

THE POETICAL  
WORKS

Of that Witty LORD

*John Earl of Rochester:*

Left in *Ranger's* Lodge in *Woodstock* Park;  
where his LORDSHIP died, and  
never before Printed;

WITH

Some ACCOUNT of the LIFE of that  
ingenious Nobleman.

EXTRACTED

From Bishop *Burnet*, and other Eminent Writers;

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L O N D O N:

Printed in the YEAR MDCC LXI.



T H E  
P R E F A C E.



*I* was long supposed (by a Tradition in the Family) that Lord Rochester left many of his Writings unpublished at his Death; but where they were, or in whose Hand deposited, remained a Secret for many Years; and had remained so for ever, had the Servant, to whose Care they were entrusted to burn them, performed the Charge he was strictly enjoined by his Lordship to execute a few Hours before his Decease. But this faithless Servant, who was very illiterate, fancying the Papers he was commissioned to destroy, contained something uncom-

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*mon and valuable, delay'd their Destruction Time after Time, 'till he had almost forgotten he had any such Things : Not daring in the Interim to shew 'em to any Body, for fear his Falshood should be detected. As he received them Young, and lived to a great Age, they were found but a few Years ago, by his Grand-daughter, who then lived with him at the Time of his Death, in searching after his Will; He being at that Time in a Kind of Trance, and past all Hopes of Recovery.*

*As this young Woman knew as little of Writings as her Grand-father, she did not doubt, upon the Manuscript's coming to Light, but she had found his Will, and well hoped from the Bulk of it, that it contained something very considerable; and as such, it was put into the Hands of a neighbouring Gentleman, who, in his Youth, had practised the Law, for the Favour of his Advice. On the Discovery of its being no Will, the young Woman, who was now become sole Heir to her Grand-father, and to whom the Contents of the said Writings appeared neither useful nor valuable, made a present of them to the said Gentleman for  
his*

*his Trouble, upon Intimation that the same would be a sufficient Gratuity for the Pains he had taken in their perusal.*

*This Gentleman, who was always an Admirer of the Muses, communicated these Remains of Lord Rochester's to his intimate Friends, and to several respectable Persons in the University of Oxford, who greatly approving thereof, constrained him to send them Abroad in this Manner, that the Young, the Gay, and the Witty, might have something new and diverting, to pass away the ensuing Winter Evenings.*

*As most of these Pieces were written when the Hey-day of his Lordship's Blood was a little over, they are penned with a stricter Regard to Decency and good Manners, than some of his former Writings.*

*As his Lordship was attended in his last Moments by several eminent Divines, and in whom he placed a very great Confidence, it may be wondered, why he did not commit the Care of his*  
*Writings*

*Writings to their Hands for Destruction, rather than to an illiterate Servant : But as he died a very great Penitent for the inordinate Sallies of youthful Profligacy, which the Gaiety of the Age he lived in, had made him guilty of, he probably did not chuse to let them see a Collection that (as mere Divines) they must have condemned rather than applauded, especially at that Crisis ; and by unseasonable Animadversions might have raised their disagreeable Ideas in himself, and put better Thoughts out of his tranquil Mind, then duly prepared and ready for Eternity : or else, against his Lordship's Inclination, they might have saved them for some future Purpose.*

*This Humour of destroying Writings has been prevalent in sundry Ages, when the Authors thereof have been on the Verge of Dissolution. Sir Philip Sidney, in great Anguish, ordered his Arcadia to be burnt : And Sir Walter Raleigh, actually burnt himself, the second Part of his History of the World, a few Hours before he was to suffer.*

*Thus*

# The P R E F A C E. v

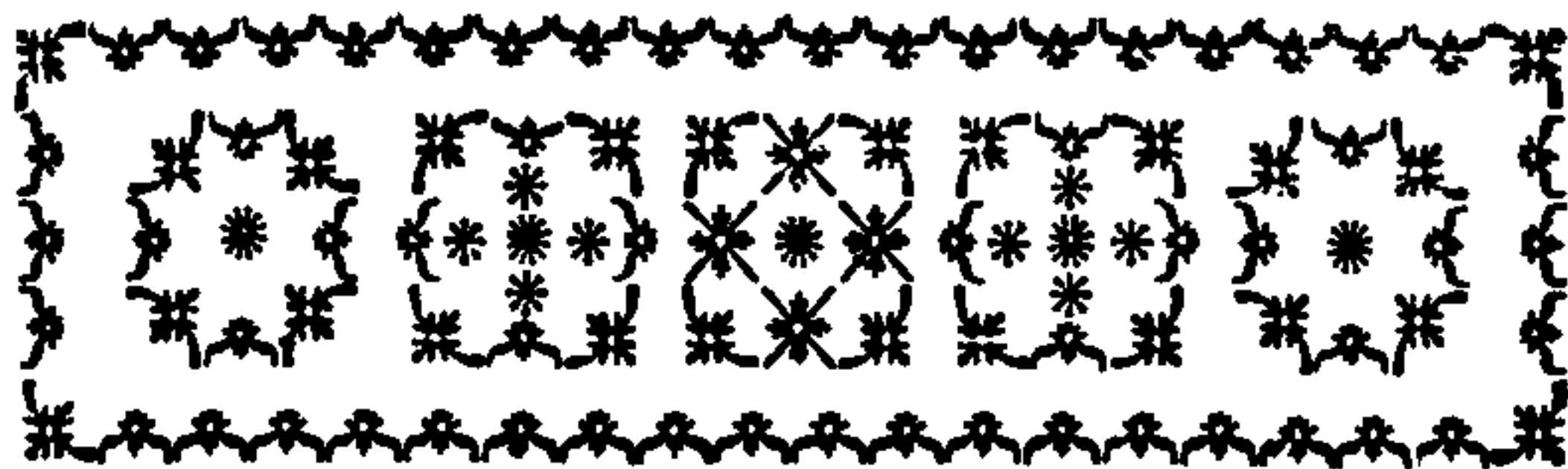
*Thus much we have thought fit to say, to satisfy the inquisitive Reader, concerning the Publication of these Writings, so long after the Death of the Noble Author.*

*As to the Work itself, the very Name of Rochester is a sufficient Passport wherever the English is spoken or understood: And we doubt not but it will give the highest Delight to all those who have Youth, Fire, Wit and Discernment; nor be even distasteful to those cool Readers who have lived 'till Pleasure hath lost its Relish, and witty Things their Power to provoke Mirth, Laughter and Delectation. There being a Season for all Things under the Sun.*




THE





THE  
L I F E  
OF THE  
*Earl of ROCHESTER.*



JOHN Wilmot, the celebrated and witty Earl of Rochester, was the Son of Henry Earl of Rochester, best known by the Title of Lord Wilmot; to whose Conduct and Bravery King Charles the Second's Preservation, after Worcester Fight, was entirely owing; the Earl not only shewing him the hiding Place in the Oak, but also procured him a safe Retreat into foreign Parts.

He was born in April 1648, and very early taken notice of for the Lustre of his Genius; and having acquired an uncommon Perfection in the *Latin* Tongue, was highly delighted with those incomparable Authors that flourished in the Reign of *Augustus Cæsar*. At twelve Years of Age (his Father being dead) he was sent to the University of *Oxford*, and committed to the  
Care

Care of Dr. *Blandford*, afterwards Bishop of *Worcester*. But King *Charles* being now restored to his Right, and the whole Nation keeping an universal Jubilee for Joy, he could not be prevailed upon to stay there. And joining with the jovial Humour of the Age, became a good Fellow before he was a Man. To avoid which he was sent to travel much sooner than otherwise he would have been, under the Governance of Dr. *Balfour*, a *Scotch* Physician; whose Love to Learning and good Morals, rendered him a proper Person for such a Charge; and who discharged his Trust more like a Father than a Governor. For seeing the young Earl's Genius more delighted with Gaiety than Study, he chose such Things for him to read, as he was sure would catch his brilliant Fancy, and going from one such Artifice to another, he brought him back to such a Love of Reading, as could never be supplanted by any other Entertainment, to his dying Day. During his stay Abroad, he learnt the *French* and *Italian* Tongues; with some Knowledge in *Physic*; which enabled him to play the Quack so well as he did upon *Tower-Hill* afterwards. At his Return, tho' he was but in his 18th Year, he appeared at Court with as great Advantages as most ever had. His Person was graceful, tall and well shaped; he was exactly well-bred; of a modest Behaviour and affable Deportment. His Conversation was easy and obliging, adorned with such a surprizing Vivacity of Thought, and Sweetness of Expression, as never failed to captivate his Hearers. And when he wrote, his Style was clear and strong;

his



his Wit sublime and pithy : And when he used Figures —they were usually new, and always sprightly. *Boileau* among the *French*, and *Cowley* among the *English*, were the Authors he took most delight in, (the latter being then, the principal Poet in vogue) but having an unbounded Thirst after Knowledge, he read every Thing : And as the Bee can draw Honey from the meanest Flower in the Field, so this witty Lord never met with any Thing but what he could strike something out of. So that 'tis no wonder his Presence proved so acceptable in a Court of so much Gaiety.

In the Winter of the Year 1665 he went to Sea, with the Earl of *Sandwich*; when he was sent out against the *Dutch East India Fleet*, and was in the Ship called the *Revenge*, Commanded by Sir *Thomas Tiddiman*, when the attack was made on the Port of *Bergen* in *Norway*, the *Dutch Ships* having got into that Port. It was, says *Burnet*, ‘ as Desperate an Attempt as ever was  
‘ made, and during the whole Action, the Earl of *Ro-*  
‘ *chester* shewed as brave and resolute a Courage as pos-  
‘ sible. A Person of Honour told me he heard the  
‘ Lord *Clifford*, who was in the same Ship, often mag-  
‘ nify his Courage at that Time very highly ; nor did  
‘ the Rigour of the Season, the Hardness of the Voyage,  
‘ and the extreme Danger he had been in, deter him  
‘ from running the like the very next Occasion ; for  
‘ the Summer following he went to Sea again, without  
‘ communicating his Design to his nearest Relations.

‘ He went aboard the Ship commanded by Sir *Edward*  
 ‘ *Spragge*, the Day before the great Sea-fight of that  
 ‘ Year; almost all the Voluntèers that went in that  
 ‘ Ship were killed. During the Action, Sir *Edward*  
 ‘ *Spragge* not being satisfied with the Behaviour of one  
 ‘ of the Captains, could not easily find a Person that  
 ‘ would undertake to venture through so much Danger  
 ‘ to carry his Command to the Captain; this Lord of-  
 ‘ fered himself to the Service, and went in a little  
 ‘ Boat, through all the Shot, and delivered his Mes-  
 ‘ sage, and returned back to Sir *Edward*, which was  
 ‘ much commended by all that saw it.’ These are the  
 early Instances of Courage, which can be produced in  
 Favour of Lord *Rocheſter*.

Since his Travels, and naval Expeditions he seemed  
 to have contracted a Habit of Temperance, in which  
 had he been so happy as to preserve, he must have  
 escaped that fatal Rock, on which he afterwards split,  
 upon his return to Court, where Love and Pleasure  
 kept their perpetual Rounds, under the Smiles of a  
 Prince, whom Nature had fitted for all the Enjoyments  
 of the most luxurious Desires. In Times so dissolute  
 as these, it is no Wonder if a Man of so warm a Con-  
 stitution as *Rocheſter*, could not resist the too flattering  
 Temptations, which were heightened by the Participa-  
 tions of the Court in general. The uncommon Charms  
 of *Rocheſter*’s Conversation, induced all Men to court  
 him as a Companion, tho’ they often paid too dear for  
 their Curiosity, by being made the Subject of his lam-  
 poons,

poons, if they happened to have any Oddities in their Temper, by the exposing of which he could humour his Propensity to Scandal. His pleasant Extravagances soon became the Subject of general Conversation, by which his Vanity was at once flattered, and his Turn of Satire rendered more keen, by the Success it met with.

*Rochester* had certainly a true Talent for Satire, and he spared neither Friends nor Foes, but let it loose on all without Discrimination. Majesty itself was not secure from it; he more than once lampooned the King, whose Weakness and Attachment to some of his Mistresses, he endeavoured to cure by several means, that is, either by winning them from him, in spite of the Indulgence and Liberality they felt from a Royal Gallant, or by severely lampooning them and him on various Occasions; which the King, who was a Man of Wit and Pleasure, as well as his Lordship, took for the natural Sallies of his Genius, and meant rather as the Amusements of his Fancy, than as the Efforts of Malice; yet, either by a too frequent Repetition, or a too close and poignant Virulence, the King banished him the Court for a Satire made directly on him; this Satire consist of twenty-eight Stanzas, and is entitled *The Restoration, or the History of the Infipids*.

Much about this Time the Duke of *Buckingham* was under Disgrace, for Things of another Nature, and being disengaged from any particular Attachment in Town, he and Lord *Rochester* resolved, like Don *Quixote* of old, to set out in quest of Adventures; and they met with some that will appear entertaining to our

Readers, which we shall give upon the Authority of *Robt.ſter's* Life, prefixed to his Works. Among many other Adventures the following was one :

There happened to be an Inn on *Newmarket* Road, to be let, they disguised themselves in proper Habits for the Persons they were to assume, and jointly took this Inn, in which each in his Turn officiated as Master; but they soon made this Subservient to Purposes of another Nature.

Having carefully observed the pretty Girls in the Country with whom they were most captivated, (they considered not whether Maids, Wives, or Widows) and to gain Opportunities of seducing them, they invited the Neighbours, who had either Wives or Daughters, to frequent Feasts, where the Men were plied hard with good Liquor, and the Women sufficiently warmed to make but as little Resistance as would be agreeable to their Inclinations, dealing out their Poison to both Sexes, inspiring the Men with Wine, and other strong Liquors, and the Women with Love ; thus they were able to deflower many a Virgin, and alienate the Affections of many a Wife by this odd Stratagem ; and it is difficult to say, whether it is possible for two Men to live to a worse Purpose.

It is natural to imagine that this Kind of Life could not be of long Duration. Feasts so frequently given, and that without any thing to pay, must give a strong Suspicion that the Inn-keepers must soon break, or that they were of such Fortune and Circumstances, as did not well suit the Post they were in.—This their  
Lordships



Lordships were sensible of, but not much concerned about it, since they were seldom found long to continue in the same Sort of Adventures, Variety being the Life of their Enjoyments. It was besides, near the Time of his Majesty's going to *Newmarket*, when they designed, that the Discovery of their real Plots, should clear them of the Imputation of being concerned in any more pernicious to the Government. These two Conjectures meeting, they thought themselves obliged to dispatch two important Adventures, which they had not yet been able to compass.—There was an old covetous Miser in the Neighbourhood, who notwithstanding his Age, was in Possession of a very agreeable young Wife. Her Husband watched her with the same Assiduity he did his Money, and never trusted her out of his Sight, but under the Protection of an old Maiden Sister, who never had herself experienced the Joys of Love, and bore no great Benevolence to all who were young and handsome. Our noble Inn-keepers had no manner of Doubt of his accepting a Treat, as many had done, for he loved good Living with all his Heart, when it cost him nothing ; and except upon these Occasions he was the most temperate and abstemious Man alive ; but then they could never prevail with him to bring his Wife, notwithstanding they urged the Presence of so many good Wives in the Neighbourhood to keep her Company. All their Study was then how to deceive the old Sister at Home, who was set as a Guardian over that Fruit which the Miser could neither



eat himself, nor suffer any other to taste; but such a Difficulty as this was soon to be overcome by such Inventions. It was therefore agreed that Lord *Rockester* should be dressed in Woman's Cloaths, and while the Husband was feasting with my Lord Duke, he should make Trial of his Skill with the old Woman at Home. He had learned that she had no Aversion to the Bottle when she could come secretly and conveniently at it. Equipped like a Country Lass, and furnished with a Bottle of Spiritous Liquors, he marched to the old Miser's House. It was with Difficulty he found Means to speak with the old Woman, but at last obtained the Favour; where perfect in all the Cant of those People, he began to tell the Occasion of his coming, in Hopes she would invite him to come in, but all in Vain; he was admitted no further than the Porch, with the House Door a-jar: At last, my Lord finding no other Way, fell upon this Expedient. He pretended to be taken suddenly Ill, and tumbled down upon the Threshold. This Noise brings the young Wife to them, who with much Trouble persuades her Keeper to help her into the House, in Regard to the Decorum of her Sex, and the unhappy Condition she was in. The Door had not been long shut, till our Impostor by Degrees recovers, and being set on a Chair, cants a very religious Thanksgiving to the good Gentlewoman for her Kindness, and observed how deplorable it was to be subject to such Fits, which often took her in the Street, and exposed her to many Accidents, but  
every

every now and then took a Sip of the Bottle, and recommended it to the old Benefactress, who was sure to drink a hearty Dram. His Lordship had another Bottle in his Pocket qualified with a Opium, which would sooner accomplish his Desire, by giving the Woman a somniferous Dose, which drinking with Greediness, she soon fell fast asleep.

His Lordship having so far succeeded, and being fired with the Presence of the young Wife, for whom he had formed this odd Scheme, his Desires became impetuous, which produced a Change of Colour, and made the artless Creature imagine the Fit was returning. My Lord then asked if she would be so charitable as to let him lie down on the Bed; the good-natured young Woman shewed him the Way, and being laid down, and staying by him at his Request, he put her in Mind of her Condition, asking about her Husband, whom the young Woman painted in his true Colours, as a surly, jealous old Tyrant. The rural Innocent imagining she had only a Woman with her, was less reserved in her Behaviour and Expressions on that Account, and his Lordship soon found that a Tale of Love would not be unpleasing to her. Being now no longer able to curb his Appetite, which was wound up beyond the Power of Restraint, he declared his Sex to her, and without much struggling enjoyed her.

He now became as Happy as Indulgence could make him; and when the first Transports were over,

he contrived the Escape of this young Adulteress from the Prison of her Keeper. She hearkened to his Proposals with Pleasure, and before the old Gentlewoman was awake, she robbed her Husband of an Hundred and Fifty Pieces, and marched off with Lord *Rochester* to the Inn, about Midnight.

They were to pass over three or four Fields before they could reach it, and in going over the last, they very nearly escaped falling into the Enemy's Hands; but the Voice of the Husband discovering who he was, our Adventurers struck down the Field out of the Path, and for the greater Security lay down in the Grass. The Place, the Occasion, and the Person that was so near, put his Lordship in Mind of renewing his Pleasure almost in Sight of the Cuckold. The Fair was no longer coy, and easily yielded to his Desires. He in short carried the Girl Home, and then prostituted her to the Duke's Pleasure, after he had been cloyed himself. The old Man going Home, and finding his Sister asleep, his Wife fled, and his Money gone, was thrown into a State of Madness, and soon hanged himself. The News was soon spread about the Neighbourhood, and reached the Inn, where both Lovers, now as Weary of their Purchase as Desirous of it before, advised her to go to *London*, with which she complied, and in all Probability followed there the Trade of Prostitution for a Subsistence.

The King, soon after this infamous Adventure, coming that Way, found them both in their Post at the  
Inn,

Inn, took them again into Favour, and suffered them to go with him to *Newmarket*. This Exploit of Lord *Rocheſter* is not at all improbable, when his Character is conſidered ; his Treachery in the Affair of the Miſer's Wife is very like him ; and ſurely it was one of the greateſt Acts of Baſeneſs of which he was ever guilty ; he artfully ſeduced her, while her unſuſpected Huſband was entertained by the Duke of *Buckingham* ; he contrived a Robbery, and produced the Death of the injured Huſband ; this complicated Crime was one of thoſe heavy Charges on his Mind when he lay on his Death-bed, under the dreadful Alarms of his Conſcience.

His Lordſhip's Amours at Court made a great Noiſe in the World of Gallantry, eſpecially that which he had with the celebrated Mrs. *Roberts*, Miſtreſs to the King, whom ſhe abandoned for the Poſſeſſion of *Rocheſter*'s Heart, which ſhe found to her Experience, it was not in her Power long to hold. The Earl, who was ſoon cloyed with the Poſſeſſion of any one Woman, though the Faireſt in the World, forſook her. The Lady after the firſt Indignation of her Paſſion ſubſided, grew as indifferent, and conſidered upon the proper Means of retrieving the King's Affections. The Occaſion was luckily given her one Morning while ſhe was dreſſing : She ſaw the King coming by, ſhe hurried down with her Hair diſheveled, threw herſelf at his Feet, implored his Pardon, and vowed Conſtancy for the Future. The King, overcome with the well-diſſembled Agonies of this Beauty, raiſed her up, took



took her in his Arms, and protested no Man could see her, and not love her : He waited on her to her Lodging, and there compleated the Reconciliation. This easy Behaviour of the King, had, with many other Instances of the same Kind, determined my Lord *Hallifax* to assert, “ That the Love of King *Charles II.* lay as  
 “ much as any Man’s in the lower Regions ; that he  
 “ was indifferent as to their Constancy, and only valued  
 “ them for the sensual Pleasure they could yield.”

Lord *Rocheſter*’s Frolics in the Character of a Mountebank are well known, and the Speech which he made upon that Occaſion of his firſt turning Itinerant Doctor, has been often printed ; there is in it a true Spirit of Satire, and a Keenneſs of Lampoon, which is very much in the Character of his Lordſhip, who had certainly an original Turn for inveſtive and ſatirical Compoſition.

We ſhall give the following ſhort Extract from this celebrated Speech, in which his Lordſhip’s Wit appears pretty conſpicuous.

“ If I appear (ſays *Alexander Bendo*) to any one like  
 “ a Counterfeit, even for the Sake of that chiefly  
 “ ought I to be conſtrued a true Man, who is the  
 “ Counterfeit’s Example, his Original, and that which  
 “ he employs his Industry and Pains to imitate and  
 “ copy. It is therefore my Fault if the Cheat, by his  
 “ Wit and Endeavours, makes himſelf ſo like me,  
 “ that conſequently I cannot avoid reſembling him ?  
 “ Conſider, pray, the Valiant and the Coward, the  
 “ wealthy Merchant and the Bankrupt ; the Politician  
 “ and



“ and the Fool ; they are the same in many Things,  
“ and differ but in one alone. The valiant Man  
“ holds up his Hand, looks confidently round about  
“ him, wears a Sword, courts a Lord’s Wife, and  
“ owns it ; so does the Coward. One only Point of  
“ Honour, and that’s Courage, which (like false Me-  
“ tal, one only Trial can discover) makes the Distinc-  
“ tion. The Bankrupt walks the *Exchange*, buys Bar-  
“ gains, draws Bills, and accepts them with the Rich-  
“ est, whilst Paper and Credit are current Coin ; that  
“ which makes the Difference is real Cash, a great  
“ Defect indeed, and yet but one, and that the last  
“ found out, and still till then the least perceived.—  
“ Now for the Politician ; he is a grave, deliberating,  
“ close, prying Man : Pray are there not grave, deli-  
“ berating, close, prying Fools ? If therefore the Dif-  
“ ference betwixt all these (though infinite in Effect)  
“ be so nice in all Appearance, will you yet expect it  
“ should be otherwise between the false Physician,  
“ Astrologer, &c. and the true ? The first calls him-  
“ self learned Doctor, sends forth his Bills, gives Phy-  
“ sic and Council, tells, and foretells ; the other is  
“ bound to do just as much. It is only your Experi-  
“ ence must distinguish betwixt them, to which I will-  
“ ingly submit myself.”

When Lord *Rochester* was restored again to the Favour of King *Charles II.* he continued the same extravagant Pursuits of Pleasure, and would even use Freedoms with that Prince, whom he had before so  
much

much offended ; for his Satire knew no Bounds, his Invention was lively, and his Execution sharp.

He is supposed to have contrived with one of *Charles's* Mistresses the following Stratagem to cure that Monarch of the nocturnal Rambles to which he addicted himself. He agreed to go out one Night with him to visit a celebrated House of Intrigue, where he told his Majesty the finest Woman in *England* were to be found. The King made no Scruple to assume his usual Disguise and accompany him, and while he was engaged with one of the Ladies of Pleasure, being before instructed by *Rocheſter* how to behave, ſhe pick'd his Pocket of all his Money and Watch, which the King did not immediately miſs. Neither the People of the Houſe, nor the Girl herſelf was made acquainted with the Quality of their Viſiter, nor had the leaſt Suſpicion who he was. When the Intrigue was ended, the King enquired for *Rocheſter*, but was told he had quitted the Houſe, without taking Leave : But into what Embarraſſment was he thrown when upon ſearching his Pockets, in order to diſcharge the Reckoning, he found his Money gone ; he was then reduced to aſk the Favour of the Jezebel to give him Credit till To-morrow, as the Gentleman who came in with him had not returned, who was to have pay'd for both. The Conſequence of this Requeſt was, he was abuſed, and laughed at ; and the old Woman told him, that ſhe had often been ſerved ſuch dirty Tricks, and would not permit him to ſtir till the Reckoning was

was paid, and then called one of her Bullies to take Care of him. In this ridiculous Distress stood the *British* Monarch; the Prisoner of a Bawd, and the Life upon whom the Nation's Hopes were fixed, put in the Power of a Russian. After many Altercations the King at last proposed, that she should accept a Ring which he then took off his Finger, in Pledge for her Money, which she likewise refused, and told him, that as she was no judge of the Value of the Ring, she did not chuse to accept such Pledges. The King then desired that a Jeweller might be called to give his Opinion of the Value of it, but he was answered, that the Expedient was impracticable, as no Jeweller could then be supposed to be out of Bed. After much Entreaty his Majesty at last prevailed upon the Fellow, to knock up a Jeweller and shew him the Ring, which as soon as he had inspected, he stood amazed, and enquired, with Eyes fixed upon the Fellow, who he had got in his House? To which he answered, a black-looking ugly Son of a W——, who had no Money in his Pocket, and was obliged to pawn his Ring. The Ring, says the Jeweller, is so immensely rich, that but one Man in the Nation could afford to wear it; and that one is the King. The Jeweller being astonished at this Accident, went out with the Bully, in order to be fully satisfied of so extraordinary an Affair; and as soon as he entered the Room, he fell on his Knees, and with the utmost Respect presented the Ring to his Majesty. The old Jezebel and the Bully finding the  
extra-

extraordinary Quality of their Guest, were now confounded, and asked Pardon most submissively on their Knees. The King in the best natured Manner forgave them, and laughing, asked them, whether the Ring would not bear another Bottle.

Thus ended this Adventure, in which the King learned how dangerous it was to risk his Person in Night-frolics; and could not but severely reprove *Rochester* for acting such a Part towards him; however he sincerely resolved never again to be guilty of the like Indiscretion.

These are the most material of the Adventures, and libertine Courses of the Lord *Rochester*, which Historians and Biographers have transmitted to Posterity.

We have now seen these Scenes of Lord *Rochester's* Life, in which he appears to little Advantage; it is with infinite Pleasure we can take a View of the brighter Side of his Character; to do which, we must attend him to his Death-bed. Had he been the amiable Man Mr. *Wolsey* represents him, he needed not have suffered so many Pangs of Remorse, nor felt the Horrors of Conscience, nor been driven almost to Despair by his Reflexions on a mispent Life.

*Rochester* lived a Profligate, but he died a Penitent. He lived in Defiance of all Principles; but when he felt the cold Hand of Death upon him, he reflected on his Folly, and saw that the Portion of Iniquity is, at last, sure to be only Pain and Anguish.

Dr. *Burnet*, the excellent Bishop of *Sarum* (however  
he



he may be reviled by a Party) with many other Obligations conferred upon the World, has added some Account of Lord *Rochester* in his dying Moments. No State Policy in this Case, can well be supposed to have biaſſed him, and when there are no Motives to Falſehood, it is ſomewhat cruel to diſcredit Assertions. The Doctor could not be influenced by Views of Intereſt to give this, or any other Account of his Lordſhip; and could certainly have no other Incentive, but that of ſerving his Country, by ſhewing the Inſtability of Vice, and, by drawing into Light an illuſtrious Penitent, adding one Wreath more to the Banners of Virtue.

*Burnet* begins with telling us, that an Accident fell out in the early Part of the Earl's Life, which in its Conſequences confirmed him in the Purſuit of vicious Courses.

“ When he went to Sea in the Year 1665, there  
 “ happened to be in the ſame Ship with him, Mr.  
 “ *Montague*, and another Gentleman of Quality; theſe  
 “ two, the former eſpecially, ſeemed perſuaded that  
 “ they ſhould never return into *England*. Mr. *Monta-*  
 “ *gue* ſaid, he was ſure of it; the other was not ſo po-  
 “ ſitive. The Earl of *Rochester* and the laſt of theſe  
 “ entered into a formal Engagement, not without Ce-  
 “ remonies of Religion, that if either of them died,  
 “ he ſhould appear and give the other Notice of the  
 “ future State, if there was any. But Mr. *Montague*  
 “ would not enter into the Bond. When the Day  
 “ came that they thought to have taken the *Dutch*  
 “ Fleet



“ Fleet in the Port of *Bergen*, Mr. *Montague*, though  
 “ he had such a strong Prefage in his Mind of his ap-  
 “ proaching Death, yet he bravely stayed all the while  
 “ in the Place of the greatest Danger. The other  
 “ Gentleman signalized his Courage in the most un-  
 “ daunted Manner, till near the End of the Action;  
 “ when he fell on a sudden into such a Trembling,  
 “ that he could scarce stand: And Mr. *Montague* go-  
 “ ing to him to hold him up, as they were in each  
 “ others Arms, a Cannon Ball carried away Mr. *Mon-*  
 “ *tague*’s Belly, so that he expired in an Hour after.”

The Earl of *Rocheſter* told Dr. *Burnet*, that theſe Pre-  
 fages they had in their Minds, made ſome Impreſſion  
 on him that there were ſeparate Beings; and that the  
 Soul either by a natural Sagacity, or ſome ſecret No-  
 tice communicated to it, had a Sort of Divination.  
 But this Gentleman’s never appearing was a Snare to  
 him during the Reſt of his Life: Though when he  
 mentioned this, he could not but acknowledge, it was  
 an unreaſonable Thing for him to think that Beings  
 in another State were not under ſuch Laws and Limits  
 that they could not command their Motion, but as  
 the ſupreme Power ſhould order them; and that one  
 who had ſo corrupted the natural Principles of Truth  
 as he had, had no Reaſon to expect that Miracles  
 ſhould be wrought for his Conviction.

He told Dr. *Burnet* another odd Prefage of ap-  
 proaching Death, in Lady *Ware*, his Mother-in-law’s  
 Family. The Chaplain had dreamed that ſuch a Day  
 he ſhould die; but being by all the Family laughed  
 out

out of the Belief of it, he had almost forgot it, till the Evening before at Supper ; there being thirteen at Table, according to an old Conceit that one of the Family must soon die, one of the young Ladies pointed to him, that he was the Person. Upon this the Chaplain recalling to Mind his Dream, fell into some Disorder, and the Lady *Ware* reproving him for his Superstition, he said, he was confident he was to die before Morning ; but he being in perfect Health, it was not much minded. It was Saturday Night, and he was to preach next Day. He went to his Chamber and set up late as it appeared by the burning of his candle ; and he had been preparing his Notes for his Sermon, but was found dead in his Bed next Morning.

These Things his Lordship said, made him incline to believe that the Soul was of a Substance distinct from Matter ; but that which convinced him of it was, that in his last Sickness, which brought him so near his Death, when his Spirits were so spent he could not move or stir, and did not hope to live an Hour ; he said his Reason and Judgment were so clear and strong, that from thence he was fully persuaded, that Death was not the Dissolution of the Soul, but only the Separation of it from Matter. He had in that Sickness great Remorse for his past Life ; but he afterwards said, they were rather general and dark Horrors, than any Conviction of Transgression against his Maker ; he was sorry he had lived so as to waste his Strength so soon, or that he had brought such an ill Name upon himself ; and had an Agony in his Mind  
about

about it, which he knew not well how to express, but believe that these Impunctions of Conscience rather proceed from the Horror of his Condition, than any true Contrition for the Errors of his Life.

During the Time Dr. *Burnet* was at Lord *Rocheſter's* House, they entered frequently into Conversation upon the Topics of natural and revealed Religion, which the Doctor endeavoured to enlarge upon, and explain in a Manner ſuitable to the Condition of a dying Penitent; his Lordſhip expreſſed much Contrition for his having ſo often violated the Laws of the one, againſt his better Knowledge, and having ſpurned the Authority of the other in the Pride of wanton Sophiſtry. He declared that he was ſatiſfied of the Truth of the Chriſtian Religion, that he thought it the Inſtitution of Heaven, and afforded the moſt natural Idea of the ſupreme Being, as well as the moſt forcible Motives to Virtue of any Faith profeſſed amongſt Men.

‘ He was not only ſatiſfied (ſays Dr. *Burnet*) of the  
 ‘ Truth of our Holy Religion, merely as a Matter of  
 ‘ Speculation, but was perſuaded likewise of the  
 ‘ Power of inward Grace, of which he gave me this  
 ‘ ſtrange Account. He, ſaid Mr. *Parſons*, in order to his  
 ‘ Conviction, read to him the 53d. Chapter of the Pro-  
 ‘ phesies of Iſaiah, and compared that with the Hiſ-  
 ‘ tory of our Saviour’s Paſſion, that he might there ſee  
 ‘ a Propheſy concerning it, written many Ages before  
 ‘ it was done; which the *Jews* that blaſphemed *Jeſus*  
 ‘ *Chriſt* ſtill kept in their Hands as a Book divinely  
 ‘ inspired,

‘inspired. He said, as he heard it read, he felt an  
‘inward Force upon him, which did so enlighten his  
‘Mind and convince him, that he could resist it no  
‘longer, for the Words had an Authority which did  
‘shoot like Rays or Beams in his Mind, so that he  
‘was not only convinced by the Reasonings he had  
‘about it, which satisfied his Understanding, but by  
‘a Power, which did so effectually constrain him that  
‘he ever after firmly believed in his Saviour, as if he  
‘had seen him in the Clouds.’

We are not quite certain whether there is not a  
Tincture of Enthusiasm in this Account given by his  
Lordship, as it is too natural to fly from one Extreme  
to another, from the Excesses of Debauchery to the  
Gloom of Methodism ; but even if we suppose this to  
have been the Case, he was certainly in the safest Ex-  
treme ; and there is more Comfort in hearing that a  
Man whose Life had been so remarkably profligate as  
his, should die under such Impressions, than quit the  
World without one Pang for past Offences.

The Bishop gives an Instance of the great Alterati-  
on of his Lordship’s Temper and Dispositions (from  
what they were formerly) in his Sickness. ‘When-  
‘ever he happened to be out of Order, either by Pain  
‘or Sicknes, his Temper became quite ungovernable,  
‘and his Passions so fierce, that his Servants were afraid  
‘to approach him. But in this last Sicknes he was all  
‘Humility, Patience, and Resignation. Once he  
‘was a little offended with the Delay of a Servant,  
‘who



‘ who he thought made not Haste enough, with some-  
‘ what he called for, and said in a little Heat, that  
‘ damn’d Fellow.’ Soon after, says the Doctor, I told  
him that I was glad to find his Stile so reformed, and  
that he had so entirely over come that ill Habit of  
Swearing, only that Word of calling any damned  
which had returned upon him was not decent; his  
Answer was, ‘ O that Language of Fiends, which was  
‘ so familiar to me, hangs yet about me, sure none has  
‘ deserved more to be damned than I have done; and  
‘ after he had humbly asked God Pardon for it, he  
‘ desired me to call the Person to him that he might  
‘ ask him Forgiveness; but I told him that was need-  
‘ less, for he had said it of one who did not hear it,  
‘ and so could not be offended by it. In this Disposi-  
‘ tion of Mind, continues the Bishop, all the While I  
‘ was with him four Days together; he was then  
‘ brought so low that all Hope of Recovery was gone.  
‘ Much purulent Matter came from him with his  
‘ Urine, which he passed always with Pain, but one  
‘ Day with inexpressible Torment; yet he bore it de-  
‘ cently, without breaking out into Repinings, or im-  
‘ patient Complaints. Nature being at last quite ex-  
‘ hausted, and all the Floods of Life gone, he died  
‘ without a Groan on the 26th of *July* 1680, in the  
‘ 33d Year of his Ags. A Day or two before his  
‘ Death he lay much silent, and seemed extremely  
‘ devout in his Contemplations; he was frequently  
‘ observed



‘ observed to raise his Eyes to Heaven, and send forth  
‘ Ejaculations to the Searcher of Hearts, who saw his  
‘ Penitence, and who, he hoped, would forgive him.’

Thus died Lord *Rochester*, an amazing Instance of the Goodness of God, who permitted him to enjoy Time, and inclined his Heart to penitence. As by his Life he was suffered to set an Example of the most abandoned Dissoluteness to the World ; so by his Death, he was a lively Demonstration of the Fruitlessness of vicious Courses, and may be proposed as an Example to all those who are captivated with the Charms of guilty Pleasure.

Let all his Failings now sleep with him in the Grave, and let us only think of his closing Moments, his Penitence, and Reformation. Had he been permitted to have recovered his Illness, it is reasonable to presume he would have been as lively an Example of Virtue, as he had ever been of Vice, and have born his Testimony in Favour of Religion.

He left behind him a Son named *Charles*, who dying on the 12th of *November*, was buried by his Father on the 7th of *December* following : He also left behind him three Daughters. The Male Line ceasing, *Charles II.* conferred the Title of Earl of *Rochester* on *Lawrence Viscount Killingworth*, a young Son of *Edward Earl of Clarendon*,