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The Works Of Horatio Walpole, Earl Of Orford

In Five Volumes

Walpole, Horace

London, 1798

Epiloque, to be spoken by Mrs. Clive

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Chill'd with the drowsy tale, his audience fret,
While the star'd piece concludes like a gazette.

The tragic Greeks with nobler licence wrote;
Nor veil'd the eye, but pluck'd away the mote.
Whatever passion prompted, was their game;
Not delicate, while chastisement their aim.
Electra now a parent's blood demands;
Now parricide distains the Theban's hands,
And love incestuous knots his nuptial bands.
Such is our scene; from real life it rose;
Tremendous picture of domestic woes.
If terror shake you, or soft pity move,
If dreadful pangs o'ertake unbridled love;
Excuse the bard, who from your feelings draws
All the reward he aims at, your applause.

EPILOGUE, to be spoken by Mrs. CLIVE.

OUR bard, whose head is fill'd with Gothic fancies,
And teems with ghosts and giants and romances,
Intended to have kept your passions up,
And sent you crying out your eyes, to sup.
Would you believe it—though *mine* all the vogue,
He meant his nun should speak the epilogue.
His nun! so pious, pliant and demure—
Lord! you have had enough of her, I'm sure!
I storm'd—for, when my honour is at stake,
I make the pillars of the green-room shake.
Heroes half-drest, and goddesses half-lac'd,
Avoid my wrath, and from my thunders haste.
I vow'd by all the gods of Rome and Greece,
'Twas I would finish his too doleful piece.

I, flush'd

I, flush'd with comic roguery—said I,
 Will make 'em laugh, more than you make 'em cry.
 Bless me! said he—among the Greeks, dear Kat'rinc,
 Of smutty epilogues I know no pattern.
 Smutty! said I—and then I stamp'd the stage
 With all a turkey-cock's majestic rage—
 When did you know in public—or in private,
 Doubles entendres my strict virtue drive at?
 Your muses, sir, are not more free from ill
 On mount Parnassus—or on Strawb'rry-hill.
 And though with her repentance you may hum one,
 I would not play your countess—to become one.
 So *very* guilty, and so *very* good,
 An angel, with such errant flesh and blood!
 Such sinning, praying, preaching—I'll be kift,
 If I don't think she was a methodist!

Saints are the produce of a vicious age:
 Crimes must abound, ere sectaries can rage.
 His mask no canting confessor assumes;
 With acted zeal no flaming bigot fumes;
 Till the rich harvest nods with swelling grain,
 And the sharp sickle can assure his gain.
 But soon shall hypocrites their flights deplore,
 Nor grim enthusiasts vex Britannia more.
 Virtue shall guard her daughters from their arts,
 Shine in their eyes, and blossom in their hearts.
 They need no lectures in fanatic tone;
 Their lesson lives before them—on the throne.

EPILOGUE,