

The Stage-Players Complaint.

Anonymous, 1641.

Note on the e-text: this [Renascence Edition](#) was transcribed in June 2003 by [Richard Bear](#), University of Oregon Library, from the Ashbee facsimile reprint. Content unique to this presentation is copyright © 2003 The University of Oregon. For nonprofit and educational uses only. Send comments and corrections to the [Publisher](#).

THE
STAGE-PLAYERS
COMPLAINT.

IN

A pleasant Dialogue betweene C A N E of
the *Fortune*, and R E E D of the Friers.

Deploring their sad and solitary conditions for
want of Employment.

In this heavie and Contagious time of the Plague in LONDON.



LONDON,
Printed for THO: BATES, and are to be sold at his shop in the
Old-Bailey. 1641.

The Stage-Players complaint.

Cane.

Stay Reed? Whither away so speedily? What you goe, as if you meant to leape over the Moon now? What's the matter?

Reede. The matter is plain enough: You incuse me of my nimble feet; but I think your tongue runnes a little faster, and you contend as much to out-strip facetious *Mercury* in your tongue, as lame *Vulcan* in my feete.

Quick. Me thinks you're very eloquent: Prithee tell me, Don't *Suada*, and the Jove-begotten-braine *Minerva* lodge in your facundious tongue: You have without doubt some great cause of alacrity, that you produce such eloquent speeches now. Prithee what is't?

Light How? Cause of alacrity? S'foot I had never more cause of sorrow in my life: And dost thou tell

me of that? Fie, Fie!

Quick. Prithiee why? I did but conjecture out of your sweet words.

Light. Well! I see you'll never be hanged for a Conjurer. Is this a world to be merry in? Is this an age to rejoyce in? Where one may as soone find honesty in a Lawyers house, as the least cause of mirth in the world. Nea you know this well enough, but onely you love to be inquisitive, and to search the Nature of men.

Quick You say true indeed. [I] cann't deny but that the world doe swell with grieffe-bedaubing cares. For illustrate the whole Universe, from *Aurora's* purple doores, to the Occidental West, and you shall finde all things drowned in the floods of sorrow. And no marvaile too: For here Gods heavy hand doth punish, there man's oppression doe raigne: And what greater aff[li]ction can be expected, then that both of God and Man.

Light. 'Tis true: And now a dayes 'tis very difficult to live without one of them.

Quick. Revolve all humane nature: Here you may see a man puff't up with the winde of popular applause, climbing to the top of Honour, but being once touch't with the breath of Iustice, oh in what a moment doth he tumble downe. There you may see one oppressed with the tyranny of disgrace, and groaning vnder the burden of calamity, but being smil'd upon by Justice, oh how suddainly is he mounted up with the wings of Fame. There you may perceive women lamenting the deaths of their poore Husbands; here one deploring the Churches Anarchie: there one grieving at Fortunes malignity: so that in the whole world such diverse streames of sorrow doe flow every where: that if the should meet: they would easily make up an Ocean.

Light. You speake of the Epidemicall cause, that produceth universall grieffe, but you shall not need, for we our selves have cause enough to mourne for our owne mis-fortune, and not to participate with the grieffe of the whole world.

[*Quick.*] Well! wee must submit our selves to Gods All-disposing providence, who in his owne time will give a period to our irregular teares. But our cause of sorrow, is the cause of the whole world: For i'me perswaded that there's never a *What lack you Sir*

Light. I beleeve thee: therefore I thinke, they may well commisserate our cause with their own, and not account us so ridiculous to the vulgar spectacle of the world. For when wee lament, they have all cause to lament too: wherefore let not that thing trouble you so much.

Quick. Ay, come, let us omit this patheticall passion, and thinke on the brave times which wee have had heretofore: Oh, the times, when wee have vapoured in the streets like Courtiers.

Light. A pritty comparison! like Courtiers indeed; for I thinke our pockets were as empty as the proudest of them.

Quick. Oh the times, when my tongue have ranne as fast upon the Scæne, as a *Windebankes* pen over the Ocean.

Light. Oh the times, when my heeles have capoured over the Stage as light as a *Finches* Feather.

Quick. But (alas) we must looke for no more of these times I feare.

Light. Why so? Dost thou thinke because a cloud sometimes may cover and obliterate the Sun, that it Will therefore shine no more? Yes I'll warrant you, and that more bright too: so never feare Boy, but we shall get the day agen for all this.

Quick. But i'll assure you 'tis to be feared: For Monopolers are downe, Projectors are downe, the High Commission Court is downe, the Starre-chamber is down, & (some think) Bishops will downe: and why should we then that are farre inferior to any of those not justly feare least we should be downe too?

Light. Pish, I can show thee many infallible reasons to the contrary: we are very necessary and

comodious to all people: First for strangers, who can desire no better recreation, then to come and see a Play: then for Citizens, to feast their wits: then for Gallants, who otherwise perhaps would spend their money in drunkennesse, and lasciviousnesse doe find a great delight and delectation to see a Play: then for the learned, it does increase and adde wit, constructively to wit: then for Gentlewomen, it teacheth them how to deceive idelnesse: then for the ignorant, it doe's augment their knowledge. Pish, a thousand more Arguments I could adde, but that I should weary your patience too much: Well! in a word we are so needfull for the Common good, that in some respect it were almost a sinne to put us downe: therefore let not these frivolous things perplex your vexatious thoughts.

Quick. But it makes me feare i'lle assure you in these times: And I thinke it would be a very good plot to borrow good store of money and then runne away: what thinke you of it?

Light. A good plot, quother? So you may come to lie in a worser plot for it all the dayes of your life. S'foot runne away too? So you may be taken for a young *Suckling*, in all the City, but is sensible of our calamity too, although we seeme to them to beare the greatest burthen thereof[.] and then followed presently with a hundred Horse. Fie, fie, remit these fopperies, you little thinke of the last Comedie you acted now.

Quick. The last Comedy quother? I act Tragedies every day, but I cannot remember since I acted a Comedy, 'tis so long agoe.

Light. But prithee how comes it to passe that you act Tragedies every day.

Quick. How? [I]'le tell thee: my purse each day perisheth most Tragædically: and now I may be taken for a Scholler, since [I]'ve no money, but because I cannot speake true Latine, I'm afraid, I shall be taken for a Lawyer.

Light. What do's Lawyers then speake false Latin?

Quick. As if you know not that! Why? True Latine is as much out of fashion at *Innes of Court*, as good cloathes at *Cambridge*.

Light. Come, come remit your jests, and thinke on our present estates now: and you know the Sicknesse is dangerous, and increaseth weekly; therefore I think we must be content in the meane while to live like *Diogenes* in his Tub.

Quick. Well! the best remedy that [I] can imagine for our present Calamitie, is to downe on our knees humbly, and pray God to abate the Sicknesse, and let each true hearted Subject conjoyne with us in our supplication.

Light. This motion pleaseth mee exceedingly, come let us goe to some other friends, and unitely joyne in our Prayers.

Quick. A match, come let us performe it with expedition: and in the meane while let us conclude with parts of our Letany.

From Plague, Pestilence, and Famine, from Battell, Murder, and suddaine Death:

Good Lord deliver us.

FINIS.

