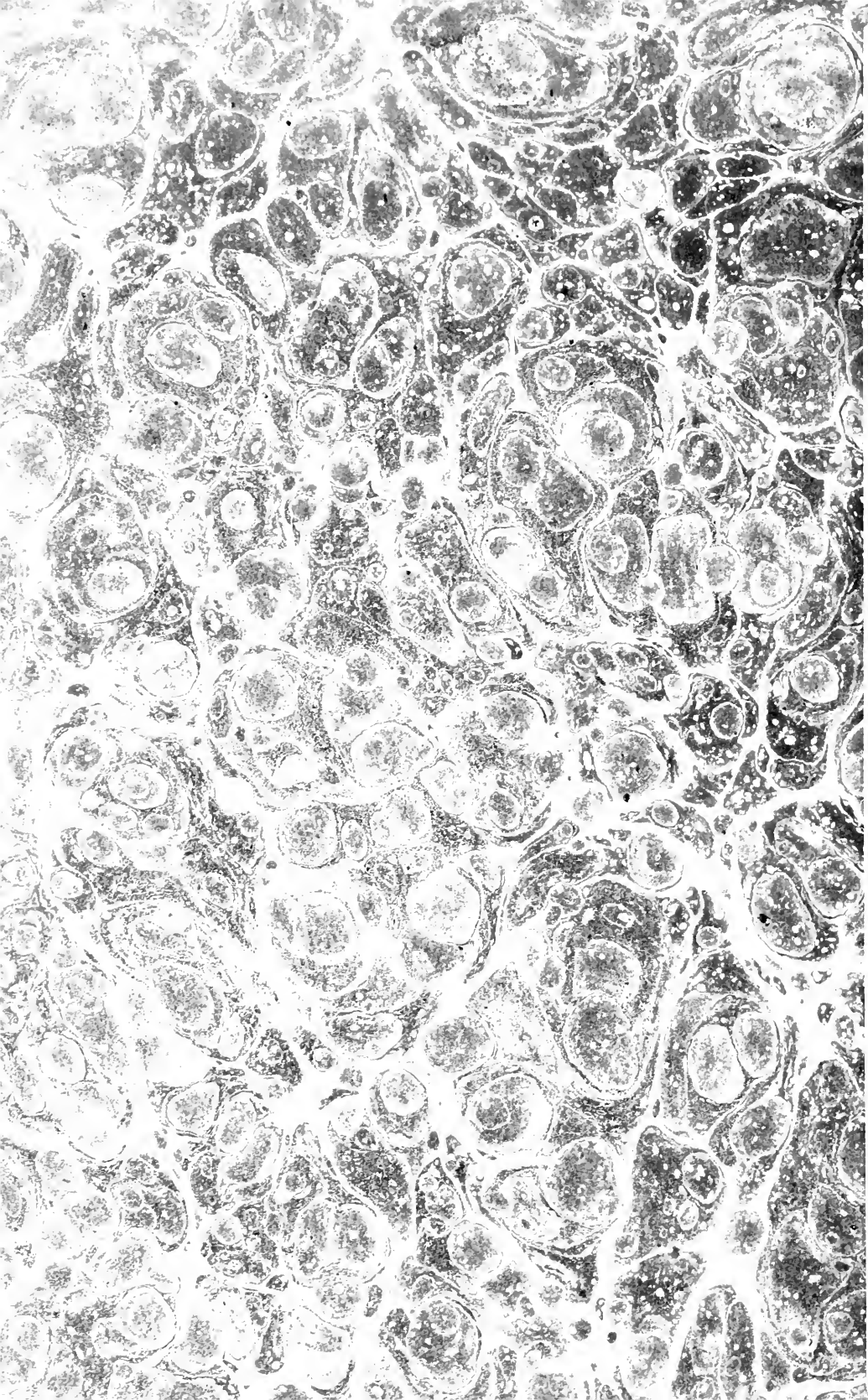












PLEASE DO NOT REMOVE  
CARDS OR SLIPS FROM THIS POCKET

---

UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO LIBRARY

---

0172  
1705

3.3  
1972  
1705

