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The Beggar's Opera

John Gay

Transcribed, with an Introduction, Notes, and Bibliography,
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INTRODUCTION



British Museum

Baptized at Barnstaple, Devon, on September 16, 1685, during the reign of Charles II, John Gay was orphaned by the age of ten but raised by a kind uncle, who saw to his education at the local grammar school. On reaching adulthood, Gay was apprenticed to a mercer, but he disliked this occupation and found a post, in or near 1712, as secretary to the Duchess of Monmouth. In 1714, with the sponsorship of Jonathan Swift, Gay joined the household of Lord Clarendon, and journeyed with him to the Continent. Gay's friendly and ingratiating character won him many friends, not a few of whom were courtiers who found employment for him, either in their own households, or with the Government, throughout his life. Immediately after losing a small fortune in the South Sea Bubble, Gay was appointed Lottery Commissioner (!), a post he held nearly to the end of his life. Gay never married, and divided his time among his friends, especially the Duke and Duchess of Queensberry and the members of the Scriblerians, including Swift and Pope.

John Gay produced, apart from *The Beggar's Opera*, a small body of prose and poetry ranging in quality from brilliant to drab. In 1712 was printed, but never acted, a short topical play, *The Mohocks*, concerning the exploits of a gang who had named themselves after a warlike Native American tribe:

*Come fill up the Glass,
Round, round let it pass,
'Till our Reason be lost in our Wine:
Leave Conscience's Rules
To Women and Fools,
This only can make us divine.*

*Chorus. Then a Mohock, a Mohock I'll be,
No Laws shall restrain
Our Libertine Reign,
We'll riot, drink on, and be free. [All Drink.]*

The point of this slight work, if it has one, seems to be that frolicsome gentlemen, by introducing chaos into society, have only themselves to blame if that chaos leads to their own downfall. The moral concern that drives *The Beggar's Opera* is found here, along with its sense of play and eye for detail; it is easy to see why the Scriblerians adopted Gay so wholeheartedly so early in his career.

In 1714, his *The Shepherd's Week* appeared, demonstrating a sustained competence in producing couplets which,

in the pastoral tradition, oscillate gently between mockery and a sweet seriousness:

*Ah woful Day! ah woful Noon and Morn!
When first by thee my Younglings white were shorn,
Then first, I ween, I cast a Lover's Eye,
My Sheep were Silly, but more Silly I.
Beneath the Shears they felt no lasting Smart,
They lost but Fleeces while I lost a Heart.*

The What-d'ye Call it, a Tragi-Comi-Pastoral-Farce, was briefly staged in 1715. It has relatively little merit, or interest other than that Alexander Pope and John Arbuthnot seem to have assisted in the writing of it. Gay's concern here, as it would be in *The Beggar's Opera*, is the suffering imposed upon the poor by the rich in a corrupt society.

A year later, in humorous tribute to his adopted London, Gay produced *Trivia: or, the Art of Walking the Streets of London*. The inconveniences of life amid eighteenth-century urban hurly-burly are sharply chronicled:

*Pent round with Perils, in the Midst you stand,
And call for Aid in vain; the Coachman swears,
And Car-Men drive, unmindful of thy Prayers.
Where wilt thou turn? ah! whither wilt thou fly?
On ev'ry Side the pressing Spokes are nigh.*

In 1724, a rather stilted, if well plotted, tragedy, *The Captives*, was staged at Drury-Lane. In 1727, Gay brought out a collection of original verse *Fables* on the model of Aesop. They are good reading, despite their subsequent neglect, but they are overshadowed by the crystalline clarity and fine-honed irony of *The Beggar's Opera*.

Gay, with the encouragement of Swift and Pope, tried to interest Colley Cibber, the manager of the theatre at Drury-Lane, in putting on his new ballad farce, but encountered disdain. It is possible that the experienced Cibber liked the work, but mistrusted its considerable departure from accepted theatrical conventions and potentially dangerous political satire. The Duchess of Queensberry used her influence (and money: she promised to cover costs in the event of a loss) to convince another reluctant manager, John Rich of the Lincoln's-Inn-Fields, to take on the piece. Rich had had a mild success recently with a revival of *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, but had since found very little useful material to bring in the crowds, and was staging a number of unmemorable pantomimes, even playing the part of Harlequin himself (Schultz 11).

James Quin, the company's leading actor, was to have been Macheath, but felt himself a poor singer and uncomfortable with the role, and recommended the more obscure Thomas Walker, who was found backstage humming one of the songs in a lively fashion, and was hired on the spot (Schultz 36-37). Walker was not, in fact, a great singer, but he brought to the role a romantic and aristocratic verve that was a perfect foil for the sweet and idealistic Polly. Miss Lavinia Fenton, a player with the company, who had been earning fifteen shillings a week, was found to be a very able singer for the part of Polly, and was engaged for the part at thirty shillings a week (Schultz 23).

The first performance, on January 29, began, it is said, with some concern on the part of the audience, for the

departure from the conventions of the day was considerable. But the sparkling dialogue, witty satire, and ingenious ballads set to well-loved familiar tunes carried their own weight, and we have a report from Pope, as remembered by Joseph Spence:

We were all at the first night of it, in great uncertainty of the event; till we were very much encouraged by overhearing the Duke of Argyle, who sat in the box next to us, say, "it will do,--it must do!--I see it in the eyes of them."--This was a good while before the first act was over, and so gave us ease soon; for the duke, (besides his own good taste) has a more particular knack than anyone now living, in discovering the taste of the public. He was quite right in this, as usual; the good nature of the audience appeared stronger and stronger with every act, and ended in a clamour of applause (*Anecdotes* 159; in Schultz, 3).

The success proved overwhelming. The London weekly *The Craftsman*, on February 3, carried a short notice:

This Week a Dramatick Entertainment has been exhibited at the Theatre in Lincoln's-Inn-Fields, entitled the Beggar's Opera, which has met with a very general Applause, insomuch that the Waggs say it hath made Rich very Gay, and probably will make Gay very Rich.

Gay cleared over six hundred pounds, in fact, while Rich was enabled to begin construction on a fine new theatre in Covent-Garden. That year the Lincoln's- Inn-Fields performances ran to sixty-two, all to full houses, an unprecedented achievement. The play was staged in a number of other cities in England while the original London run was still in progress, and spread to Wales and Ireland, and was the first musical comedy produced in New York City. *The Beggar's Opera* was printed (and pirated) in many editions; the songs were sung everywhere, and prints of Miss Fenton as Polly were sold in all the shops. The actress was mobbed wherever she went, and eventually married a lord, the Duke of Bolton, who had been present on opening night and lost his heart upon first hearing her sing "Oh ponder well! Be not severe."

The Beggar's Opera is a comic farce, poking accurate fun at the prevailing fashion in Italian opera as well as the social and political climate of the age. It established a new genre, the "ballad opera," of which it remains the only really notable example, though its popularity led to the work Sheridan and eventually Gilbert and Sullivan. Gay cuts the standard five acts to three, and tightly controls the dialogue and plot so that there are delightful surprises in each of the forty-five fast-paced scenes.

Peachum, who is both fence and thief-catcher (see note 10, below), sets the tone with his song of self-justification as he sits at his account-book:

*Through all the Employments of Life
Each Neighbour abuses his Brother;
Whore and Rogue they call Husband and Wife:
All Professions be-rogue one another:
The Priest calls the Lawyer a Cheat,
The Lawyer be-knaves the Divine:
And the Statesman, because he's so great,
Thinks his Trade as honest as mine.*

Mrs. Peachum comes in, and overhearing her husband's blacklisting of unproductive thieves, remonstrates with him over one of them, but easily goes along:

You know, my Dear, I never meddle in matters of Death; I always leave those Affairs to you. Women are indeed bad Judges in these cases, for they are so partial to the Brave that they think every Man handsome who is going to the Camp or the Gallows.

The middle-class criminal complacency of these two is shattered by their discovery that their daughter Polly has secretly married Macheath, the famous highwayman. Peachum's famous objection:

Do you think your Mother and I should have liv'd comfortably so long together if ever we had been married?

is seconded by Mrs. Peachum's:

Can you support the Expence of a Husband, Hussy, in Gaming, Drinking and Whoring? Have you Money enough to carry on the daily Quarrels of Man and Wife about who shall squander most? There are not many Husbands and Wives, who can bear the Charges of plaguing one another in a handsome way.

The parents conclude, however, that the match may make sense, provided the husband can be killed for his money. They depart, intent on this errand, and we find that Polly has hidden her man on the premises. She informs him of his danger, and there follows a touching duet, in spite of its intentional burlesque of popular love scenes:

MACHEATH. *And I would love you all the Day,*
POLLY. *Every Night would kiss and play,*
MACHEATH. *If with me you'd fondly stray*
POLLY. *Over the Hills and far away.*

Macheath's idea of escaping is to repair to a tavern and gather around him a company of women of dubious virtue. These, though they are of the lowest possible class of society, vie with one another in displaying perfect drawing-room manners, although the subject of their conversation is their success in picking pockets and shoplifting. Two of them, to Macheath's great surprise, have contracted with Peachum to capture him, and Macheath finds himself a prisoner in Newgate, the great City prison. Here, it develops, the jailor's daughter, Lucy Lockit, awaits her chance to upbraid Macheath for having promised to marry her, and reneged.

You base Man you,----how can you look me in the Face after what hath passed between us?---- See here, perfidious Wretch, how I am forc'd to bear about the Load of Infamy you have laid upon me----O Macheath! thou hast robb'd me of my Quiet----to see thee tortur'd would give me Pleasure.

Macheath succeeds in mollifying her, only to have Polly drop in at this inopportune moment, nearly ruining his chances of escape by claiming him for her husband in Lucy's presence. Macheath finds himself forced to pretend

that Polly is crazy, and succeeds in forcing her to retreat--but something in the performance fills Lucy with foreboding: "But that Polly runs in my Head strangely." And she sings, affectingly:

*If love be not his Guide,
He never will come back!*

There would be, as the Beggar promised, difficulty choosing between the two young women, but for Lucy's capacity for violence and revenge. Macheath notices, and this would be fatal to her cause, were it not lost already:

LUCY. How happy I am, if you say this from your heart! For I love thee so, that I could sooner bear to see thee hang'd than in the Arms of another.

MACHEATH. But could'st thou bear to see me hang'd?

In spite of her fears, Lucy aids Macheath in his escape. Her father learns of Macheath's promise of marriage to her, and determines to learn from Peachum the status of Polly's possible marriage, for if Macheath is recaptured and hanged, his fortune will be subject to rival claims. Lockett visits Peachum, and they discover, while listening to a long-winded account by Mrs. Trapes, the whereabouts of Macheath. They conclude to go halves in him, and the chase is on. Mrs. Trapes shows the practical presence of mind that characterizes these underworld characters, by not presuming upon Peachum and Lockett's promise of a reward:

TRAPES. I don't enquire after your Affairs-- --so whatever happens, I wash my hands on't---- It hath always been my Maxim, that one Friend should assist another-- --But if you please----I'll take one of the Scarfs home with me. 'Tis always good to have something in Hand.

Polly, meanwhile, goes to visit Lucy in hopes of working something out, little knowing that Lucy has resolved to poison her. In a fine takeoff on melodramatic murder scenes, Polly narrowly avoids the cup, and Macheath's recapture is revealed. In the scene memorialized by Hogarth, who was present on opening night, The two "wives" plead with their fathers, unavailingly, for Macheath's life. Then, in a moment of inspired burlesque, Macheath finds that his life has become too complex for him:

JAILOR. Four Women more, Captain, with a Child apiece! See, here they come.

MACHEATH. What----four Wives more!----This is too much----Here----tell the Sheriff's Officers I am ready.

A scene, reminiscent of the interruptions in *The Rehearsal*, interposes, in which the Beggar explains that he would have provided a properly moral ending with the hanging of Macheath, "and for the other Personages of the Drama, the Audience is to suppose they were all either hang'd or transported." But the "taste of the town" will not allow this, for the people had not come to see a tragedy, and must have a happy ending. Macheath is brought back, to the general cry of "a Reprieve," and invites all to a dance of celebration, declaring to Polly that he acknowledges his marriage to her as binding.

The intent of the play is clearly to remind those in high place that corruption at their level leads to corruption and

suffering throughout society. As such, it is a highly moral play, in spite of its apparent glamorization of the criminal life. Two weeks after opening night, an article appeared in *The Craftsman*, the leading Opposition newspaper, ostensibly protesting Gay's work as libelous, but actually assisting him in satirizing the Walpole establishment by very clumsily taking the government's side:

It will, I know, be said, by these libertine Stage-Players, that the Satire is general; and that it discovers a Consciousness of Guilt for any particular Man to apply it to Himself. But they seem to forget that there are such things as Innuendo's (a never-failing Method of explaining Libels)....Nay the very Title of this Piece and the principal Character, which is that of an Highwayman, sufficiently discover the mischievous Design of it; since by this Character every Body will understand One, who makes it his Business arbitrarily to levy and collect Money on the People for his own Use, and of which he always dreads to give an Account----Is not this squinting with a vengeance, and wounding Persons in Authority through the Sides of a common Malefactor? (in Guerinot & Jilg, 87-88)

The commentator drives home his point by taking note of the Beggar's last remark, which is the most important of the play: "That the lower People have their Vices in a Degree as well as the Rich, and are punished for them,----innuendo, that rich People never are" (89). The article was reprinted as *A Key To The Beggar's Opera*, and widely distributed.

Following the success of the Opera, Gay wrote a sequel in which Polly follows her husband to the West Indies, which though never performed (it was banned by the Lord Chamberlain, presumably for the sharp satire it contained), sold very well in the bookshops. *Polly* is confusingly plotted and attempts too many things at once, though its songs are not unmemorable:

*Tho' peevish and old
If Women have Gold,
They have Youth, Good-Humour and Beauty:
Among all Mankind
Without it we find
Nor Love, nor Favour nor Duty.*

Gay also wrote, as he was nearing his end, a serious opera, *Achilles*, which was performed briefly at the Theatre Royal, Covent Garden, and allowed quietly to disappear into deserved obscurity.

To the end, although Gay was financially improvident, his loyal friends, particularly the Duchess of Queensberry, watched over him. He died in London in 1732, at forty-seven years of age. His remains were interred in the Poet's Corner in Westminster Abbey, and marked with an inscription which included these lines:

*Life is a Jest, and all Things show it:
I thought so once, and now I know it.*

Gay was a serious artist, never more so than when producing satire; but it is fitting for the persona of the Beggar to pronounce his last rites.

-- R.S. Bear.

The Beggar's Opera

Written by Mr. GAY

Nos haec novimus esse nihil.

MART.

INTRODUCTION.

BEGGAR, PLAYER.

B E G G A R.

If Poverty be a Title to Poetry, I am sure nobody can dispute mine. I own myself of the Company of Beggars; and I make one at their Weekly Festivals at St. Giles's^{1}. I have a small Yearly Salary for my Catches ^{2}, and am welcome to a Dinner there whenever I please, which is more than most Poets can say.

Player. As we live by the Muses, it is but a Gratitude in us to encourage Poetical Merit wherever we find it. The Muses, contrary to all other Ladies, pay no Distinction to Dress, and never partially mistake the Pertness of Embroidery for Wit, nor the Modesty of Want for Dulness. Be the Author who he will, we push his Play as far as it will go. So (though you are in Want) I wish you success heartily.

Beggar. This piece I own was originally writ for the celebrating the Marriage of James Chanter and Moll Lay, two most excellent Ballad-Singers. I have introduced the Similes that are in all your celebrated Operas; The Swallow, the Moth, the Bee, the Ship, the Flower, &c. Besides, I have a prison-Scene, which the Ladies always reckon charmingly pathetick. As to the Parts, I have observed such a nice Impartiality to our two Ladies that it is impossible for either of them to take Offence. I hope I may be forgiven, that I have not made my Opera throughout unnatural, like those in vogue; for I have no Recitative ^{3}; excepting this, as I have consented to have neither Prologue nor Epilogue, it must be allowed an Opera in all its Forms. The Piece indeed hath been heretofore frequently represented by

ourselves in our Great Room at St. Giles's, so that I cannot too often acknowledge your Charity in bringing it now on the Stage.

Player. But now I see it is time for us to withdraw; the Actors are preparing to begin. Play away the Overture. [Exeunt.]

Dramatis Personæ.

MEN.

Mr. Peachum.

Lockit.

Macheath.

Filch.

Jemmy Twitcher,

Crook-Finger'd Jack,

Wat Dreary,

Robin of Bagshot,

Nimming Ned,

Harry Paddington,

Mat of the Mint,

Ben Budge,

Beggar.

Player.

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Macheath's Gang.

WOMEN.

Mrs. Peachum.

Polly Peachum.

Lucy Lockit.

Diana Trapes.

Mrs. Coaxer,

Dolly Trull,

Mrs. Vixen,

Betty Doxy,

Jenny Diver,

Mrs. Slammekin,

Sukey Tawdrey,

Molly Brazen,

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Women of the Town.

THE BEGGAR'S OPERA.

ACT I.

SCENE, Peachum's *House*.

Peachum sitting at a Table with a large Book of Accounts before him.

AIR I.--An old Woman clothed in Gray, &c.



*THROUGH all the Employments of Life
Each Neighbour abuses his Brother;
Whore and Rogue they call Husband and Wife:*

*All Professions be-rogue one another:
The Priest calls the Lawyer a Cheat,
The Lawyer be-knaves the Divine:
And the Statesman, because he's so great,
Thinks his Trade as honest as mine.*

A Lawyer is an honest Employment, so is mine. Like me too he acts in a double Capacity, both against Rogues and for 'em; for 'tis but fitting that we should protect and encourage Cheats, since we live by them.

Scene 2.

Peachum, Filch.

FILCH. Sir, Black Moll hath sent word her Trial comes on in the Afternoon, and she hopes you will order Matters so as to bring her off.

PEACHUM. Why, she may plead her Belly {4} at worst; to my Knowledge she hath taken care of that Security. But, as the Wench is very active and industrious, you may satisfy her that I'll soften the Evidence.

FILCH. Tom Gagg, sir, is found guilty.

PEACHUM. A lazy Dog! When I took him the time before, I told him what he would come to if he did not mend his Hand. This is Death without Reprieve. I may venture to Book him {5}. [writes.] For Tom Gagg, forty Pounds. Let Betty Sly know that I'll save her from Transportation {6}, for I can get more by her staying in England.

FILCH. Betty hath brought more goods into our Lock {7} to-year than any five of the Gang; and in truth, 'tis a pity to lose so good a Customer.

PEACHUM. If none of the Gang take her off, she may, in the common course of Business, live a Twelve-month longer. I love to let Women scape. A good Sportsman always lets the Hen Partridges fly, because the Breed of the Game depends upon them. Besides, here the Law allows us no Reward; there is nothing to be got by the Death of Women--except our Wives.

FILCH. Without dispute, she is a fine Woman! 'Twas to her I was obliged for my Education {8}, and (to say a bold Word) she hath trained up more young fellows to the Business than the Gaming table.

PEACHUM. Truly, Filch, thy Observation is right. We and the Surgeons are more beholden to Women than all the Professions besides.

Air II.--The bonny gray-ey'd Morn, &c.

FILCH.

*'Tis Woman that seduces all Mankind,
By her we first were taught the wheedling Arts:
Her very Eyes can cheat; when most she's kind,
She tricks us of our Money with our Hearts.
For her, like Wolves by Night we roam for Prey,
And practise ev'ry Fraud, to bribe her Charms;
For suits of Love, like Law, are won by Pay,
And Beauty must be fee'd into our Arms.*

PEACHUM. But make haste to Newgate {9}, Boy, and let my Friends know what I intend; for I love to make them easy one way or other.

FILCH. When a Gentleman is long kept in suspence, Penitence may break his Spirit ever after. Besides, Certainty gives a Man a good Air upon his Trial, and makes him risque another without Fear or Scruple. But I'll away, for 'tis a Pleasure to be the Messenger of Comfort to Friends in Affliction.

Scene 3.

PEACHUM.

But 'tis now high time to look about me for a decent Execution against next Sessions {10}. I hate a lazy Rogue, by whom one can get nothing 'till he is hang'd. A Register of the Gang, [Reading] Crook-finger'd Jack. A Year and a half in the service; Let me see how much the Stock owes to his Industry; one, two, three, four, five Gold Watches, and seven Silver ones. A mighty clean-handed Fellow! Sixteen Snuff-boxes, five of them of true Gold. Six Dozen of Handkerchiefs, four silver- hilted Swords, half Dozen of Shirts, three Tye-Periwigs {11}, and a piece of Broad-Cloth. Considering these are only the Fruits of his leisure Hours, I don't know a prettier Fellow, for no Man alive hath a more engaging Presence of Mind upon the Road. Wat Dreary, alias Brown Will, an irregular Dog, who hath an underhand way of disposing of his Goods. I'll try him only for a Sessions or two longer upon his Good-behaviour. Harry Paddington, a poor petty-larceny Rascal, without the least Genius; that Fellow, though he were to live these six Months, will never come to the Gallows with any Credit. Slippery Sam; he goes off the next Sessions, for the Villain hath the Impudence to have Views of Following his Trade as a Tailor, which he calls an honest Employment. Mat of the Mint; listed not above a Month ago, a promising sturdy Fellow, and diligent in his way; somewhat too bold and hasty, and may raise good Contributions on the Public, if he does not cut himself short by Murder. Tom Tipple, a guzzling soaking Sot, who is always too drunk to stand himself, or to make others stand. A Cart {12} is absolutely necessary for him. Robin of Bagshot {13}, alias Gorgon, alias Bob Bluff, alias Carbuncle, alias Bob Booty.

Scene 4.

PEACHUM, MRS. PEACHUM.

MRS. PEACHUM. What of Bob Booty, Husband? I hope nothing bad hath betided him. You know, my Dear, he's a favourite Customer of mine. 'Twas he made me a present of this Ring.

PEACHUM. I have set his Name down in the Black List, that's all, my Dear; he spends his Life among Women, and as soon as his Money is gone, one or other of the Ladies will hang him for the Reward, and there's forty Pounds lost to us for-ever.

MRS. PEACHUM. You know, my Dear, I never meddle in matters of Death; I always leave those Affairs to you. Women indeed are bitter bad Judges in these cases, for they are so partial to the Brave that they think every Man handsome who is going to the Camp {14} or the Gallows.

Air III.--Cold and raw, &c.

*If any Wench Venus's Girdle {15} wear,
Though she be never so ugly;
Lilies and Roses will quickly appear,
And her Face look wond'rously smugly.*

*Beneath the left Ear so fit but a Cord,
(A Rope so charming a a Zone is!)
The Youth in his Cart hath the Air of a Lord,
And we cry, There goes an Adonis {16}!*

But really Husband, you should not be too hard-hearted, for you never had a finer, braver set of Men than at present. We have not had a Murder among them all, these seven Months. And truly, my Dear, that is a great Blessing.

PEACHUM. What a dickens is the Woman always a whimpring about Murder for? No Gentleman is ever look'd upon the worse for killing a Man in his own Defense; and if Business cannot be carried on without it, what would you have a Gentleman do?

MRS. PEACHUM. If I am in the wrong, my Dear, you must excuse me, for no body can help the Frailty of an over-scrupulous Conscience.

PEACHUM. Murder is as fashionable a Crime as a Man can be guilty of. How many fine Gentlemen have we in Newgate every Year, purely upon that Article! If they have wherewithal to persuade the Jury to bring it in Manslaughter, what are they the worse for it? So, my Dear, have done upon this Subject. Was Captain Macheath here this Morning for the Bank-Notes {17} he left with you last Week?

MRS. PEACHUM. Yes, my Dear; and though the Bank hath stopt Payment, he was so cheerful and so agreeable! Sure there is not a finer Gentleman upon the Road than the Captain! If he comes from Bagshot {18} at any reasonable Hour, he hath promis'd to make one this Evening with Polly and me, and Bob Booty at a party of Quadrille {19}. Pray, my dear, is the Captain rich? PEACHUM. The Captain keeps too good Company ever to grow rich.

Mary-bone {20} and the Chocolate-houses {21} are his undoing. The Man that proposes to get Money by Play should have the Education of a fine Gentleman, and be train'd up to it from his Youth.

MRS. PEACHUM. Really, I am sorry upon Polly's Account the Captain hath not more Discretion. What Business hath he to keep Company with Lords and Gentlemen? he should leave them to prey upon one another.

PEACHUM. Upon Polly's Account! What a plague does the Woman mean?-- ---Upon Polly's Account!

MRS. PEACHUM. Captain Macheath is very fond of the Girl.

PEACHUM. And what then?

MRS. PEACHUM. If I have any Skill in the Ways of Women, I am sure Polly thinks him a very pretty Man.

PEACHUM. And what then? You would not be so mad as to have the Wench marry him! Gamesters and Highwaymen are generally very good to their Whores, but they are very Devils to their Wives.

MRS. PEACHUM. But if Polly should be in Love, how should we help her, or how can she help herself? Poor Girl, I am in the utmost Concern about her.

Air IV.--Why is your faithful Slave disdained? &c.

*If Love the Virgin's Heart invade,
How, like a Moth, the simple Maid
Still plays about the Flame!
If soon she be not made a Wife,
Her Honour's sing'd, and then for Life
She's--what I dare not name.*

PEACHUM. Look ye, Wife. A handsome Wench in our way of Business is as profitable as at the Bar of a Temple Coffee-House {22}, who looks upon it as her livelihood to grant every Liberty but one. You see I would not indulge the Girl as far as prudently we can. In anything, but Marriage! After that, my Dear, how shall we be safe? Are we not then in her Husband's Power? For a Husband hath the absolute Power over all a Wife's Secrets but her own. If the Girl had the Discretion of a Court- Lady, who can have a Dozen young Fellows at her Ear without complying with one, I should not matter it; but Polly is Tinder, and a Spark will at once set her on a Flame. Married! If the Wench does not know her own Profit, sure she knows her own Pleasure better than to make herself a Property! My Daughter to me should be, like a Court-Lady to a Minister of State, a Key to the whole Gang. Married! If the Affair is not already done, I'll terrify her from it, by the Example of our Neighbours.

MRS. PEACHUM. May-hap, my Dear, you may injure the Girl. She loves to imitate the fine Ladies, and she may only allow the Captain liberties in the view of Interest.

PEACHUM. But 'tis your Duty, your Duty, my Dear, to warn the Girl against her Ruin, and to instruct her how to make the most of her Beauty. I'll go to her this moment, and sift her. In the mean time, Wife, rip out the Coronets and Marks of these Dozen of Cambric {23} Handkerchiefs, for I can dispose of them this Afternoon to a Chap {24} in the City.

Scene 5.

MRS. PEACHUM.

Never was a Man more out of the way in an Argument than my Husband. Why must our Polly, forsooth, differ from her Sex, and love only her Husband? And why must Polly's Marriage, contrary to all Observation, make her the less followed by other Men? All Men are Thieves in Love, and like a Woman

the better for being another's Property.

Air V.--Of all the simple Things we do, &c.

*A Maid is like the Golden Ore,
Which hath Guineas {25} intrinsical in't,
Whose Worth is never known, before
It is try'd and imprest in the Mint.
A wife's like a Guinea in Gold,
Stamp't with the Name of her Spouse;
Now here, now there; is bought, or is sold;
And is current in every House.*

Scene 6.

MRS. PEACHUM, FILCH.

MRS. PEACHUM. Come here, Filch. I am as fond of the Child, as though my Mind misgave me he were my own. He hath as fine a Hand at picking a Pocket as a Woman, and is as nimble-finger'd as a Juggler. If an unlucky Session does not cut the Rope of thy Life, I pronounce, Boy, thou wilt be a great Man in History. Where was your Post last Night, my Boy?

FILCH. I ply'd at the Opera, Madam; and considering 'twas neither dark nor rainy, so that there was no great Hurry in getting Chairs and Coaches, made a tolerable Hand on't. These seven Handkerchiefs, Madam.

MRS. PEACHUM. Colour'd ones, I see. They are of sure Sale from our Warehouse at Redriff {26} among the Seamen.

FILCH. And this Snuff-box.

MRS. PEACHUM. Set in Gold! A pretty Encouragement this to a young Beginner.

FILCH. I had a fair Tug at charming Gold Watch. Pox take the Tailors for making the Fobs {27} so deep and narrow! It stuck by the way, and I was forc'd to make my Escape under a Coach. Really, Madam, I fear I shall be cut off in the Flower of my Youth, so that every now and then (since I was pumpt) {28} I have Thoughts of taking up and going to Sea.

MRS. PEACHUM. You should go to Hockley in the Hole {29}, and to Mary-bone, Child, to learn Valour. These are the Schools that have bred so many brave Men. I thought, Boy, by this time thou hadst lost Fear as well as Shame. Poor Lad! how little does he know yet of the Old Baily {30}! For the first Fact I'll insure thee from being hang'd; and going to Sea, Filch, will come time enough upon a Sentence

of Transportation. But now, since you have nothing better to do, ev'n go to your Book, and learn your Catechism; for really a Man makes but an ill Figure in the Ordinary's Paper {31}, who cannot give a satisfactory Answer to his Questions. But hark you, my Lad. Don't tell me a Lye; for you know that I hate a Liar. Do you know of anything that hath pass'd between Captain Macheath and our Polly?

FILCH. I beg you, Madam, don't ask me; for I must either tell a Lye to you or to Miss Polly; for I promis'd her I would not tell.

MRS. PEACHUM. But when the Honour of our Family is concern'd--- --

FILCH. I shall lead a sad Life with Miss Polly, if she ever comes to know that I told you. Besides, I would not willingly forfeit my own Honour by betraying any body.

MRS. PEACHUM. Yonder comes my Husband and Polly. Come, Filch, you shall go with me into my own Room, and tell me the whole Story. I'll give thee a most delicious Glass of a Cordial that I keep for my own drinking.

Scene 7.

PEACHUM, POLLY.

POLLY. I know as well as any of the fine Ladies how to make the most of myself and of my Man too. A Woman knows how to be mercenary, though she hath never been in a Court or at an Assembly. We have it in our Natures, Papa. If I allow Captain Macheath some trifling Liberties, I have this Watch and other visible Marks of his Favour to show for it. A Girl who cannot grant some Things, and refuse what is most material, will make but a poor hand of her Beauty, and soon be thrown upon the Common.

Air VI.--What shall I do to show how much I love her, &c.

*Virgins are like the fair Flower in its Lustre,
Which in the Garden enamels the Ground;
Near it the Bees in play flutter and cluster,
And gaudy Butterflies frolick around.
But, when once pluck'd, 'tis no longer alluring,
To Covent-Garden {32} 'tis sent (as yet sweet),
There fades, and shrinks, and grows past all enduring
Rots, stinks, and dies, and is trod under feet.*

PEACHUM. You know, Polly, I am not against your toying and trifling with a Customer in the way of Business, or to get out a Secret, or so. But if I find out that you have play'd the Fool and are married, you Jade you, I'll cut your Throat, Hussy. Now you know my Mind.

Scene 8.

PEACHUM, POLLY, MRS. PEACHUM.

Air VII.--Oh London is a fine Town.

MRS. PEACHUM, in a very great Passion.

*Our Polly is a sad Slut! nor heeds what we have taught her.
I wonder any Man alive will ever rear a Daughter!
For she must have both Hoods and Gowns, and Hoops to swell her Pride,
With Scarfs and Stays, and Gloves and Lace; and she will have Men beside;
And when she's drest with Care and Cost, all tempting, fine and gay,
As Men should serve a Cowcumber, she flings herself away.
Our Polly is a sad slut, &c.*

You Baggage! you Hussy! you inconsiderate Jade! had you been hang'd, it would not have vex'd me, for that might have been your Misfortune; but to do such a mad thing by Choice! The Wench is married, Husband.

PEACHUM. Married! the Captain is a bold Man, and will risk anything for Money; to be sure he believes her a Fortune. Do you think your Mother and I should have liv'd comfortably so long together, if ever we had been married? Baggage!

MRS. PEACHUM. I knew she was always a proud Slut; and now the Wench hath play'd the Fool and Married, because forsooth she would do like the Gentry. Can you support the Expencc of a Husband, Hussy, in Gaming, Drinking and Whoring? Have you Money enough to carry on the daily Quarrels of Man and Wife about who shall squander most? There are not many Husbands and Wives, who can bear the Charges of plaguing one another in a handsome way. If you must be married, could you introduce no body into our Family but a Highwayman? Why, thou foolish Jade, thou wilt be as ill-used, and as much neglected, as if thou hadst married a Lord!

PEACHUM. Let not your Anger, my Dear, break through the Rules of Decency, for the Captain looks upon himself in the Military Capacity, as a Gentleman by his Profession. Besides what he hath already, I know he is in a fair way of getting, or of dying; and both these ways, let me tell you, are most excellent Chances for a Wife. Tell me, Hussy, are you ruin'd or no?

MRS. PEACHUM. With Polly's Fortune, she might very well have gone off to a Person of Distinction. Yes, that you might, you pouting Slut!

PEACHUM. What is the Wench dumb? Speak, or I'll make you plead by squeezing out an Answer from you. Are really bound Wife to him, or are you only upon liking? [Pinches her.]

POLLY. Oh! [Screaming.]

MRS. PEACHUM. How the Mother is to be pitied who has handsome Daughters! Lock, Bolts, Bars, and Lectures of Morality are nothing to them: They break through them all. They have as much Pleasure in cheating a Father and Mother, as in cheating at Cards.

PEACHUM. Why, Polly, I shall soon know if you are married, by Macheath's keeping from our House.

Air VIII.--Grim King of the Ghosts, &c.

POLLY.

*Can Love be control'd by Advice?
Will Cupid our Mothers obey?
Though my Heart were as frozen as Ice,
At his Flame 'twould have melted away.
When he kist me so closely he prest,
'Twas so sweet that I must have comply'd;
So I thought it both safest and best
To marry, for fear you should chide.*

MRS. PEACHUM. Then all the Hopes of our Family are gone for ever and ever!

PEACHUM. And Macheath may hang his Father and Mother-in-law, in hope to get into their Daughter's Fortune.

POLLY. I did not marry him (as 'tis the Fashion) coolly and deliberately for Honour or Money. But, I love him.

MRS. PEACHUM. Love him! worse and worse! I thought the Girl had been better bred. Oh, Husband, Husband! her Folly makes me mad! my Head swims! I'm distracted! I can't support myself---Oh!
[Faints.]

PEACHUM. See, Wench, to what a Condition you have reduc'd your poor Mother! a glass of Cordial, this instant. How the poor Woman takes it to heart! [Polly goes out, and returns with it.] Ah, Hussy, this is now the only Comfort your Mother has left!

POLLY. Give her another Glass, Sir! my Mama drinks double the Quantity whenever she is out of Order. This, you see, fetches her.

MRS. PEACHUM. The Girl shows such a Readiness, and so much Concern, that I could almost find it in my Heart to forgive her.

Air IX.--O Jenny, O Jenny where hast thou been.

*O Polly, you might have toy'd and kist.
By keeping Men off, you keep them on.*

POLLY.

*But he so teaz'd me,
And he so pleas'd me,
What I did, you must have done.*

MRS. PEACHUM. Not with a Highwayman.----You sorry Slut!

PEACHUM. A Word with you, Wife. 'Tis no new thing for a Wench to take a Man without Consent of Parents. You know 'tis the Frailty of Woman, my Dear.

MRS. PEACHUM. Yes, indeed, the Sex is frail. But the first time a Woman is frail, she should be somewhat nice methinks, for then or never is the time to make her Fortune. After that, she hath nothing to do but to guard herself from being found out, and she may do what she pleases.

PEACHUM. Make yourself a little easy; I have a Thought shall soon set all MAttters again to rights. Why so melancholy, Polly? since what is done cannot be undone, we must all endeavour to make the best of it.

MRS. PEACHUM. Well, Polly; as far as one Woman can forgive another, I forgive thee.----Your Father is too fond of you, Hussy.

POLLY. Then all my Sorrows are at an end.

MRS. PEACHUM. A mighty likely Speech in troth, for a Wench who is just married!

Air X.----Thomas, I cannot, &c.

POLLY.

*I like a Ship in Storms, was tost;
Yet afraid to put in to Land:
For seiz'd in the Port the Vessel's lost,
Whose Treasure is contrebanded.
The Waves are laid,
My Duty's paid.*

*O joy beyond Expression!
Thus, safe a-shore,
I ask no more,
My All is in my Possession.*

PEACHUM. I hear Customers in t'other Room: Go, talk with 'em, Polly; but come to us again, as soon as they are gone----But, hark ye, Child, if 'tis the Gentleman who was here Yesterday about the Repeating Watch {33}; say you believe we can't get Intelligence of it till to-morrow. For I lent it to Suky Straddle, to make a figure with it to-night at a Tavern in Drury-Lane {34}. If t'other Gentleman calls for the Silver-hilted Sword; you know Beetle-brow'd Jemmy hath it on, and he doth not come from Tunbridge {35} 'till Tuesday Night; so that it cannot be had 'till then.

Scene 9.

PEACHUM, MRS. PEACHUM.

PEACHUM. Dear Wife, be a little pacified, Don't let your Passion run away with your Senses. Polly, I grant you, hath done a rash thing.

MRS. PEACHUM. If she had had only an Intrigue with the Fellow, why the very best Families have excused and huddled up a Frailty of that sort. 'Tis Marriage, Husband, that makes it a Blemish.

PEACHUM. But Money, Wife, is the true Fuller's-Earth {36} for Reputations, there is not a Spot or a Stain but what it can take out. A rich Rogue now-a-days is fit Company for any Gentleman; and the World, my Dear, hath not such a contempt for Roguery as you imagine. I tell you, Wife, I can make this Match turn to our Advantage.

MRS. PEACHUM. I am very sensible, Husband, that Captain Macheath is worth Money, but I am in doubt whether he hath not two or three Wives already, and then if he should die in a Session or two, Polly's Dower would come into a Dispute.

PEACHUM. That, indeed, is a Point which ought to be consider'd.

Air XI.--A Soldier and a Sailor.

*A Fox may steal your Hens, Sir,
A Whore your Health and Pence, Sir,
Your Daughter rob your Chest, Sir,
Your Wife may steal your Rest, Sir.
A Thief your Goods and Plate {37}.
But this is all but picking {38},
With Rest, Pence, Chest and Chicken;*

*It ever was decreed, Sir,
If Lawyer's Hand is fee'd, Sir,
He steals your whole Estate.*

The Lawyers are bitter Enemies to those in our Way. They don't care that any body should get a clandestine Livelihood but themselves.

Scene 10.

MRS. PEACHUM, PEACHUM, POLLY.

POLLY. 'Twas only Nimming Ned. He brought in a Damask Window-Curtain, a Hoop-Petticoat, a pair of Silver Candlesticks, and one Silk Stocking, from the Fire that happen'd last Night.

PEACHUM. There is not a Fellow that is cleverer in his way, and saves more Goods out of the Fire than Ned. But now, Polly, to your Affair; for Matters must be left as they are. You are married, then, it seems?

POLLY. Yes, Sir.

PEACHUM. And how do you propose to live, Child?

POLLY. Like other Women, Sir, upon the Industry of my Husband.

MRS. PEACHUM. What, is the Wench turn'd Fool? A Highwayman's Wife, like a Soldier's, hath as little of his Pay, as of his Company.

PEACHUM. And had not you the common Views of a Gentlewoman in your Marriage, Polly?

POLLY. I don't know what you mean, Sir.

PEACHUM. Of a Jointure {39}, and of being a Widow.

POLLY. But I love him, Sir; how then could I have Thoughts of parting with him?

PEACHUM. Parting with him! Why, this is the whole Scheme and Intention of all Marriage Articles. The comfortable Estate of Widow-hood, is the only Hope that keeps up a Wife's Spirits. Where is the Woman who would scruple to be a Wife, if she had it in her Power to be a Widow, whenever she pleas'd? If you have any Views of this sort, Polly, I shall think the Match not so very unreasonable.

POLLY. How I dread to hear your Advice! Yet I must beg you to explain yourself.

PEACHUM. Secure what he hath got, have him peach'd the next Sessions, and then at once you are made a rich Widow.

POLLY. What, murder the Man I love! The Blood runs cold at my Heart with the very Thought of it!

PEACHUM. Fie, Polly! What hath Murder to do in the Affair? Since the thing sooner or later must happen, I dare say, the Captain himself would like rather that we should get the Reward for his Death sooner than a Stranger. Why, Polly, the Captain knows that as 'tis his Employment to rob, so 'tis ours to take Robbers; every Man in his Business. So there is no Malice in the case.

MRS. PEACHUM. Ay, Husband, now you have nick'd the Matter. To have him peach'd {40} is the only thing could ever make me forgive her.

Air XII.--Now ponder well, ye Parents dear.

POLLY.

*O ponder well! be not severe:
So save a wretched Wife!
For on the Rope that hangs my Dear
Depends poor Polly's Life.*

MRS. PEACHUM. But your Duty to your Parents, Hussy, obliges you to hang him. What would many a Wife give for such an Opportunity!

POLLY. What is a Jointure, what is Widow-hood to me? I know my heart. I cannot survive him.

AIR XIII.--Le printemps rappelle aux armes.

*The Turtle thus with plaintive Crying,
Her Lover dying,
The Turtle thus with plaintive Crying,
Laments her Dove.
Down she drops quite spent with Sighing
Pair'd in Death, as pair'd in Love.*

Thus, Sir, it will happen to your poor Polly.

MRS. PEACHUM. What, is the Fool in Love in earnest then? I hate thee for being particular: Why Wench, thou art a Shame to they very Sex.

POLLY. But hear me, Mother.----If you ever lov'd-- --

MRS. PEACHUM. Those cursed Play-Books {41} she reads have been her Ruin. One Word more, Hussy, and I shall knock your Brains out, if you have any.

PEACHUM. Keep out of the way, Polly, for fear of Mischief, and consider what is propos'd to you.

MRS. PEACHUM. Away, Hussy. Hang your Husband, and be dutiful.

Scene 11.

MRS. PEACHUM, PEACHUM.
[Polly listning.]

MRS. PEACHUM. The Thing, Husband, must and shall be done. For the sake of Intelligence we must take other Measures, and have him peach'd the next Session without her Consent. If she will not know her Duty, we know ours.

PEACHUM. But really, my Dear, it grieves one's Heart to take off a great Man. When I consider his Personal Bravery, his fine Strategem {42}, how much we have already got by him, and how much more we may get, methinks I can't find it in my Heart to have a hand in his Death. I wish you could have made Polly undertake it.

MRS. PEACHUM. But in a Case of Necessity----our own Lives are in danger.

PEACHUM. Then, indeed, we must comply with the Customs of the World, and make Gratitude give way to Interest.----He shall be taken off.

MRS. PEACHUM. I'll undertake to manage Polly.

PEACHUM. And I'll prepare Matters for the Old Baily.

Scene 12.

POLLY.

Now I'm a Wretch, indeed.----Methinks I see him already in the Cart, sweeter and more lovely than the Nosegay in his Hand!--- -I hear the Crowd extolling his Resolution and Intrepidity!-- --What VOLLIES of Sighs are sent from the Windows of Holborn {43}, that so comely a Youth should be brought to Disgrace!--I see him at the Tree! The whole Circle are in Tears!----even Butchers weep!----Jack Ketch {44} himself hesitates to perform his Duty, and would be glad to lose his Fee, by a Reprieve. What then will become of Polly!----As yet I may inform him of their Design, and aid him in his Escape.----It shall be so-- --But then he flies, absents himself, and I bar myself from his dear Conversation! That too will

distract me.----If he keep out of the way, my Papa and Mama may in time relent, and we may be happy.-
---If he stays, he is hang'd, and then he is lost for ever!- ---He intended to lie conceal'd in my Room, 'till
the Dusk of the Evening: If they are abroad, I'll this Instant let him out, lest some Accident should
prevent him. [Exit, and returns.]

Scene 13.

POLLY, MACHEATH

Air XIV.--Pretty Parrot, say----

MACHEATH.

*Pretty Polly, say,
When I was away,
Did your Fancy never stray
To some newer Lover?*

POLLY.

*Without Disguise,
Heaving Sighs,
Doting Eyes,
My constant Heart discover,
Fondly let me loll!*

MACHEATH.

O pretty, pretty Poll.

POLLY. And are you as fond as ever, my Dear?

MACHEATH. Suspect my Honour, my Courage, suspect any thing but my Love.- ---May my Pistols
miss Fire {45}, and my Mare slip her Shoulder {46} while I am pursu'd, if I ever forsake thee!

POLLY. Nay, my Dear, I have no Reason to doubt you, for I find in the Romance you lent me, none of
the great Heroes were ever false in Love.

Air XV.--Pray, Fair one, be kind----

MACHEATH.

*My Heart was so free,
It rov'd like the Bee,
'Till Polly my Passion requited;
I sipt each Flower,
I chang'd ev'ry Hour,
But here ev'ry Flow'r is united.*

POLLY. Were you sentenc'd to Transportation, sure, my Dear, you could not leave me behind you---- could you?

MACHEATH. Is there any Power, any Force that could tear me from thee? You might sooner tear a Pension out of the hands of a Courtier, a Fee from a Lawyer, a pretty Woman from a Looking-glass, or any Woman from Quadrille. ----But to tear me from thee is impossible!

Air XVI.--Over the Hills and far away.

*Were I laid on Greenland's Coast,
And in my Arms embrac'd my Lass;
Warm amidst eternal Frost,
Too soon the Half Year's Night would pass.*

POLLY.

*Were I sold on Indian Soil,
Soon as the burning Day was clos'd,
I could mock the sultry Toil
When on my Charmer's Breast repos'd.*

MACHEATH.

And I would love you all the Day,

POLLY.

Every Night would kiss and play,

MACHEATH.

If with me you'd fondly stray

POLLY.

Over the Hills and far away.

POLLY. Yes, I would go with thee. But oh!----how shall I speak it? I must be torn from thee. We must part.

MACHEATH. How! Part!

POLLY. We must, we must.----My Papa and Mama are set against thy Life. They now, even now are in Search after thee. They are preparing Evidence against thee. Thy Life depends upon a moment.

Air XVII.--Gin thou wert mine awn thing.----

*Oh What pain it is to part!
Can I leave thee, can I leave thee?
O what pain it is to part!
Can thy Polly ever leave thee?
But lest Death my Love should thwart,
And bring thee from my bleeding Heart!
Fly hence, and let me leave thee.*

One Kiss and then--one Kiss--begone--farewell.

MACHEATH. My Hand, my Heart, my Dear, is so riveted to thine, that I cannot unloose my Hold.

POLLY. But my Papa may intercept thee, and then I should lose the very glimmering of Hope. A few Weeks, perhaps, may reconcile us all. Shall thy Polly hear from thee?

MACHEATH. Must I then go?

POLLY. And will not Absence change your Love?

MACHEATH. If you doubt it, let me stay--and be hang'd.

POLLY. O how I fear! how I tremble!----Go--- -but when Safety will give you leave, you will be sure to see me again; for 'till then Polly is wretched.

Air XVII.--O the Broom, &c.

[Parting, and looking back at each other with fondness; he at one Door, she at the other.]

MACHEATH.

*The Miser thus a Shilling sees,
Which he's oblig'd to pay,
With sighs resigns it by degrees,
And fears 'tis gone for aye.*

POLLY.

*The Boy, thus when his Sparrow's flown,
The Bird in Silence eyes;
But soon as out of Sight 'tis gone,
Whines, whimpers, sobs and cries.*

ACT II.

SCENE I

A Tavern near Newgate.

JEMMY TWITCHER, CROOK-FINGER'D JACK, WAT DREARY, ROBIN OF BAGSHOT,
NIMMING NED, HENRY PADINGTON, MATT OF THE MINT, BEN BUDGE, and the rest of the
Gang at the Table, with Wine, Brandy, and Tobacco.

BEN. But pr'ythee, Matt, what is become of thy brother Tom? I have not seen him since my Return from Transportation.

MATT. Poor Brother Tom had an Accident this time Twelvemonth, and so clever a made fellow he was, that I could not save him from those fleaing {47} Rascals the Surgeons; and now, poor Man, he is among the Ottamys {48} at Surgeons Hall.

BEN. So it seems, his Time was come.

JEMMY. But the present Time is ours, and no body alive hath more. Why are the Laws levell'd at us? are we more dishonest than the rest of Mankind? What we win, Gentlemen, is our own by the Law of Arms, and the Right of Conquest.

CROOK. Where shall we find such another Set of Practical Philosophers, who to a Man are above the Fear of Death?

WAT. Sound Men, and true!

ROBIN. Of try'd Courage, and indefatigable Industry!

NED. Who is there here that would not die for his Friend?

HARRY. Who is there here that would betray him for his Interest?

MATT. Show me a Gang of Courtiers that can say as much.

BEN. We are for a just Partition of the World, for every Man hath a Right to enjoy Life.

MATT. We retrench the Superfluities of Mankind. The World is avaritious, and I hate Avarice. A covetous fellow, like a Jackdaw, steals what he was never made to enjoy, for the sake of hiding it. These are the Robbers of Mankind, for Money was made for the Free-hearted and Generous, and where is the Injury of taking from another, what he hath not the Heart to make use of?

JEMMY. Our several Stations for the Day are fixt. Good luck attend us all. Fill the Glasses.

Air XIX.--Fill every Glass, &c.

MATT.

*Fill ev'ry Glass, or Wine inspires us,
And fires us
With Courage, Love and Joy.
Women and Wine should Life employ.
Is there ought else on Earth desirous?*

CHORUS

Fill ev'ry Glass, &c.

Scene 2.

To them enter MACHEATH.

MACHEATH. Gentlemen, well met. My Heart hath been with you this Hour: but an unexpected Affair hath detain'd me. No ceremony, I beg you.

MATT. We were just breaking up to go upon Duty. Am I to have the Honour of taking the Air with you, Sir, this Evening upon the Heath? I drink a Dram now and then with the Stage-coachmen in the way of Friendship and Intelligence; and I know that about this Time there will be Passengers upon the Western

Road, who are worth speaking with {49}.

MACHEATH. I was to have been of that Party----but-- --

MATT. But what, Sir?

MACHEATH. Is there any Man who suspects my Courage?

MATT. We have all been Witnesses of it.

MACHEATH. My Honour and Truth to the Gang?

MATT. I'll be answerable for it.

MACHEATH. In the Division of our Booty, have I ever shewn the least Marks of Avarice or Injustice?

MATT. By these Questions something seems to have ruffled you. Are any of us suspected?

MACHEATH. I have a fixed Confidence, Gentlemen, in you all, as Men of Honour, and as such I value and respect you. Peachum is a Man that is useful to us.

MATT. Is he about to play us any foul Play? I'll shoot him through the Head.

MACHEATH. I beg you, Gentlemen, act with Conduct and Discretion. A Pistol is your last Resort.

MATT. He knows nothing of this Meeting.

MACHEATH. Business cannot go on without him. He is a Man who knows the World, and is a necessary Agent to us. We have had a slight Difference, and 'till it is accomodated I shall be obliged to keep out of his way. Any private dispute of mine shall be of no ill consequence to my Friends. You must continue to act under his Direction, for the moment we break loose from him, our Gang is ruin'd.

MATT. As a Bawd {50} to a Whore, I grant you, he is to us of great Convenience.

MACHEATH. Make him believe I have quitted the Gang, which I can never do but with Life. At our private Quarters I will continue to meet you. A Week or so will probably reconcile us.

MATT. Your Instructions shall be observ'd. 'Tis now high time for us to repair to our several Duties; so 'till the Evening at our Quarters in Moor- Fields {51} we bid you farewell.

MACHEATH. I shall wish myself with you. Success attend you.

[Sits down melancholy at the Table.]

Air XX.--March in Rinaldo {52}, with Drums and Trumpets.

MATT.

*Let us take the Road.
Hark! I hear the Sound of Coaches!
The Hour of Attack approaches,
To your Arms, brave Boys, and load.*

*See the Ball I hold!
Let the Chymists {53} toil like Asses,
Our Fire their Fire surpasses,
And turns all our Lead to Gold.*

[The Gang, rang'd in the Front of the Stage, load their Pistols, and stick them under their Girdles; then go off singing the first Part in Chorus.]

Scene 3.

MACHEATH, DRAWER {54}.

MACHEATH. What a Fool is a fond Wench! Polly is most confoundedly bit.--I love the Sex. And a Man who loves Money, might as well be contented with one Guinea, as I with one Woman. The Town perhaps have been as much obliged to me, for recruiting it with free-hearted Ladies, as to any Recruiting Officer in the Army. If it were not for us, and the other Gentlemen of the Sword, Drury-Lane would be uninhabited.

Air XXI.--Would you have a young Virgin, &c.

*If the Heart of a Man is deprest with Cares,
The Mist is dispell'd when a Woman appears;
Like the Notes of a Fiddle, she sweetly, sweetly
Raises the Spirits, and charms our Ears,
Roses and Lilies her Cheeks disclose,
But her ripe Lips are more sweet than those.
Press her,
Caress her,
With Blisses,
Her Kisses*

Dissolve us in Pleasure, and soft Repose.

I must have Women. There is nothing unbends the Mind like them. Money is not so strong a Cordial for the Time. Drawer.--[Enter Drawer.] Is the Porter gone for all the Ladies according to my Directions?

DRAWER. I expect him back every Minute. But you know, Sir, you sent him as far as Hockley in the Hole for three of the Ladies, for one in Vinegar- Yard {55} and for the rest of them somewhere about Lewker's Lane {56}. Sure some of them are below, for I hear the Bar-Bell. As they come I will show them up. Coming, Coming.

Scene 4.

MACHEATH, MRS. COAXER, DOLLY TRULL, MRS. VIXEN, BETTY DOXY, JENNY DIVER,
MRS. SLAMMEKIN, SUKY TAWDRY, and MOLLY BRAZEN.

MACHEATH. Dear Mrs. Coaxer, you are welcome. You look charmingly to-day. I hope you don't want the Repairs of Quality, and lay on Paint.--- -Dolly Trull! kiss me, you Slut; are you as amorous as ever, Hussy? You are always so taken up with stealing Hearts, that you don't allow yourself Time to steal anything else.----Ah Dolly, thou wilt ever be a Coquette!----Mrs. Vixen, I'm yours, I always lov'd a Woman of Wit and Spirit; they make charming Mistresses, but plaguey Wives.-- --Betty Doxy! Come hither, Hussy. Do you drink as hard as ever? You had better stick to good wholesom Beer; for in troth, Betty, Strong-Waters {57} will in time ruin your Constitution. You should leave those to your Betters.-- What! and my pretty Jenny Diver too! As prim and demure as ever! There is not any Prude, though ever so high-bred, hath a more sanctify'd Look, with a more mischievous Heart. Ah! thou art a dear artful Hypocrite.----Mrs. Slammekin! as careless and genteel as ever! all you fine Ladies, who know your own Beauty, affect an Undress.----But see, here's Suky Tawdry come to contradict what I am saying. Everything she gets one way she lays out upon her Back. Why, Suky, you must keep at least a Dozen Talley-men {58}. Molly Brazen! [She kisses him.] That's well done. I love a free-hearted Wench. Thou hast a most agreeable Assurance, Girl, and art as willing as a Turtle.-----But hark! I hear Music. The Harper is at the Door. If Music be the Food of Love, play on {59}. Ere you seat yourselves, Ladies, what think you of a Dance? Come in. [Enter Harper.] Play the French Tune, that Mrs. Slammekin was so fond of.

[A dance a la ronde in the French manner; near the end of it this Song and Chorus.]

Air XXII.--Cotillon.

*Youth's the Season made for Joys,
Love is then our Duty,
She alone who that employs,
Well deserves her Beauty.
Let's be gay,*

*While we may,
Beauty's a Flower, despis'd in Decay,
Youth's the Season &c.*

*Let us drink and sport to-day,
Ours is not to-morrow.
Love with youth flies swift away,
Age is nought but Sorrow.
Dance and sing,
Time's on the Wing.
Life never knows the Return of Spring.
Chorus.Let us drink, &c.*

MACHEATH. Now, pray Ladies, take your Places. Here Fellow. [Pays the Harper.] Bid the Drawer bring us more Wine. [Exit Harper.] If any of the Ladies choose Ginn, I hope they will be so free to call for it.

JENNY. You look as if you meant me. Wine is strong enough for me. Indeed, Sir, I never drink Strong-Waters, but when I have the Cholic. I hope, Mrs. Coaxer, you have had good Success of late in your Visits among the Mercers {60}.

COAXER. We have so many interlopers----Yet with Industry, one may still have a little Picking. I carried a silver-flower'd Lutestring, and a Piece of black Padesoy {61} to Mr. Peachum's Lock but last Week.

VIXEN. There's Molly Brazen hath the Ogle of a Rattle-Snake. She rivetted a Linen-Draper's Eye so fast upon her, that he was nick'd of three Pieces of Cambric before he could look off.

BRAZEN. Oh dear Madam! ----But sure nothing can come up to your handling of Laces! And then you have such a sweet deluding Tongue! To cheat a Man is nothing; but the Woman must have fine parts indeed who cheats a Woman.

VIXEN. Lace, Madam, lies in a small Compass, and is of easy Conveyance. But you are apt, Madam, to think too well of your Friends.

COAXER. If any Woman hath more Art than another, to be sure, 'tis Jenny Diver. Though her Fellow be never so agreeable, she can pick his Pocket as coolly, as if money were her only Pleasure. Now that is a Command of the Passions in a Woman!

JENNY. I never go to the Tavern with a Man, but in the View of Business. I have other Hours, and other sorts of Men for my Pleasure. But had I your Address, Madam----

MACHEATH. Have done with your Compliments, Ladies, and drink about: You are not so fond of me, Jenny, as you use to be.

JENNY. 'Tis not convenient, Sir, to shew my Fondness among so many Rivals. 'Tis your own Choice, and not the Warmth of my Inclination that will determine you.

AIR XXIII.--All in a misty Morning, &c.

*Before the Barn-Door crowing,
The Cock by Hens attended,
His Eyes around him throwing,
Stands for awhile suspended.
Then one he singles from the Crew,
And cheers the happy Hen;
With how do you do, and how do you do,
And how do you do again.*

MACHEATH. Ah Jenny! thou art a dear Slut.

TRULL. Pray, Madam, were you ever in keeping {62}?

TAWDRY. I hope, Madam, I han't been so long upon the Town, but I have met with some good-fortune as well as my Neighbors.

TRULL. Pardon me, Madam, I meant no harm by the Question; 'Twas only in the way of Conversation.

TAWDRY. Indeed, Madam, if I had not been a Fool, I might have liv'd very handsomely with my last Friend. But upon his missing five Guineas, he turn'd me off. Now I never suspected he had counted them.

SLAMMEKIN. Who do you look upon, Madam, as your best sort of Keepers?

TRULL. That, Madam, is thereafter as they be.

SLAMMEKIN. I, Madam, was once kept by a Jew; and bating {63} their Religion, to Women they are a good sort of People.

TAWDRY. Now for my Part, I own I like an old Fellow: For we always make them pay for what they can't do.

VIXEN. A spruce Prentice, let me tell you Ladies, is no ill thing, they bleed freely. I have sent at least two or three Dozen of them in my time to the Plantations {64}.

JENNY. But to be sure, Sir, with so much Good-fortune as you have had upon the Road, you must be grown immensely rich.

MACHEATH. The Road, indeed, hath done me Justice, but the Gaming-Table hath been my Ruin.

AIR XXIV.--When once I lay with another Man's Wife, &c.

JENNY.

*The Gamesters and Lawyers are Jugglers alike,
If they meddle, your all is in Danger.
Like Gypsies, if once they can finger a Souse{65},
Your Pockets they pick, and they pilfer your House
And give your Estate to a Stranger.*

A Man of Courage should never put any thing to the Risque but his Life. These are the Tools of a Man of Honour. Cards and Dice are fit only for cowardly Cheats, who prey upon their Friends.

[She takes up his Pistol. Tawdry takes up the other.]

TAWDRY. This, Sir, is fitter for your Hand. Besides your loss of Money, 'tis a loss to the Ladies. Gaming takes you off from Women. How fond could I be of you! But before Company 'tis ill bred.

MACHEATH. Wanton Hussies!

JENNY. I must and will have a Kiss to give my Wine a Zest.

[They take him about the Neck and make signs to Peachum and Constables {66}, who rush in upon him.]

Scene 5.

To them, PEACHUM and Constables.

PEACHUM. I seize you, Sir, as my Prisoner.

MACHEATH. Was this well done {67}, Jenny?----Women are Decoy Ducks; who can trust them! Beasts, Jades, Jilts, Harpies, Furies, Whores!

PEACHUM. Your Case, Mr. MACHEATH, is not particular. The greatest Heroes have been ruin'd by Women. But, to do them Justice, I must own they are a pretty sort of Creatures, if we could trust them. You must now, Sir, take your Leave of the Ladies, and if they have a mind to make you a Visit, they will

be sure to find you at home. This Gentleman, Ladies, lodges in Newgate. Constables, wait upon the Captain to his Lodgings.

Air XXV.--When first I laid Siege to my Chloris, &c.

MACHEATH.

*At the Tree I shall suffer with Pleasure,
At the Tree I shall suffer with Pleasure,
Let me go where I will,
In all kinds of Ill,
I shall find no such Furies as these are.*

PEACHUM. Ladies, I'll take care the Reckoning shall be discharg'd.

[Exit Macheath, guarded with Peachum and Constables.]

Scene 6.

The Women remain.

VIXEN. Look ye, Mrs. Jemmy, though Mr. Peachum may have made a private Bargain with you and Suky Tawdry for betraying the Captain, as we were all assisting, we ought all to share alike.

COAXER. I think Mr. Peachum, after so long an Acquaintance, might have trusted me as well as Jenny Diver.

SLAMMEKIN. I am sure at least three Men of his hanging, and in a Year's time too, (if he did me Justice) should be set down to my Account.

TRULL. Mrs. Slammekin, that is not fair. For you know one of them was taken in Bed with me.

JENNY. As far as a Bowl of Punch or a Treat, I believe Mrs. Suky will join with me.----As for anything else, Ladies, you cannot in Conscience expect it.

SLAMMEKIN. Dear Madam----

TRULL. I would not for the World----

SLAMMEKIN. 'Tis impossible for me----

TRULL. As I hope to be sav'd, Madam----

SLAMMEKIN. Nay then, I must stay here all night----

TRULL. Since you command me. [Exeunt with great Ceremony.]

Scene 7, Newgate.

LOCKIT, Turnkeys {68}, MACHEATH, Constables.

LOCKIT. Noble Captain, you are welcome. You have not been a Lodger of mine this Year and a half. You know the Custom, Sir. Garnish {69}, Captain, Garnish. Hand me down those Fetters {70} there.

MACHEATH. Those, Mr. Lockit, seem to be the heaviest of the whole Set. With your Leave, I should like the further Pair better.

LOCKIT. Look ye, Captain, we know what is fittest for our Prisoners. When a Gentlemen uses me with Civility, I always do the best I can to please him.----Hand them down I say. We have them of all Prices, from one Guinea to ten, and 'tis fitting every Gentleman should please himself.

MACHEATH. I understand you, Sir. [Gives Money.] The fees here are so many, and so exorbitant, that few Fortunes can bear the Expense, of getting off handsomely, or of dying like a Gentleman.

LOCKIT. Those, I see, will fit the Captain better--Take down the further Pair. Do but examine them, Sir.--Never was better work.---- How genteely they are made!----They will fit as easy as a Glove, and the nicest Man in England might not be asham'd to wear them. [He puts on the Chains.] If I had the best Gentleman in the Land in my Custody. I could not equip him more handsomely. And so, Sir--I now leave you to your private Meditations.

Scene 8.

MACHEATH.

AIR XXVI.--Courtiers, Courtiers, think it no Harm, &c.

*Man may escape from Rope and Gun;
Nay, some have outliv'd the Doctor's Pill;
Who takes a Woman must be undone,
That Basilisk {71} is sure to kill.
The Fly that sips the Treacle {72} is lost in the Sweets,
So he that tastes Woman, Woman, Woman,
He that tastes Woman, ruin meets.*

To what a woful Plight have I brought myself! Here must I (all Day long, 'till I am hang'd) be confin'd to hear the Reproaches of a Wench who lays her Ruin at my Door----I am in the Custody of her Father, and to be sure, if he knows of the matter, I shall have a fine time on't betwixt this and my Execution.----But I promis'd the Wench Marriage----What signifies a Promise to a Woman? Does not Man in Marriage itself promise a hundred things that he never means to perform? Do all we can, Women will believe us; for they look upon a Promise as an Excuse for following their own Inclinations.----But here comes Lucy, and I cannot get from her.----Wou'd I were deaf!

Scene 9.

MACHEATH, LUCY.

LUCY. You base Man you,----how can you look me in the Face after what hath passed between us?----See here, perfidious Wretch, how I am forc'd to bear about the Load of Infamy {73} you have laid upon me--- -O Macheath! thou hast robb'd me of my Quiet----to see thee tortur'd would give me Pleasure.

Air XXVII.--A lovely Lass to a Friar came, &c.

*Thus when a good Huswife sees a Rat
In her Trap in the Morning taken,
With Pleasure her Heart goes pit-a-pat,
In Revenge for her loss of Bacon.
Then she throws him
To the Dog or Cat
To be worried, crush'd and shaken.*

MACHEATH. Have you no Bowels {74}, no Tenderness, my dear Lucy, to see a Husband in these Circumstances?

LUCY. A Husband!

MACHEATH. In ev'ry Respect but the Form, and that, my Dear, may be said over us at any time.----Friends should not insist upon Ceremonies. From a Man of Honour, his Word is as good as his Bond.

LUCY. 'Tis the Pleasure of all you fine Men to insult the Women you have ruin'd.

Air XXVIII.'Twas when the Sea was roaring, &c.

*How cruel are the Traitors,
Who lye and swear in jest,
To cheat unguarded Creatures,
Of Virtue, Fame, and Rest! Whoever steals a Shilling,*

*Through shame the Guilt conceals:
In Love the perjur'd Villain
With boasts the Theft reveals.*

MACHEATH. The very first Opportunity, my Dear, (have but Patience) you shall be my Wife in whatever manner you please.

LUCY. Insinuating Monster! And so you think I know nothing of the Affair of Miss Polly Peachum.----I could tear thy Eyes out!

MACHEATH. Sure, Lucy, you can't be such a fool as to be jealous of Polly!

LUCY. Are you not married to her, you Brute, you.

MACHEATH. Married! Very good. The Wench gives it out only to vex thee, and to ruin me in thy good Opinion. 'Tis true, I go the House; I chat with the Girl, I kiss her, I say a thousand things to her (as all Gentlemen do) that mean nothing, to divert myself; and now the silly Jade hath set it about that I am married to her, to let me know what she would be at. Indeed, my dear Lucy, these violent Passions may be of ill Consequence to a Woman in your Condition.

LUCY. Come, come, Captain, for all your Assurance, you know that Miss Polly hath put it out of your Power to do me the Justice you promis'd me.

MACHEATH. A jealous Woman believes everything her Passion suggests. To convince you of my Sincerity, if we can find the Ordinary, I shall have no Scruples of making you my Wife; and I know the Consequences of having two at a time.

LUCY. That you are only to be hang'd, and so get rid of them both.

MACHEATH. I am ready, my dear Lucy, to give you Satisfaction--- -If you think there is any in Marriage.----What can a Man of Honour say more?

LUCY. So then, it seems, you are not married to Miss Polly.

MACHEATH. You know, Lucy, the Girl is prodigiously conceited. No Man can say a civil thing to her but (like other fine Ladies) her Vanity makes her think he's her own for ever and ever.

Air. XXIX.--The Sun had loos'd his weary Teams &c.

*The first time at the Looking-glass
The Mother sets her Daughter,
The Image strikes the smiling Lass*

*With self-love ever after,
Each time she looks, she, fonder grown,
Thinks ev'ry Charm grows stronger.
But alas, vain Maid, all eyes but your own
Can see you are not younger.*

When Women consider their own Beauties, they are all alike unreasonable in their Demands; for they expect their Lovers should like them as long as they like themselves.

LUCY. Yonder is my Father----perhaps this way we may light upon the Ordinary, who shall try if you will be as good as your Word.-- --For I long to be made an honest Woman.

Scene 10.

PEACHUM, LOCKIT with an Account-Book.

LOCKIT. In this last Affair, Brother Peachum, we are agreed. You have consented to go halves in Macheath.

PEACHUM. We shall never fall out about an Execution----But as to that Article, pray how stands our last Year's Account?

LOCKIT. If you will run your Eye over it, you'll find 'tis fair and clearly stated.

PEACHUM. This long Arrear of the Government {75} is very hard upon us! Can it be expected that we would hang our Acquaintance for nothing, when our Betters will hardly save theirs without being paid for it. Unless the People in Employment pay better, I promise them for the future, I shall let other Rogues live besides their own.

LOCKIT. Perhaps, Brother, they are afraid these Matters may be carried too far. We are treated by them with Contempt, as if our Profession were not reputable.

PEACHUM. In one respect indeed our Employment may be reckon'd dishonest, because, like great Statesmen, we encourage those who betray their Friends.

LOCKIT. Such Language, Brother, any where else, might turn to your Prejudice. Learn to be more guarded, I beg you.

AIR XXX.--How happy are we, &c.

*When you censure the Age,
Be cautious and sage,*

*Lest the Courtiers offended should be:
If you mention Vice or Bribe,
'Tis so pat to all the Tribe;
Each cries----That was levell'd at me.*

PEACHUM. Here's poor Ned Clincher's Name, I see. Sure Brother Lockit, there was a little unfair Proceeding in Ned's Case: for he told me in the Condemn'd Hold {76}, that for Value receiv'd, you had promis'd him a Session or two longer without Molestation.

LOCKIT. Mr. Peachum----this is the first time my Honour was ever call'd in Question.

PEACHUM. Business is at an end--if once we act dishonourably.

LOCKIT. Who accuses me?

PEACHUM. You are warm, Brother.

LOCKIT. He that attacks my Honour, attacks my Livelihood--- -And this Usage----Sir----is not to be borne.

PEACHUM. Since you provoke me to speak--I must tell you too, that Mrs. Coaxer charges you with defrauding her of her Information-Money, for the apprehending of curl-pated Hugh. Indeed, indeed, Brother, we must punctually pay our Spies, or we shall have no Information.

LOCKIT. Is this Language to me, Sirrah,----who have sav'd you from the Gallows, Sirrah {77}!
[Collaring each other.

PEACHUM. If I am hang'd it shall be for ridding the World of an arrant Rascal.

LOCKIT. This Hand shall do the office of the Halter you deserve, and throttle you----you Dog!----

PEACHUM. Brother, Brother----We are both in the Wrong- ---for you know we have it in our Power to hang each other. You should not be so passionate.

LOCKIT. Nor you so provoking.

PEACHUM. 'Tis our mutual Interest; 'Tis for the Interest of the World we should agree. If I said any thing, Brother, to the Prejudice of your Character, I ask pardon.

LOCKIT. Brother Peachum----I can forgive as well as resent.----Give me your Hand. Suspicion does not become a Friend.

PEACHUM. I only meant to give you Occasion to justify yourself. But I must now step home, for I expect the Gentleman {78} about this Snuff-box, that Filch nimm'd two nights ago in the Park. I appointed him at this Hour.

Scene 11.

LOCKIT, LUCY.

LOCKIT. Whence come you, Hussy?

LUCY. My Tears might answer that Question.

LOCKIT. You have then been whimpering and fondling, like a Spaniel, over that Fellow that hath abus'd you.

LUCY. One can't help Love; one can't cure it. 'Tis not in my Power to obey you, and hate him.

LOCKIT. Learn to bear your Husband's Death like a reasonable Woman. 'Tis not the fashion now-a-days, so much as to affect Sorrow upon these Occasions. No Woman would ever marry, if she had not the Chance of Mortality for a Release. Act like a Woman of Spirit, Hussy, and thank your Father for what he is doing.

Air XXXI.--Of a noble Race was Shenkin.

LUCY.

*Is then his fate decreed, Sir?
Such a Man can I think of quitting?
When first we met, so moves me yet,
See how my heart is splitting!*

LOCKIT. Look ye, Lucy--There is no saving him----So, I think, you must ev'n do like other Widows----buy yourself Weeds {79}, and be cheerful.

Air XXXII.

*You'll think ere many Days ensue
This Sentence not severe;
I hang your Husband, Child, 'tis true,
But with him hang your Care.
Twang dang dillo dee.*

Like a good Wife, go moan over your dying Husband. That, Child, is your Duty--Consider, Girl, you can't have the Man and the Money too--so make yourself as easy as you can, by getting all you can from him.

Scene 12.

LUCY, MACHEATH.

LUCY. Though the Ordinary was out of the way to-day, I hope, my Dear, you will upon the first Opportunity, quiet my Scruples----Oh Sir!----my Father's hard heart is not to be soften'd, and I am in the utmost Despair.

MACHEATH. But if I could raise a small Sum----Would not twenty Guineas, think you, move him?----Of all the Arguments in the way of Business, the Perquisite {80} is the most prevailing----Your Father's Perquisites for the Escape of Prisoners must amount to a considerable Sum in the Year. Money well tim'd, and properly apply'd, will do anything.

Air XXXIII.--London Ladies.

*If you at an Office solicit your Due,
And would not have Matters neglected;
You must quicken the Clerk with the Perquisite too,
To do what his Duty directed.
Or would you the Frowns of a Lady prevent,
She too has this palpable Failing,
The Perquisite softens her into Consent:
That Reason with all is prevailing.*

LUCY. What Love or Money can do shall be done: for all my Comfort depends upon your Safety.

Scene 13.

LUCY, MACHEATH, POLLY.

POLLY. Where is my dear Husband?----Was a Rope ever intended for this Neck!----O let me throw my Arms about it, and throttle thee with Love!----Why dost thou turn away from me?----'Tis thy Polly----'Tis thy Wife.

MACHEATH. Was there ever such an unfortunate Rascal as I am!

LUCY. Was there ever such another Villain!

POLLY. O Macheath! was it for this we parted? Taken! Imprison'd! Try'd! Hang'd--cruel Reflection! I'll stay with thee 'till Death--no Force shall tear thy dear Wife from thee now.----What means my Love?- --- Not one kind Word! not one kind Look! think what thy Polly suffers to see thee in this Condition.

Air XXXIV.--All in the Downs, &c.

*Thus when the Swallow, seeking Prey,
Within the Sash is closely pent,
His Comfort, with bemoaning Lay,
Without sits pining for th' Event.
Her chatt'ring Lovers all around her skim;
She heeds them not (poor Bird!) her Soul's with him.*

MACHEATH. I must disown her. [Aside] The wench is distracted.

LUCY. Am I then bilk'd of my Virtue? Can I have no Reparation? Sure Men were born to lie, and Women to believe them! O Villain! Villain!

POLLY. Am I not thy Wife?----Thy Neglect of me, thy Aversion to me too severely proves it.----Look at me.- ---Tell me, am I not thy Wife?

LUCY. Perfidious Wretch!

POLLY. Barbarous Husband!

LUCY. Hadst thou been hang'd five Months ago, I had been happy.

POLLY. And I too----If you had been kind to me 'till Death, it would not have vexed me----And that's no very unreasonable Request, (though from a Wife) to a Man who hath not above seven or eight Days to live.

LUCY. Art thou then married to another? Hast thou two Wives, Monster?

MACHEATH. If Women's Tongues can cease for an answer---- hear me.

LUCY. I won't.--Flesh and Blood can't bear my Usage.

POLLY. Shall I not claim my own? Justice bids me speak.

Air XXXV.--Have you heard of a frolicsome Ditty, &c.

MACHEATH.

*How happy could I be with either,
Were t'other dear Charmer away!
But while you thus teaze me together,
To neither a Word will I say;
But tol de rol, &c.*

POLLY. Sure, my Dear, there ought to be some Preference shown to a Wife! At least she may claim the Appearance of it. He must be distracted with his Misfortunes, or he could not use me thus.

LUCY. O Villain, Villain! Thou hast deceiv'd me----I could even inform against thee with Pleasure. Not a Prude wishes more heartily to have Facts against her intimate Acquaintance than I now wish to have Facts against thee. I would have her Satisfaction, and they should all out.

Air XXXVI.--Irish Trot.

POLLY.

I am bubbled {81}.

LUCY.

I'm bubbled.

POLLY.

O how I am troubled!

LUCY.

Bambouzled, and bit!

POLLY.

My Distresses are doubled.

LUCY.

*When you come to the Tree, should the Hangman refuse,
These Fingers, with Pleasure, could fasten the Noose.*

POLLY.

I'm bubbled, &c.

MACHEATH. Be pacified, my dear Lucy----This is all a Fetch of Polly's to make me desperate with you in case I get off. If I am to be hang'd, she would fain have the Credit of being thought my Widow-- -- Really, Polly, this is no time for a Dispute of this sort; for whenever you are talking of Marriage, I am thinking of Hanging.

POLLY. And hast thou the Heart to persist in disowning me?

MACHEATH. And hast thou the Heart to persist in persuading me that I am married? Why, Polly, dost thou seek to aggravate my Misfortunes?

LUCY. Really, Miss Peachum, you but expose yourself. Besides, 'tis barbarous in you to worry a Gentleman in his Circumstances.

Air XXXVII.

POLLY.

*Cease your Funning;
Force or Cunning
Never shall my Heart trepan.
All these Sallies
Are but Malice
To seduce my constant Man.*

*'Tis most certain,
By their flirting
Women oft have Envy shown
Pleas'd to ruin
Others wooing;
Never happy in their own!*

Decency, Madam, methinks might teach you to behave yourself with some Reserve with the Husband, while his Wife is present.

MACHEATH. But seriously, Polly, this is carrying the Joke a little too far.

LUCY. If you are determin'd, Madam, to raise a Disturbance in the Prison, I shall be oblig'd to send for the Turnkey to shew you the Door. I am sorry, Madam, you force me to be so ill-bred.

POLLY. Give me leave to tell you, Madam: These forward Airs don't become you in the least, Madam. And my Duty, Madam, obliges me to stay with my Husband, Madam.

Air XXXVIII.--Good-morrow, Gossip Joan.

LUCY.

*Why how now, Madam Flirt?
If you thus must chatter;
And are for flinging Dirt,
Let's see who best can spatter;
Madam Flirt!*

POLLY.

*Why how now, saucy Jade;
Sure the Wench is tipsy!
How can you see me made [To him.]
The scoff of such a Gipsy?
Saucy Jade! [To her.]*

Scene 14.

LUCY, MACHEATH, POLLY, PEACHUM.

PEACHUM. Where's my Wench? Ah, Hussy! Hussy!----Come you home, you Slut; and when your Fellow is hang'd, hang yourself, to make your Family some Amends.

POLLY. Dear, dear Father, do not tear me from him---I must speak; I have more to say to him---Oh! twist thy Fetters about me, that he may not haul me from thee!

PEACHUM. Sure all Women are alike! If ever they commit the Folly, they are sure to commit another by exposing themselves----Away- ---Not a Word more----You are my Prisoner now, Hussy.

Air XXXIX.--Irish Howl.

POLLY.

*No Power on Earth can e'er divide
The Knot that sacred Love hath ty'd.
When Parents draw against our Mind,
The True-Love's Knot they faster bind,*

Oh, oh ray, oh Amborah--oh, oh, &c.
[Holding Macheath, Peachum pulling her.]

Scene 15.

LUCY, MACHEATH.

MACHEATH. I am not naturally Compassionate, Wife; so I could not use the Wench as she deserv'd; which made you at first suspect there was something in what she said.

LUCY. Indeed, my Dear, I was strangely puzzled.

MACHEATH. If that had been the Case, her Father would never have brought me into this Circumstance----No, Lucy----I had rather die than be false to thee.

LUCY. How happy I am, if you say this from your heart! For I love thee so, that I could sooner bear to see thee hang'd than in the Arms of another.

MACHEATH. But could'st thou bear to see me hang'd?

LUCY. O Macheath, I can never live to see that Day.

MACHEATH. You see, Lucy; in the account of Love you are in my debt, and you must now be convinc'd, that I rather choose to die than be another's.- ---Make me, if possible, love thee more, and let me owe my Life to thee----If you refuse to assist me, Peachum and your Father will immediately put me beyond all means of Escape.

LUCY. My Father, I know, hath been drinking hard with the Prisoners; and I fancy he is now taking his Nap in his own Room----If I can procure the Keys, shall I go off with thee, my Dear?

MACHEATH. If we are together, 'twill be impossible to lie conceal'd. As soon as the Search begins to be a little cool, I will send to thee-- --'Till then my Heart is thy Prisoner.

LUCY. Come then, my dear Husband----owe thy life to me- ---and though you love me not----be grateful,----But that Polly runs in my Head strangely.

MACHEATH. A moment of Time may make us unhappy for ever.

Air XL.--The Lass of Patie's Mill, &c.

LUCY.

*I like the Fox shall grieve,
Whose Mate hath left her Side,
Whom Hounds from Morn to Eve,
Chase o'er the Country wide.
Where can my Lover hide?
Where cheat the weary Pack {82}?
If love be not his Guide,
He never will come back!*

ACT III.

SCENE I.

Scene, Newgate.

LOCKIT, LUCY.

LOCKIT. To be sure, Wench, you must have been aiding and abetting him to help him to this Escape.

LUCY. Sir, here hath been Peachum and his Daughter Polly, and to be sure they know the Ways of Newgate as well as if they had been born and bred in the Place all their Lives. Why must all your Suspicion light upon me?

LOCKIT. Lucy, Lucy, I will have none of these shuffling Answers.

LUCY. Well then----If I know anything of him I wish I may be burnt!

LOCKIT. Keep your Temper, Lucy, or I shall pronounce you guilty.

LUCY. Keep yours, Sir,----I do wish I may be burnt. I do- ---And what can I say more to convince you?

LOCKIT. Did he tip handsomely?----How much did he come down with? Come, Hussy, don't cheat your Father; and I shall not be angry with you- ---Perhaps, you have made a better Bargain with him than I could have done----How much, my good Girl?

LUCY. You know, Sir, I am fond of him, and would have given him money to have kept him with me.

LOCKIT. Ah Lucy! thy Education might have put thee more upon thy Guard; for a Girl in the Bar of an ale-house is always besieg'd.

LUCY. Dear Sir, mention not my Education--for 'twas to that I owe my Ruin.

Air XLI.--If Love's a sweet Passion, &c.

*When young at the Bar you first taught me to score,
And bid me be free of my Lips and no more;
I was kissed by the Parson, the Squire, and the Sot
When the guest was departed the Kiss was forgot.
But his Kiss was so sweet, and so closely he prest,
That I languish'd and pin'd till I granted the rest.*

If you can forgive me, Sir, I will make a fair Confession, for to be sure he hath been a most barbarous Villain to me.

LOCKIT. And so you have let him escape, Hussy----Have you?

LUCY. When a Woman loves; A kind Look, a tender Word can persuade her to anything----and I could ask no other Bribe.

LOCKIT. Thou wilt always be a vulgar Slut, Lucy.--If you would not be look'd upon as a Fool, you should never do anything but upon the foot of Interest. Those that act otherwise are their own Bubbles.

LUCY. But Love, Sir, is a Misfortune that may happen to the most discreet Woman, and in Love we are all Fools alike----Notwithstanding all that he swore, I am now fully convinc'd that Polly Peachum is actually his Wife.----Did I let him escape (Fool that I was!) to go to her?----Polly will wheedle herself into his Money, and then Peachum will hang him, and cheat us both.

LOCKIT. And so I am to be ruin'd, because, forsooth, you must be in Love! ----A very pretty Excuse!

LUCY. I could murder that impudent happy Strumpet:--I gave him his Life, and that Creature enjoys the Sweets of it.----Ungrateful Macheath!

Air XLII.--South-Sea Ballad.

*My Love is all Madness and Folly,
Alone I lie,
Toss, tumble, and cry,
What a happy creature is Polly!
Was e'er such a Wretch as I!
With rage I redden like Scarlet,
That my dear inconstant Varlet,
Stark blind to my Charms,*

*Is lost in the Arms
Of that Jilt, that inveigling Harlot!
Stark blind to my Charms,
Is lost in the Arms
Of that Jilt, that inveigling Harlot!
This, this my Resentment alarms.*

LOCKIT. And so, after all this Mischief, I must stay here to be entertain'd with your Catterwauling, Mistress Puss!----Out of my Sight, wanton Strumpet! you shall fast and mortify yourself into Reason, with now and then a little handsome Discipline to bring you to your Senses.- ---Go.

Scene 2.

LOCKIT.

Peachum then intends to outwit me in this Affair; but I'll be even with him.----The Dog is leaky in his Liquor, so I'll ply him that way, get the Secret from him, and turn this Affair to my own Advantage.- ---Lions, Wolves and Vultures don't live together in Herds, Drovers, or Flocks. {83}-- --Of all Animals of Prey, Man is the only sociable one. Every one of us preys upon the other, and yet we herd together.----Peachum is my Companion, my Friend.----According to the Custom of the World, indeed he may quote thousands of Precedents for Cheating me----And shall I not make use of the Privilege of Friendship to make him a Return.

Air XLIII.--Packington's Pound.

*Thus Gamesters united in Friendship are found,
Though they know that their Industry all is a Cheat;
They flock to their Prey at the Dice-Box's Sound,
And join to promote one another's Deceit.
But if by mishap
They fail of a Chap,
To keep in their hands, they each other entrap.
Like Pikes {84}, lank with Hunger, who miss of their Ends,
They bite their Companions and prey on their Friends.*

Now, Peachum, you and I, like honest Tradesmen are to have a fair Trial which of us can overreach the other.----Lucy.--- -[Enter Lucy.] Are there any of Peachum's People now in the House?

LUCY. Filch, Sir, is drinking a Quartern {85} of Strong-Waters in the next Room with Black Moll.

LOCKIT. Bid him come to me.

Scene 3.

LOCKIT, FILCH.

LOCKIT. Why, Boy, thou lookest as if thou wert half starv'd, like a shotten Herring {86}.

FILCH. One had need have the Constitution of a Horse to go through with the Business.----Since the favourite Child-getter was disabled by a Mishap, I have pick'd up a little Money by helping the Ladies to a Pregnancy {87} against their being call'd down to Sentence.----But if a Man cannot get an honest Livelihood any easier way, I am sure, 'tis what I can't undertake for another Session.

LOCKIT. Truly, if that great Man {88} should tip off, 'twould be an irreparable Loss. The vigor and Prowess of a Knight-Errant never sav'd half the Ladies in Distress that he hath done.----But, Boy, canst thou tell me where thy Master is to be found?

FILCH. At his Lock, Sir, at the Crooked Billet.

LOCKIT. Very well.--I have nothing more with you. [Exit Filch.] I'll go to him there, for I have many important Affairs to settle with him; and in the way of these Transactions, I'll artfully get into his Secret--- -So that Macheath shall not remain a Day longer out of my Clutches.

Scene 4, A Gaming-House.

MACHEATH in a fine tarnish'd Coat, BEN BUDGE, MATT OF THE MINT.

MACHEATH. I am sorry, Gentlemen, the Road was so barren of Money. When my Friends are in Difficulties, I am always glad that my Fortune can be serviceable to them. [Gives them Money.] You see, Gentlemen, I am not a mere Court Friend, who professes every thing and will do nothing.

Air XLIV.--Lillibullero.

*The Modes of the Court so common are grown,
That a true Friend can hardly be met;
Friendship for Interest is but a Loan,
Which they let out for what they can get,
'Tis true, you find
Some Friends so kind,
Who will give you good Counsel themselves to defend.
In sorrowful Ditty,
They promise, they pity,
But shift you for Money, from Friend to Friend.*

But we, Gentlemen, still have Honour enough to break through the Corruptions of the World.----And while I can serve you, you may command me.

BEN. It grieves my Heart that so generous a Man should be involv'd in such Difficulties, as oblige him to live with such ill Company, and herd with Gamesters.

MATT. See the Partiality of Mankind!----One man may steal a Horse, better than another may look over a Hedge.----Of all Mechanics, of all servile handi-crafts-men, a Gamester is the vilest. But yet, as many of the Quality are of the Profession, he is admitted among the politest Company. I wonder we are not more respected.

MACHEATH. There will be deep Play to-night at Mary-bone, and consequently Money may be pick'd up upon the Road. Meet me there, and I'll give you the Hint who is worth Setting {89}.

MATT. The Fellow with a brown Coat with a narrow Gold Binding, I am told, is never without Money.

MACHEATH. What do you mean, Matt?----Sure you will not think of meddling with him!----He's a good honest kind of a Fellow, and one of us.

BEN. To be sure, Sir, we will put ourselves under your Direction.

MACHEATH. Have an Eye upon the Money-Lenders.----A Rouleau {90}, or two, would prove a pretty sort of an Expedition. I hate Extortion.

MATT. Those Rouleaus are very pretty things.----I hate your Bank Bills.----There is such a Hazard in putting them off.

MACHEATH. There is a certain Man of Distinction, who in his Time hath nick'd me out of a great deal of the Ready. He is in my Cash, Ben;-- --I'll point him out to you this Evening, and you shall draw upon him for the Debt. ----The Company are met; I hear the Dice- Box in the other Room. So, Gentlemen, your Servant. You'll meet me at Mary- bone.

Scene 5, Peachum's Lock.

A Table with Wine, Brandy, Pipes, and Tobacco.

LOCKIT. The Coronation Account {91}, Brother Peachum, is of so intricate a nature, that I believe it will never be settled.

PEACHUM. It consists indeed of a great Variety of Articles.--- -It was worth to our People, in Fees of different kinds, above ten Instalments.----This is part of the Account, Brother, that lies open before us.

LOCKIT. A Lady's Tail {92} of rich Brocade----that, I see, is dispos'd of.

PEACHUM. To Mrs. Diana Trapes, the Tally-Woman, and she will make a good Hand on't in Shoes and Slippers, to trick out young Ladies, upon their going into Keeping----

LOCKIT. But I don't see any Article of the Jewels.

PEACHUM. Those are so well known that they must be sent abroad--- -You'll find them enter'd upon the Article of Exportation.-- --As for the Snuff-Boxes, Watches, Swords, &c.--- -I thought it best to enter them under their several Heads.

LOCKIT. Seven and twenty Women's Pockets complete; with the several things therein contain'd; all Seal'd, Number'd, and Enter'd.

PEACHUM. But, Brother, it is impossible for us now to enter upon this Affair.--We should have the whole Day before us.----Besides, the Account of the last Half Year's PLate is in a Book by itself, which lies at the other Office.

LOCKIT. Bring us then more Liquor.----To-day shall be for Pleasure----To-morrow for Business--Ah, Brother, those Daughters of ours are two slippery Hussies----Keep a watchful eye upon Polly, and Macheath in a day or two shall be our own again.

Air XLV.--Down in the North Country, &c.

LOCKIT.

*What Gudgeons {93} are we Men!
Ev'ry Woman's easy Prey.
Though we have felt the Hook, agen
We bite and they betray.*

*The Bird that hath been trapt,
When he hears his calling Mate,
To her he flies, again he's clapt
Within the wiry Grate.*

PEACHUM. But what signifies catching the Bird, if your Daughter Lucy will set open the Door of the Cage?

LOCKIT. If Men were answerable for the Follies and Frailties of the Wives and Daughters, no Friends could keep a good Correspondence together for two Days.----This is unkind of you, Brother; for among good Friends, what they say or do goes for nothing.

[Enter a Servant.]

SERVANT. Sir, here's Mrs. Diana Trapes wants to speak with you.

PEACHUM. Shall we admit her, Brother Lockit?

LOCKIT. By all means,----She's a good Customer, and a fine- spoken Woman----And a Woman who drinks and talks so freely, will enliven the Conversation. PEACHUM. Desire her to walk in.

[Exit Servant.]

Scene 6.

PEACHUM, LOCKIT, MRS. TRAPES.

PEACHUM. Dear Mrs. Dye {94}, your Servant----One may know by your Kiss, that your Ginn is excellent.

TRAPES. I was always very curious in my Liquors.

LOCKIT. There is no perfum'd Breath like it.--I have been long acquainted with the Flavour of those Lips--Han't I, Mrs. Dye.

TRAPES. Fill it up----I take as large Draughts of Liquor, as I did of Love.----I hate a Flincher in either.

Air XLVI.--A Shepherd kept Sheep, &c.

*In the Days of my Youth I could bill like a Dove, fa, la la, &c.
Like a Sparrow at all times was ready for Love, fa, la la, &c.
The Life of all Mortals in Kissing should pass,
Lip to Lip while we're young--then the Lip to the Glass, fa, la la, &c.*

But now, Mr. Peachum, to our Business.----If you have Blacks of any kind, brought in of late; Mantoos {95}--Velvet Scarfs----Petticoats--- -Let it be what it will----I am your Chap-- --for all my Ladies are very fond of Mourning.

PEACHUM. Why, look ye, Mrs. Dye----you deal so hard with us, that we can afford to give the Gentlemen, who venture their Lives for the Goods, little or nothing.

TRAPES. The hard Times oblige me to go very near in my Dealing.-- --To be sure, of late Years I have

been a great Sufferer by the Parliament.----Three thousand Pounds would hardly make me amends.----The Act for destroying the Mint {96}, was a severe Cut upon our Business- ---'Till then, if a Customer stept out of the way-- --we knew where to have her----No doubt you know Mrs. Coaxer----there's a Wench now ('till to-day) with a good Suit of Clothes of mine upon her Back, and I could never set eyes upon her for three Months together.----Since the Act too against Imprisonment for small Sums {97}, my Loss there too hath been very considerable, and it must be so, when a Lady can borrow a handsome Petticoat, or a clean Gown, and I not have the least Hank upon her! And, o' my Conscience, now-a-days most Ladies take a Delight in cheating, when they can do it with Safety.

PEACHUM. Madam, you have had a handsome Gold Watch of us t'other Day for seven Guineas.----Considering we must have our Profit- ---To a Gentleman upon the Road, a Gold Watch will be scarce worth the taking.

TRAPES. Consider, Mr. Peachum, that Watch was remarkable, and not of very safe Sale.----If you have any black Velvet Scarfs-- --they are a handsome Winter-wear, and take with most Gentlemen who deal with my Customers.----'Tis I that put the Ladies upon a good Foot. 'Tis not Youth or Beauty that fixes their Price. The Gentlemen always pay according to their Dress, from half a Crown {98} to two Guineas; and yet those Hussies make nothing of their bilking of me.----Then too, allowing for Accidents {99}.- ---I have eleven fine Customers now down under the Surgeon's Hands----What with Fees and other Expenses, there are great Goings-out and no Comings in, and not a Farthing {100} to pay for at least a Month's Clothing.----We run great Risques--great Risques indeed.

PEACHUM. As I remember, you said something just now of Mrs. Coaxer.

TRAPES. Yes, Sir.----To be sure I stript her of a Suit of my own Clothes about two Hours ago; and have left her as she should be, in her Shift, with a Lover of hers at my House. She call'd him up Stairs, as he was going to Mary-bone in a Hackney Coach {101}----And I hope, for her own sake and mine, she will persuade the Captain to redeem her, for the Captain is very generous to the Ladies.

LOCKIT. What Captain?

TRAPES. He thought I did not know him----an intimate Acquaintance of yours, Mr. Peachum----Only Captain Macheath- ---as fine as a Lord.

PEACHUM. To-morrow, Mrs. Dye, you shall set your own Price upon any of the Goods you like----We have at least half a Dozen Velvet Scarfs, and all at your Service. Will you give me leave to make you a Present of the Suit of Night-clothes for your own wearing?----But are you sure it is Captain Macheath.

TRAPES. Though he thinks I have forgotten him; no body knows him better. I have taken a great deal of the Captain's Money in my Time at second-hand, for he always lov'd to have his ladies well drest.

PEACHUM. Mr. Lockit and I have a little Business with the Captain;-- --You understand me----and we

will satisfy you for Mrs. Coaxer's Debt.

LOCKIT. Depend upon it----We will deal like Men of Honour.

TRAPES. I don't enquire after your Affairs-- --so whatever happens, I wash my hands on't---- It hath always been my Maxim, that one Friend should assist another-- --But if you please----I'll take one of the Scarfs home with me. 'Tis always good to have something in Hand.

Scene 7, Newgate.

LUCY.

Jealousy, Rage, Love and Fear are at once tearing me to pieces, How am I weather-beaten and shatter'd with Distresses!

Air XLVII.--One Evening, having lost my Way, &c.

*I'm like a Skiff {102} on the Ocean tost,
Now high, now low, with each Billow born,
With her Rudder broke, and her Anchor lost,
Deserted and all forlorn.
While thus I lie rolling and tossing all Night,
That Polly lies sporting on seas of Delight!
Revenge, Revenge, Revenge,
Shall appease my restless Sprite.*

I have the Rats-bane {103} ready.----I run no Risque; for I can lay her Death upon the Ginn, and so many die of that naturally that I shall never be call'd in question.----But say, I were to be hang'd.--- -I never could be hang'd for any thing that would give me greater Comfort, than the poisoning that Slut.

[Enter FILCH.]

FILCH. Madam, here's Miss Polly come to wait upon you.

LUCY. Show her in.

Scene 8.

LUCY, POLLY.

LUCY. Dear Madam, your Servant.----I hope you will pardon my Passion, when I was so happy to see you last.----I was so over-run with the Spleen {104}, that I was perfectly out of myself. And really when

one hath the Spleen, everything is to be excus'd by a Friend.

Air XLVIII.----Now Roger, I'll tell thee because thou'rt my Son.

*When a Wife's in her Pout, (As she's sometimes, no doubt;)
The good Husband as meek as a Lamb,
Her Vapours to still,
First grants her her Will,
And the quieting Draught is a Dram {105}.
Poor Man!
And the quieting Draught is a Dram.*

----I wish all our Quarrels might have so comfortable a Reconciliation.

POLLY. I have no Excuse for my own Behaviour, Madam, but my Misfortunes. ----And really, Madam, I suffer too upon your Account.

LUCY. But, Miss Polly----in the way of Friendship, will you give me leave to propose a Glass of cordial to you?

POLLY. Strong-Waters are apt to give me the Head-Ache----I hope, Madam, you will excuse me.

LUCY. Not the greatest Lady in the Land could have better in her Closet, for her own private drinking.----You seem mighty low in Spirits, my Dear.

POLLY. I am sorry, Madam, my Health will not allow me to accept of your Offer----I should not have left you in the rude manner I did when we met last, Madam, had not my Papa haul'd me away so unexpectedly- ---I was indeed somewhat provok'd, and perhaps might use some Expressions that were disrespectful.----But really, Madam, the Captain treated me with so much Contempt and Cruelty, that I deserv'd your Pity, rather than your Resentment.

LUCY. But since his Escape, no doubt all Matters are made up again.-- --Ah Polly! Polly! 'tis I am the unhappy Wife; and he loves you as if you were only his Mistress.

POLLY. Sure, Madam, you cannot think me so happy as to be the object of your Jealousy.----A Man is always afraid of a Woman who loves him too well----so that I must expect to be neglected and avoided.

LUCY. Then our Cases, my dear Polly, are exactly alike. Both of us indeed have been too fond.

Air XLIX.-- O Bessy Bell.

POLLY.

*A Curse attend that Woman's Love,
Who always would be pleasing.*

LUCY.

*The Pertness of the billing Dove,
Like Tickling, is but teasing.*

POLLY.

What then in Love can Woman do;

LUCY.

If we grow fond they shun us.

POLLY.

And when we fly them, they pursue:

LUCY.

But leave us when they've won us.

LUCY. Love is so very whimsical in both Sexes, that it is impossible to be lasting.----But my Heart is particular, and contradicts my own Observation.

POLLY. But really, Mistress Lucy, by his last Behaviour, I think I ought to envy you.----When I was forc'd from him, he did not shew the least Tenderness.----But perhaps, he hath a Heart not capable of it.

Air L.--Would Fate to me Belinda give.

*Among the Men, Coquets we find,
Who court by turns all Woman-kind;
And we grant all the Hearts desir'd,
When they are flatter'd, and admir'd.*

The Coquets of both Sexes are Self-lovers, and that is a Love no other whatever can dispossess. I hear, my dear Lucy, our Husband is one of those.

LUCY. Away with these melancholy Reflections,----indeed, my dear Polly, we are both of us a Cup too

low----Let me prevail upon you to accept of my Offer.

Air LI.--Come, sweet Lass.

*Come, sweet Lass,
Let's banish Sorrow
'Till To-morrow;
Come, sweet Lass,
Let's take a chirping Glass.
Wine can clear
The Vapours of Despair
And make us light as Air;
Then drink, and banish Care.*

I can't bear, Child, to see you in such low Spirits.----And I must persuade you to what I know will do you good.----I shall now soon be even with the hypocritical Strumpet. [Aside.]

Scene 9.

POLLY.

All this Wheedling of Lucy cannot be for nothing.----At this time too! when I know she hates me!----The Dissembling of a Woman is always the Forerunner of Mischief.----By pouring Strong-Waters down my Throat, she thinks to pump some Secrets out of me,- ---I'll be upon my Guard, and won't taste a Drop of her Liquor, I'm resolv'd.

Scene 10.

LUCY, with Strong-Waters. POLLY.

LUCY. Come, Miss Polly.

POLLY. Indeed, Child, you have given yourself trouble to no purpose.---- You must, my Dear, excuse me.

LUCY. Really, Miss Polly, you are as squeamishly affected about taking a Cup of Strong-Waters as a Lady before Company. I vow, Polly, I shall take it monstrously ill if you refuse me.----Brandy and Men (though Women love them ever so well) are always taken by us with some Reluctance- ---unless 'tis in private.

POLLY. I protest, Madam, it goes against me.----What do I see! Macheath again in Custody!----Now every Glimm'ring of Happiness is lost. [Drops the Glass of Liquor on the Ground.]

LUCY. Since things are thus, I'm glad the Wench hath escap'd; for by this Event, 'tis plain, she was not happy enough to deserve to be poison'd. [Aside.]

Scene 11.

LOCKIT, MACHEATH, PEACHUM, LUCY, POLLY.

LOCKIT. Set your Heart to rest, Captain.----You have neither the Chance of Love or Money for another Escape,---- for you are order'd to be call'd down upon your Trial immediately.

PEACHUM. Away, Hussies!----This is not a Time for a Man to be hamper'd with his Wives.----You see, the Gentleman is in Chains already. LUCY. O Husband, Husband, my Heart long'd to see thee; but to see thee thus distracts me.

POLLY. Will not my dear Husband look upon his Polly? Why hadst thou not flown to me for Protection? with me thou hadst been safe.

Air LII.--The last time I went o'er the Moor.

POLLY.

Hither, dear Husband, turn your Eyes.

LUCY.

Bestow one Glance to cheer me.

POLLY.

Think with that Look, thy Polly dies.

LUCY.

O shun me not----but hear me.

POLLY.

'Tis Polly sues.

LUCY.

'Tis Lucy speaks.

POLLY.

Is thus true Love requited?

LUCY.

My Heart is bursting.

POLLY.

Mine too breaks.

LUCY.

Must I

POLLY.

Must I be slighted?

MACHEATH. What would you have me say, Ladies?----You see this Affair will soon be at an end, without my disoblging either of you.

PEACHUM. But the settling this Point, Captain, might prevent a Law-Suit between your two Widows.

Air LIII. Tom Tinker's my true Love.

MACHEATH.

*Which way shall I turn me----How can I decide?
Wives, the Day of our Death, are as fond as a Bride.
One Wife is too much for most Husbands to hear,
But two at a time there's no mortal can bear.
This way, and that way, and which way I will,
What would comfort the one, t'other Wife would take ill.*

POLLY. But if his own Misfortunes have made him insensible to mine-- --A Father sure will be more compassionate---- Dear, dear Sir, sink the material Evidence, and bring him off at his Trial- ---Polly, upon her Knees begs it of you.

Air LIV.--I am a poor Shepherd undone.

*When my Hero in Court appears,
And stands arraign'd for his Life;
Then think of poor Polly's Tears;
For Ah! poor Polly's his Wife.
Like the Sailor he holds up his Hand,
Distrest on the dashing Wave.
To die a dry Death at Land,
Is as bad as a wat'ry Grave.
And alas, poor Polly!
Alack, and well-a-day!
Before I was in Love,
Oh! every Month was May.*

LUCY. If Peachum's Heart is harden'd; sure you, Sir, will have more Compassion on a Daughter.----I know the Evidence is in your Power.----How then can you be a Tyrant to me? [Kneeling.]

Air LV.--Ianthé the lovely, &c.

*When he holds up his Hand arraign'd for his Life,
O think of your Daughter, and think I'm his Wife!
What are Cannons or Bombs, or clashing of Swords?
For Death is more certain by Witnesses Words.
Then nail up their Lips; that dread Thunder allay;
And each Month of my Life will hereafter be May.*

LOCKIT. Macheath's Time is come, Lucy----We know our own Affairs, therefore let us have no more Whimpering or Whining.

Air LVI.--A Cobler there was, &c.

*Ourselves, like the Great, to secure a Retreat,
When Matters Require it, must give up our Gang:
And good reason why,
Or, instead of the Fry,
Ev'n Peachum and I.
Like poor petty Rascals, might hang, hang;
Like poor petty Rascals, might hang.*

PEACHUM. Set your Heart at rest, Polly.----Your Husband is to die to-day. ----Therefore if you are not already provided, 'tis high time to look about for another. There's comfort for you, you Slut.

LOCKIT. We are ready, Sir, to conduct you to the Old Baily.

Air LVII.--Bonny Dundee.

MACHEATH.

*The charge is prepar'd; the Lawyers are met,
The Judges all rang'd (a terrible Show!)
I go, undismay'd.----For Death is a Debt,
A Debt on Demand.----So take what I owe.
Then farewell, my Love----Dear Charmers, adieu.
Contented I die----'Tis the better for you.
Here ends all Disputes for the rest of our Lives,
For this way at once I please all my Wives.*

Now, Gentlemen, I am ready to attend you.

Scene 12.

LUCY, POLLY, FILCH.

POLLY. Follow them, Filch, to the Court. And when the Trial is over, bring me a particular Account of his Behaviour, and of everything that happen'd- ---You'll find me here with Miss Lucy. [Exit Filch.] But why is all this Musick?

LUCY. The prisoners, whose Trials are put off 'till next Session, are diverting themselves.

POLLY. Sure there is nothing so charming as Musick! I'm fond of it to Distraction!----But alas!----now, all Mirth seems an Insult upon my Affliction.----Let us retire, my dear Lucy, and indulge our Sorrows.----The noisy Crew, you see, are coming upon us. [Exeunt.]

A Dance of Prisoners in Chains, &c.

Scene 13. The Condemn'd Hold

MACHEATH, in a melancholy Posture.

Air LVIII.--Happy Groves.

*O cruel, cruel, cruel Case!
Must I suffer this Disgrace?*

Air LIX.--Of all the Girls that are so smart.

*Of all the Friends in time of Grief,
When threatening Death looks grimmer,
Not one so sure can bring Relief,
As this best Friend, a Brimmer. [Drinks.]*

Air LX.--Britons strike home.

Since I must swing,----I scorn, I scorn, to wince or whine. [Rises.]

Air LXI.--Chevy Chase.

*But now again my Spirits sink;
I'll raise them high with Wine. [Drinks a glass of Wine.]*

Air LXII.--To old Sir Simon the King.

*But Valour the stronger grows,
The stronger Liquor we're drinking;
And how can we feel our Woes
When we've lost the Trouble of Thinking? [Drinks.]*

Air LXIII.--Joy to Great Caesar.

*If thus----A Man can die
Much bolder with Brandy. [Pours out a Bumper of Brandy.]*

Air LXIV.--There was an old Woman.

*So I drink off this Bumper.----And now I can stand the Test.
And my Comrades shall see, that I die as brave as the Best. [Drinks.]*

Air LXV.--Did you ever hear of a gallant Sailor.

*But can I leave my pretty Hussies,
Without one Tear, or tender Sigh?*

Air LXVI.--Why are mine Eyes still flowing.

Their Eyes, their Lips, their Busses

Recall my Love,----Ah must I die!

Air LXVII.--Green Sleeves.

*Since Laws were made for ev'ry Degree,
To curb Vice in others, as well as me,
I wonder we han't better Company,
Upon Tyburn Tree {106}!
But Gold from Law can take out the Sting;
And if rich Men like us were to swing,
'Twould thin the Land, such Numbers to string
Upon Tyburn Tree!*

JAILOR. Some Friends of yours, Captain, desire to be admitted--- -I leave you together.

Scene 14.

MACHEATH, BEN BUDGE, MATT OF THE MINT.

MACHEATH. For my having broke Prison, you see, Gentlemen, I am order'd immediate Execution.---- The Sheriff's Officers, I believe, are now at the Door.----That Jemmy Twitcher should peach me, I own surpris'd me!----'Tis a plain Proof that the World is all alike, and that even our Gang can no more trust one another than other People. Therefore, I beg you, Gentlemen, look well to yourselves, for in all probability you may live some Months longer.

MATT. We are heartily sorry, Captain, for your Misfortune.--- -But 'tis what we must all come to.

MACHHEATH. Peachum and Lockit, you know, are infamous Scoundrels. Their Lives are as much in your Power, as yours are in theirs.---- Remember your dying Friend!----'Tis my last Request.-- --Bring those Villains to the Gallows before you, and I am satisfied.

MATT. We'll do it.

JAILOR. Miss Polly and Miss Lucy intreat a Word with you.

MACHEATH. Gentlemen, adieu.

Scene 15.

LUCY, MACHEATH, POLLY.

MACHEATH. My dear Lucy----My dear Polly. Whatsoever hath pass'd between us is now at an end----

if you are fond of marrying again, the best Advice I can give you is to Ship yourselves to the West-Indies, where you'll have a fair Chance of getting a Husband a-piece, or by good Luck, two or three, as you like best.

POLLY. How can I support this Sight!

LUCY. There is nothing moves one so much as a great Man in Distress.

Air LXVII.--All you that must take a Leap, &c.

LUCY.

Would I might be hang'd!

POLLY.

And I would so too!

LUCY.

To be hang'd with you.

POLLY.

My dear, with you.

MACHEATH.

O leave me to Thought! I fear! I doubt!

I tremble! I droop!----See, my Courage is out! [Turns up the empty Bottle.]

POLLY.

No Token of Love?

MACHEATH.

See, my Courage is out. [Turns up the empty Pot.]

LUCY.

No Token of Love?

POLLY.

Adieu.

LUCY.

Farewell.

MACHEATH.

But hark! I hear the Toll of the Bell.

CHORUS.

Tol de rol lol, &c.

JAILOR. Four Women more, Captain, with a Child apiece! See, here they come. [Enter Women and Children.]

MACHEATH. What----four Wives more!----This is too much----Here----tell the Sheriff's Officers I am ready. [Exit Macheath guarded.]

Scene 16.

To them, Enter PLAYER and BEGGAR.

PLAYER. But, honest Friend, I hope you don't intend that Macheath shall be really executed.

BEGGAR. Most certainly, Sir.----To make the Piece perfect, I was for doing strict poetical Justice----Macheath is to be hang'd; and for the other Personages of the Drama, the Audience must have suppos'd they were all hang'd or transported.

PLAYER. Why then Friend, this is a downright deep Tragedy. The Catastrophe is manifestly wrong, for an Opera must end happily.

BEGGAR. Your Objection, Sir, is very just, and is easily remov'd. For you must allow, that in this kind of Drama, 'tis no matter how absurdly things are brought about----So----you Rabble there----run and cry, A Reprieve! {10}7 ----let the Prisoner be brought back to his Wives in Triumph.

PLAYER. All this we must do, to comply with the Taste of the Town.

BEGGAR. Through the whole Piece you may observe such a Similitude of Manners in high and low Life, that it is difficult to determine whether (in the fashionable Vices) the fine Gentlemen imitate the Gentlemen of the Road, or the Gentlemen of the Road, the fine Gentlemen.----Had the Play remain'd, as I at first intended, it would have carried a most excellent Moral. 'Twould have shown that the lower sort of People have their Vices in a degree as well as the Rich: And that they are punish'd for them.

Scene 17.

To them, MACHEATH with RABBLE, &c.

MACHEATH. So, it seems, I am not left to my Choice, but must have a Wife at last.----Look ye, my Dears, we will have no Controversy now. Let us give this Day to Mirth, and I an sure she who thinks herself my Wife will testify her Joy by a Dance.

ALL.

Come, a Dance----a Dance.

MACHEATH. Ladies, I hope you will give me leave to present a Partner to each of you. And (if I may without Offence) for this time, I take Polly for mine.----And for Life, you Slut,----for we were really marry'd.----As for the rest.--- -But at present keep your own Secret.

A DANCE.

Air LXIX.--Lumps of Pudding, &c.

*Thus I stand like the Turk, with his Doxies {108} around;
From all Sides their Glances his Passion confound;
For Black, Brown, and Fair, his Inconstancy burns,
And different Beauties subdue him by turns:
Each calls forth her Charms, to provoke his Desires;
Though willing to all, with but one he retires.
But think of this Maxim, and put off your Sorrow,
The Wretch of To-day, may be happy To-morrow.*

CHORUS:

But think of this Maxim, &c.

FINIS.

Notes:

{1} St. Giles: a "fashionable" (in satire) section of London.

{2} Catches: songs. The term here refers to poems, especially those which might be turned into ballads sung to popular tunes. Technically, a catch is a kind of round for three voices.

{3} Recitative: a stylized spoken passage in an opera or oratorio. There is a recitative in The Beggar's Opera, but it is a mock-recitative, so the Beggar's assertion is honest so far as it goes.

{4} plead her Belly: By law a pregnant woman could not be executed.

{5} Book him: arrange for "transportation" as an alternative to hanging.

{6} Transportation: placed on a ship bound for the West Indies or the colonies in North America (later also Australia) for "service," generally to a plantation owner for a set term of years.

{7} Lock: warehouse for stolen goods. Peachum's principal trade is in "fencing" (selling stolen goods) through merchants such as Mrs. Trapes.

{8} Education: as a pickpocket. Thieves were trained by an apprenticeship system that resembled that in use in legitimate trades.

{9} Newgate: the principal jail of London. There were some 150 jails in the city.

{10} Sessions: English justices of peace sat for a specified term to hear cases. If a case did not come before the justices, the prisoner was held over until the next sessions. Peachum, who is based on the notorious Jonathan Wild, is using the court system to clean out the less efficient members of his gang by the expedient of handing them over for a reward, to be hanged. Wild had a gang of some 1500 thieves, and was the undisputed master of the London underworld in the early 1720's.

{11} Periwig: the powdered wig worn by Gentlemen. Macheath, Peachum, and Lockit would also wear these; while not Gentlemen, their high position in the underworld would procure them the marks of a higher class, the better to gain access to courtiers and bureaucrats who found these men useful.

{12} Cart: criminals went to their executions in an open cart so that the populace could see them.

{13} Robin...Booty: these are names for Sir Robert Walpole, prime minister, whose corrupt administration is the target of much of the serious satire in *The Beggar's Opera*. Because of this, the even more pointed sequel, *Polly Peachum*, was denied performance on the stage, though it was published and sold well.

{14} Camp: military service, particularly as an officer.

{15} Venus's Girdle...smugly: a young woman who becomes a votary of Venus will soon take on the complexion of some of Venus' flowers, and show signs of self-satisfaction.

{16} Adonis: A youth with whom Venus (Aphrodite) fell in love.

{17} Bank-Notes: the equivalent of cashier's checks. Required a proper signature to cash in, and were difficult to dispose of safely.

{18} Bagshot: Bagshot Heath was the scene of numerous robberies.

{19} Quadrille: a card game for four hands; the object is to discard the 8's, 9's and 10's. Very popular in the 1720's through the '30's, particularly among the ladies.

{20} Mary-bone: a noted high- stakes gambling center, popular with fashionable gentlemen.

{21} Chocolate-Houses: a high- fashion drink, chocolate, which was something like the hot cocoa of today, was served in a kind of tavern supposedly specializing in the drink. However, much stronger drink was available, and high-stakes gambling was rife in these establishments, as at Marybone.

{22} Temple: section of London containing the Inns of Court, where young lawyers received their training. A good location for a "coffee-house" which, like the chocolate-houses, offered a variety of beverages.

{23} Cambric: fine linen. The handkerchiefs of the gentry were often embroidered with their identifying symbols and initials.

{24} Chap: short for "chapman," a purchaser.

{25} Guineas: gold coin worth 21 shillings.

{26} Redriff: suburb of the Port of London, where many sailors lived.

{27} Fob: very small pocket, difficult to pick. Usually a watch-pocket.

{28} Pumpst: doused in public under a stream of water from the pump; a common punishment for juvenile offenders.

{29} Hockley-in-the-Hole: a popular resort of thugs and prostitutes. Bear-baiting and cock-fights took place there.

{30} Old Baily: criminal court, since generally spelled Old Bailey. Jonathan Wild kept an office near the court, to facilitate his business in turning in thieves and collecting rewards for the return of stolen goods.

{31} Ordinary's Papers: the prison chaplain's record of confessions. Mrs. Peachum can imagine no other end to Filch's career than Newgate prison.

{32} Covent-Garden: large flower market in London. Some of the "flowers" were prostitutes.

{33} Repeating-Watch: an especially expensive type of watch that chimed the hour.

{34} Drury-Lane: London street noted for prostitution.

{35} Tunbridge: a town to the north of London.

{36} Fullers-Earth: a "soap," very abrasive and effective, made from the microscopic skeletons of diatoms, a kind of plankton.

{37} Plate: tableware, sometimes silver but most often of pewter. A very common object of theft, as it was easily melted down if too recognizable.

{38} ...is but picking: mere picking of pockets or shop-lifting.

{39} Jointure: a transfer of funds or property from husband to wife, effective upon his death, for her maintenance as a widow.

{40} Peach'd: indicted, sworn out a warrant against. One could be impeached on the testimony of one witness, but convicted only on that of two or more.

{41} Play-Books: an in-joke, as many of the patrons present will have bought a copy of the "Opera," or if they have not, are thus wryly encouraged to do so. Many plays were romances and the books were regarded by parents as a "bad influence."

{42} Strategem: strategy; here the Captain's skill in conducting robberies upon the Road.

{43} Holborn: the slums between Newgate and Tyburn (the place of execution).

{44} Jack Ketch: a generic nick-name for hangmen. The original Jack Ketch plied his trade in the previous century.

{45} Miss Fire: flintlock pistols depended upon a spark from the flint to strike the powder in the "pan," which then ignited the compressed powder in the barrel through a small "touch hole." The spark often went in some other direction than the pan, so that the pistol failed to shoot. This was very aptly called a miss Fire, and the term has survived as "misfire."

{46} Slip her Shoulder: a highwayman's horse was expected to carry him away safely at night upon uneven ground. If it stepped in a hole, a dislocated limb could result in his hanging.

{47} Fleaing: "flaying," as in skinning or fleecing. Also: bloodsucking.

{48} Ottamys at Surgeons Hall: corruption of "anatomies." Tom has been dissected in a lecture on anatomy and is now a skeleton, i.e., dead.

{49} Worth speaking with: euphemism for "profitable robbery victim."

{50} Bawd: a madam, or sometimes, a pimp. One whose business is to sell prostitutes.

{51} Moor-fields: a district in north London, convenient for operations upon the Road.

{52} March in Rinaldo: a march from a popular G.F. Handel opera, Rinaldo.

{53} Chymist: alchemist. The highwaymen hope to turn their lead bullets into gold coins by a form of transmutation called "armed robbery."

{54} Drawer: person, generally male, whose work is to tap the barrels in the cellar and bring wine or beer up to the customers in a tavern.

{55} Vinegar Yard: courtyard noted for prostitution.

{56} Lewkers Lane: London street noted for prostitution. Jonathan Wild had operated a brothel there.

{57} Strong-Waters: Geneva, a strong distilled drink, which became known as "ginn," or gin. Not considered a proper drink for ladies, and therefore much in demand by them.

{58} Talley-men: merchants who offered terms (at very high percentage rates--like modern credit card companies).

{59} If Musick be the Food of Love, play on: Twelfth Night 1.1.

{60} Mercers: merchants of dry goods, especially textiles.

{61} Padesoy: a very costly material.

{62} Keeping: a mistress, or "kept woman," was said to be "in Keeping." It was important for mistresses to dress well; their function was as much for escort as for sexual services.

{63} Bating: excepting. It was traditional, when saying anything complimentary of Jews, to append a disclaimer as to their illegal faith.

{64} Plantations: sugar farms in the West Indies, and tobacco farms in Virginia, Maryland, and Carolina, of very extensive acreage, which must be worked by "servants," many of whom at the time were supplied by "transportation."

{65} Souse: sou, a French coin.

{66} Constables: men of the parish designated for the keeping of the peace. One citizen could engage the services of the constables in effecting an arrest, but if he could not provide sufficient witnesses or evidence in court, and the case was thrown out, the citizen was accountable for court costs and the constables' fees.

{67} Was this well done: Antony and Cleopatra 5.2.

{68} Turnkey: combination guard and janitor. Turnkeys carried the keys of the prison and opened and closed doors for prisoners, jailors, ordinaries, visitors, laundry-women, and all others who had business in the prison. In most cases, though not always, they also brought food, bedding, and the like to the cells and wards.

{69} Garnish: Lockit has obtained his position by submitting the high bid for a Government contract. The return on his investment is obtained by extracting fees from his prisoners for "liquor, food, walking space, lighter chains, and bedding. A final outrageous feature of this system forced prisoners acquitted of crimes to pay a discharge fee" (Guerinot & Jilg 38).

{70} Fetters: fetlocks, or leg-irons. By this time also sometimes used to refer to hand-cuffs.

{71} Basilisk: a reptile of legend whose look or breath could kill.

{72} Treacle: formerly a compound for treatment of poisonous bites; by this time, referring only a thick molasses.

{73} ...load of Infamy: Lucy is about five months pregnant.

{74} Bowels: the seat of kindness, pity, forgiveness; generally in plural, as here.

{75} Arrear of the Government: although Lockit has paid for his contract to run the concession of Newgate, some fees, such as the rewards for criminals caught and executed, were owed by the government to him (and his partner). The state bureaucracy was notoriously slow in payment.

{76} Condemn'd Hold: the Stone Hold. A prisoner entering Newgate who could not pay his fees was kept here. There was neither heat nor light, and excrement was seldom if ever removed.

{77} Sirrah: an expression of contempt.

{78} ...expect the Gentleman: Jonathan Wild actually advertised in the papers his business in locating and returning stolen goods for a reward, no questions asked. When asked about a snuff-box, "nimm'd" (stolen) on a given night in a given locality, he had but to look in his account-books to see if the item in question was in one of his warehouses.

{79} Weeds: black clothing, signifying mourning. Often taken as a sign that a woman had come into her jointure and would be a fine catch.

{80} Perquisite: incidental income unrelated to salary. In this case, a euphemism for "bribe."

{81} Bubbled: a financial scheme that fell through was a "bubble": the "South Seas Bubble" was a famous instance, which took place in 1720. A bubble is hence anyone easily cheated or hoodwinked.

{82} Pack: foxhounds, but also, in Macheath's case, bloodhounds.

{83} Herds, Drovers, or Flocks: Gay is mistaken here; these are all social animals. That information would not have been available to him at the time; most of what was known in England of lions, for example, was true of the Asian lion of the Near East, which was more solitary in its habits than the now much more common African lion.

{84} Pikes: A powerful, toothed fish, of gaunt build ("lank"), found in streams, lakes and moats, noted for its cannibalism.

{85} Quatern: one-fourth of a pint

{86} Shotten Herring: when a herring has spawned it has a used-up appearance.

{87} ...helping the Ladies to a Pregnancy: if a woman was about to go on trial for her life it was to her advantage to be pregnant, for she could not be hanged until the child was born and provided for, by which time another Sessions might have passed.

{88} Great Man: Macheath. This was also a common (sarcastic) expression for referring to Sir Robert Walpole.

{89} Setting: euphemism for watching a traveler for a convenient opportunity to rob him. The term actually means to spy on a criminal for an opportunity to safely arrest him. Jenny Diver and Sukey Tawdrey, in effecting Macheath's capture earlier, act as "setters" in the usual sense. The Irish Setter got its name from this practice, for it "points" game much as a criminal is "finger'd" or "peach'd".

{90} Rouleau: coins, particularly of gold, that have been sorted, counted, and rolled.

{91} Coronation Account: list of items stolen from the large numbers who had attended festivities celebrating a coronation (probably that of George II, who acceded to the throne in 1727). Such occasions were so lucrative that Jonathan Wild sometimes established a temporary field office in the vicinity, the better to direct his gangs.

{92} Lady's Tail: train, or a piece of rich cloth designed to drag along behind the lady as she walks. Associated with state occasions such as a coronation.

{93} Gudgeons: a species of fish very easily caught.

{94} Mrs. Dye: a generic nick- name for a dealer in stolen cloth. Some items were dyed to disguise their origins.

{95} Mantoos: manteaus. A loose cloak or robe.

{96} The Act for destroying the Mint: The Mint was an area in Southwark where a debtor or thief could find sanctuary (cf. DeFoe's *Moll Flanders*). The legal status of the area had been repealed in 1697, but the custom prevailed. The Act referred to here was enacted in 1724 in a more determined effort to clean up the area.

{97} Act...against Imprisonment for small Sums: the Bankruptcy Laws had allowed for imprisonment of all debtors and confiscation of their goods. So many people had fled the country in order to avoid

imprisonment for relatively small debts that liberalization was undertaken to stem the flow and allow debtors more leeway in finding income to cover these debts. Mrs. Trapes complains that she has thereby lost the leverage she needs to keep her clients in line.

{98} Half a Crown: a crown was a coin worth five shillings.

{99} Accidents: pregnancies, and perhaps cases of syphilis (which at the time was incurable).

{100} Farthing: coin valued at one-fourth of a penny.

{101} Hackney Coach: four- wheeled coach drawn by two horses; seated six. The fare was one shilling.

{102} Skiff: an open boat with center board and mast, suitable for light cargo carrying but vulnerable, especially when heavy, to rough weather.

{103} Rats-bane: arsenic trioxide. Has a characteristic almond-like smell which is easily disguised by some alcoholic drinks.

{104} Spleen: melancholia.

{105} Vapours...Dram: the vapours were any form of melancholia or nervous disorder; a frequent excuse for the ladies to take a "dram"--a small quantity of drink such as gin in a cup or glass sized accordingly.

{106} Tyburn Tree: the gallows at the place of execution.

{107} Reprieve: commutation of the sentence of execution. This is not a pardon, and Macheath may expect still to be transported.

{108} Doxies: a "doxy" is a prostitute or mistress. Here the term is used in reference to the women of a Turkish harem.

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