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THE HOME OF THE AUTHOR'S MANUSCRIPTS

A decorative border of grapevines with leaves and clusters of grapes surrounds the text.

*THE
CREAM OF CURIOSITY*

*Being an account of certain
historical and literary
manuscripts of the
xviith, xviiith & xixth
centuries
collected
by*

REGINALD L. HINE

ILLUSTRATED

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1393. 'I axe that my boke be nought refused for lack of Curiosite.'
(Gower, Conf. iii. 383.)
1632. 'A noble and solid curiosity of knowing things in their
beginnings.'
(Hayward's tr. of Biondi's *Eromena*.)
1653. 'He was a man very curious and much inclined to hear of
novelties and rare things.'
(H. Cogan, tr. of Pinto's *Travels*, xliv., 172.)
-
1542. 'Clowtyd crayme and rawe crayme put togyther.'
(Boorde, *Dyetary*, xii. (1870), 267.)
1636. 'You may sound these wits. They are cream-bowl or but
puddle deep.'
(B. Jonson, *Discoveries, Works* (Routledge), 747.)
1704. 'Such a man, truly wise, creams off nature leaving the sour
and the dregs for philosophy and reason to lap up.'
(Swift, *Tale of a Tub*, ix.)

‘ All men, Socrates, who have any degree of right feeling, at the beginning of every enterprise, whether small or great, always call upon God.

‘ And we, too, must invoke and pray the gods and goddesses that we may say all things in a manner pleasing to them above all and likewise consistent with ourselves.’—The *Timæus* of Plato.

To
William Onslow Times

Qui dono lepidum novum libellum?

Timaci tibi : namque tu solebas

Meas esse aliquid putare nugas.

Quare habe tibi quidquid hoc libelli

Qualecumque ; quod, o patrona virgo,

Plus uno maneat perenne sæclo.

CATULLUS, I, I.

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TO MR. MARTIN SECKER and MESSRS. SIMPKIN, MARSHALL & Co., who—the one for good consideration, the other out of good nature—gave me leave to reproduce the portraits prefixed to *A Child's Diary at Gibraltar*, *A Seventeenth-Century Pacifist*, and *Rabies Theologorum*.

To the Editor of *Blackwood's Magazine* for leave to reprint *A Prince's Pocket-Book*, and *A Seventeenth-Century Pacifist*.

To the shade of BERTRAM DOBELL, Most Benevolent of Booksellers, who was wont to sell me precious manuscripts below price and add thereto much hard-won wisdom of his own.

men whose fingers thrill to the touch of old vellum, whose eyes light to the appeal of faded ink. Like Li-Po, Prince of Poets, they have learned to count the world 'as so much duckweed on a river', that they may sit in their pavilions and garner the harvest of a quiet eye. I, too—let me confess it—was once numbered of their tribe. In my 'canicular and flaming days' I lived biblio-riotously: danced the night through with duo-decimos; got mad drunk with old-vintage manuscripts; and wantoned with the slim, lascivious Elzevirs. Then followed the lean years, the years of war. I came to myself. I developed a conscience, of all things the most hurtful to a connoisseur. Casting my eyes along my shelves of prodigal collecting, I grew alarmed. Though a man, thought I, should gain the whole world of books might he not, by imperceptible degrees, lose his soul in so doing? Already I had seen so many sink into that mental and moral sloth which the accumulation of this world's goods induces. Was I not myself beset with the same mortal danger? Did not we chamber-students become gradually dim to the things more excellent; insensible, if not actually callous, to those hopes and fears of struggling humanity, for which men were forsaking all and losing their very lives? How these thoughts stung into the mind! Most of all in the seclusion of my study, for there every book seemed to raise a separate accusation. Then for the first time I remembered I was mortal. In the quiet turning of

the leaves I began to hear the disquieting call of Death to leave 'musing on this world in the midst of my books', and consider my latter end. 'Naked camest thou into the world and naked shalt thou return'. Like the young lawyer, whose profession I also followed, I foresaw that I too should go away sorrowful, having great possessions.

II

They say a book-worm can crawl through the most obstructive conscience. And I have proved it to be true. Though your convert is almost always an iconoclast, I for one made no bonfire of the vanities, did not in truth burn a single book. And I soon found that it was too late to thwart the settled order and disposition of my life. In the end I compromised with my conscience, as any wise attorney would. I must remain a bibliophile—that much was certain; but I would be one degree better than the worst. If I sought after rarities still, I would collect, not to hoard them as before, but to read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest them, and give their quintessence to those whom it might concern.

The only thing that really troubled me was the possession of some forty literary and historical manuscripts, ranging over the last three hundred

INTRODUCTION

I

TIMES have changed overmuch since those studious, monastic days when Richard de Bury ransacked the libraries of Europe, and wrote the *Philobiblon* as the apologia of his pillage. 'In truth,' he says, 'we wanted manuscripts, not moneyscripts; we loved folios more than florins, and preferred slender pamphlets to pampered palfreys'. Though men and manuscripts have multiplied ten-thousand-fold since then, I doubt if there is anywhere the same unwearied devotion to letters that he and the 'sons of learning' shewed. And naturally enough. In the course of its secular evolution, the world-community has outgrown its novitiate and cloister-days, taken new vows, and donned a different habit. There are new heavens to win: the politician's preferment; the novelist's applause; the merchant's crown. By such as these, men have been distracted from that singleness of heart which a bibliophile must have. All the same, there does exist a silent company of

men whose fingers thrill to the touch of old vellum, whose eyes light to the appeal of faded ink. Like Li-Po, Prince of Poets, they have learned to count the world 'as so much duckweed on a river', that they may sit in their pavilions and garner the harvest of a quiet eye. I, too—let me confess it—was once numbered of their tribe. In my 'canicular and flaming days' I lived biblio-riotously: danced the night through with duo-decimos; got mad drunk with old-vintage manuscripts; and wantoned with the slim, lascivious Elzevirs. Then followed the lean years, the years of war. I came to myself. I developed a conscience, of all things the most hurtful to a connoisseur. Casting my eyes along my shelves of prodigal collecting, I grew alarmed. Though a man, thought I, should gain the whole world of books might he not, by imperceptible degrees, lose his soul in so doing? Already I had seen so many sink into that mental and moral sloth which the accumulation of this world's goods induces. Was I not myself beset with the same mortal danger? Did not we chamber-students become gradually dim to the things more excellent; insensible, if not actually callous, to those hopes and fears of struggling humanity, for which men were forsaking all and losing their very lives? How these thoughts stung into the mind! Most of all in the seclusion of my study, for there every book seemed to raise a separate accusation. Then for the first time I remembered I was mortal. In the quiet turning of

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The only thing that really troubled me was the possession of some forty literary and historical manuscripts, ranging over the last three hundred

years, abounding in wisdom and gaiety and quaintness, unique and unpublished still. It seemed rather selfish to be keeping them for my own pleasure, and I began to feel an obligation to share them with my fellow-men. How melancholy, after all, to become like Sir Thomas Phillipps, that close-fisted antiquary, who amassed over 60,000 manuscripts (some of which I now possess) and printed hardly one. Had he spent half his time and money in editing some of his treasures, he would have deserved better of posterity. As it was, he simply rolled the stone of Sisyphus, collecting a pile of rarities, which on his death were once again dispersed. Not so, I determined, should it be with me. I would save my soul while there was time. To the young lawyer Christ had said: 'Sell whatsoever thou hast and give to the poor'. A hard saying indeed; one to be construed a little at a time. The sale may wait for a more convenient season, I reflected, but at least I will make my distribution to the poor—a distribution not in money but in kind. There shall be the bread of gaiety, the cream of curiosity, the wholesome nuts of knowledge—all gathered and served as daintily as I may out of my manuscript-store.

And so has it come to pass. Here in this little morsel of a book is the first dole I fling. To be frank, I do not quite visualize the hungry multitude clamouring at my gates, but that is my publisher's affair. My conscience is satisfied.

III

Reader ! a word in your ear, before you glide off to the inevitable novel. You are a little shy—is it not so ?—of the unfamiliarity of my name and my wrinkled parchments, *revenants* of the ‘yellow yesterdays of time’. But be of good heart. As for my name, it signifies a ‘servant’. I am a son—nay, a servant of learning, and your servant too. I ask no louder fame than that. For the rest, I am as impatient as you are at the worship given to a thing just because it is old and smelleth mustily. If it can help to recreate the memory of what is best in the olden time, well and good—that is something gained. And that is just what the following pages seek to do. They form, as it were, a slender bridge across the ages, a faint clue to the complexity of the past. They tell of many times, of many goodly states, of some humble, unhistoried people. And the tale is a light-hearted one too. Nothing is here for tears or tediousness. Believe me, I have banged all the dust away. In the clemency of time, moreover, even the cruelty and heartbreak of mankind take on a mellow tone ; the dull things sink into the bottomless pit ; whilst those that are gay, and eager, and of good report, shine more and more unto the perfect day.

But enough. I can hear some critic say : ‘Me-thinks this servant apes the gentleman ; he doth

protest too much. Why has he not conned Lord Bacon's sound advice : " Prefaces are great waste of time, for though they seem to proceed of modesty yet they are bravery " ? '

Very well, I will cease. Pass on, reader, and prosper ! I give you good-day, and a pleasant journey. I wish it the more hopefully, because with my goose-grey quill I travelled the selfsame way—the *via Manuscripta*.

FLY-LEAVES AND MARGINAL NOTES

(TO IONE AND DOROTHY)

I

ONE of the pleasures and rewards of a bibliophile's dusty career is to find manuscript entries of former possessors in the fly-leaves or margins of old books. I say 'old books' because, of recent years, readers have become delicate in their ways and will by no means intrude on the pure whiteness of the unprinted page. There was no squeamishness of this kind two hundred years ago. Note-books were dear to buy, and files and registers were things unknown. If our ancestors would preserve anything for future record, if they would make a rough calculation of wages or rent, if they would prepare a rough draft of letters or sonnets to the beloved, there really was only one way—to use the blank pages of their books. To them there was nothing desecrating or incongruous in this habit. It was as natural to them as it was later to Professor Héger to make a note of his shoemaker's bill on the passionate letters of Charlotte Brontë. I know a copy of the *Breeches Bible* in which the *Epistle to the Hebrews* is scored all over with the household accounts of a family from August to November, 1693, and a bookseller once



INITIAL LETTER FROM A BIBLE OF THE 14TH CENTURY (ROYAL MS. IE. IX)

Fly-Leaves & Marginal Notes 403

told me that he had a second edition of Rabelais containing the draft correspondence of a horse-dealer in King George the First's day over an alleged breach of warranty, and from his report of the contents I could guess that the dealer was not a whit behind Master Rabelais himself in the power and variety of his abuse. Nothing comes amiss. Wisdom and worldliness go hand in hand and give you, if you read at large in the byeways of old books, a veritable *speculum mundi*. In a manuscript of Boethius' *De Consolatione Philosophiæ*, for which a rapacious bookseller asked me £32, there were some fifteenth-century recipes added by way of supplement against the colic, which if sound were consolation indeed. In one of the Libri treasures of the eleventh century a dim-eyed scribe had written down a recipe for his own use, 'ad curandum dolorem oculorum', whilst another more sanguine fellow had expressed the desire of his heart in plain English another way :

'To sleep soundly
Eat roundly
And drink profoundly
Is the redie way to become Fatt.'
Sic ait C. B. 1683.

You will frequently find complaints and expostulations of scribes against the weariness and boredom of their tasks. One of them stops right in the middle of Ovid's *Ars Amatoria* and peevishly notes in the margin *Melius scripsissem si voluissem*, and then turns

to the end and relieves his mind with curious designs for cutting out men's coats. Another will be taken quite a different way and lift his stiffened hands in prayer :

' Jesus that made both sea and lande
Send me grace to amend my hande.'

II

To a mere bookworm, I can think of no more pleasant recreation for a winter evening than to draw the curtains, fling an extra log on the study fire, set the tea tray in the middle of the room, and then wander up and down the length of those shelves where all one's dreams and memories are stored. Not to read, mark you ; but to browse at random and with an especial eye to discover hints and signs of those who loved these books before our day. It is by this half-careless pursuit that we light upon those records of the dead, sometimes touchingly human in their way, which in the determined reading of the text we had not eyes to see. Let no one belittle these waifs and strays of literature because they have no fixed abode. Wisdom is justified of these children as much as any other. Who, for example, does not rejoice in the mellow learning, the criticism and the conceits of Gabriel

Hervey's *Marginalia*, collected by Mr Bullen? Who does not covet the library of Bishop Warburton, who read everything he could find, and having, as Bentley said, 'a monstrous appetite and a very bad digestion', covered his books with comments and notes for his recollection? Who will forget the 'empty, pragmatist fellow' in Addison's essay, who, after reading '*The Whole Duty of Man*', wrote the names of some of his neighbours opposite every deadly sin named in that improving treatise? And who would not give his two ears to possess the books that passed through Coleridge's magical hands? Do you remember what Lamb said of him in that essay where he divides mankind into the race of borrowers and the race of lenders? 'Reader, if haply thou art blest with a moderate collection of books, be shy of showing it, or, if thy heart overfloweth to lend them, lend thy books; but let it be to such an one as Samuel Taylor Coleridge. He will return them (generally anticipating the time appointed) with usury; enriched with annotations trebling their value. I have had experience. Many are those precious MSS of his (in matter oftentimes, and almost in quantity not infrequently, vying with the originals) in no very clerly hand—legible in my Daniel, in old Burton, in Sir Thomas Browne.'¹

¹ Not so choicely illuminating was poet Wordsworth. One long-suffering friend of his said: 'You might as well turn a bear into a tulip garden as let Wordsworth loose in your library.'

I fancy Coleridge must have been a little doubtful whether this habit of his did not annoy his friends, for he wrote in Lamb's copy of Donne, 'I shall die soon, my dear Charles Lamb, and then you will not be vexed that I have bescribbled your books'¹.

III

And now without any apology of the kind I offer to those dusty creatures, my brother book-worms, some of the treasure which I have grubbed up out of my own little heap of books.

In my copy of the second edition of the *Justice of the Peace*, 1696, there are written down several barbaric attempts at verse by one Edward George, who possessed the book, as he says, on 'April ye 12. old stile 1773'.

'Pray reader do not take this book away
For that it hath a greater mind to stay.'

And the following quatrain appears in three different forms :

'My noble Lord Noddy
Ever let it be said,
That where Nature doth no brains afford,
No moon affects that head.'

¹ The mention of Charles Lamb calls to mind many caustic marginal notes of Walter Savage Landor. In the *Life* of the essayist prefixed to the second volume of the *Letters*, Talfourd unfortunately remarks: 'The spirit of gentility seems to breathe around all his persons'. On which Landor scribbles in the margin, 'The deuce it does!'

In my copy of *Living English Poets*, 1893, these satirical lines appear :

‘How they made a goodly show
One and twenty years ago
Forty poets in a row !
Twenty now are voted dead ;
Ten beside are hardly read ;
Show some pity, years ahead.’

Against many a passage in John Reynolds’ *Inquiries concerning the State and Oeconomy of the Angelical Worlds*, which I bought in the fish-market at Whitby, a former reader has made the accusation of plagiarism, until at last, exasperated beyond measure, he sets down this fulmination of Erasmus on a like occasion : ‘The thief who steals money goes to the gallows. The miscreant who purloins other men’s writings is called a man of letters ; I would not hang him. I would suffocate him with burnt paper.’

In my edition of Locke’s *Essay on the Human Understanding* this indignant protest is written in a youthful hand :

“I believe this is the first book I ever bought. I bought it when quite a tiny child because a deceiving man told me it was a merry book and full of adventures. If anyone care to see how deeply that man lied let him read the book for himself. It is cut up to page 146. Nothing on earth will ever make me read any further. If anyone else wish to do so he must cut it for himself but it is sheer lunacy to do anything of the kind. It is a book about as bad as

that one of which the prophet Jeremiah said to the prince Seraiah "And it shall be when thou hast made an end of reading this book thou shalt bind a stone to it and cast it into the midst of Euphrates"'.¹

In my *History of the Council of Trent*, by Nathaniel Brent, 1629, a very ponderous work in folio, there is the bookplate of a certain parson named Kenworthy and this sentence written in pencil below: 'I read this as a Lenten penance in the year 1867'. He is not quite accurate in saying this, for there are 878 pages in all and he failed to accomplish more than a third. The reading must have proved a very torment to this strict Protestant. The interjection marks in pencil begin on page 10; from page 50 onwards the margins are full of expostulations, and when on page 216 he finds Friar Ambrosius Catarinus saying that 'the Bishopriche instituted by Christ is one only which the Pope hath and the institution of the others is by the Pope', he puts down in the margin, 'This is rank Popery', and slams the book.

In my *History of the Houses of Douglas and Angus*, by David Hume, 1644, some patriotic fellow has inscribed these words with a threatening hand: 'Whoever asserts that England and its people are superior to Scotland, I say he lies in his throat'². In my *Selections from Wordsworth* (1834) made by Joseph Hine, with whom I claim no connection, the

¹ A not uncommon maxim, I am told, in Scottish books. Sir Walter Scott found one similar in a book on heraldry.

preface is much disfigured by the pencil-remarks of a reader ; especially the passage where Hine considers that 'Mr Wordsworth's poetry, if properly read (that is as Hine himself would read it) when reflected from the mirror of simplicity, dignity, and power . . . renders it highly desirable for ladies' seminaries and female perusal'. He really deserves the pencilled abuse in the margin, 'You conceited puppy !'

IV

In my second edition of Boccaccio's *Decameron* there is a note to say that the book was given by Mr J. C. Nainby on his death-bed to Dr Forbes his physician. I suppose this is one of those books which a man gets rid of in a hurry when he makes a death-bed repentance ; and of course Boccaccio himself had done the same. In the first edition of *A treatise of Satan's Temptations*, by Richard Gilpin, 1677, there is this curious entry : 'A. Hughes, given to him by himself as an aid to meet the cunning devices of the world the flesh and the Devil. In a time of sore trial. February 1822.' And that reminds me of a *Latin Grammar* I heard of since this essay was commenced, the property of a schoolboy by whom these same devices of the devil were rather cultivated than abhorred. Among

a thousand scribblings in this book his master found this very villainous advice: 'Be sure never to give the same name to more than one shop in the town.'

In the first volume of my Hooker's *Ecclesiastical Polity*, which once belonged to a Cambridge rowing blue ¹, there is scarcely a bare half-inch which is not crammed with pictures or pen-work of other kind. The drawings of girls' heads are especially good, but they are placed rather unfortunately between some Hebrew characters and the results of the Rugby matches of St John's XV; on the last page is a detailed drawing of an undergraduate's mock funeral. I have only once seen ladies' heads drawn in more charming fashion, and that was in a work of Aristotle which Andrew Lang illustrated when he was at Oxford. And in that same volume there were these delightful verses as well:

'There is an old provost of Oriel
Who's been there from time immemorial,
As the age of Zanonis
He fancies his own is
This festive old provost of Oriel.'²

In Walter Raleigh's *History of the World* there is written the following effusion: 'John Evans his booke. Pray read with great caution, but very

¹ The Honourable and Reverend L. W. Denman, for many years rector of Willian, near Hitchin.

² Lang's name reminds me of a paper of his in the second volume of *Bibliographica*, gathering together many choice manuscript entries in the books—especially the association books—he loved to collect. It is worth noting as one of the very few essays of the kind.

little at a time. Please to Endeavour to keep in memory some little part of what is required that you must be joyfull in solemnity: Fear God: Honour the King: Glory to God in the Highest: Peace good will towards men. Allelujah. Amen.' This burst of spiritual fervour could not well last. John Evans soon found himself immersed in worldly things and used the rest of the fly-leaf as a memorandum of hirings. 'Mary Ann Evans came to Mr Phillippes on 26 May 1797 for the term of 3 years at 4 guineas for the first year, two of which as been received according to agreement. Thomas Evans came to Mr Phillippes the 15th Sep 1797—received one guinea towards his board.'

In the first volume of my Florio's *Montaigne* the following little conspiracy is revealed:

'I being in poverty and having vowed a vow to buy no more books for myself for the space of six calendar months next ensuing do hereby in order to evade such vow and also out of sheer affection for my ladye give her my love and these three volumes of dear old Montaigne. Provided nevertheless [and this is the cunning of it] that it shall be lawful and permitted to me to read herein at all hours of day and night throughout the term of my natural life not exceeding however the period of fourteen hours in any one day.'

V

One finds, of course, much doggerel-of-abuse addressed to readers who borrow and never return:

London March ye 7th 1741

If that this booke,
Wherein you look,
By carlissnesse be lost;
Restore it me,
For I am he,
That knows best what it cost.

James Brewinny. Cost me 6/s. ¹

There is another which stands threateningly at the beginning of my *Art of Ingeniously Tormenting with proper rules for the exercise of that pleasant art*, 1753.

'He that doth this booke steal,
May he never taste good ale;
And who ever takes this booke away,
In a ditch may dye, I hartly pray, I say.'

They say there are no creatures quite so cruel as the men of letters; and really the terrific punishments they would mete out for minor offences would seem to prove it true. They can be excused if at all only by reference to their originals in the

¹ References to the cost of books are of course amongst the most frequent of manuscript entries. The best I have met with was written by Sir Walter Scott in his copy of Monk's *History of the Poets*: 'Very rare, therefore worth a guinea; very senseless, therefore not worth a shilling.'

Dark Ages when a manuscript was often worth the price of many men. Here are some of the milder notices I have taken from the forefront of old books : 'Whoever removeth this volume from its place, may the anger of the Lord overtake him in both worlds to all eternity. Amen.' 'If any man thieve this book may he receive damnation with Judas the traitor, with Annas and Caiaphas and Pilate. Amen.' And this, if you please, from a Holy Bible : 'If any man shall purloin this book, may he die the death, may he be cooked on a gridiron, may the falling sickness and fevers attack him, and may he be broken on the wheel and hung. Amen.' And the following, from a manuscript of some of Augustine's and Ambrose's works in the Bodleian library : 'This book belongs to St Mary of Robert's Bridge ; whosoever shall steal it or sell it, or in any way alienate it from this house or mutilate it, let him be *anathema-maranatha*. Amen.' Underneath this imprecation is the frightened note of a subsequent owner : 'I John, Bishop of Exeter, know not where the aforesaid house is, nor did I steal this book, but acquired it in a lawful way.' There is just one more of the kind, a pretty blend of French and Latin verse that I can commend to any bibliophile for the protection of his books. I found it in my copy of the *Antidotum Melancholiæ Joco Serium*, 1667—a book so wicked and whimsical and pleasant withal that I can forgive any possessor wishing a shameful death to him who took it away :

*Qui ce livre desrobere
 Pro suis criminibus
 Sa tête au gibet portera
 Cum aliis latronibus ;
 Quelle honte ce sera
 Pro suis parentibus !
 Si hunc librum redidisset
 Lector pendu non fuisset.*

I myself once ventured to make something of the same kind, for I have always thought that a man should, if possible, compose his own oaths and objurgations. To swear between quotation marks, to curse according to a book, to plagiarize the minor prophets—all this is very well, but it gives half the glory to another and but feebly satisfies the spleen. So in the copy of a book which I wrote on the subject of dreams and presented to a local library I inserted the following lines. They should be read at top speed and with a certain ghostliness of voice to produce the proper terrification.

CAVEAT LECTOR

Let him that taketh this book away,
 And fails to return it upon the day,
 Be seized in the dark by a nightmare grim,
 Be tickled and tortured in every limb,
 Be freed to the fiends' and the furies' whim,
 And the mischievous elves severe though slim,
 Be mocked by the Devil in pseudonym,
 Of the cheeky, inconsequent Cherubim,
 And preached to in possible interim,
 By near relations and spinsters prim.

Till his hair stand up in a style horrific,
His teeth grow loose in chatter terrific,
His eyes revolve in his face rubific,
And his vertebrae shiver with pains prolific,
Till mandragora, that rare specific,
Nor homœopathy's mild pacific,
Nor ever the soundest soporific,
Shall soothe that sinner to sleep again.

VI

Come, Reader, let's make an end, or with these innumerable cocktails of casual fancies we shall get gout in the understanding. Never mind those twenty bescribbled tomes, tumbled about the floor; we can look at them another day. See, there's the fire nearly out! And here's our tea getting cold—an ancient brew of long standing; what they call in the tea-book-shop 'a very late infusion of the first edition'. And by Boanerges, Son of Thunder, if our Cream of Curiosity hasn't turned! We've left it too long, my dear Sir, and I've got none of the Milk of Meditation to offer you. What! You will not stay? Ah! I see. You want to go and scribble something malicious about me on the fly-leaf of my book. I have given you some models to improve on, eh? Well, get along with you. But, one moment: I think I can give you a better model still. Reach down that shabby quarto by your right shoulder—Burchard's *Ordo*

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Missæ, 1502. That's the one. Now turn to page 57—I fancy it is—and read out what is penned at the bottom. 'Tis Signor Grassi's polite appreciation of the author: *Fuit supra omnes bestias, bestialissimus, inhumanissimus, invidiosissimus, stolidissimus, inhonestissimus*. . . . That's enough, please; the rest is unprintable. Well, now, if you can abuse me more abundantly than that, I'll forgive you for the fun of it. Farewell! Close both the doors, there's a good fellow. I want to be alone.

THE END