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ORATION

ON THE

Virtues of Old Women,

AND THE

Failures 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
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the Clashing Wive's Clerk.

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An Oration on the Virtues of Old Women, &c.

THE madness of this unmuzzled age has driven to mountains of thoughts, and a continual meditation. It is enough to make an auld wife rin wood, and drive a body beyond the halter's endurance, 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. the door of civility is laid quite open, plain speech and mild admonition is of none effect; nothing unused now, but thunderbolts of reproach tartly trim in a tantalizing style, roughly redd up and muzzled thro' an auld matron's mouth, who is indeed frail in the teeth, but will squeeze surprisngly her auld gums until her very chaff blades crack in crushing of your vice.

I shall branch out my discourse into 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 does not help; I mean the difference between the old men and the young.

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

First, The first thing then I see and observe is that a wheen dast giddy headed, cock nos'd, jonnibbed mothers in the towns, bringing up a wheen skyrocket dancing daughters, a' bred up to be ladies without so much as the breadth o' their lufe o' lands it's an admiration to me where a' the lairds and farmers are a' to come frae that's to be coupled to their work! na, na, my bairn must not work, sic's to be

* A nick-name to the wife's daughter that no man will marry, because stuff'd full of laziness and stinking pride.

lady, they ca' her miss, I must have her ears Lor'd save
 old Mumps the mother; thus the poor pet is brought
 up like a motherless lamb, or a parrot in a cage; they
 learn nothing but price and sew, and hing their feet
 when the fiddle plays, so they become a parcel of yel-
 low faced female saylors. unequal matches for country-
 men, 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-rigg; 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-tailors,
 that they may be male and female, agreeable in trade,
 since their paper-fac'd fingers are not for hard labour,
 yet they might also pass on a pitch for a black bit.
 A wife for the stitching of white seams round the mouth
 of a lady's shoe, or with barbers or bakers they might
 be buckled becaule of their muslin mouths and pinch-
 beck speeches, when barn 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 all versed in all the science of
 flattery, musical tunes, horn pipes and country daaces,
 tho' perfect in none but the reel of Gammon.

Yet these are they the sickle farmer fixes his fancy
 upon; a bundle of cloths, a skeleton of bones, Maggy
 and the mitch, like twa fir sticks and a pickt cow
 neither for his plate or his plow; very unproper ple-
 nishing, neither for his profit nor her pleasure; to
 plunge her hands thro' Houkney's oass cog is a hate-
 ful hardship for mammy's pet, and will hack a' her
 hands. All this I have seen and heard and been wit-
 ners to, but my pen being a goose-quill cannot expose
 their names nor places of abode, but warns the work-
 ing men out of their way.

Secondly, I see another sort, who can work and
 maun work till they be married and become mistres

themselves; but as the husband receives them, the
 thrift leaves them; before that they wrought as for a
 wager, they hunt as for a premium; husked as for a
 bag, sound as their din stinks as a wanker does wor-
 ted brooks; kept as men in the mouth as a minister's
 wife, comely as Diana, chaste as Susanna, yet the
 whole of their toil is the trimming of their rigging;
 their backs and their bellies are box'd about with the
 fins of a big fish, six petticoats, a gown and a apron,
 holds a lady sark down to the ankle bones, ah! what
 nonstrous tags are here, what a cloth is consumed for
 exceeding to one pair of buttocks, I leave it to the
 judgment of any ten tailors in town, if thirty pair of
 men's breeches may not be cut from the ealing of
 Belly's burn, and this makes her a motherly woman,
 as stately a fabric as ever strade to market or mill.

But when she is married she turns a madam, her
 mistress did not work much and why should she? Her
 mother tell'd ay she was be a lady, but could never
 show where her lands lay; but when money is all spent,
 credit broken, and conduct out of keeping, a wheen
 babbling tudy bairns crying piece minny, porrich min-
 ny, the witless wanton watter is at her wit's end, Work
 now or want and do not say the world has war'd you;
 but lofty Noddle your giddy head; mother has led you
 atray by learning you to be a lady before you was fit
 to be a servant lass, by teaching you laziness instead
 of hard labour, by giving you such a high conceit of
 yourself, that no body thinks any thing of you now;
 and you may judge yourself to be one of those that
 wise people call Little-worth; 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
 uncertain fortune, and a judicious life will not last long.

Another sort I see, who has got more silver than
 sente, more gold than good nature, more mullions and
 means than good manner: tho' a sack can hold their
 silver six hundred and a half cannot contain their ambi-

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 ous desires. Fortunatus' wonderful purse would fail
 in fetching in the fourth part of their worldly wants,
 and the children imitate their mothers, chattering like
 hungry cranes, crying still, I want, I want; ever crav-
 ing, wilfully wasting, till all be brought to a doleful
 blish of confusion, and with channels of tears, 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 baith 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-firks, they gie them wealth of meat but not
 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 gie mine again; if they had tell'd-me wats or
 wate no I laid them o'er my knee and I com'd crack
 or crack o'er their hurdies like a knock bleaching a
 barn web till the red wats stood on their hips; this
 brought obedience into my house, and banished ill-
 nature out at the doot; I dang the deil out o' them,
 and dadded them about like a wet dish-cloth till they
 did my bidding; but now the bairns are brought up
 to spit fire in their mother's face and cast dirt at their
 auld daddies. How can they be good who never saw
 a san ple of it, or reverence old age who practised no
 precepts in their youth? How can they love their
 parents who gave them black poison instead of good
 princi, les, who showed 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 banish-
 ment of that noble holy day, called Sabbath; which
 has been blasted by a whirlwind 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 shine day amongst 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 commendēt him therefore: 'Because the season was backward, why should not man 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 slymbal." Is it not come to pass, the taverns roar like Aetha's mouth; children follow their gaming, and old sinners their strolling about, nothing stopt but coal-carts and common carriers, the 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 shew their antic dress, with heads of a monstrous form more surprising than those described by Aristotle, as for length exceeding that of an asses head ears and bill, 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 hardies, 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 in the language of their native country, but must have southern oaths, refined like raw sugar thro' the mills of cursing, finely polished and fairly strack in the profane mint of London, into a perfect form of sunkey language; even the very wild Arabs from the mountain tops, who have not yet got English to profane their Maker's name, will cry, Cot, Cot; hateful is it 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 the days of counting, scribbling, riding of horses, and the found the mail coach come; surely there will be trade now, and none will miss prosperity when every day is a fair. I add no more on this head, but let every one claim a right to his own set time, &c.

Another grievance of the female offenders I cannot omit, which attacks mens fancy and is the cause of his fall, I mean sighters who has 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 hearts 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 fine teas and the either thing; when pregnancy and the spring of porrick approaches then she prophesies of her death; as she hatches life, she embraces laziness; 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 feigned sickness soon render the husband to the substance of one sixpence, he becomes poor and hen peckt under such petticoat government.

But when I Janet was a Janet and had the judgment of my own houle my husband was thrice happy, I

never hold him down, he was above me day and night. I fat late and rose early, kept a still home and rook back, when summer came we minded winter's care, we had peace at a rich time and dinner time, and we supped our friends at supper time wi' a seasonal treat, and good to bed like good bairns, kend naething but Earl's ease and knaughtly we wrought for riches and our aches and earbly stores increased a little, we hated pride and loved peace, he died with a 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 now practised? Come help yourselves you hilokat livers and avoid it.

Now after all if a poor man want a perfect wife, let him wale a well blooded hissy, wi' braid shoulders and thick about the haunches, that has been lang servant in the house tho' twice or thrice away & ay fied back, that's well liked by the bairns and their mither, that's nae way onward to the cats nor kicks the colly dogs among her feet, that wad let a brute beasts live but rats, mice, lice, flaes, neets and bugs that bites the wae bairns in their eradles, that carefully combs the young thing's heads, washes their faces & kips their cheeks, smites the snoutter frae the nose as it were a' her ain, that's the lass that will make a good wife, for them that daunts the young bairns will be kind to auld fouk an they had them.

And ony hale-hearted wholef-me hissy that wants to halter a good husband, never take a widow's ae son for a' the wisly gaves in the world will be in him for want of a better, to teach his wonly actions - never take a fine looking simphair a mislie mouth and a wide gutt, you will ca' it a horse and jockey like a few of the best in the pairt but beware, eat your meat and the bairns bait, when hungry angry and when full of pride, ten shillings will not hold his sauce tho' a pey-shap will hold his life - so go take your chance, and if cheated channer not on me for fashionable folk flee to fashionable things, for lust is brutish blind, and fond love is blear-ey'd. I add no more so Janet; so be it said Humphrey the Clerk.

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