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ORATION

ON THE  
Virtues of the Old Women,  
AND THE  
PRIDE of the YOUNG;

With a Direction for Young MEN what sort of  
WOMEN to take, and for WOMEN what sort  
of MEN to marry

Dictated by JANET CLINKER, and written by  
HUMPHRAY CLINKER, the Clashing Wives  
Clerk.



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M D C C X C.

*An ORATION on the Virtues of the Old WOMEN, &c.*

**T**HE madness of this unmuzzled age has driven me to mountains of thoughts, and a continual meditation; It is enough to make an old wife rin red-wood, and drive a body beyond the halter's end of ill-nature, to see what I see, and hear what I hear: Therefore the hinges of my anger are broke, and the bands of my good and mild nature are burst in two, the door of civility is laid quite open, plain speech and mild admonition is of none effect; nothing must be used now but thunder-bolts of reproach tartly trimm'd in tantalizing stile, roughly redd up and manufactured thro' an old matron's mouth, who is indeed but frail in the teeth; but will squeeze surprisngly with her auld gums until her very chaft blebs crack in the crushing of your vice.

I shall branch out my discourse in four heads;

First, What I have seen, and been witness to.

Secondly, What I now see, and am witness to.

Thirdly, What I have heard, does hear, and cannot help; I mean the difference between the old women and the young.

Fourthly, Conclude with an advice to young men and young women how to avoid the buying of Janet Juniper's stinking butter\*, which will have a rotten rift on their stomach as long as they live.

First, The first thing then, I see and observe is, That a when dast' giddy-headed, cock-nosed, juniper-nebbed mothers, bring up a when sky-racket dancing daughters, a' bred up to be ladies, without so much as the breadth of their luse of land: it's an admiration to me where the lairds are a' to come frae that's to be coupled to them; work, na, na, my bairn must not work, she's to be a lady, they ca' her miss, I must have her ears bor'd, says all Mumps the mother; thus the poor pet is brought up like a motherless lamb, or a parrot in the cage; they learn no-

\* A nick name to a wife's daughter that no man will marry because stuffed up with laziness, self-conceit and stinging pride; or if she be married she'll ly like stinking butter on his stomach, while she lives

thing but to prick and sew, and sling their feet when the fiddle plays, so they become a parcel of yellow-faced female taylors, unequal matches for countrymen, Flanders babies, brought up in a box, and must be carried in a basket, knows nothing but pinching poverty, hunger and pride, can neither milk kye, muck a byre, card, spin, nor yet keep a cow from a corn-rig; the most of such are as blind penny-worths, as buying pigs in pocks, and ought only to be matched with Tacket-makers, Tree-trimmers, and Male-taylors, that they may be male and female agreeable in trade, since their paper-faced fingers are not for hard labour; yet they might also pass on a pinch for a black Sutor's wife, for the stitching of white seams round the mouth of a lady's shoe, or with Barbers or Bakers they might be buckled, because of their muslin-mouth and pinch-beck speeches, when barm is scant they can blow up the bread with fair wind, and when the razor is rough, can trim their chafts with a fair tale, oil their peruke with her white lips, and powder the beaus pow with a French puff; they are well versed in all the science of flattery, musical-tunes, horn-pipes, and country dances, tho' perfect in none but the reel of Gammon.

Yet these are they the fickle farmer fixes his fancy upon; a bundle of clouts, a skeleton of bones, Maggy and the mutch, like twa fir-sticks and a pickle tow, neither for his plate nor his plow; very unproper plenishing, neither for his profit nor his pleasure, to plout her hands thro' Hawkey's cass-cug is a hateful hardship for Mammy's pet, and will hack a' her hands. All this have I seen and heard, and been witness too, but my pen being a goose-quill, cannot expose their names nor places of abode, but warns the working men out of their way

Secondly, I see another sort, that can work and maun work till they be married and become mistress themselves; but as the husband receives them, the thrift leaves them; before that, they wrought as for a wager, they span as for a premium, busket as for a brag, scour'd their din-skins as a wauker does worsted blankets, kept as a mim in the mouth as a mini-



ster's wife, comely as Diana, chaste as Susanna, yet the whole of their toil is the trimming of their rigging, tho' their hulls be everlastingly in a laking condition; their backs and their bellies are box'd about with the fins of a big fish, six petticoats, a gown, and an apron, besides a side sark down to the anklebones, ah! what monstrous rags are here, what a cloth is consumed for a covering of one pair of buttocks; I leave it to the judgement of any ten taylors in the town, if thirty pair of men's breeches may not be cut from a little above the easing of Bessy's bum, and this makes her a motherly woman, as stately a fabric as ever strade to market or mill.

But when she's married, she turns a madam, her mistress did not work much, and why should she? Her mother tell'd ay she wad be a lady, but cou'd never show where her lands lay; but when money is all spent, credit broken, and conduct out of keeping, and when babling bubbly bairns crying piece minny, porrech minny, the witlefs wanton waster is at her wit's end. Work now or want, and do not say that the world has war'd you; but lofty Nodle, your giddy-headed mother has led you astray, by learning you to be a lady before you was fit to be a servant-lafs, by teaching you laziness instead of hard labour, by giving you such a high conceit of yourself, that nobody thinks any thing of you now, and you may judge yourself to be one of those that wise people call Littleworth; but after all, my dear dirty-face, when you begin the world again, be perfectly rich before you be gentle, work hard for what you gain, and you'll ken better how to guide it, for pride is an unperfect fortune, and a ludicrous life will not last long.

Another sort I see, who has got more silver than sense, more gold than good nature, more muslins and means than good manners; tho' a sack can hold their silver, six houses and an half cannot contain their ambitious desires. Fortunatus' wonderful purse would fail in fetching in the south part of their worldly wants, and the children imitate their mother's chattering like hungry cranes, crying still, I want, I want,

ever craving, wilfully wasting, till all be brought to a doleful dish of desolation, and with cleanness of teeth, a full breast, an empty belly, big pockets without pence, pinching penury, perfect poverty, drouth, hunger, want of money and friends both, old age, dim eyes, feeble joints, without shoes or cloaths, the real fruits of a bad marriage, which brings thoughtless Fops to both faith and repentance in one day.

Thirdly, Another thing I see, hear, and cannot help, is the breeding of bairns and bringing them up like bill-stirks, they gie them wealth of meat, but no manners; but when I was a bairn, if I did not bend to obedience, I ken mysel what I got, which learned me what to gi' mine again; if they had tell'd me tuts or prute-no, I laid them o'er my knee and a com'd crack for crack o'er their hurdies like a knock bleaching a harn-web, till the red wats stood on their hips, this brought obedience into my house, and banish'd dods and ill-nature out at the door; I dang the de'il o' them, and dadded them like a wet dish-clout till they did my bidding: But now the bairns are brought up to spit fire in their mithers' face, and cast dirt at their auld daddies; How can they be good who never saw a sample of it? or reverence old age, who practis'd no precepts in their youth? How can they love their parents who gave them black poison instead of good principles? Who shewed them no good, nor taught them no duties? No marvel such children despise old age, and reverence their parents as an old horse does his father.

Fourthly, The last prevailing evil which I see, all men may hear, but none strive to help, the banishment of that noble holy-day, called the Sabbath, which has been blasted by a whirl-wind from the south; I am yet alive, who saw this hurricane coming thro' the walled city near Solway in the South; it being on a Sunday, and a beautiful sun-thine day amangst some foul weeks in harvest weather, which caused the Lord Mayor of that place work hard and put in the whole fields of wheat harvest, and the priests of that church commended him therefore; because the season was back-

ward, why should not men be disobedient? And this infection is come here also, surely the loss of this Sabbath-day will be counted a black Saturday to some when I walk in the fields, I know it not but by the stopping of the plow, when in the city only by the closeness of a few shop-doors and the sound of the bells, degenerate ideas of religion indeed! when the high praise is sounded only by bell metal. A *sounding brass* and a *tinkling cymbal*, is it not come to pass, the tavern roar like *Ætna's* mouth; children follow their gaming, and old sinners their strolling about, nothing stop but coal-carts and common carriers, tee Sabbath lasts no longer than the sermon, and the sermon is measured by a little sand in a glass! many, too many frequent the church, seemingly only to show their anticdress, with heads of a monstrous form, more surprising than those described by Aristotle, as for length exceeding that of an asses head, ears and all, and ah how humbling would it be to see their heads struck into such forms, &c.

They disdain now to ride on pads as of old, or to be hobbled on a horse's hurdies, but must be hurled behind the tail, safely seated in a leather conveniency, and there they fly swiftly as in the chariot of *Aminadab*.

They will not speak the mother language of their native country, but must have southren oaths, refined like raw sugar thro' the mills of cursing, finely polished and fairly struck in the profane mint of London, into a perfect form of flunkey-language; even the very wild Arabs from the mountain tops, who have not yet got English to profane his Maker's name, will cry *Cot, Cot*; hateful it is to hear them swear, who cannot speak, O! strange alteration since the days of old, the downfall of Popery and the Prelates decay, when reformation was alive, and religion in taste and fashion; the people during the Sabbath, were all packed up in closets, and their children kept within doors, when every city appeared as a sanctuary, nothing to be heard in the streets but the sound of prayer on the right hand, and the melodious sound of psalms on the left.



Now is the days of counting, scribing, riding of horses, and the sound of the post-horn come; surely there will be trade now, and none will miss prosperity, when every day is fair; I add no more on this head, but every one claim a right to his own set time, &c.

Another grievance of the female offenders I cannot omit, which attracts man's fancy and is the cause of his fall; I mean Flighters who have got a little of the means of Mammon, more silver than sense, more gold than good nature, haughtiness for humility, value themselves as a treasure incomprehensible, their heads and heart of Ophir-gold, their hips of silver, and their whole body as set about with precious stones, great and many are the congresses of their courtship, and the solemnizing of their marriage is like the conclusion of a peace after a bloody and tedious war.

And what is she after all, yea her poor penny will never be exhausted, it must be laid out in lunacy and laziness, she must have teas and the tuther thing: when pregnancy and the spueing of porich approaches, then she prophesies of her death; as she hatches life, she embraces laziness; then O the bed, the bed, nothing like the bed for a bad wife; her body becomes as par-boil'd being so bed-ridden, this rots their children in the brewing, and buries them in the bringing up, yea some mothers are so beastly, as to water the bed and blame the child therefore; yet such lazy wives live long, and their children soon die; their far fetched and feigned sickness soon render the husband to the substance of one sixpence, he becomes poor and hen-peck't under such petticoat government.

But when I Janet was a Janet and had the judgement of my own house, my husband was thrice happy, I never held him down, he was above me day and night, I sat late and rose early, kept a full house and a tough back, when summer came we minded winter's cold, we had peace aye at porich-time, and harmony thro' the day; we supp'd our sowens at supper-time with a feasonable heat, and went to bed good bairns, and end naething but stark love and kindness, we wrought our riches, and our age and earthly stores increased a-

like, we hated pride and loved peace, he died with good name, I let you ken I live, but not as many do not so lordly of my brain as some are of their belly and was not my life strange by that new practised. Come help yourselves you hillokat livers and avoid it.

Now after all, if a poor man want a perfect wife let him wale a well-blooded hiffie, wi' bread shoulders and thick about the haunches, that has been lang servant in ae house, tho' twice or thrice away an aye fied' back, that's well liked by the bairns and the bairns' mither, that's nae way cankard to the cats nor kicks the colley-dogs amang her feet, that wae let a' brute beasts live, but rats, mice, lice, flaes, neet and bugs, that bites the wee bairns in their cradles that carefully combs the young things' heads, washe their faces and claps their cheeks, snites the snottes frae their nose as they were a' her ain, that's the last that will make a good wife, for them that dauts the young bairns will ay be kind to auld fouks an they haed them.

And ony hale hearted wholesome hiffie that wants to halter a good husband, never take a widow's ae foir for a' the wifely gates in the world will be in him, for want of a father to teach him manly actions; neither take a fourlooking sumf wi' a muckle mouth, and a wide guts, who will eat like a horse and soss like a sow, suffer none to sup but himself, eat your meat and the bairns' baith; when hungry angry, when fu' full o' pride, ten secks will not hold his sauce, though a peas-shap will hold his silver: But go take your chance, and if cheated chaner not on me, for fashionable folk flee to fashionable things, for lust is brutish blind, and fond love is blear eye'd. I add no more, says Janet; so be it, said Humphray the Clerk.