

THE
E L D E R S.
A
FARCE.

[H. Man.]

DRAMATIS PERSONAE.**MEN.**

Sir Valentine Sedgmore
Humphrey Sedgmore *Brothers, and Guardians to Louisa.*

Charles Manley *An Officer contracted to Louisa.*

Mr. Carlton *Uncle to Manley, and a friend of Sir Valentine's.*

Ralph *Servant to Sir Valentine.*

BUTLER and other Servants, and Catch Singers

WOMEN.

Miss Louisa Balmer *In love with Charles Manley.*
Kitty *Her Maid.*

ACT I.

SCENE I.

[A room in Sir VALENTINE'S House.]

Humphrey Sedgmore, solus.

NOTWITHSTANDING it is fashionable for small wits to rail against matrimony, I begin to be convinced that a bachelor's life is an undesirable one in youth and an unaccommodated one in age; and though it is rather late in the day, I now begin to think seriously of marriage. With this view, I have opened my mind to Louis Balmer, who is my ward, and the most amiable woman in this country. "*The disproportion* years, and the want of personal accomplishments, might have been objections to my addresses in the last age; but in times like the present when dissipation is become a profession, elopement a trade and hair-dressing a science, he who can make the best settlements is soonest preferred, and the soonest becomes a cuckold. Louisa, however, is a good girl, and I think I may venture with her on marriage;" but as my brother's consent will be necessary, I am come to consult his approbation, and will then settle the business with the lady. O, here he is!

Enter Sir Valentine.

H.S. A subject of some consequence to my happiness, Sir Valentine, and to which I am persuaded you will have no objection, has brought me to consult your opinion.

Sir V. Well, well, well, bother Humphrey, we will talk of the matter bye and bye; in the meantime you must know, that I too have an affair of some consequence in which *your* opinion will be necessary. You know Louisa Balmer, who was left by her father in

our care, and who cannot marry without our consents, is arrived at years of discretion.

H.S. She is so.

Sir V. And is consequently marriageable.

H.S. Granted.

Sir V. And is a most monstrous fine girl.

H.S. I think so.

Sir V. And she will make a most excellent wife.

H.S. I have not the least doubt of it.

Sir V. Why then brother I have a match to propose for her – that's all.

H.S. A suitable one I presume.

Sir V. Oh yes, very suitable; suitable in all points, I can assure you, for the gentleman is of a proper age, has a pretty pleasing kind of person, a most elegant address, an engaging manner, and a most bewitching conversation.

H.S. Upon my word, whoever sat for this picture, you have paid great attention to the outline, and bestowed some pains on the colouring; pleasing, engaging, bewitching; from the great brilliancy of his character, I suspect that I have not the honour to know him.

Sir V. Not know him, bother Humphrey!

H.S. I fancy not, Sir.

Sir V. And you seriously don't know any gentleman who will exactly answer this description?

H.S. No, I do not upon my honour.

Sir V. And I warrant you never saw, never conversed with any body, who might lay claim to these epithets without presumption.

*[Strutting backwards and forwards,
with his hands behind him.]*

H.S. Never, to my knowledge.

Sir V. Ha! ha! ha! – that is comical enough, faith – that is very good upon my soul! *(laughing)*; that is excellent; my dear

undistinguishing brother Humphrey! why, what think you of myself, brother, -- am not I elegant? -- am not I engaging, brother?

H.S. Yourself, brother!

Sir V. Yes, myself, brother.

H.S. You in love, Sir Valentine, in love with Louisa Balmer! at your years, at your time of life, in love! and in love too with a young girl, who is scarcely out of her teens! Why, man, it is impossible -- it can't be. Come, come, Sir Valentine, to leave trifling, who is this clever fellow you are proposing for a husband for Louisa?

Sir V. Who is he!

H.S. Yes, who is he?

Sir V. Why, have it not told you who he is?

H.S. Then I am not to consider it as a joke, but as a matter which your heart is positively engaged, and the result of mature deliberation.

Sir V. Why really, brother Humphrey, you have a strange preposterous, unaccountable, uncomfortable, method of delivering yourself on some occasions. At my years! at my time of life! and it must be a joke! and it's impossible! and it can't be! Now, the devil take me, brother, if I like such joking. I tell you, there is the most tender pathetic correspondence imaginable subsisting between me and the lovely Louisa; and I only want your concurrence to bring matters to a happy conclusion.

H.S. Then I am to conclude that your whole soul is wrapt up in this tender infatuation?

Sir V. Yes, my dear brother, yes! I love her as Hector loved Andromache; as Cleopatra loved Mark Anthony, and as Alexander loved Sisygambus.

H.S. And she has given you proofs of her passion in return?

Sir V. Proofs, man! proofs positive, proofs insurmountable; did not she praise the cut of my coat? was not she charmed with the air of my wig? did not she notice the cock of my hat? and did she not tell me, in her dear ironical familiar way, that I carried as much

powder on my head as a roasting-pig, and was as facetious in my manner as a dancing-bear.

H.S. Ha! ha! ha! – Why these are proofs positive with a vengeance.

Sir V. O, yes! – so I think – so I think.

H.S. From this indisputable sort of encouragement, you have fanned a spark into flame, and that flame into a furnace?

Sir V. From nothing more, upon my honor!

H.S. If that is the case, it will be in vain to expostulate, for it will be impossible for you to live without her –

Sir V. Without her! – without her! – I'm distressed as a lawyer without parchment – a barber without soap-suds – a minister without a majority – or a sausage-woman without charcoal!

H.S. Ha! ha! ha! – truly, a very excellent description of your feelings and situation with the lady; but with respect to my concurrence, it is a point that I shall consider in future –

Sir V. Well – well ! we'll talk of that hereafter; but now to the affair you mentioned when you first came in –

H.S. Affair – brother!

Sir V. Aye – aye – the business that was of such consequence.

H.S. Business – brother!

Sir V. Yes, brother – I mean the business which you were sure I should have no objection to, that was of such importance to your happiness you know.

H.S. Objection to, brother!

Sir V. Objection to ! – why confound your repetitions! you grow as pithy as a quaker, and as communicative as a Dutch fisherman. Did not you tell me when you first came in, with a long, grave, formal, sanctified face, that you wished to consult me on something of importance to your felicity!

H.S. I wish I may die, Sir Valentine, if –

Sir V. You don't remember one syllable of the matter, I suppose? –

H.S. Why really I must confess – I say – I do confess – I say –

I don't deny – that embarrassments are d_____d disagreeable things, and I believe no man wishes to have less of them than I do; but really this business, whatever it was, has so – so disconcerted – so confounded – so – you understand me, I dare say, Sir?

Sir V. Oh, perfectly, perfectly! Yes, yes! – I understand the whole affair just as well, as if you had done me the favour to deliver yourself in Welsh, or in one of the dead languages. To be sure, brother Humphrey, you may have a particular method of introducing your meanings, and of explaining them when nothing was meant; but I believe it is not very customary for a man to have a great many ideas of the first consequence upon his mind, and yet know nothing of the matter.

Enter SERVANT.

Serv. Mr. Carlton, a gentleman from London, Sir, will be glad to speak with you in the drawing-room.

Sir V. What, my old friend! tell him I'll wait on him directly. Well brother, when you have recovered from your embarrassments, your confusions, your hesitations, and all that; I hope we shall come to a proper explanation – till then – adieu.

II. SEDGEMORE, *solus.*

Why what a fool of a figure do I cut in my own eyes, and the eyes of that supernatural coxcomb, my brother. – O woman! – woman! – never let men dispute the sovereignty of your sway, for it is as absolute as the Emperor of Morocco's; if a green girl of one-and-twenty can so fascinate a family, as to make one brother an ass, and the other a monkey; what is not the sex capable of, in the fullness of their influence and power! I have, however, acquired this degree of knowledge, that a woman, who can listen to Sir Valentine's pretensions, is totally unfit for mine. – I will, therefore, see her once more, acquaint her with what has passed,

and either oblige her to relinquish her hold upon my heart, or break my chain, and get free from her.

SCENE II. *A Dressing Room.*

A Guitar and Music Book on a Table.

LOUISA [*solus.*] *A Book in her hand.*

Louisa. This lovely egotist, Miss Byron, *deserves* our best wishes; but poor Clementina *demands* them. [*Lays down the book.*] Ah, Charles! Charles! -- A soldier's friend, who reflects on the dangers of his profession, may well be concerned for his safety, but a friend in love is more subject to anxiety than all others. Books may relieve the heart from the severity of its sensations, but music gratifies and indulges it. [*Turns to the music-book – takes up the guitar – and sings*] ---

How blest is the maiden, how free from all care,
 Who each day can behold her fond swain:
 But he may stray to the wake, to the statute, or fair,
 But is sure to return back again.

No seas to endanger, no wars to alarm,
 Her breast is secur'd from all pain;
 If he wanders, tis only from cottage to farm

Tho' pleasure or profit should tempt him to roam
 With his flocks over mountain or plain;
 Tho' he's lost in the woods, yet he'll find his way home;
 And he's soon to return back again.

Not to the dear youth, who by honour is led
 To a far – very far distant shore;
 On the earth, on the sea, he may rest his cold head,

And may never return any more.

Enter KITTY.

Kitty. O gemini, ma'am – I have such a story to tell you! You must know, ma'am, as I was walking just now in the shrubbery by moonlight – of all the people in the world – who should come up – but Mr. Thomas the gardener! Dear Mr. Thomas, says I, (for I protest he frightened me,) who should expect to see you here, said I? And so, says he, what do you think, Mrs. Kitty, says he? – think! says I, (looking very gravely I assure you ma'am) – think! says I – why I think you are very familiar with your betters, says I! for he kept squeezing my hand in such a manner, ma'am – and so, says he, as I was standing at the garden gate, Mrs. Kitty, who should come up, but as clever a gentleman as ever stood upon two legs.

Louisa. Well, well! What is all this nonsense to me?

Kitty. So I said, ma'am! What is all this nonsense to me, said I, Mr. Thomas? Why then, [here is missing a couple of lines] about the garden, and then about my old master, and then about Miss Louisa! said he –

Louisa. About me!

Kitty. Yes! you, you, ma'am! – and, then said Mr. Thomas, he talk'd about *botamy* and *floristers* and then he ask'd me what o'clock it was, and how long I had lived here? and then, said Mr. Thomas, he asked me one of the oddest questions in the world!

Louisa. For Heaven's sake! make an end of your story.

Kitty. Pray, Mr. Thomas, said he, (for he had told him his name, ma'am) pray, said he, Mr. Thomas, were you ever in love? – because, if you were ever in love, says he, you must know how to keep a secret – Did he so, said I?

Louisa. This tautology is insufferable – I am impatient until you have done! –

Kitty. So was I, ma'am ! – A very pretty thing truly, said I, Mr. Thomas, that you must undertake to keep other people's secrets (says I), who have so many to keep of your own. I assure you I don't understand such behavior. With that, ma'am, he said, if I would suffer him to take a civil salute, he would tell me the whole affair; and, before I had time to refuse him, though the words were at the tip of my tongue, he took me round the neck, ma'am, and kissed me with such violence, that you might have heard him from one end of the shrubbery to the other.

Louisa. Then you are determined to torture me with suspense, I see –

Kitty. With that I learned from Mr. Thomas, that the gentleman was a proper, genteel, handsome, young man, an officer in the army, just returned from abroad, that he was dying for love of you, and that his name would be known by the letter.

Louisa. Charles returned! Ten thousand thanks to you, Kitty, for the intelligence: but the letter, the letter, give me the letter directly!

Kitty. Ha! ha! ha! The very words that I said to Mr. Thomas – give me the letter, said I, Mr. Thomas – give me the letter directly, said I! With that, ma'am, he took to his heels, and we had such a race, that, he if he had not run into the temple of Hymen (as my old master calls it), I never should have been able to overtake him: and there, ma'am – when I was quite of breath – he took it out in his long *d-r-a-w*ling awkward way, and put it into my hands, ma'am!

Louisa. [*snatches the letter, and going out, says.*] Should Sir Valentine enquire for me, I am not to be spoken with; if I want you I'll ring for you –

[*Exit.*]

Kitty. Well! this love is a mighty entertaining thing in a gentleman's family; and when the master shows a proper example in the parlour, it sets the servants in the kitchen to billing and cooing like so many turtle doves. O, tis charming! and now this young officer has put up in opposition to my old master, I shall have as much bustle and business as an innkeeper at a contested

election. The chamber-maid in these cases is always the returning officer; and consequently he who has a majority upon the poll – *[imitates counting of guineas in her hand]* -- is sure of my vote and interest into the bargain.

SONG.

Since cupid thus, to make a fuss,
 Has very wisely plann'd it,
 'Twixt you and I, if gold should fly,
 Poor Kitty can't withstand it.
 Both young and old will bribe with gold,
 Its charms are so endearing;
 I must confess, I can't do less
 Than love electioneering.

Since not on oath, I'll flatter both,
 That method is surest;
 With, Sir, your cause attention draws,
 And, Sir, your cause is surest.
 What 'tho I be, Miss Double-fee,
 It's charming interfering;
 And greater folks approve such jokes,
 When they're electioneering.

[Exit.

SCENE III. *With a View of the House at a small Distance.*

Enter SIR VALENTINE and Mr. Carlton.

Sir V. This is kind of you, Mr. Carlton, this is very kind indeed to call and see an old friend after so long an absence; upon my soul, it is monstrous civil of you without joking. Tho' I suppose if my brother was here, he would think I was joking – notwithstanding.

(Aside)

Mr. Carl. Some engagements calling to Bath, Sir Valentine, I proposed paying you a visit on my return; but the post-chaise breaking down in the high road, at the end of the lane, has brought me here sooner than I expected.

Sir V. Ah! this riding post is the devil; and, I am sure, if I held the Pythagorean opinion, I should dread being cooped up in the carcasses of three particular animals, beyond all others in the creation.

Mr. Carl. And what are they?

Sir V. Sir, they are a post-horse, a lobster, and a country apothecary!

Mr. Carl. And why so?

Sir V. Why so! – why the first is flogg'd to death; the second is boiled to death; and I am sure, if I were subject to be called up at all hours in the night, I should fret myself to death, and die by inches, which would perhaps be the worst death of the three. Well, but what think you of the alterations I have made? what think you of my improvements?

Mr. Carl. With respect to alterations you have certainly made them with a vengeance; but as to improvements, Sir Valentine, I confess myself to be so old-fashioned a fellow, and to have so few ideas of modern taste, that I am not qualified to give an opinion. – You have cut down the grove, I see.

Sir V. O, yes! all smack, smooth, stick and stump, root and branch; lawns, lawns, Carlton! are the modern taste! groves and rookeries are as unfashionable at this time of day, as character and distinction in dress, or economy and hospitality at your table!

Mr. Carl. And yet I own myself to be so far a Druid in my passion for groves, that I had rather plant six new ones, than destroy one of long standing.

Sir V. Then perhaps you don't altogether approve of the agreeable desolation that I have made among my elms, though I was absolutely oblig'd to demolish them in my own defence; for the rooks kept such a diabolical cawing as soon as it was light, that they always gave me an idea of a convocation of old-cloathsmen at Dukes-place, or the Jew brokers at the India-house!

Mr. Carl. So then I find you cut down your groves, as Cromwell destroy'd the monasteries, to send the rooks a grazing.

Sir V. Ha! ha! ha! A comical conceit, a very comical conceit upon, my dignity!

Mr. Carl. But what has become of the mill and the farm-house, Sir Valentine?

Sir V. Sir, they are all metamorphosed, by the all-powerful hand of taste, into the most agreeable objects in creation. The mill is converted into a Chinese temple; the cottage into a hermitage; the cow-house to a grotto, the barn to a most beautiful ruin; and the horse-pond into a cascade.

Mr. Carl. Very capital improvements truly.

Sir V. Very pleasing. [*gravely.*]

Mr. Carl. Very proper.

Sir V. Very refined. [*gravely.*]

Mr. Carl. Very useful.

Sir V. Very elegant [*gravely.*]

Mr. Carl. Very profitable.

Sir V. Have a charming effect upon the eye.

Mr. Carl. And are wonderfully serviceable to the country.

Sir V. So they are! – so they are indeed!

Mr. Carl. O! there is no doubt but the annihilation of small farms tends to the plentiful supply of markets; the discouraging marriage among poor farmers promotes the legal propagation of our species; spending of rack rents in London increases the riches of the tenant; while bringing down refinements, luxuries, and dissipations, improves their morals and their manners.

Sir V. What a d_____ d dry, moralizing, sentimental old fool this is [*Aside.*]

Mr. Carl. But a-propos, Sir Valentine, among the rest of your improvements, how is your ward Louisa?

Sir V. A prodigy of perfection, Sir! So charming – so bewitching – so captivating – so transporting – so – But what the deuce brought Louisa into your head? I thought you were amusing yourself with a philosophical discourse on small farms?

Mr. Carl. I'll tell you. My nephew, Charles, who shall one day be heir to my estate, I am desirous of seeing happily married.

Sir V. Oh, you are –

Mr. Carl. I am, Sir. And as I have known Louisa from her infancy, and am convinced she will make him an exceeding good wife, I should be glad to promote the alliance.

Sir V. You really would?

Mr. Carl. Most certainly. And as Charles is daily expected from America, where he has served with great military reputation, I trust his intrinsic accomplishments will recommend him to Louisa's affection, and that my fortune will justify his pretensions.

Sir V. You do, do you? Why then my good friend, you were never more mistaken in your life, I can assure you.

Mr. Carl. Mistaken!

Sir V. Yes, mistaken! for Louisa has been engaged these six months.

Mr. Carl. Engaged!

Sir V. Yes, Sir, her affections are fixed, I tell you – and fixed too with great judgment, great discernment, great discretion, fixed upon a man who is always sure of my consent, and whose happiness will ever give me pleasure; in short, Carlton! Louisa is a dear distinguishing girl, and is perhaps too – too sensible of my perfections.

[Takes out his handkerchief]

Mr. Carl. Your perfections, Sir Valentine!

Sir V. Yes! my – my – my – perfections. You will excuse my sensibility, Mr. Carlton; but I can't help it – upon my soul I can't help it [*still crying*] for whenever I think of Louisa's goodness, I melt – melt – melt like a stick of Dutch sealing-wax in a farthing candle –

Mr. Carl. Then I may impute your great display of taste to your desire of obliging your mistress?

Sir V. Witness, ye Heavens! for her I cut down my trees; for her I erected my temples; for her I ornamented my rooms with gingerbread fripperies like the Bank; and stuccoed the front of my house, till it looked as white as a Judges' wig, or a pear-tree in full-blossom.

Mr. Carl. Ha, ha, ha!

Sir V. Ha, ha, ha! Well, but after all I can't help laughing for the soul of me – and yet, really, Carlton, to a man in love, there is great pleasure in melancholy, and I generally weep twice a day to moderate the excess of my transports.

Mr. Carl. Don't let me intrude any longer on your time; to a man in your situation it is precious. I beg I may no longer keep you from your lady; I can amuse myself with books till your return.

Sir V. Will you so? Why then I'll just offer an evening sacrifice to my goddess; call upon the chaste moon to witness to the purity of my attachment, compare her eyes to stars, her lips to coral, her teeth to ivory, and her bosom to snow, (which are not customary comparisons), and return to you in a few moments at farthest.

Ye frozen seas, that ne'er were taught to flow;
 Ye Alpine hills, whose tops are crowned with snow;
 Were ye in love, ye would with feavour glow,
 And melting, deluge all the plains below.

[*Exeunt*]

SCENE V. *A Garden.*

CHARLES MANLEY *and* LOUISA.

Charles. My dear, dear, Louisa! after so long an absence, this meeting is doubly transporting.

Louisa. I need not tell you, Charles, how rejoiced I am too see you, your own feelings, I trust will best interpret mine; but, pray, how did you contrive to procure this interview, for though I received your letter acquainting me with your arrival, I apprehended we should have some difficulty meeting.

Charles. Money, money my dear angel! Which softens the heart of a great man's porter, or a great man's mistress; which gives eloquence to ignorance, honesty to knaves, beauty to old maids, and sanctity to [Y (illegible)], gave me admittance into this garden; to be plain, upon applying a few pieces to the gardener, who received them with the grace and gravity of a physician, the locks and bolts shrunk back like so many sensitive plants, and brought me to the object of my devotion.

Louisa. A pretty description truly! Well, Charles I congratulate you on your safe arrival in England, and rejoice to find you have escaped the captivity of your countrymen which engages so much public conversation.

Charles. A soldier's profession is more particularly exposed to misfortunes. Xenophon and Hannibal were not free of them. A brave man's zeal, Louisa, may sometimes betray his judgement, but never can impeach his honor, and his conduct will ever receive a liberal construction from the feelings of a generous, and the candor of a judging people, but to talk of softer subjects – my dear Louisa's heart I hope?

Louisa. And do you really think, Charles, that I have kept my heart disengaged all this time?

Charles. Most certainly.

Louisa. Then most certainly you are a very unreasonable man; but, to convince you that you have either over-rated your own power, or my constancy, I must tell you that there are at this time no less than two passionate, pleading, persuasive swains, who are ready to throw their fortunes at my feet, and to sacrifice me at the altar into the bargain.

Charles. Swains! Louisa?

Louisa. Yes! Swains, simpletons, lovers, silly things who deal in poetry and falsehoods, rhapsodies and ejaculations, long sighs and short sentences; who show their learning on trees, and their wit upon windows, who are more fawning than spaniels, more crafty than foxes, more inconstant than the wind, and more to be dreaded than the small-pox or the wrinkles of old age.

Charles. For Heaven's sake! Louisa, ease me from this suspence; what lovers are those you allude to?

Louisa. Lovers, Charles! Never was a poor damsel so tormented with lovers since the days of Penelope and Susannah; -- however, for your comfort and information, you must know, there are two pretenders.

Charles. Well. --

Louisa. Who are both old. --

Charles. Well. --

Louisa. Both rich.

Charles. Well --

Louisa. Both amorous.

Charles. Well, well --

Louisa. And both in love with Louisa Balmer; indeed, the lady has some claim to their regard, as her father left them the care of his estate, and the disposal of his daughter's person.

Charles. Your guardians!

Louisa. The same -- Mr. Humphrey Sedgmore is too rational to divert my melancholy; but, Sir Valentine is all riot and rapture; yet, so respectful, so delicate, so distant, so piously disposed, poor soul! to make himself ridiculous, and so successful in his laudable

endeavours, that I believe I must discard my lapdog, my squirrel, and my parrot, lest they rival the old baronet in my affections.

Charles. And the ridiculous old coxcomb is really in love, Louisa? –

Louisa. Sir, I breakfast on love, dine upon love, drink tea upon love, and sup upon love – am serenaded with love both morning and evening, and hear of nothing else the whole day long. Then I have love-odes, sonnets, pastorals, elegies, epigrams, and acrostics in abundance, in which I am compared to the Graces on mount Ida – to his great aunt who was maid of honor to queen Mary – to Anna Bullen -- the Venus de Medicis – Nell Gwynn, and the goddess Diana.

Charles. Ha, ha, ha! Why what an amorous old turtle-dove it is, Louisa! –

Louisa. Ah Charles! – were you young men as constant in matrimony as old ones are in love, poor wives would have less temptations to sacrifice their characters abroad, to retaliate neglects at home.

Charles. But how do you intend to dispose of your lovers at last?

Louisa. As children dispose of an old play-thing, lay it aside in favour of a new one – and since I have so far neglected my understanding, as to stand contracted for a husband – I must e'en take the bauble for life, and play with it when I have no better employment – but Sir Valentine will wonder at my absence, therefore, I must now leave you – meet me, however, in this spot in less than hour – as I shall have something of importance to reveal to you –

Charles. This – this, my dear Louisa, fills up the measure of your goodness; and since there is no prospect of obtaining the consent of your guardians, I shall esteem myself enriched by the blessing of your hand, though I obtain it by the forfeiture of your fortune.

Louisa. Lunatics and lovers, Charles are inseparable.

[Sings.

To behold in bright dreams –
 Fairy groves, silver streams,
 Is the favour they ask from above;
 And all their request
 When they wish to be blest ---
 Is to live in a cottage on love.
 Poor souls! Is to live, etc.

Flocks and herds, nymphs and swains,
 Rustic cots, verdant plains,
 The woodlark and sweet turtle-dove
 So enchanting appear,
 Give so wild an idea –
 That they'd live in a cottage on love --
 Poor souls! That they'd live, etc.

End of the First Act.

A C T II.

SCENE I.

[Sir Valentine's House]

SIR VALENTINE.

What a great comfort and consolation it is to a great gentleman in the bloom of life as I am, to be loved and to have his passion returned in the supernatural, unaccountable kind of agreeable way that mine is! – Love is certainly more salutary to my constitution than a quack medicine, for it rectifies my spirit, clarifies my brain, braces my nerves, stimulates my circulation, and invigorates my whole animal economy. I'm all softness and sweetness, I'm as

gentle as sucking-pig, and as serene as a sleeping alderman. And so I'll marry, and take snuff, and cultivate my genius; and when I grow old, which by the course of nature may possibly happen fifty or sixty years from hence, I shall have nothing to do but to get children, and sing psalms; but, I believe it is time to wait upon Louisa. Oh, transporting thought! I shall see her sparkling eyes – I shall see her lovely cheeks – I shall see her pouting lips – I shall see her ivory teeth – I shall see her snow-white bosom – I shall see her _____ O, here comes Ralph!

Ralph. Miss Balmer, Sir, if you are not engaged, will be glad to speak with you.

Sir V. Odso! – odso! – get me my hat, get me my hat. I'll wait on her directly – but Ralph –

Ralph. Sir.

Sir V. Did you tear the leaf out of the book as I directed?

Ralph. Yes, Sir! –

Sir V. And did you paste it in the crown of my hat!

Ralph. Yes, Sir.

Sir V. That's right, that's right – come, come, bring me my hat, bring me my hat. I'll wait on her directly.

[Sir Valentine alone.]

Why should a man be at the trouble of making a set speech, and run the risk of false concords and the Lord knows what, when our novels and romances are full of them, and when too, by sticking a printed one in his hat, he may address a lady with as much ease as he can harangue a corporation? When I stood for the county about thirty years ago, I bargained for a large quantity of this kind of eloquence. I remember there was a long speech against an additional land-tax, and a short one for the good of my country; there was, “I pledge myself, Sir, on the one hand;” and, “conscious of my own integrity, on the other:” to be sure, they were all made a hundred years ago, but I was told they would be new a hundred years hence with very little alteration, it was only putting in a few fashionable words which come up fresh every

winter, and so I agreed with a great Genius, at so much a season to make the necessary embellishments, and keep my speeches in constant repair, but unfortunately losing my election – *[Enter Ralph]* – Well Ralph?

O that's clever – well, well, I'll just con my lessons [?] and [put?] on her in an instant.

Dearest madam – I may venture so far without looking at the hat – for on these occasions one always begins with – dear madam, or divine creature, or angel soul. *[Puts on his spectacles, and reads]* Let me see – let me see – O here, here I have it – here I have it— let me see. *[Reads.]* “Take six ounces of the best mutton suet, chopped very fine” – hey-day, what's all this! – *[Reads.]* – “Then put it into a pint of milk, and let it simmer over a slow fire” – Why, what can this mean! – I'm all amazement! – *[Reads fast.]* – “Then put in a couple of eggs, a little cinnamon, a little mace, a little allspice, a little ginger, beat them up well together – and then sweeten it to your palate.” Sweeten it to your palate! *[Raising his voice.]* Why, what in the Devil's name have we got here? Here Ralph! Ralph! – cinnamon, suet, slow fire, and nutmeg! – Why, Ralph! Ralph! I *[Still raising his voice]*.

Enter Ralph

Ralph. Here, here, Sir! – here, Sir!

Sir V. Here you blundering blockhead, you've ruined me beyond redemption. I have not made a regular speech these three days, and now I shall not have a word to say. – Do you know what you have done, Sir! Do you know what you have brought me here?

Ralph. Lord, Your honour!

Sir V. Are you stupid – are you drunk – are you mad – are you bewitched – does the Devil possess you? *[Raising his voice.]*

Ralph. Lord, your honour!

Sir V. Is this what I sent you for? Is this a speech fit for a man of my fashion and dignity to make to a lady, about allspice, and cinnamon, and suet, and the Lord knows what? – Why, it is a

receipt to make a pudding, you dog – a receipt to make a pudding!

[Raising his voice.]

Ralph. Good Lord! Your honour _____

Sir V. But is not this always the case? is not there mistake on mistake, and blunder on blunder continually? Did not you one time paste in a leaf from Culpepper on Midwifery? And a last dying speech at Tyburn, on another?

Ralph. Good Lord! – Good Lord! – Your honour.

Sir V. But I'll teach you to be witty I warrant me; I'll learn you to crack jokes on your betters! Sirrah.

[Beats him] Scoundrel, dolt, idiot, rogue, rascal, renegado! – I'll teach you to -----

Enter LOUISA.

[Sir Valentine sinks into a dead calm, and looks confused [?]]

Louisa. In a rage Sir Valentine! I thought a man of your philosophy was superior to vulgar passions. Poor Ralph is in disgrace, I see. What have you done, Ralph, to exasperate so mild a man as your master?

Ralph. Why, ma'am, my mas —

[Sir Val. Stopping his mouth

Sir V. O, confound your _____ *Aside]*

Ralph. My master, madam – told me, madam –

Sir V. *[To Ralph]* For Heaven's sake!

[Still stopping his mouth.

Ralph. Sp – spe – speech in his ha – ha – hat, madam.

[Sir Val. still stopping his mouth

Sir V. *[To Ralph]* Ralph, my dear Ralph, honest Ralph, for the Lord's sake, Ralph! get out of the room, you dog, get out of the room directly.

Ralph. *[Still speaking, Sir val. Stopping his mouth and pushing him out of the room]* A receipt, madam, to make a pe – pe – pu – pud – pudding, madam. *[Sir Val pushes him out]*

Sir V. Now was I set in the stocks, or up to my chin in a horse-pond, what an enviable happy creature I should be!

Louisa. I am sorry, Sir, to have intruded upon you so unseasonably. Servants are apt to aggravate [uncomfortably] by misbehaviour. I could have wished to have had the benefit of your judgment, as I came to [...], but perhaps when you are more composed, Sir.

Sir V. Composed! – ha, ha, ha! – never was more composed in my life, madam – never upon my honour – O no never [quite] a musical pulse, quite a musical pulse, madam, and an heart harmonized with a delicacy of [...tion] which love only can inspire!

Louisa. Love, Sir Valentine, is the business that has brought me hither, an offer that has been made me.

Sir V. An offer, Madam!

Louisa. I say, Sir, an overture that has been made me by a gentleman who seems seriously determined to marry.

Sir V. Overtures, and gentleman, and marry, madam!

Louisa. And who offers such terms in point of settlement and fortune, as would be thought irresistible by many!

Sir V. Settlements and irresistible! Madam!

Louisa. And who has some right to demand my attention, as he has some power over my –

Sir V. Attention! madam! Why this confounds me more than Ralph's d_____d mistake about the pudding. *[Aside]*

Louisa. I say, Sir, as matrimony is an engagement for life, and deserves particular consideration, I do not choose to give the gentleman a positive answer till I have first consulted your approbation.

Sir V. A very pretty reasonable request upon my soul! *[Aside]*

Louisa. The gentleman, Sir, is a younger brother of an ancient family, a man of estate, of good sense and has seen the world.

Sir V. O, he has! –

Louisa. To his character and morals I have no objection, and his name _____

Sir V. For Heaven's sake! his name, madam, if you love me.

Louisa. And his name, Sir, is Humphrey Sedgmore.

Sir V. What, Humphrey! my brother Humphrey – ha! ha! ha! never heard a better joke in all my born days; and the old simpleton has really made you proposals! – ha, ha, ha!

Louisa. He has, Sir, I assure you; and if you will grant me one favour –

Sir V. A thousand, madam! a thousand!—

Louisa. I will this evening give you an opportunity of hearing him plead his passion. You must know – he has requested an interview to have my final answer; and as it is moonlight, I have appointed to meet him in a mask, about half an hour hence, in the summer-house at the bottom of the garden. Now I have been thinking that if you were dressed in some of my clothes –

Sir V. A most excellent contrivance –

[rubbing his hands.]

Louisa. You might personate me with great success, and receive considerable entertainment from the deception.

Sir V. A charming contrivance – I'll do it – I'll do it – a most delightful contrivance truly!

Louisa. Your judgement and great penetration, Sir, will enable you to comprehend the meaning of this proposal.

Sir V. O, yes! perfectly, perfectly – a most incomparable contrivance!

Louisa. And your wit and ingenuity to carry it into execution.

Sir V. They will so!

Louisa. I will direct my servant to give you the necessary assistance, and the rest I will leave to your discretion *[Exit.]*

Sir V. Ah, there is nothing like a woman for invention – why what an amazing clever scheme this is! and what a prodigious genius she must have to think of such a thing – to be sure, some people will look confoundedly foolish when they discover their mistake;

but as it is a mark of her affection for me, and as it is her dear request, that one of the family should make himself a fool, I don't know any body I would sooner recommend than brother Humphrey. [*Dances and sings to the tune of Ally Croaker.*]

Poor brother Humphrey thinks to go and come free;
How mistaken you will be – poor brother Humphrey!

SCENE II *A Servant's Hall.*

[...] Servants in Livery – Musical Instruments – A pitcher of Ale and Glasses on the Table.

BUTLER *[drunk]* Comes forward.

Butler. Never was a poor gentleman placed at the head of so refractory a band, since fiddling came [to be] in fashion. I had rather travel the country with a hand-organ on my back, and sweat and groan under the weight of its harmony, than have to manage such a discontented set of mortals as I have. They're as miserable as men of a thousand a year. One would be first, and t'other would be first, and all would be first. There's the old cook, who can scarce play a solo on the salt-box, muttering, and grumbling, and scolding, from morning to night, because she's not allowed to exercise her fat fists on the organ; and Snow-drop, the black footman, is soliciting for an appointment to the harpsichord, though he can't thrum a country-dance on the Jews-harp without blundering in a dozen places – I'm sick on't, I'm sick on't; for when people, whose business is to keep a family in tune, are the first to put it in disorder – it's time for a wise-man to retire. Here, Ralph.

Ralph. Here, Mr. William.

Butler. Did you get the cat-gut I sent you for?

Ralph. Yes, Mr. William.

Butler. And the rosin – and the bridge for the fiddle – and the reed for the hautboy?

Ralph. Yes, Mr. William.

Butler. And did you call on the parish-clerk and the dancing-master for the last new tunes.

Ralph. I did, Mr. William.

Butler. Very well – and are all your instruments in order?

Omnes. All! all! all!

Butler. And are you all in order yourselves?

Omnes. All! all! all!

Butler. Then you are not disposed to play a Psalm tune for ‘John come kiss me’ – nor the Black Joke for ‘Handel’s Water-piece?’”

Omnes. No—no—no.

Butler. Ha! ha! ha! What a wonder-working nostrum is a pitcher of old October! These fellows, I have found, love bribing as well as their betters; and a bribe of this sort, when applied to all, will make as much melody as a concert of Nightingales in a Summer’s evening; but the mischief of it is, that if one neglected who may chance to over-rate his abilities, all is discord and confusion. Well, gentlemen, there is plenty of ale you see: so while the glass goes round, we will sing an old song in praise of it, and then prepare the evening serenade for Miss Louisa –

[They fill their glasses, and the Butler sings.]

What tho' I eat but little meat,
 My stomach is not good:
 Yet still I think, that I can drink,
 With him who wears a hood.

Chorus – Tho I go bare, take ye no care,
 For I am never cold;
 I stuff my skin, so full within,
 With jolly good ale and old.

I have no roast, but a nut-brown toast,
 Well done before the fire,
 A little bread shall do me stead,
 For much I don't require –
Chorus – Tho' I go bare, etc.

And Joan, my wife, is cur'd of strife
 With ale ten times a week ---
 For drink she will, till you may see
 The tears run down her cheek.

Chorus – Then gaily pass the sparkling glass,
 While thus the jug we hold,
 With cheerful hearts, Lets' play our parts
 With jolly good ale and old, --

[Exeunt.]

SCENE III. *The Garden – by Moonlight.*

Mr. CARLTON *and* CHARLES MANLEY

Mr. Carlton. This accidental meeting of ours, Charles, in a friend's garden by moonlight, has something in it truly romantic; but love is fond of romance; and love, it seems, brought you hither?

Charles. I confess it did, Sir.

Mr. Carl. Well! You may be assured, that your attachment to Louisa is every way agreeable to my wishes, as Fame, which rather magnifies our faults than our virtues, speaks largely of her perfections; and I am glad to find you have preserved an honourable fidelity to your mistress, amidst that zeal for your country, and loyalty to your King, for which your character and conduct stand distinguished.

Charles. If a soldier, Sir, has superior obligations – he has great satisfaction in performing them.

Mr. Carl. O Charles! I honour that glorious emulation which has so noble animated our military and our marine, to oppose the infamous confederacy of the House of Bourbon – which promotes divisions in the empire to facilitate its destruction – which treacherously offers freedom to foreign states, while it enslaves its own, and, not contented with tyrannizing over the natural and civil rights of mankind, must also insult their understandings, -- But I fear I keep you from Louisa?

Charles. By no means, Sir, on the contrary: -- I shall be oblig'd to you for your company at the interview – as I conceive your approbation is all that is necessary to make me happy in an early day.

Mr. Carl. Ah, you young rogues have such romantic ideas, that nothing but matrimony can bring you to reason: indeed, it is an infallible kind of remedy, and seldom fails to produce a wonderful degree of temperance and moderation; -- but what do you intend to do with Sir Valentine?

Charles. Coax him – sooth him – flatter him – humour him – any thing but reason with him; for reason is as unintelligible to a man in love, as charity to an old maid, who is dissecting a young one’s reputation.

Mr. Carl. Well! we must try what may be done by fair means to obtain consent and his brother’s – they are both men of principle, and tho’ this levelling little deity, called Love, may have made himself merry at the old gentlemen’s expence, I have no doubt, but when they perceive their mistake, they will act as becomes their honor.

Charles. I fancy, by the time we have taken one turn more down the walk, Louisa will fulfil her appointments.

SCENE IV. *Enter SIR VALENTINE in women’s cloaths, a colash on, and a mask in his hand.*

Sir V. Here I am as tight braced as a collar of brawn – trussed up like a Norfolk turkey – I feel myself as easy and as comfortable as if I was wedged into a straight waistcoat, or dressed in a full suit of Edward the Black Princes’ armour; and in this delectable metamorphosis am I to personate a young lady of one-and-twenty, and receive the tender addresses of brother Humphrey, to be sure, if he should oblige me to speak, this musical voice of mine will naturally increase his affections, and if I say nothing, brother Humphrey may construe my silence into consent, and perhaps send for the parson without further ceremony, or offer to elope with me to Scotland! – But here he comes – here he comes. Now for my mask – here he comes.

Enter HUMPHREY SEDGMORE.

[Sir Valentine courtesies awkwardly.]

H.S. I am greatly obliged to you, Miss Balmer, for the honor of this indulgence. You know my sentiments, madam, my pretensions, and my proposals. I wish not to interfere if there are other engagements. – I have only presumed on your freedom. – My brother, Sir Valentine, who is a well-meaning man (and whose good-nature may atone for the great deficiency of his understanding), informs me that you have encouraged his addresses – *[Sir Val. appears confused]* – and distinguished him with a degree of attention, which fopperies and coxcomical singularities -- *[Sir Val. confused]* – in old men seldom obtain from your sex, in the meridian of youth and beauty, -- especially when it happens (as it does in the present case), that the person is awkward, the face plain, the dress fantastical, the address superficial, the mind [barren], the manners affected, the _____ but I see we are likely to be interrupted, madam _____. *[Sir Val. appearing confused.]*

Enter Mr. CARLTON and CHARLES.

[Mr. Sedgmore walks on one side of that stage, but still keeps near. Mr. Carlton quits Charles, and addresses himself to Sir Valentine, mistaking him for Louisa.]

Carl. Though it is long since I have had the pleasure to see you, madam, I am no stranger to your accomplishments, and I am happy to find there is so near a prospect of your alliance with my family; but my friend, Sir Valentine, poor man! who appears to be in his dotage – seems so confident of you affections, madam, that he assured me, to use his own words, he regularly blubbered twice a-day, to comfort himself in the excess of his transports.

[Here Charles runs up to Sir Val. and dropping on one knee.]

Charles. O! my dear – dear Louisa! now – now -- my angel,
consent to make me happy!

Love at your feet, a faithful swain,
I bend my supplicant knee
Give me the heart you've stole again,
Or take both heart and me.

Enter LOUISA.

[They all start – Louisa looking at Charles – the rest looking at Sir Valentine and Louisa – alternatively.]

After a short pause –

H. Sedgmore. Who have I been talking to!

Mr. Carl. Who have *I* been talking to!

Charles. And who have *I* been talking to!

Sir V. Why, who the Devil do you think you have been talking to?

[Takes of his mask.]

All. Sir Valentine!

Sir V. Ha! ha! ha! – yes! – that very identical, coxcomical, old fool, gentlemen, who in his dotage you know – ha! ha! ha! – who is plain, awkward, and fantastical you know -- ha! ha! ha! – but brother Humphrey, you're in love, brother! in love with Miss Louisa Balmer, brother!

All. Ha! ha! ha!

Sir V. At you age, brother! at your time of life! It can't be! It's impossible I tell you! why it can't be, brother!

All. Ha! ha! ha!

Sir V. To be sure, brother! Sir Valentine is rather deficient in understanding, poor man! as you prettily express it; but while he is happy in a lady's affections, who –

Louisa. Sir Valentine's politeness and attentions give him every claim to my esteem.

Sir V. There! I told you so – I told you so – did not I tell you so, brother Humphrey?

Louisa. And I shall be always happy, to acknowledge the very singular distinctions he has paid me.

Sir V. Charmingly expressed! O! delightfully expressed! – I say, friend Carlton, I wish you, and your nephew Charles, have not made a bit of a mistake here.

Louisa. It is true -- there are obligations of a superior *nature* [*Charles takes her hand*] – which this gentleman seems to think must be obeyed.

Sir V. That's very obliging in him upon my honor.

Louisa. And, not content with the possession of this poor, foolish, fluttering heart of mine, insists upon my hand into the bargain.

Sir V. The devil he does!

Mr. Carl. Why, Sir Valentine, her heart is fixed I tell you – O, yes; her heart has been fixed these six months.

All. Ha! ha! ha! [*Carlton gravely*] – And fixed [---] with great judgment, great discernment, and great discretion.

All. Ha! ha! ha!

Mr. Carlton But Louisa is a dear distinguishing girl and is but too – too sensible of some people's pretensions -- [*Imitating a broken voice*].

H.S. Did she not praise the cut of my coat? – Was not she charmed with the air of my whig? – Did not she notice the cock of my hat?

[*Imitating Sir. Val.*]

Sir V. Now if any body would take upon them the trouble and fatigue, just to inform me that I was a fool, I should be inclined to thank them for the intelligence; to be sure, good folks, here have been a few mistakes; but with respect to Louisa's affections, I do assure you, I had much rather discover them before marriage than after; because tho' cuckoldom is a mighty genteel, fashionable, agreeable kind of thing, I think I could be happy without it.

H.S. And now, brother, since we both meant to make Miss Balmer happy; tho' we were a little mistaken in the method of doing it, our consents will convince her of the sincerity of our intentions.

Sir V. And since to forget and forgive is my favourite maxim – Carlton and you shall give me your hands – and as by this gentleman's [*to Charles*] very obliging assistance I have recovered my heart, we will welcome home the wanderer with Claret.

That the married are happy must sure be confess'd;
But the worst of it is, they're *compelled* to be bless'd;
Now, at my time of life, such compulsion's not clever,
Tho I'm brisk as a Bee, and as active as ever.

Then the married of this age pursue such strange courses,
Think so little of love, and so much of divorce,
Are so madly determin'd to make their chains jingle
That I'll think myself happy, tho' forced to live single.

**SOME NOTES on 'THE ELDERS'
and
'CLOACINA'**

Henry Man (1747-1799) published his play *'The Elders: A Farce'* in 1780 when he was 33 years old. The transcription made here is from a photocopy produced from a Microcard that was published by a company called Readex Microprint of New York sometime during the 1950's. A microcard is an opaque film (solid white background with black printing). A single card can contain up to about fifty pages. Microcards were popular in the 1950's as a means of storing information in a fashion similar to Microfilm and Microfische today. However, its use was never very great and few are produced today. To read a microcard you have to use a special microcard reader which projects the print on to a screen from which copies can be made. Because microcards are no longer produced, machines to read them are also rare and when found are often broken or being mended, etc., as was the case when I tried to read 'The Elders'. In New York I could find only two, one at NYU and the other at Columbia and both proved very unreliable. This accounts for the fact that the copy you have here of 'The Elders' sometimes has lines cut off or the page is out of focus. I had to make five or six copies of some of the pages to piece together all the information.

I also searched some university library online catalogs here in the U.S. to find out which, if any, had 'The Elders'. A search of Yale's catalog showed that they did not have 'The Elders', but it did have Henry Man's earlier play 'Cloacina'. Part of the record for this play contains the following information: 'Cloacina: a comi-tragedy ... Published: London: Printed for George Kearsly, at No. 46, near Serjeants-Inn, in Fleet-street, 1775. Description: 1 p.l., viii, 23 p.; 27 cm. Notes: In verse. Call Number: Misc. Poems 15'. 'Cloacina' is also to be found at the Folger Shakespeare library in Washington D.C., as well as Harvard University's Houghton Library and Oxford. What is particularly interesting about the Harvard copy is that it was once owned by Horace Walpole.¹ The Harvard catalogue record is similar to Yale's expect for the following additional description:

Horace Walpole's copy, with his ms. date of acquisition "May 1st." below imprint & his identifications throughout.
Imperfect: half-title wanting.
No. 2 in a volume with Walpole's arms on covers, his ms. table of contents inside front cover, and labeled on spine: Poems. Geo. 3. Vol. 14.
NOTES: Dramatic satire on various Literary & political figures, including Johnson & Chesterfield.

I have also looked at the published catalogue of the Walpole library (in eleven volumes or so) and it too indicates that the copy of *Cloacina* that Walpole owned had a number of

¹ Horace Walpole, 4th Earl of Oxford (1717-1797), was a noted author, historian, connoisseur, and amateur architect. He was a member of the House of Commons from 1741 to 1768, and was a keen observer of politics and society. His *Anecdotes of Painting in England* (1762-63 4 v.) is still useful to art historians, and the *Castle of Otranto* (1764) is a minor landmark in literary history, being the first Gothic novel in English. Walpole's fame now rests on his letters, of which over 3,000 survive. Historically, they are 18th century England's truest record, portraying social life, public affairs, and contemporary arts and letters with wit, vividness, and accuracy. As an architect, he is most famous for his country house Strawberry Hill, near Twickenham, which he remodeled into a miniature Gothic castle. His father, Robert Walpole (1676-1745) was Britain's first Prime Minister. (This description of HW was downloaded from the internet).

Walpole's comments in the margin, as indicated on the Harvard catalogue record. I suspect Walpole's interest in Henry Man's play is because it, among other things, lampoons Lord Chesterfield who was a political enemy of Walpole's.

I have written Harvard's Houghton Library Photo-reproduction Service a letter requesting a photocopy be made of 'Cloacina' (both copies), but for over a month now I have not heard from them. I will remind them shortly. If they do not respond, I will go pay Harvard a visit and take a look at these copies for myself. I have also requested the Huntington Library to send me a copy of 'The Elders' in the hope that I can restore the two missing lines from the version I got from Columbia. Again this was well over a month ago and I have heard nothing. I sent them a check for \$46.00!

The microcard which contained 'The Elders' is part of a series called, '*Three Centuries of Drama: English*' edited by Henry Willis Wells. The entire collection runs to 26 boxes of cards and begins in 1540 and ends in 1800. Notes on a catalogue record found on the OCLC library database indicates that authority for the authorship (Henry Man) comes from Allardyce Nicoll's 'A History of English Drama, 1660-1900' Volume 3 on page 286 of the 1952 edition. The Huntington Library's copy of the play which has been assigned the Larpent number 'LA 519' and the card catalogue reads 'Man, Henry, "The Elders, Comedy," 2 acts.' A note in MacMillians states that the Huntington's manuscript '... prologue compares to *Miscellaneous Works of the Late Henry Man* 1802 (Dev. 8vo 14): unimportant differences.'

The Microcard version of 'The Elders', that I have transcribed here, I suspect comes from Henry Man's posthumously published (1802) 'Miscellaneous Works', and is not the original manuscript of the play. The Huntington library's may be but . To determine this I would have to wait for them to send me a copy of their copy. What makes me think that the microcard copy of 'The Elders' comes from the 'Miscellaneous Works of Henry Man' is that 'The Works' were published in two volumes and at the bottom some of the pages on the microcard can be found 'Vol. II'. Also the printing seems to be two well defined and perfect, as well as various other clues.

We know that the play was produced (unlike 'Cloacina') and there are three at least sources for this fact: 1) 'MacMillian's Guide to the Larpent Plays in the Huntington Library' (1939), 2) 'Some Account of the English Stage from the Restoration in 1660 – 1830', and 3) 'The London Stage 1660-1800' compiled by Charles Beecher Hogan. I have photocopied the latter two sources, underlining the references to 'The Elders' and they are included in the mailing. To summarize from both, the following facts can be determined:

1. 'The Elders' was first performed at Covent Garden on April 21st 1780.
2. It was the last play of the night's three. The first was 'A Gazette Extraordinary' and the second 'The Pilgrim'.
3. The play was repeated at Covent Garden on Monday May 1st, Wednesday May 3rd, and Friday May 5th.
4. There may be a review of the play in The London Chronicle of May 3 1780.

5. It is possible from these two sources to determine who played what parts in the play.

There is also a comment about the play in 'Some Account' which is that it was 'not a very bad Farce', which could be considered less damning than the comment made of another play referred to before 'The Elders' which is that it is 'a contemptible Farce in one act.' *My* comment on the play is that it reminds me of a rather bad episode of 'Are you being served?' the British television show popular in the 1970's and to this day regularly broadcast in New York City.

David Man