

The Welsh Opera

Henry Fielding

Table of Contents

<u>The Welsh Opera</u>	1
<u>Henry Fielding</u>	1
<u>THE Welsh OPERA: OR, THE Grey Mare the better Horse. As it is Acted at the NEW THEATRE IN</u>	
<u>THE HAY-MARKET.</u>	1
<u>ACT I.</u>	4
<u>SCENE I.</u>	4
<u>SCENE II.</u>	5
<u>SCENE III.</u>	6
<u>SCENE IV.</u>	7
<u>SCENE V.</u>	9
<u>SCENE VI.</u>	9
<u>SCENE VII.</u>	11
<u>SCENE VIII.</u>	13
<u>SCENE IX.</u>	14
<u>SCENE X.</u>	15
<u>SCENE XI.</u>	15
<u>SCENE XII.</u>	18
<u>ACT II.</u>	19
<u>SCENE I.</u>	19
<u>SCENE II.</u>	19
<u>SCENE III.</u>	22
<u>SCENE IV.</u>	23
<u>SCENE V.</u>	24
<u>SCENE VI.</u>	27
<u>SCENE VII.</u>	28
<u>SCENE the Last.</u>	29

The Welsh Opera

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- ACT I.

- SCENE I.
- SCENE II.
- SCENE III.
- SCENE IV.
- SCENE V.
- SCENE VI.
- SCENE VII.
- SCENE VIII.
- SCENE IX.
- SCENE X.
- SCENE XI.
- SCENE XII.

- ACT II.

- SCENE I.
 - SCENE II.
 - SCENE III.
 - SCENE IV.
 - SCENE V.
 - SCENE VI.
 - SCENE VII.
 - SCENE the Last.
-

**THE Welsh OPERA:
OR, THE *Grey Mare the better* Horse.
As it is Acted at the NEW THEATRE IN THE *HAY-MARKET*.**

Cobler.

*Say, why what d'ye think I say? I say,
All Men are married for their Sins,
And that a Batchelor Cobler, is happier than a Hen-peck'd Prince.*
The PREFACE.

The Welsh Opera

As the Performance of the *Grubstreet* Opera has been prevented, by a certain Influence which has been very *prevailing* of late Years, we thought it would not be unacceptable to the Town, if we communicated to them the *Welsh Opera*, from which the other was not only Originally borrow'd, but which is in effect the same, excepting some few Additions, that were made only with a view to lengthen it.

The Publick having given a very kind Reception to all Productions of this Nature that have appear'd for some time, we have reason to hope that this, which we flatter our selves is not inferiour to them, will likewise meet with their Acceptance; we have reason to hope so, I say, because the Characters are affecting, as they may be every Man's Lot who runs his Neck into the Marriage Noose, since every One who marries is liable to have a *domineering Wife, who will aspire at wearing the Breeches*, tho' G d help the Men whose hard Lot it is to fall under *Petticoat Government*. A *Presbyterian Lecture* is, I believe, no very agreeable Amusement to any Man of Sense, especially if it is, as most of them are, very long Winded, but it is my Opinion that a *Curtain Lecture* is ten times more disagreeable as it is generally something more Sonorous, and much more long Winded; for set a Woman's Clack but once a going, and the Devil himself can't stop it, till the Alarm, like that of a Clock, runs down of it self. We have known in History, that even *Sovereign Princes* have not been exempted from such *Female Furies*; even one of the most arbitrary Emperors of *Turkey* had a *Roxolana* that held his Nose to the Grindstone. But I will not anticipate the Reader's Pleasure by detaining him too long in the Porch, but only wish him as much Satisfaction in the perusal as I had my self, and then I am sure he will not grudge the Price he pays for it.

THE INTRODUCTION.

Scriblerus and a Player.

Player.

Upon my word, Mr. *Scriblerus*, you write Plays, (or something like Plays) faster than we can act them, or the Town damn them; I hope your Opera will take up more time in Running than it hath in Writing. But pray, why do you call it a *Welsh* one, since there is not a Word of *Welsh* in it?

Scrib.

Because the Scene lies in *Wales*, as the Village Opera, because the Scene lies in a Village, or the *Scots* Opera, because the Scene lies in *Scotland*.

Player.

Do you not think the Town will expect *Welsh* in it from its Title?

Scrib.

No, Sir, the Town is too well acquainted with Modern Authors, to expect any thing from a Title. A Tragedy often proves a Comedy; a Comedy a Tragedy; and an Opera nothing at all I have seen a Tragedy without any Distress, a Comedy without a Jest, and an Opera without Musick.

Player.

I wish, Sir, you had kept within the Rules of Probability in your Plot, if I may call it so.

Scrib.

It is the Business of a Poet to surprize his Audience, especially a Writer of Opera's the discovery, Sir, should be as no one could understand how it could be brought about, before it is made.

The Welsh Opera

Player.

No, and I defy them to understand yours after it is made .

Scrib.

Well, but I have a Witch to solve all that I know some Authors who have made as strange Discoveries without any Witch at all.

Player.

You have been kind indeed to lay your Jealousy with a Witch, and it would have been as kind in you to have brought in a Conjuror to have rais'd it. For I am mistaken if any but a Conjuror can imagine how it is rais'd.

Scrib.

Jealousy, Sir, is an unaccountable Passion one Man is jealous from the Beauty of his Wife, another from her Wit, a third from her Folly, and a fourth from his own Folly.

Player.

And a fifth from the Folly of the Poets. But I think Jealousy a tragical Passion, and more proper to Tragedy than Comedy.

Scrib.

Oh fie, you might as well say that Smiles are not proper to Tragedy There is your Tragical Jealousy, and Comical Jealousy; your Tragical Jealousy is between Kings and Heroes; your Comical between Gentlemen and Servants; your Tragical produces its effect before it is discover'd; your Comical is discover'd before its effect; and as in Tragedy all dye, so in Comedy all are married.

Player.

And it is a Question, which is the most Tragical End of the two.

Scrib.

Smiles are also Tragical and Comical the so have I seen belongs to Tragedy the as then to Comedy, I think, I may say, the Smiles I have introduc'd in this Opera are all entirely New, not like any thing that has been produc'd before.

Player.

No, upon my Word, they are as unlike any thing else, as they are the things they are compar'd too.

Scrib.

Sir, if a Smile be very unlike, it is as well as if it be very like, So have I not seen is as well as, so have I seen, and agad I dont know whether it does not sometimes surprize more.

Player.

Sir, I wish you would be so kind to stay here to Comment upon your Opera as it goes on.

Scrib.

Hey to be a sort of walking Notes.

Enter Second Player.

2d. Player.

Sir, Mr. *Davenport* will not go on without a Pair of white Gloves, and Mrs. *Jones* who play'd *Huncamunca*, insists on a Dram before she goes on, for Madam *ap Shinken*; as for Mrs. *Clark*, the King has fall'n so heavy upon her

The Welsh Opera

that he has almost squeez'd her Guts out, and it's a Question whether she will be able to Sing or no.

Scrib.

Pox on 'em, bid 'em begin any way, I'll burn my four dozen of Opera's, and six dozen of Tragedies, and never give 'em another.

Player.

Good God's! what a Fury is an incens'd Author.

MEN.

'Squire ap Shinken Mr. *Furnival*.

Master Owen his Son, in love with *Molly* Mr. *Davenport*

Parson Puzzle-Text, his Chaplain Mr. *Reynolds* .

Robin, the Butler, in love with *Sweetissa* Mr. *Mullart*.

John, the Coachman, his Friend, in love with *Betty* Mr. *Hallam*.

William, the Groom, Enemy to *Robin*, in love with *Susan* Mr. *Jones*.

Thomas, the Gardiner, his Friend, in love with *Margery* Mr. *Dove*.

WOMEN.

Madam ap Shinken Mrs. *Jones*.

Molly, in love with *Master Owen* Miss *Price* .

Goody Scratch, a Witch, secretly in love with the Parson Mrs. *Clark*.

Sweetissa, in love with *Robin* Mrs. *Nokes* .

Susan, in love with *William* Mrs. *Mullart* .

Margery, in love with *Thomas* Mrs. *Lacy* .

Betty, in love with *John* Mrs. *Furnival*

SCENE, *Wales*. Either North or South.

ACT I.

SCENE I.

'Squire Ap-Shinkin's House. A Table and Chairs.

'Squire Ap-Shinken and Puzzletext Smoaking.

Ap-Shinkin.

Come Mr. *Puzzletext*, it is your Glass. Let us make haste and finish our Breakfast before Madam is up. Oh!

Puzzletext, what a fine Thing it is for a Man of my Estate to stand in fear of his Wife, that I dare not get drunk so much as once a Day, without being call'd to an Account for it.

Puz.

Petticoat Government is a very lamentable Thing indeed but it is the Fate of many an honest Gentleman.

AIR I. (A lusty young Smith.)

What a wretched Life,

Leads a Man a Tyrant Wife,

While for each small Fault he's corrected,

One Bottle makes a Sot,

ACT I.

The Welsh Opera

*One Girl is ne'er forgot;
And Duty is always neglected;
But, tho' nothing can be worse
Than this, feel Domestick Curse.
Some Comfort this must do you,
So vast are the Hen-peck'd Bands,
That each Neighbour may shake Hands,
With my humble Service to you.*

SCENE II.

Mrs. Ap-Shipkin, Mr. Ap-Shipkin, Puzzletext.

Mrs. Ap-Sh.

At your Morning's Draught Mr. *Ap-Shinkin*, I find according to Custom. Methinks you Mr. *Puzzletext* should not encourage Drunkenness.

Puz.

I ask your Ladyship's Pardon, I profess I have scarce drank your Health this Morning; and Wine while it contributeth only to the Chearing of the Heart, is not forbidden to us. I am an Enemy to Excess. But as far as the second Bottle; and to some Constitutions the third, it is no doubt allowable. And I do remember to have preach'd with much Perspicuity even after the fourth.

Mrs. Ap-Sh.

Oh! intollerable, do you call four Bottle no Excess.

Puz.

To some it may, to others it may not. Excess dependeth not on the Quantity that is drank, but on the Quality of him who drinketh.

Mrs. Ap-Sh.

I do not understand this Sophistry. Tho' I think I have some skill in Divinity.

Puz.

Oh! Madam, no one more, your Ladyship is the Honour of your Sex in that Study; and may properly be term'd the great *Welsh* Lamp of Divinity.

Mrs. Ap-Sh.

I always have had an Inclination, to serve the Church, and some other Time should be very glad to dispute with you concerning Excess. But at present must impart something to you concerning my Son, whom I have observ'd too familiar with the Maids.

Puz.

Which of the Maids, Madam. Not one of my Mistresses I hope.

(Aside. Mrs. Ap-Sh.)

Truly with all of 'em, and unless we prevent it, I am afraid we shall hear of a Marriage not much to our liking, and you know Mr. *Puzzletext*, how hard a Thing it wou'd be for us who have but one Child, and to throw himself away.

The Welsh Opera

Puz.

What Methods shall we take in order thereto.

Mrs. Ap-Sh.

I know but one. We must prevent his marrying them, by marrying 'em to others. We have as many Men as Maids. Now I rely on you to Match them up to one another. For whilst there is one unmarried Wench in the House, I shall think him in Danger, Oh, Mr. *Puzzletext*, the Boy takes after his Father, his Head is full of nothing but Love! for whatever Nature hath done for him in another Way, she hath left his Head unfurnish'd.

Puz.

Love in a young Mind, is powerful indeed.

AIR II. (Lads of Dunce.)

[1.]

*If Love gets into a Soldier's Heart,
He puts off his Helmit, his Bow, and his Dart,
Achilles charm'd with a Nymph's fair Eye,
A Distaff took, and his Arms laid by.*

(2.)

*The gay Gods of old their Heaven would quit,
And leave their Ambrosia for Moral tid Bit,
The first of that Tribe that Whore-master Jove,
Prefer'd to all Heavens, that Heaven of Love.* *Mrs. Ap-Sh.*

Two of the Maids I think you have already ask'd in the Church and I believe you will find no great Difficulty to prevail on the others this I assure you I shall not forget the Favours. I am now going to take a short Airing in the *Park* in my own Chaise, and I would have you remember we have no Time to loose.

[Exit. Puz.]

Well, Sir, you have heard what my Lady says, What shall I do. 'Squire *Ap*.

E'en what she Commands, if she interfereth not with my Pipe, I am resolv'd not to interfere with her Family let her govern while I Smoke.

[Exit. Puz.]

Upon my Word the 'Squire is a thorough *Epicuizean* Philosopher. I must now seek for the young 'Squire who is a Philosopher of another Mind.

[Exit.]

SCENE III.

(Owen alone.)

Ow.

Say you so, my good Madam, Mother and Mr. *Parson*, I shall be too hard for you both this is one of the finest Schemes I ever heard of if you will keep me from marrying, you shall marry all the Women in *Wales*. But though you happen to have mistaken the Woman. I will spoil your Stratagem for Mischief-sake. I'll write a Brace of Letters one from *Susan* to *Robin*, and the other from *William* to *Switissa* these two Letters will I put into their Pockets upon their Handkerchiefs; when they pull out their Handkerchiefs to blow their Noses, they will drop the Letters, upon which a Jealousy will arise between them, and the Match be prevented.

The Welsh Opera

SCENE IV.

Puzzletext and Owen.

Puz.

Mr. *Owen*, I have been searching for you, I am come Child to give you some good Instructions, I am sorry to hear you have an Intention to Disgrace your Family by a Marriage inferior to your Birth.

Owen.

Do not trouble your Head with my Marriage, good Mr. *Parson* when I marry, 'twill be to please my self, not you.

Puz.

But let it not be such a Marriage as may reflect upon your Understanding. Consider, Sir, consider who you are.

AIR III. (March in Scipio.)

*Think mighty Sir think e'er you are undone,
Think who you are, Ap-Shinkin's eldest Son,
At Oxford you have been At London Eke also,
You're almost half a Man—and more than half a Beau,
Oh do not then disgrace the great Actions of your Life,
Nor let Ap-Shipkin's Son be buried in his Wife. Puz.
You must govern your Passions, Master Owen.*

Owen.

You may preach Mr. *Parson*, but I shall very little regard you, there is nothing so ridiculous as to hear an old Fellow railing at Love.

Puz.

It is like a young Fellow's railing at Age.

Owen.

Or a Courtier out of Place at Court.

AIR IV. (Tho' I cannot.)

*The worn out Rake at Pleasure Rails,
And Crys 'tis all Idle and Fleeting,
At Court the Man whose Interest fails,
Crys all is Corruption and Cheating.
But would you know,
Whence both these flow.
Tho' too much they pretend to abhor 'em,
That rails at Court,
This at Love's Sport.
Because they are neither fit for 'em,
Fit for 'em.
Because they are neither fit for 'em. Owen.
Besides Doctor, I fancy you have not always govern'd your own Passions, tho' you are so fond in correcting*

The Welsh Opera

others, as a Poet Burlesques the Nonsense of others, while he writes the greatest Nonsense himself.

Puz.

Or as a Prude corrects the Vices of others, while she is more Vicious her self.

Owen.

Or as a Parson Preaches against drinking, and then goes to the Ale-house.

Puz.

Very true (if you mean a Presbyterian Parson.)

AIR V. (One Evening having lost my Way).

*I've heard a Noncon Parson preach,
'Gainst Whoring with just Disdain,
Whilst he himself to be naught, did teach,
Of females a large a Train.
As Stars in Sky, or Lamps in Street,
Or Beauty's in the Mall we meet.
Or as or as, or as,
Or as Whores in Drury-Lane. Owen.*

Thy Similes are all Froth like bottled Ale and it is as difficult to get the out of a Simile, as out of an Ale-house.

AIR VI. (Dutch Skipper.) Puz.

*The gaudy Sun adorning,
With brightest Rays the Morning;
The Morning,
Shines o're the Easten Hill,
And I will go a Sporting. Owen.
And I will go a Courting,
A Courting,
There lies my Pleasure still. Puz.
In Gaffer Woodford's Ground,
A brushing Hare is found.
A Course which even Kings themselves might see, Owen.
And in another Place,
There lies a brushing Lass.
Which will give ten times more Sport than she.
(Second Part.) Puz.
What Pleasure to see while the Greyhounds are running,
Poor Puss's cunning, and shifting and shunning.
To see with what Art, she plays still her part.
And leaves her Pursuers afar.
First this Way, then that,
First a stretch, and then a Squat.
Till quite out of Breath,
She yields her to Death.
What Joys with the Sportman's compare. Owen.
How sweet to behold the soft blooming Lass,
With blushing Face, claspt close in Embrace,*

SCENE IV.

The Welsh Opera

To feel her Breasts rise see Joy fill her Eyes.

And Float on her Heaven of Charms.

While sighing and whining,

And twisting and twining,

With kissing and pressing,

And fondest caressing.

With Raptures she dies in your Arms.

[Exeunt.]

SCENE V.

Sweetissa, Margery.

Sweet.

If ever you had known what it was to love *Margery*, you would not have wonder'd how I could prefer a Man to his Master.

Marg.

I should not have wonder'd, indeed, if our young 'Squire had been like most other young Country 'Squires but he is a fine Gentleman, *Sweetissa*.

Sweet.

Before I went to *London*, *Margery* he might have had some Charms for me But you must know, my Dear, my young Master is a Beau and a Beau is a Creature for whom I have the greatest Contempt Why should one marry a Beau when one can have as much of him without Marriage as with it; A Beau, like a Shadow, is only to be seen: Oh! I would no more think of making such a Creature my Husband, than of riding to *London* on a Hobby-Horse.

AIR VII. (Bessy Bell.)

In long Pig-Tales, and shining Lace,

Our Beaus set out a Wooing;

Ye Widows never show them Grace,

But laugh at their pursuing.

But let the Daw, that shines so bright,

Of borrow'd Plumes bereft be;

Alas! poor Dame, how naked's the Sight,

You'll find there's nothing left ye.

Oh! *Margery*, there's more in *Robin's* Littlefinger than in a Beau's whole Body.

SCENE VI.

AIR VIII. (Masquerade Minuet.)

Robin, Sweetissa. Robin.

Oh! my Sweetissa,

Give me a Kiss a;

Oh! What a Bliss a,

To behold your Charms;

My Eyes with Gazing

The Welsh Opera

Are set a Blazing. Sweet.

Come then, and quench them within my Arms.

Robin.

Oh! my *Sweetissa*, thou art straiter than the straitest Tree; sweeter than the sweetest Flower Thy Hand as white as Milk, and as warm, thy Breast is white as Snow, and as cold. Thou art, to sum thee up at once, an Olio of Perfections; or, in other Words, a Garden of Bliss, which my Soul delights to walk in Oh! I will take such Strides about thy Form such vast, such mighty Strides.

Sweet.

Oh! *Robin*, it is impossible to tell you how much I love as it is to tell how much Water there is in the Sea.

Rob.

My dear *Sweetissa*, had I the Learning of the Author of that Opera Book in the Parlour Window, I could not make a Simile to my Love.

Sweet.

Be assur'd there shall be no Love lost between us.

AIR IX. (Young Dæmon once the happiest Swain.)

*When mutual Passion hath possess'd,
With equal Flame each amorous Breast,
How sweet the Rapture, Kiss;
Whilst each with soft Contention strive,
Which higher Extasy shall give,
Or be more mad with Bliss. Rob.*

Oh! my *Sweetissa*, how impatient am I till the Parson hath stitch'd us together; then my Dear, nothing but the Scissars of the Fates shall ever cut us asunder. Adieu my dear I must go whet the Knives, by that time the Parson will be return'd from Coursing, and we will be married this Morning Oh *Sweetissa*, it is easier to tell thee how much Water there is in the deepest Well, than to tell thee how I love.

Sweet.

Or to fathom the Depth of a Woman's Conscience, than to tell thee mine.

Rob.

Mine is as deep as the Knowledge of Physicians.

Sweet.

Mine as the Projects of Statesmen.

Rob.

Mine as the Virtue of Whores.

Sweet.

Mine as the Honesty of Lawyers.

Rob.

Mine as the Generosity of an Usurer.

The Welsh Opera

Sweet.

Mine as the Piety of Priests.

Rob.

Mine is as as as I know not what.

[While the Symphony is Playing, *Robin* pulls out an Handkerchief, blows his Nose, and drops a Letter.]

AIR X. (All in the Downs.)

Would you have my Love in Words display'd,

A Language must be coin'd to tell;

No Word for such a Passion made,

For no one ever lov'd so well.

Nothing, oh! nothing like my Love for you,

And so my Dearest, and so my Dearest, and my Dear, Adieu.

Exit.

SCENE VII.

Sweetissa, Margery.

Sweet.

Oh! my *Margery*, if this Fit of Love continues, how happy shall I be

Marg.

I would not have you build to much on the fine Promises which Men make before-hand for as a certain old Author says Men are frail.

Sweet.

Very true, but as the Poet says, There is difference in Men.

Marg.

Still another Poet says, There are Nine bad ones to One good one.

Sweet.

Granting even that Why may not mine be that Tythe Sheep. In a Lottery, where there are Nine Blanks to a Prize, every one expects that Prize for their own Ticket.

Marg.

Love is indeed like a Lottery, because it draws us into an almost certain Loss, by the Alurements of uncertain Gain; but then it is not like a Lottery, because in every other Circumstance it is unlike one.

Sweet.

I take Love to be rather like a Mess of Pease-Porridge, where tho' there are some bad Pease, there are more good ones; but then it is unlike a Mess of Pease-Porridge, because there is this Difference between a Man and a Pea, you may know a Pea by its Outside, you can't a Man.

Marg.

Love is like an Olio.

The Welsh Opera

Sweet.
Rather a Dish of South Meagre.

Marg.
Not very unlike Potatoes.

Sweet.
How?

Marg.
Because People live mostly upon it in a Cottage.

Sweet.
In short it is like every thing.

Marg.
And like nothing at all.

AIR XI. (Ye Nymphs and Silvan Gods.) Sweet.

*How odd a thing is Love,
Which the Poets fain would prove
To be this and that,
And the Lord knows what,
Like all Things below and above;
But believe a Maid,
Skill'd enough in the Trade,
Its Misery to explain;
'Tis a gentle Dart,
That tickles the Heart;
And tho' it gives Smart,
Does Joys impart;*

Which largely requites all the Pain. Marg.

Oh! my Dear, whilst you have been singing, see what I have discover'd A Letter dropt out of *Robin's* Pocket.

Sweet.
It is a Woman's Hand, and not my own [*reads it*] O! my *Margery*, now am I undone; indeed, *Robin* has writ he lain with me, and left our *Susan*.

Marg.
How!

Sweet.
This Letter comes from her, to upbraid him with it.

Marg.
Then you have reason to thank the Gods for this timely Discovery; what would it have availed you to have found him out when you were married to him when you had been his Wife, what would it have profited to have known he had another?

The Welsh Opera

Sweet.

True, true, *Margery*; when once a Woman is married, 'tis too late to discover Faults.

AIR XII. (Red–House.)

*Ye Virgins who would marry,
E'er you chuse be wary,
And if you'll not miscarry,
Be still inclin'd to doubting.*

*Examine well your Lover,
His Vices to discover;
With Caution con him over,
And turn quite Inside out him:*

*But Wedding past,
The Stocking cast
The Guests all gone,
The Curtain drawn;
Be henceforth blind,
Be very blind,*

And find no Faults about him. Sweet.

Oh! *Margery*, I am resolved never to see *Robin* more.

Marg.

Keep that Resolution, and you will be happy.

[Sweetissa drops a Letter.]

SCENE VIII.

Robin.

Rob.

How truly does the Book say, Hours to Men in Love are Years; Oh! for a Shower of Rain, to send the Parson home from Coursing before the Canonical Hours are over Ha! What Paper is this the Hand of our *William* on the Superscription To Mrs. *Sweetissa*, Madam Hoping that you are not quite de- t, e, r, ter Deter m, i, i, n, e, d, to marry our *Robin*, this comes for to let you know I'll read no more; can there be such Falshood in Mankind I find Footmen are as great Rogues as their Masters, and henceforth I'll look for no more Honesty under a Livery than an embroider'd Coat but let me see again To let you know I'm ready to fulfil my Promise to you Ha! she too is guilty: Chambermaids are as bad as their Ladies, and the whole World is one Nest of Rogues.

AIR XIII. (Black–Joke.)

*The more we know of Human Kind,
The more Deceits and Tricks we find,
In every Land as well as Wales;
For would you see no Roguery thrive,
Upon the Mountains you must live;
For Rogues abound in all the Vales,
The Master and the Man will nick,*

The Welsh Opera

*The Mistress and the Maid will trick;
For Rich and Poor,
Are Rogue and Whore,
There's not one honest Man in a Score,
Nor Woman true in Twenty four.*

SCENE IX.

Robin, John.

Rob.

Oh! *John*, thou best of Friends, come to my Arms; for thy Sake I will believe there is still one honest, one honest Man in the World

John.

What means our *Robin*.

Rob.

Oh! my Friend *Sweetissa's* false and I'm undone Let this Letter explain the rest.

John.

Ha! and is *William* at the Bottom of all our *William*, who us'd to rail against Women and Matrimony; Oh! 'tis too true what our Parson says there is no Belief in Man.

Rob.

Nor Women neither *John* art thou my Friend.

John.

When did *Robin* ask me what I have not done; have I not left my Horses undress'd to whet thy Knives? Have I not left my Stable unclean'd to clean thy Spoons, and even the Bey Stone—Horse unwater'd to wash thy Glasses.

Rob.

Then thou shalt carry a Challenge for me to *William*.

John.

Oh! *Robin*, consider what our Parson says we must not revenge, but forget and forgive.

Rob.

Let our Parson say what he will when did he himself forgive, did he forgive Gaffer *Jobson's* having wrong'd him of two Cocks of Hay in five Load Did he forgive Gammer *Sow Grunt* for having rob'd him of a Tythe Pig Did he forgive *Susan Foulmouth*, for telling him he lov'd the Cellar better than his Pulpit no no let him preach up Forgiveness, he forgives no Body. So I will follow his Example, not his Precepts; had he hit me a slap in the Face I could have put it up Had he stole a Silver Spoon, and laid the Blame on me, tho' I had been turn'd away for it, I would have forgiven him; but to try to rob me of my Love that, that, our *John*, I never will forgive him.

AIR XIV. (Tipling John.)

*The Dog his Bitt
Will often quit,
A Battle to eschew;*

The Welsh Opera

*The Cock his Corn
Will leave in Barn,
Another Cock in View:
One Man will eat
Anothers Meat,
And no Contention seen,
For all agree
'Tis good to be,
Tho' Hungry, in a whole Skin:
But should each spy
His Mistress by,
A Rival move his Suit;
He quits all Fears,
And by the Ears
They fall together to't.
A Rival shocks
Men, Dogs, and Cocks,
And makes the gentlest froward;
He who wont fight
For Mistress bright,
Is something worse than Coward. John.*
Nay, to say the Truth, thou hast Reason on thy Side Fare thee well I'll go, deliver thy Message; and thou shalt find I will behave as becomes a *Welshman*, and thy Friend.

SCENE X.

Robin.

Rob.

Now, were it not for the Sin of Self-murder, would I go hang my self at the next Tree Yes, *Sweetissa*, I would hang my self and haunt thee Oh! Woman, Woman, is this the Return you make true Love, no Man is sure of his Mistress till he has gotten her with Child. A Lover should act like a Boy at School, who shits in his Porridge that no one may take it from him should *William* have been before-hand with me . Oh!

SCENE XI.

Robin, Sweetissa.

Sweet.

Oh! the Perjury of Men, I find Dreams do not always go by Contraries; for I dream'd last Night that I saw our *Robin* married to another Ha! he's here.

[A long Silence, and walking by one another; she takes out her Handkerchief and bursts out a Crying.

Rob.

Your Crying won't do, Madam; I can tell you that, I have been your Fool long enough I have been cheated by your Tears too often to believe them any more *Sweet.*

Oh! barbarous, cruel, perfidious Wretch! oh! I shall break my Heart oh

The Welsh Opera

Rob.

No, no, your Heart is like a green Stick, you may bend it but can't break it; it will bend like a Willow, and twist round any one.

Sweet.

Monster! Monster!

Rob.

Better Language would shew better Breeding.

AIR XV. (Hedge Lane.) [Rob.]

Indeed my Dear,

With Sigh and Tear,

Your Point you will not carry;

I'd rather eat,

The Offal Meat,

Then other's Leavings marry, Sweet.

Villain! well,

You would conceal,

Your Falshood by such Fetches;

Alas too true,

I've been to you,

Thou very Wretch of Wretches.

Will you know

What I might do,

Would I but with young Master. Rob.

Pray be still,

Since by our Will,

You're now with Child of Bastard. Sweet.

I with Child? Rob.

Yes, you with Child? Sweet.

I with Child, you Villain? Rob.

Yes, you Madam, you

Are now with Child by William. [Rob.]

It is equal to me, Madam, with whom you play your Pranks, and I'd as live be my Master's Cuckold as my Fellow Servants nay, I had rather for I could make him pay for it.

Sweet.

Oh! most inhuman, dost thou not expect the Ceiling to fall down on thy Head for so notorious a Lie? dost thou believe in the Bible? dost thou believe there is such a thing as the Devil? dost thou believe there is such a Place as Hell?

Rob.

Yes, I do, Madam, and you'll find there's such a Place to your Cost. Oh! *Sweetissa Sweetissa*, that a Woman could hear herself ask'd in Church to one Man, when she knows she has had to do with another.

Sweet.

I had to do with another?

The Welsh Opera

Rob.
You, Madam, you.

Sweet.
I had to do with *Will*.

Rob.
Yes, you had to do with *Will*.

AIR XVI. (Lord Biron's Maggot.
Sure naught so disast'rous can Woman befall.
As to be a good Virgin and Thought none at all.

Had William but pleas'd me
It never had Teaz'd me
To hear a forsaken Man Bawl:
But from you this Abuse,
For whose Sake and whose Use,
I have safe cork'd my Maiden—head up;
How must it shock my Ear,
For what Woman can bear
To be call'd a vile Drunkard,
And told of the Tankard
Before she had swallow'd a Cup. Rob.

Oh! *Sweetissa*, *Sweetissa*, well, thou knowest, that wert thou true, I'd not have sold thee for Five Hundred Pounds. But why do I argue longer with a perfidious Woman, who is not only false, but triumphs in her Falsehood Oh! *Sweetissa*, *Sweetissa*, the very Andirons thou didst rub, before thou wert prefer'd to wait on thy Lady, have not more Brass in them than thy Forehead.

Sweet.
Oh *Robin*, *Robin*, the great Silver Candlesticks in thy Custody are not more Hollow than thou are

Rob.
Oh! *Sweetissa* the Paint, nay, the Eyebrows that thou putttest upon thy Mistress, are not more false than thou.

Sweet.
Thou hast as many Mistresses as there are Glasses on thy Side—board.

Rob.
And thou Lovers as thy Mistress has Patches.

Sweet.
If I have, you will have but a small Chance.

Rob.
The better my Fortune, to loose a Wife when you have had her, is to get out of Misfortune; to loose one before you get her is to escape it, especially if it be a Wife that some Body has had before you. He that marries a Woman pays the Price of Virtue; a Whore may be had cheaper.

AIR XVII. (Do not ask me charming Phillis.)

The Welsh Opera

*A Woman's Ware like China,
Now dear, now cheap is bought;
When whole 'tis worth a Guinea,
When broke not worth a Groat.
The Coat for which your Taylor,
Puts many Guineas down,
In Monmouth Street a Sailor
Will sell you for a Crown.
A Woman at St. James's,
With Guinea's you obtain,
But stay till lost her Fame is,
She'll be cheap in Drury-lane.*

SCENE XII.

Sweetissa, Margery.

Sweet.
Ungrateful barbarous Wretch.

Marg.
What is the Matter.

Sweet.
Oh! *Margery Robin.*

Marg.
What, more of him

Sweet.
Oh! worse than you can imagine, worse than I could have dreaded Oh! he has sullied my Virtue.

Marg.
How Your Virtue.

Sweet.
Yes *Margery*, that Virtue which I kept lock'd up as in a Cupboard that very Virtue has he abus'd has he barbarously insinuated to be no Virtue at all Oh I could have born any Fate but this I that would have carried a Knapsack through the World. So that my Virtue had been safe within it; I that would have rather been the poorest Man's Wife, than the richest Man's Whore to be call'd the Miss of a Footman, that would not be Miss to a King.

Marg.
It is a melancholly Thing indeed.

Sweet.
Oh *Margery*, Men do not sufficiently know the Value of Virtue. Even Footmen learn to go a Whoring of their Masters, and Virtue will shortly be of no Use but to stop Bottles.

AIR XVIII. (Twede Side.)

[Act ready.]

*What Woman her Virtue will keep,
When nought by her Virtue she Gains,
While she lulls her soft Passions asleep,
She's thought but a Fool for her Pains.
Since Valets who learn their Lords Wit,
Our Virtue a Bawble can Call,
Why should we our Ladies Steps quit,
Or have any Virtue at all.
(Exit.*

ACT II.

SCENE I.

A Field.

Robin. Will. John. Thomas. *Will.*
Here's a proper Place as can be for our Business.

Rob.
The sooner the better.

John.
Come *Thomas*, thou and I will not be idle.

Tho.
I'll take a Knock or two for Love with all my Heart.

(They stript.)
AIR XIX. (Britons strike Home.) Will.
*Robin. Come on, come on, come on,
As soon as you please, Rob.*
*Will. I will hit thee a slap in the,
Slap in the, slap in the Face, Will.*
*Wou'd, wou'd I could see't,
I would with both Feet,
Give thee such a damnable kick, by the by. Rob.*
If you dare, Sir, do. Will.
Why do not, Sir, you. Rob.
I'm ready, I'm ready, Will.
And so am I too. Tho.
You must fight to some other Tune, or you will never fight at all.

SCENE II.

Robin. Will. John. Thomas. Susan. *Sus.*

The Welsh Opera

What are you doing you set of Lazy Rascals. Do you consider my Master will be at home within these two Hours, and find nothing ready for his Supper. *Will.*

Let Master come when he will, if he keeps *Robin*, I am free to go as soon as he pleases, *Robin* and I will not live in one House together.

Susan.

Why, what's the Matter?

Rob.

He wanted to get my Mistress from me, that's all.

Will.

You Lie, Sirrah, you Lie.

Rob.

Who do you call Liar, you Blockhead I say you Lie.

Will.

And I say you Lie.

Rob.

The Devil take the greater Liar, I say.

AIR XX. (Mother quoth Hodge.)

*Oh! Fie upon't, Robin Oh! fie upon't Will;
With Language like this, when Scullian defames,
'Twere better your Tongues should ever lye still,
Than always be scolding, and calling ill Names. Will.*

'Twas he that Lies

Did first devise;

The first Words were his, and the last shall be mine. Rob.

You kiss my Dog. Will.

You are a sly Dog. Rob.

Bufflehead.

Will.

Loggerhead.

Rob.

Blockhead.

Will.

Fool.

Rob.

Swine.

Will.

Fox.

The Welsh Opera

Sirrah, I'll make you repent you ever quarrel'd with me; I will tell my Master of two Silver Spoons you stole I'll discover your Tricks Your selling Glasses, and pretending that the Frost broke them. Making your Master brew more Beer than he needed, and then giving it away to your own Family especially to feed that great swollen Belly of that pot-gutted Brother of your's who gets drunk twice a Day at Master's Expence

Rob.

Ha ha ha And is this all?

Will.

No, Sirrah! it is not all then there's your filing the Plate, and when it was found lighter, pretending that it wasted in Cleaning And your Bills for Tutty and rotten Stone, when you us'd nothing but poor Whiting Sirrah, you have been such a Rogue, that you have stole above half my Masters Plate, and spoil'd therest.

Sus.

Fie upon't *William*, what have we to do with Master's Losses, he is rich and can afford it Don't let us Quarrel among our Selves. Let us stand by one another; for let me tell you if Matters were to be too nicely examin'd into. I am afraid it would go hard with us all. Wise Servants always stick close to one another, as Plumbs in a Pudding that's over wetted, says *Susan* the Cook.

John.

Or Horse in a Stable that's on Fire, says *John* the Groom.

Tho.

Or Grapes upon a Wall says *Thomas* the Gardiner.

Sus.

Every Servant should be Sauce to his Fellow Servant, as Sauce Disguises the Faults of a Dish, so should he theirs. Oh *William* , were we all to have our Desarts we should be finely roasted indeed.

AIR XXI. (Dame of Honour.

A wise Man others Faults Conceals,

His own to get more clear of,

While Folly, all she knows reveals;

Sure what she does to hear of.

The Parson and the Lawyers blind,

Each to his Brother's erring,

For should you search, ke knows you'd find;

No Barrel the better Herring.

AIR XXII. (We've cheated the Parson.) Rob.

Here stands honest Bob, who ne'er in his Life,

Was known to be guilty of Faction or Strife.

But oh, what can;

Appease the Man.

Who'd rob me of both my Peace, and my Wife. Will.

If you prove it, I will be hang'd, and that's fair, Rob.

I've that in my Pocket will make it appear. Will.

Prithee what, Rob.

Ask you that.

When you know what you've written,

Against me so flat. [Rob.]

The Welsh Opera

Here is your Hand, tho' there is not your Name to it.
Is not this your Hand, Sir. *Will.*
I don't think it worth my while to tell you whether it is or no.

Rob.

Was it not enough to try to supplant me in my Place, but you must try to get my Mistress.

Will.

Your Mistress, any one may have your Mistress that can out-bid you, for it is very well known you had never a Mistress without paying for her. But perhaps you may find me too cunning for you, while you are attempting my Place, you may loose your own.

AIR XXIII. (Hark, Hark, the Cock Crows. Will.)

[1.]

*When Masters think fit,
I am ready to quit,
A Place I so little regard, Sir,
For while thou art here,
No Merit must e're,
Expect to find any Reward, Sir.*

(2.)

*The Groom who is able,
To manage his Stable.
Of Places enough need not doubt, Sir,
But you my good Brother,
Will scarce find another.
If Master should e're turn you out, Sir.*

SCENE III.

Susan, Sweetissa. Sweet.

Oh brave *Susan*, what you are resolv'd to keep open Doors, I find. When a Woman once goes without the Precincts of Virtue. She never knows where to stop.

AIR XXIV. (Country Garden.)

*Virtue within a Woman's Heart,
By Nature Hand is rain'd in,
Must there be kept by steady Art.
[Thunder ready.]*

*Like Water when it's damn'd in.
But the Dam once broken,
Past all revoking.*

Virtue Runs off in a Minute.

*Like Rivers left,
Of Water Bereft.*

Each Man may venture it. Sus.

I hope you will Pardon my Want of Capacity, Madam, but I don't understand what you mean.

Sweet.

The Welsh Opera

Your Capacity is to capacious Madam.

Sus.

Your Method of talking, Madam is something dark.

Sweet.

Your Method of acting is darker. Madam.

Sus.

I dare Appeal to the whole World, for the Justification of my Actions, Madam. And I defy any one to say my Fame is more sullied than my Plates. Madam.

Sweet.

Your Pots you mean Madam, if you are like any Plates, it is Soop Plates which any Man may put his Spoon into.

Sus.

Me, Madam?

Sweet.

You, Madam.

AIR XXV. (Dainty Davy.) Sus.

What the Devil mean you thus,

Scandal scattering,

Me be spattering.

Dirty Slut, and ugly Puss.

What can be your Meaning. Sweet.

Had you, Madam, not forgot,

When with Bob, you, you know what,

Surely, Madam, you would not.

Twice enquire my Meaning. [Sweet.]

There read that Letter, and be satisfied how base you have been to a Woman to whom you have profess'd a Friendship.

[A Noise of Halloo, Halloo Thunder and Lightning.]

SCENE IV.

To them Goody Scratch.

Scratch.

Oh save me, save me, save me.

John.

Save you, from what?

Scr.

Oh from the Greyhound, from the Greyhounds, they take me for a Hare, and will devour me.

The Welsh Opera

John.

If they take you for a Witch, I believe they take you Right.

Tho.

Look if she be quite chang'd out of the Hare's Form yet. She has got the Ears, and the Scent still.

John.

The Greyhounds are gone down on the other Side of the Hedge. Goody *Scratch*. You have been taken for a Witch a long Time, and now I think you are sufficiently prov'd one.

Scr.

O spare my Life, and do not take me before the Justice, and I will make your Fortunes.

Tho.

You shall be hang'd you Jade.

SCENE V.

To them Puzzletext (out of Breath.)

Puz.

Did you see the Hare.

Tho.

We have gotten the Hare safe enough this is the Hare.

Scr.

Oh spare my Life, and I'll confess it all. I am a Witch indeed, I am, and I was the Hare that you cours'd.

Tho.

See Master here are her Ears and her Scut which I caught hold of before she had changed her self from a Hare to a Woman again.

Puz.

Oh Goody *Scratch*. Goody *Scratch*, I am sorry to find my Sermons have no better Effect; but the true Reason is, because you have seldom come to hear them.

AIR XXVI. (A Soldier and a Sailor,)

*In vain the Parson Preaches,
Of Devils, Ghosts, and Witches.
While by each Unbeliever,
He's thought a mere Deceiver.*

Or Triffler at the best.

*But sure the Man who Spys, Sir,
A Witch with both his Eyes, Sir.
With Ears and Scut of Hare, Sir,
And looks enough to scare, Sir.*

Must think a Witch no Jest.

The Welsh Opera

Tho' to say the Truth, I never believ'd one Word of Witches my self till this Moment.

Sus.

I see the Reason now that my Pot would not boil sometimes, tho' I blow'd my Eyes out.

Puz.

Oh Goody *Scratch*, how Sorry am I, that any of my Flock should come to be hang'd.

Scr.

For God—sake, dear Sir; do take Pity on me.

Puz.

I will do all I can for thee, I will give the Spiritual Advice, and when thou art hang'd, I will for so low a Price as Ten Groats preach thy Funeral Sermon, wherein I will say of thee as many good Things as if thou hadst dy'd a Martyr.

Scr.

Alack, Alack, what comfort will your preaching be to me, when I shall not be able to hear it. But if you will be Secret, and preach nothing of this my Misfortune. I will discover a Secret that shall make you all Rich and Happy.

Omnes.

Ay! Let's hear that.

Scr.

In the first Place you are all People of Quality and great Fortunes You Ladies are all Daughters of my Lord *Truelove* and you Gentlemen are all Sons of Sir *Geo. Wealthy*.

Omnes.

How.

Scr.

On your Right Arms Ladies, you will find a Star, which was the particular Mark of Lord *Truelove's* Children.

Omnes.

How?

Puz.

A Star that was indeed the Mark by which they all were known, I do remember to have my self seen that Mark when I christen'd 'em, as being at that Time Chaplain to my Lord.

Omnes.

How?

Scratch.

You, Gentlemen, will find behind every one of your Ears a Swelling, which has been reputed to have been the Symptom of an unhappy Death but was indeed no other than a Mark plac'd there by Nature, to be the Witness of a happy Birth.

Omnes.

How!

SCENE V.

The Welsh Opera

Puzzle.

I do remember likewise to have heard a Brother—Clergyman, who was at that Time Chaplain to Sir *George*, to have spoken hereof.

Women.

We have all the Marks upon our Arms.

Men.

And we behind our Ears.

Scratch.

How you came here, I shall tell some other Time. Let it suffice now, that you Ladies are worth Nineteen Thousand Three Hundred and Fifty five Pounds a—piece; and you Mr. *Robin* have an Estate of Three Thousand a Year left you by your Father. You Mr. *John* have the same from an Uncle. You Mr. *Thomas* from another Uncle. And you Mr. *William* from a third Uncle.

Omnes.

How!

Scratch.

There remains one Thing to be set to rights, which is concerning those Letters, both which were written in my Master's Frolick, in order to occasion a Quarrel betwixt you.

Omnes.

How!

Scratch.

What I have said is true, as I'm a Witch.

Rob.

Oh, *Sweetissa!* can you pardon me?

Sweet.

Heaven knows how willingly. *Susan*, what say you? shall you and I make a second Couple.

Sus.

We follow our Leaders, Mr. *William*.

Tho.

What say'st thou *Margery?*

Marg.

I say, Yes.

John.

And you, Mrs. *Betty*.

Betty.

I don't say no.

The Welsh Opera

Puzzle.

Let us then to Church, where I will marry you all, without farther Ceremony.

Witch.

I have but one Word more, which is concerning myself; I am a Widow of Five Hundred a Year Jointure, and must marry a Parson to dissolve the Spell.

Puzzle.

Then I have only one Word to say for myself, which is that I may be that Parson.

Scratch.

Agreed.

Puzzle.

I will send for my Neighbour *Concordance*, and he shall marry us, as soon as I have tack'd the others together.

AIR XXVI. (Country Bumpkin.)

Come to Church my Lads and Lasses,

First be Wedded,

Then be Bedded,

Thank, if pleas'd with what there passes,

Parson of the Parish.

But if you repent your Flame,

And your Marriages,

Prove Miscarrages,

'Twill avail you nought to blame

The Parson of the Parish.

Chorus.

Who ties the Wedding Noose,

'Tis the Parson,

'Tis the Parson,

Who's the Hymen for our Use,

The Parson of the Parish.

SCENE VI.

A Room.

Mr. Ap-shinken, Mrs. Ap-shinken. Mrs. Ap-sh.

It is very hard, my Dear, that I must be an eternal Slave to my Family That the Moment my Back is turn'd, every thing goes to Rack and Manger: That you will take no Care upon yourself, like a sleepy good-for-nothing Drone, as you are. *Mr. Ap-sh.*

My Wife is a very good Wife. but she has an extraordinary Tongue of her own: It is happy for me she has Servants to scold, for no living Man would be able to stand alone the Fury of her Tongue. *Mrs. Ap-Sh.*

Mr. Ap-Shinken, Mr. Ap-Shinken, it is very well known what Offers I have refused when I married you. *Mr. Ap-Sh.*

Yes, my Dear but if you had ever had better, I believe you know your own Interest too well to have refused it. Besides it is a little strange that you should scruple the Government of your Maids, when you formerly used to

The Welsh Opera

dispute with me the Government of my Men. Thus it is always with Women. I will maintain it to be as difficult to please a Woman as to shoot a Swallow flying. A Woman is just opposite to a Turnstile, that turns every way with you, she turns every way against. A scolding Wife is a Kennel of Hounds. Mrs. *Ap-Sh.*

A drunken Husband is a Hogshead of strong Beer continually running about the House. Mr. *Ap-Sh.*

A scolding Wife is a walking Base-viol out of Tune. Mrs. *Ap-Sh.*

A drunken Husband is a bad Fiddle-stick, never able to put her into Tune, or play any Tune upon her. Mr. *Ap-Sh.*

A scolding Wife is Rosin to that Fiddle-stick, continually rubbing it up to play 'till it wears it out. Mrs. *Ap-Sh.*

A drunken Husband is a wet Piece of Paper to that Rosin, which consumes the Rosin without any rubbing at all. Mr. *Ap-Sh.*

The Wife is the Paper Mill that hammers the Paper. Mrs. *Ap-Sh.*

And the Husband is a Paper Mill without any Hammer at all.

SCENE VII.

Enter Master Owen, and Mrs. Ap-Shinken (his Wife.)

Both Children.

Your Blessing, Sir.

Both Parents.

How!

Both Child.

We are your Son and Daughter.

Ap-Sh.

My Son married to the Daughter of a Tenant!

Owen.

Oh, Sir! she is indeed your Tenant's Daughter, but worthy of a Crown.

AIR XXVII. (Fond Eccho.) Molly.

Oh think not the Maid whom you scorn

With Riches delighted can be,

Had I a great Princess been born

My Owen had dear been to me.

On others your Treasures bestow,

Give Owen alone to these Arms;

In Grandeur and Wealth we find Woe,

But in Love there is nothing but Charms. Owen.

In Title and Wealth what is lost

In Tenderness oft is repaid;

Too much a great Fortune may cost,

Well purchas'd may be the poor Maid.

Whilst Fancy's faint Dreams cheat the great,

We Pleasure will really prove,

While they in their Palaces Hate,

We in our poor Cottage will love. Ap-Sh.

She sings delightfully, that's the truth on't.

The Welsh Opera

Owen.

T'other Song, t'other Song, ply him with Songs 'till he forgives us.

AIR XXVIII. (Patty's Mill.) Molly.

If I too high aspire,

'Tis Love that prunes my Wing,

Love makes a Clown a 'Squire,

Would make a 'Squire a King.

What Maid that Owen 'spies

From Love can e'er be free;

Love in his lac'd Coat lies,

And peeps from his Toupet. Mr. Ap-Sh.

I can hold out no longer.

Mrs. Ap-Sh.

Nor I. Let me see you embrace one another, and then I'll embrace you both. *Mr. Ap-Sh.*

How little does my Lady Wife think that this *Owen*, whom we have bred up as our Son, is really the Son of our Tenant; and this *Molly*, who is supposed to be the Daughter of our Tenant, is really our own Daughter; but the Discovery of this, and of the Reasons which induced me to this, I shall defer 'till some other Opportunity.

AIR XXIX. (Caro Vien.) Molly.

With Joy my Soul's o'erflowing. Owen.

With Joy my Heart's jolly. Molly.

Oh my dearest sweet Owen. Owen.

Oh my dearest Molly.

SCENE the Last.

Omnes.

Mrs. Ap-Sh.

Hey-day, hey-day! what's the Meaning of this? Hearkee, Madam (*whispers.*) *Mr. Ap-Sh.*

I suppose my Lady will put an End to this Diversion immediately. *Mrs. Ap-Sh.*

How! Men and Women of Quality!

Puzzle.

As I tell you I assure you.

Mr. Ap-Sh.

Then, Gentlemen and Ladies, I ask your Pardon for using you as Servants, not knowing the Respect which was due to you, but I will try to make amends by the Hospitality I will shew you this Day.

Owen.

If you please we will begin our Hospitality with a Dance, for which the Fiddles I have provided for my own Wedding will be very opportune.

Mrs. Ap-Sh.

Be not too extravagant of your Hospitality, *Owen*, neither.

The Welsh Opera

[A Dance here.]

AIR XXX. (Little Jack Horner.) Puzzle.

Thus Couples united,

Ever delighted,

May ye ne'er disagree; Men.

First we'll be fed, Women.

Then we'll to Bed, Omnes.

What happy Rogues are we,

Chorus.

Couples united,

Ever delighted,

May we ne'er disagree;

First we'll be fed,

Then we'll to Bed,

What happy Rogues are we.

FINIS.