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## **Hogarth moralized**

**Hogarth, William**

**London, 1831**

The Election.

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## THE ELECTION.\*

## PLATE I.

IF any scenes in life can be truly said to be full of humour, those of a Country Election certainly may, being crowded with such variety of grotesque characters, as cannot but draw a smile, even from the most grave and rigid philosopher ; and though in these before us, our author has been rather lavish, still I am confident they are no other than natural,

\* [“ Of the likenesses of living persons” (observes Mr. Cunningham) “ introduced into these designs, it is scarcely necessary to speak. These are merits which are temporary and fleeting : faces are forgotten as generations pass away ; and of all the millions who lived and breathed in 1756, a few names only remain on the sunny side of oblivion. All who smarted from the artist’s satire are as cold and silent as himself ; and by inserting in my narrative the names of Thomas Potter, Dr. Shebbeare, the Rev. Dr. Cosserrat, and Sir John Parrell—nay, even of Lord Melcombe and the Duke of Newcastle, I add but little to the interest of these four pictures. The merits of original fancy, natural action, ceaseless humour, and amusing and instructive incident, are matters of another kind ; and these keep, and will keep, the works of Hogarth as fresh and interesting as they ever were.”

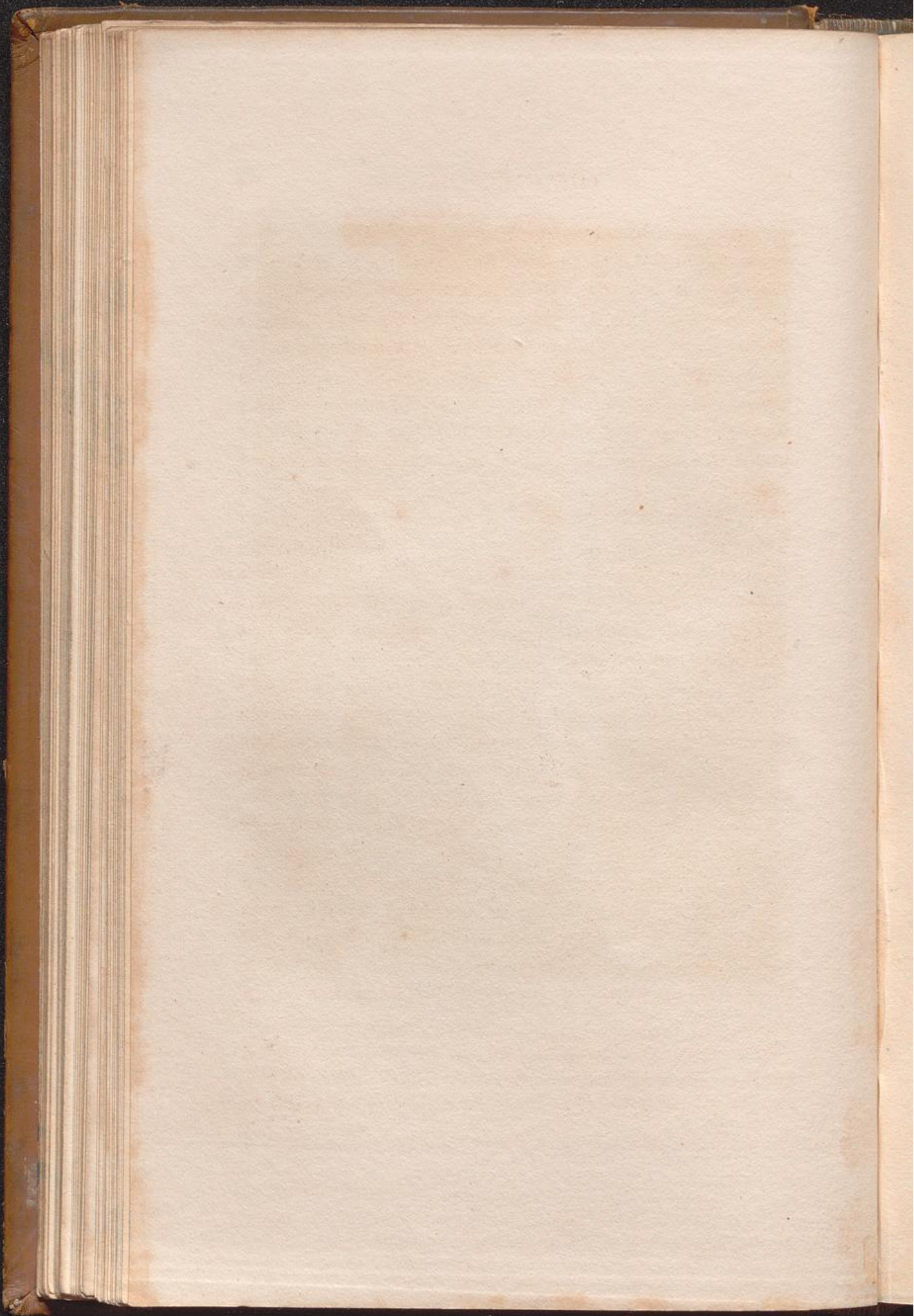
For the originals of this series Garrick gave 200*l.* In 1823 they became the property of John Soane, Esq., for the munificent price of 1732*l.* 10*s.* It is well observed by Mr. Dallaway, that “ since Hogarth’s death, his genius has been justly estimated ; and it would have been well rewarded had he received during his lifetime one half of what his works have produced.” At Mr. Baker’s sale, the original etchings of these four subjects sold for 39*l.* 7*s.* 6*d.*, and a finished proof of the Election Dinner alone, in its first state, for thirty guineas !]



W. Woodcutting sc.

THE ELECTION. - P.L.I.

Published by John Major & Co. Printers, Street, Jan 11 1831.



and am persuaded there has been no election for a century back without exhibiting some such drollery as is here remarked. It may therefore be no unpleasing thing, after the sad relation of two such melancholy stories, as those of the Progress of the Harlot, and the Rake, to amuse the reader with something not quite so serious. Let this part then be considered as a farce, to divert the attention from a tragic representation, and exhilarate the spirits of an affected audience. Not that these scenes are without some lessons of morality, for where bribery, hypocrisy, and venality are in view, there must we observe the tottering christian and the falling man; and thence may we draw this judicious conclusion, that when designing hypocrisy unbars the gates of bribery, then will the dirty sons of shameless venality rush like a torrent through the golden portals, beating down all that is just and honest in their way.

Our author, then, has begun his piece with an entertainment at a public-house in the county town, opened by one of the candidates for the reception of his friends, some time before the poll, in order to secure his interest; for there is no one thing an Englishman loves so much as his belly; and such is the idle notion of the world, that a man is more or less a gentleman, the more or less free he spends his money. To preserve the connection of this piece, we are to suppose it a general election for knights of the shire, when two members of the whig party are chosen, in opposition to two others of the tory. But when the court and country are put in different scales, the weight of the first, at least in appearance, makes the second kick the beam, those in the tory interest are obliged to wear the faces of the whig, in order to carry the point in question. Such is the case of the party present; evident by the slashed picture of the

king, which they are supposed to have demolished through a pretended aversion to the court, and the flag, on which is painted, "Give us our eleven days," alluding to the alteration of the stile, in the year 1752, which gave great displeasure throughout England; these things, with some others, such as the foppish dress of the candidate, the name of the person next him (one of his agents), viz. Sir Commodity Taxem, known by the address of a letter, just presented him by that leering cobbler, who has him by the hand, and whom he solicits, thinking he has taken him in for some service, and by the motto on the butcher's favour (who is pouring gin on the broken head of another), namely, "for our country;" I say, by these and many other circumstances, it is past doubt that the party present are tories, under false colours. To confirm this further, see the opposite party throwing in bricks and stones at the window, one of which has knocked down an attorney from his seat, who was employed in casting up the votes. Without is a flag, carried by the mob, bearing these words, "Marry and multiply, in spite of the devil and the court," and the effigy of a Jew, on whose breast is written, "No Jews," alluding to those two unpopular acts that passed about the same time. To revenge this riotous proceeding without, see one man throwing a stool out in return, and another emptying a vessel of urine on their heads. For on these occasions, the greater the riot the more jovial is the merriment; the wounds and sufferings of the mob, being considered only as trophies and honours of the time.\* It is very well known, that at these

\* [Sherlock writes to a Frenchman at Paris thus: "It is worth your while to come to England, were it only to see an election and a cock-match. There is a celestial spirit of anarchy and confusion in these two scenes that words cannot paint, and of which no countryman of yours

seasons, all sorts of decency and distinction are laid aside, and that drunkenness and condescension are the greatest virtues. Would a gentleman reflect to what meanness he is obliged to submit, in order to obtain a rank of precedence, he would not, sure, when he has obtained that rank, look down on the person to whom he, at one time, humbled, and to whom he must again do the same, with such disdain and contempt; but such is the case, of which the circumstance I remark is a striking instance, that the ingratitude of mankind is risen to so high a pitch, as too often to despise the very friend who served them. As a proof of this amazing condescension, see here an assembly of all ranks of people; view the candidate paying his respects to a female voter, an old toothless jade, who in obedience to the word of command, viz. "Kiss him, Moll," (from the man above her, who is shedding the fiery ashes on the member's wig,) is not only doing that, but taking other indecent liberties with him, while the girl is endeavouring to rob him of his ring. Before this woman is one Abel Squat, a dealer in ribbons, gloves, and stockings, bought as presents on the occasion, for which he has received a promissory note of fifty pounds, payable in six months, a thing he little relishes, convinced that a bird in hand is worth two in a bush. At the middle of this table, on the further side, sits a crooked object ridiculing one of the fiddlers for his enormous length of chin, not considering his own deformity, even in that very part; a striking instance of the folly of such persons, as condemn in others what is too conspicuous in themselves.

can form even an idea." The obvious truth of this assertion only serves to point out how fully both subjects were suited to the display of Hogarth's talents.]

In front, is a boy making of punch\* in a mashing tub, intimating the great quantity of liquor that is swallowed at such meetings, of some kind of which, one of the corporation, behind the young woman, near the window, seems to have got his full. But in order to shew that this entertainment does not consist in drinking only, but that eating to excess, is also part of it, our author has introduced a parson and an alderman, (of all classes of men known to be the greatest gutlers) feeding their bellies to the destruction of their health. Though the dishes are removed from table, we see this voracious divine feasting, luxuriously on the remains of a haunch of venison, even when all the rest have done, indulging his palate by heating it over a chafing dish of coals, though he is almost fainting with the heat.

I cannot avoid relating here, what I once heard, at a country election, it being extremely applicable to the occasion, shewing us, what part the pulpit gentry bear at these times of public rejoicing. An occasional rustic attendant at a public house, whose name was Nicodemus, and whose business it was to serve out the liquors, having stepped without the door, in the morning of the election day, to view the entry of the pollers into town, was soon followed by a brother waiter, who called out with the utmost vociferation, "Nicodemus,—Nicode—mus," and, on being answered, "here, here" replied, "more rum and tobacco for the clar—gy."

With respect to the alderman, behold him, after dinner, gorged with oysters, dying, with one upon his fork, and a

\* [The open back of the chair in the middle of the picture, denotes the first state of this plate, as also the lemons lying near the mash-tub of punch. Hogarth afterwards removed them on being informed that "election punch" was acidulated only with vitriol and cream of tartar!]



barber surgeon vainly attempting to recover him, by bleeding. Behind this man's chair is a puritan with up-lifted hands, refusing to take a bribe, and his wife abusing him for so doing, "Curse your squeamish conscience," says she, "is not your wife and children starving? Have they cloaths to their backs, or stockings to their feet?—Take it,—or by all that's just you rue the consequence." Beneath the window is an old gentleman afflicted with the gravel; and on his right hand, sits one\* making game of him, he is exhibiting that droll performance of winding a handkerchief round his hand, marking the back of it with charcoal, in imitation of eyes and nose, his thumb and fore-finger serving for the mouth, which he moves in conformity to the song he sings; namely, that of "An old woman clothed in grey, &c." In this position the hand represents the face of an old woman, which with the motion of the thumb and the humour of the performer, fails not to draw upon the object of ridicule the laugh of the company. In this room we are to imagine a variety of noises, loud and boisterous, which is increased in order to keep the spirits upon the wing, by the addition of a few gut-scrapers, and a north country bag-piper, which last performer seems gently interrupted and teased by that itching disorder peculiar to the Scotch. The only thing in this plate further to be noticed, is the elector's coat of arms against the wainscot; viz. three guineas proper, with the motto, "speak and have;" whose crest is a bawling mouth; hence are we taught, that in elections, honesty is shut out of doors; that gold is the

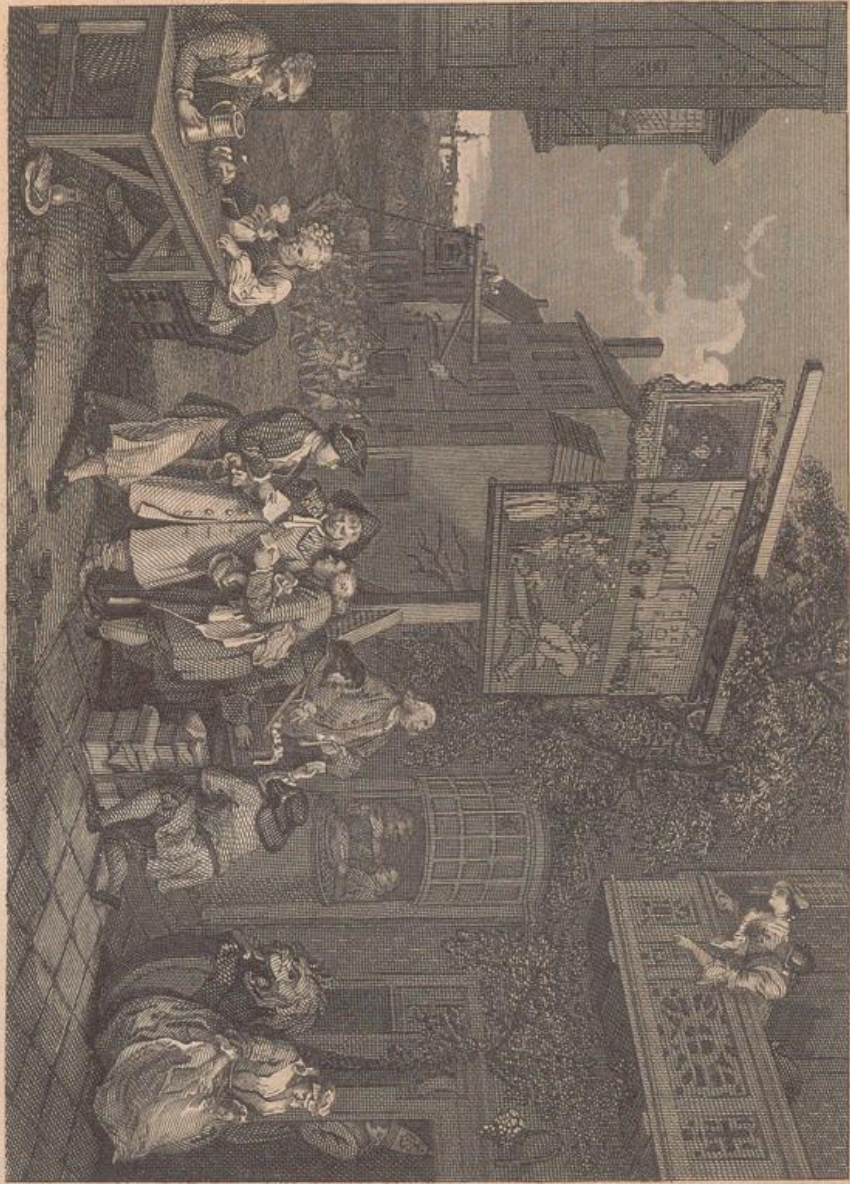
\* Mr. Parnel (drawn from the life,) an Irish gentleman, by profession an attorney, remarkable for his drollery and uncommon humour. [This was introduced at his own request—he said he was so well known, that it would promote the sale of the prints.]

most prevailing argument, and that on these occasions, he who can make the most noise is the best instrument for party, and is sure to gain the greatest share of money and temporary favour.

Though this scene is exhibiting within doors, there are others equally interesting without. Here votes are called together, as birds to a net, by a decoy ; abroad, the fowler is upon the hunt, canvassing from parish to parish, of which the reader will have some idea, from the following print.

PLATE II.

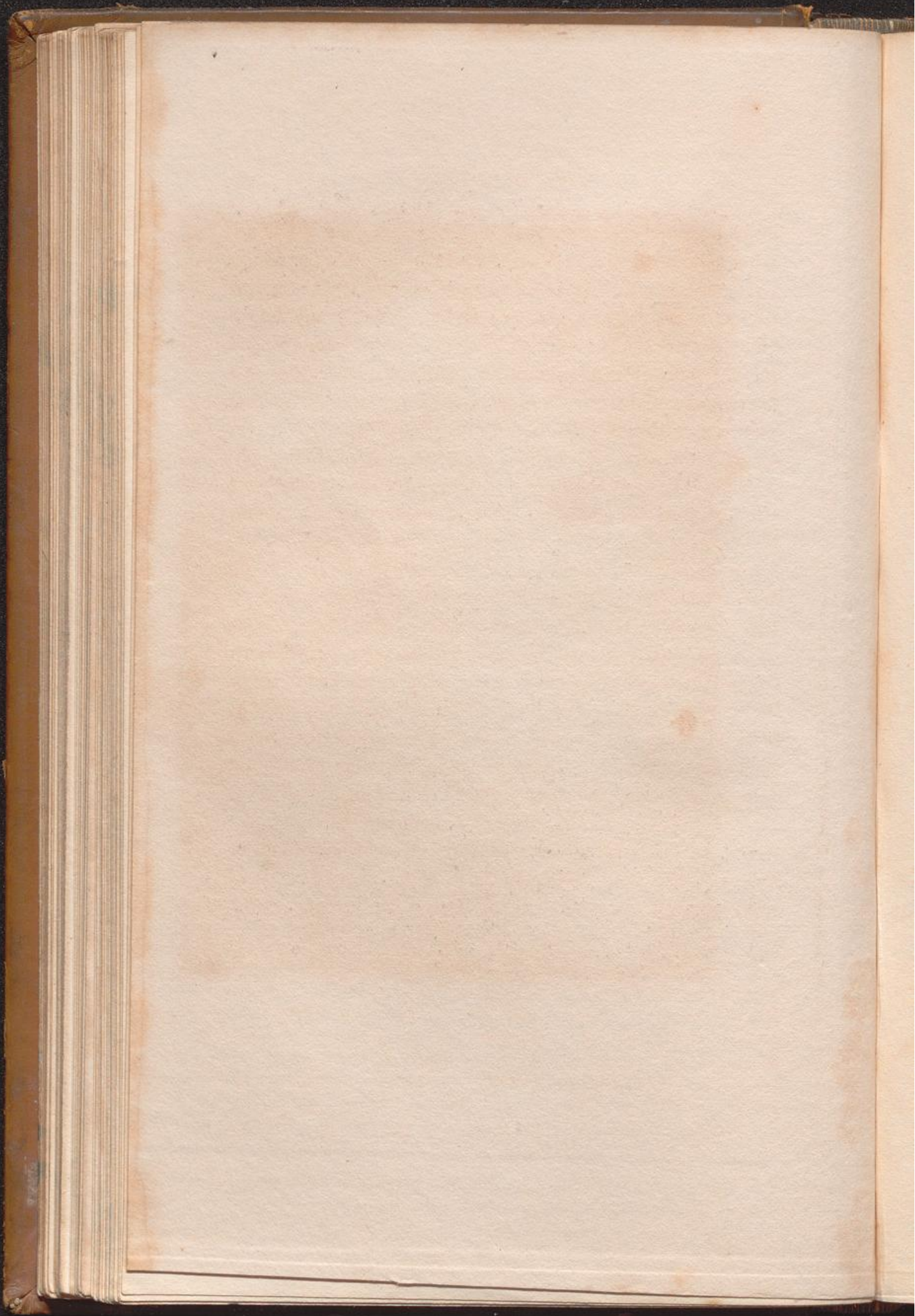
TAKE a view now of the opposite party, canvassing in a country village, strewing as it were money among the inhabitants ; for at these times no one thing paves the way so well as gold, which, as a celebrated writer observed, is the strongest argument, and a most wonderful clearer of the understanding ; it dissipates every doubt and scruple in an instant ; accommodates itself to the meanest capacities ; silences the loud and clamorous ; and brings over the most obstinate and inflexible. Philip of Macedon refuted by it all the wisdom of Athens, confounded their statesmen, struck their orators dumb, and at length argued them out of all their liberties. No wonder then it should have the same effect upon a people to whom money is a God, and who consider the accumulation of wealth (as is the now-prevailing opinion of the world) to be the sole object of a christian's view. Mark, here, an agent for one of the candidates making interest with the ladies ; "gain but the women," has been an old saying, "you are sure of the men ;" see him offering them presents from the box of a travelling



M. H. Worthington, sc.

THE ELECTION. - PL. 2.

Published by John Major, 50, Fleet Street, June 30, 1831.



Jew, in which there is such variety, that they know not what to accept, so wavering and undetermined is the female choice in general. In order to gain their favour, which is oftener effected by baubles and sights, than by any degree of patriotism, he is supposed to entertain the village with a puppet-show, for admission to which a porter has just brought from the printer's some quires of tickets, together with a quantity of bills, usually distributed on these occasions, requesting of the electors their vote and interest. The cloth bearing the insignia of this exhibition is hoisted to the sign post, and is allusive to the subject we are upon; the lower part of which represents Punch profusely throwing money to the populace; the upper part, a view of the treasury loading a waggon with money, in order to secure a parliamentary interest. In this piece, Mr. Hogarth has taken an opportunity of ridiculing the clumsiness and absurdity of the building of the Horse-guards in the heaviness of its steeple, which he has made to resemble a butt; and the lowness of the gateway, by taking off the coachman's head, as he passed through it, when his majesty went first to the House of Lords after it was finished; making the man, in reality, as he is customarily called the King's Body coachman. In the front of this piece stands a country freeholder, beset on both sides by emissaries of different parties,\* presenting cards of invitation to dinner, in order to curry

\* [Upon this interesting trio, Mr. Ireland remarks, "I am tasteless enough to prefer this to Garrick between Tragedy and Comedy. From Hogarth the hint was indisputably taken, but exquisite as is the face of Thalia, and it is perhaps not to be paralleled in any other picture, the countenance of the actor, from the contention of two passions, has assumed a kind of ideotic stare, of which our honest farmer has not an iota."]

favour ; one of whom, viz. he in the cap, is supposed to be an attendant to the Crown ; the other, the master of the Royal Oak ; both are offering bribes, but one a much larger than the other ; and the determination of the farmer is sufficiently known by the cast of his eye, which expressly declares, that though his necessity obliges him to take a fee from both, his conscience bids him vote for him that gives him most. That woman counting her money, which the grenadier eyes with so much wishfulness, is mistress of the inn ; and is introduced to shew us, that the general attention of all ranks of people is fixed upon that saint-seducing object, money ; she sits upon the head of an old ship, fixed at the door, as is commonly seen at public-houses, which represents a lion ready to devour a flower-de-luce (the French arms) ; emblematical of the natural animosity that constantly subsists between the two nations, England and France. As this scene would be imperfect without some eating and drinking, which is, as it were, the very life of parliamenteering ; our author has given us two men hard at it in the larder ; one, tearing a fowl to pieces with his teeth, and the other playing away upon a buttock of beef. On the opposite side of this plate are two alehouse politicians, a barber\* and a cobbler, who with a total ignorance of men and measures, are settling the affairs of state, and planning out of sieges with halfpence and pieces of a tobacco-pipe. During the barber's supposed harangue, which we are to imagine was graced with numerous hesitations, variety of blunders and nonsense of seeming moment, see the one-eyed cobbler, snuffing the snuff of self-consequence,

\* George Alexander Stevens, in his lecture upon heads, has given us the words of this powdered politician ; his Sir Full-fed-Domine Doublechin, being evidently taken from this political barber of Mr. Hogarth's.

and whiffing his tobacco with an air of importance. To set forth the surly pride of one of these menders of shoes, on a time of election, permit me to relate a little anecdote, that happened in a borough town not far from London. In the course of the canvass, the member, who, in order to save appearances, had kissed the voter's wives, with guineas in his mouth, applied for a vote to a low-bred surly chap of the same stamp with this man before us. He began his application with professions of esteem and enquiries of health ; and closed it with saying, "he flattered himself that he had always lived in such repute, as to have the voice of every one there, and among the rest, that of his ;" and on being asked, "what he meant by slobbering the women-folk," replied, "'twas his customary method of expressing his joy in seeing them." "Why don't you, then," says the cobbler, "express your joy in seeing me, the same way?" This was no sooner complied with, than the rough-hewn freeman slips the guinea from his mouth to his pocket, and turns upon his heel with a laugh of derision, telling the 'squire, "that he might now kiss his ——, for that he had promised his vote to t'other man." But to return to my subject ; as in the first plate the persons present wore only the cloke of reality, in this, they shew themselves absolutely in earnest. The people having here assembled to break the windows, tear down the sign, (which one is sawing through on the top) and demolish the house, opened by the contrary party ; and so resolute are they in their determinations, as even to dare the discharge of a gun ; so headstrong and ungovernable is an English mob, that the more they are opposed, the greater ravage they make. We are however to understand, that their inveteracy here is actuated by a twofold principle, that of a spirit of opposition, and their

abhorrence of excise, (this riot being at the office of excise\*) a law, which though it may be particularly necessary, has been and still continues to be extremely unpopular.

In this state of tumult and dissipation, the time is spent till the day of election, when every agent is supposed to head his party, and march into town with a formal procession; the bells ringing, music playing, streamers flying, and people shouting. It is almost impossible to conceive the noise, the hurry, the bustle, and joyous confusion of the populace, each party striving to be loudest, and endeavouring by all the acts of riot and opposition to suppress the other. Now all business is superseded by enjoyment, fighting and feasting is the employment of the day, all distinction is laid aside, and the beggar is as great as the lord. Having then made all the interest possible, and secured every vote in their power, the next step is to poll them.

PLATE III.

Accordingly, see both parties at the hustings, taking every advantage in their power, and, to swell the number of votes, polling the maimed, the sick, the halt, and the blind. The tory interest is distinguished by the orange-coloured flag, and is that on the right, where they are swearing a pensioned officer, who has lost the major part of his person in the service of his country, and who is, here, supposed under a necessity of voting for the court, in order to secure his little pay; so ungrateful is the state in general, as to take notice of, and, reward but a few, except its interest is

\* In country-places, the Excise-office is generally held at public-houses.

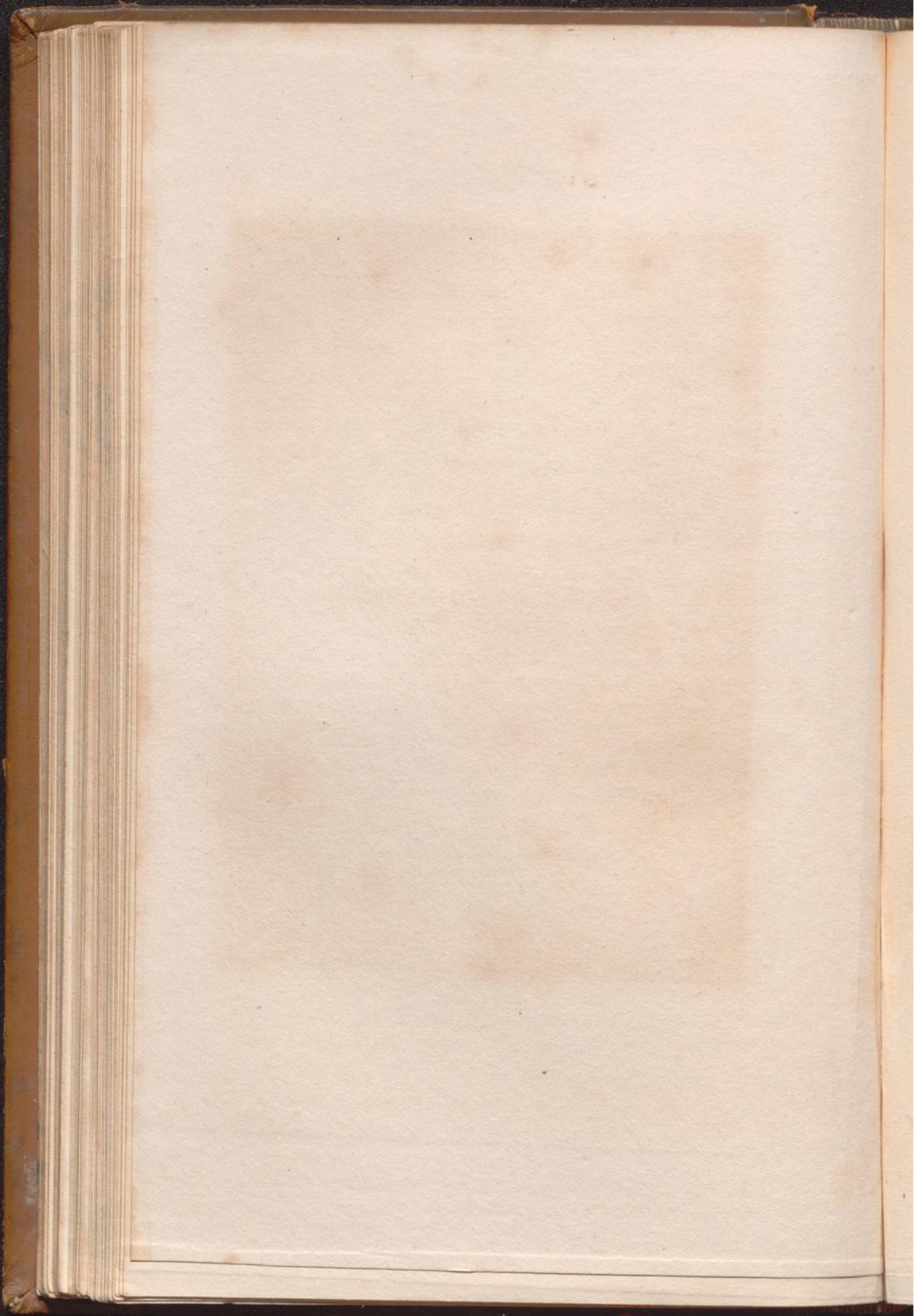




R. II. Weyling sculp. &c.

THE ELECTION. PL. 3.

Published by John Major 50. Fleet Street. March. 31. 1791.



immediately concerned. An oath, however light of it may be made, is one of the most sacred acts of man, being a solemn appeal to heaven, for the truth of the cause in question : whoever therefore is so presumptive as to take a false one, or so rash as not to consider what they are about, is sure to draw upon themselves the anger of the Almighty, and lay themselves open to the vengeance of the God of Truth : an act of this sort being a public affront, and a barefaced mockery of his justice. Yet, notwithstanding this, it is commonly looked upon merely as a ceremonial, which the laws of this kingdom have enjoined, in judicial matters, and as such does not always answer the wise design. As a proof how little its solemnity is apt to affect us, take notice, that on the officer's laying his wooden stump upon the book, the swearing clerk bursts into a fit of laughter, which he endeavours to stifle with his hand, and which is not a little increased by the two counsellors disputing the legality of the oath. By which last we are given to understand, that these black-robed gentry of the bar, so hackneyed are they in the ways of quibbling, will harangue longer and louder in a case of this sort, than when truth is on their side, and integrity before them. On the other hand see the whigs, distinguished by the blue flag and favours, polling a man who has lost the use of his limbs and senses by the palsy, the latter of which is in some measure assisted by the whispers of one \* behind him, who is directing him whom to vote for. By the shackle on this man's leg, and the paper in his pocket, whose title is, "The Sixth Letter to the People of England," we learn, that he came into disgrace for being the author of that publication. Behind him is another freeholder, brought almost dying

\* Dr. Shebbeare, a physician, who was pilloried, and imprisoned two years in the King's Bench, for a libel against his Majesty.

["The Doctor frequently said in a public coffee-house, that he

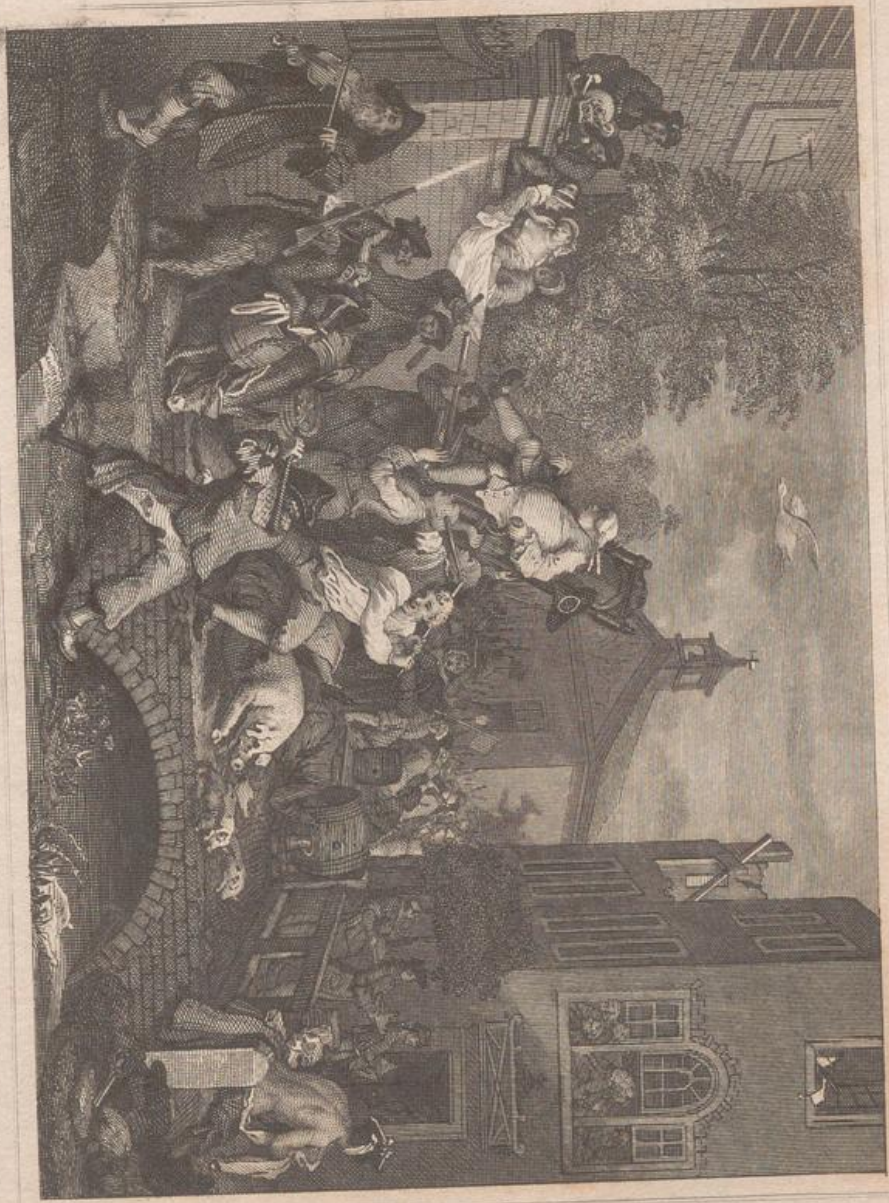
from his bed. So great is the opposition, and so hard run are they supposed to be, as to be under a necessity of procuring of votes, even at the risk of life. Hence have we a further proof of the general craving after money, when a man shall run such great lengths to obtain it, though it is more than probable, the step he takes may occasion his death; and though he has the greatest reason to think he shall not live to enjoy it. On these particular occasions, each party endeavours to lessen the other in the eyes of the public; nor do they stick at any one meanness, in order to accomplish it. It is something very astonishing that gentlemen, men who pride themselves in that appellation, should descend to such wretched shifts, in order to support their cause: things I am confident they would loudly condemn in others; but such is the self partiality of mankind, as to view their own failings through the diminished sight of the telescope, when at the same time they will shuffle to themselves that end, which shall greatly magnify the failings of others. In this view of things, we are to suppose all manner of calumnies and invectives thrown out by one party against the other; and lest they should not spread sufficiently, which is seldom if ever known to be the case, they are committed to press, and distributed up and down among the people. To this end then are those ballads, bearing the print of a gibbet, (an emblem of the contents) which the woman is crying, and which a cluster of men are reading with so much glee. There are many little strokes of humour in this and the other plates, which it might be injudicious to remark, as their discovery must undoubtedly give some pleasure to the person who searches for them; but, as perhaps it may be expected, would have a pillory or a pension. In each of these points he was gratified; Lord Mansfield complimented him with the first, and Lord Bute rewarded him with the second. J. I.]

that I should take some notice of those under this shed, seated above the rest ; let it suffice to say that they are two magistrates, in opposite interests, attending the poll ; one of whom seems not to like the account of it, and the other, so sure within himself of the success he anticipates, as to be lost in the pleasing reverie. This, fully appears, by his inattention to that person on his right, who is sketching off his face on paper. Regretting the sad situation of England, under these scenes of venal corruption, Mr. Hogarth has introduced Britannia in her chariot, breaking down, and her life in danger, through the indiscretion and obstinacy of her coachman, who is at cards with the footman on the box, and who, in contempt of all the cries, and calls of his mistress, is determined to play on, let the consequence be what it will. An admirable stroke on administrations, in general ; whose prevailing principles, too often are interest and ambition, which, though they are productive of the most dreadful events, they never fail to pursue, notwithstanding their country's safety is at stake ; but, like these worthless servants before us, are determined to play their game without interruption ; to ennoble and enrich themselves, at the expense of all that is great and valuable. Would to God that such men would seriously consider that by distressing the state, of which they are the supporters, they, in fact, distress themselves ; for if the body suffers, the arms, the head, and all its members must suffer likewise ; if the carriage be upset, of which these men are the charioteers, they must undoubtedly fall with it ; and it will as little avail them, that the vehicle was not their own, as the ridiculous thought of escaping did the indolent and inconsiderate Hibernian, who, when at sea, in a violent storm, was called up to assist upon deck, for that the vessel was sinking, and the whole crew would be lost, replied, " what care I for the vessel or the crew ?—"

“ sink, and be d——d ;—I am only a passenger.” Nay, let them reflect that they are answerable to the public for their conduct, who have entrusted them, as it were, with their properties and lives ; and that if they make a wrong use of the power committed to their hands, though they may chance to escape an examination in this life, they will most assuredly meet with a severe one in the next.

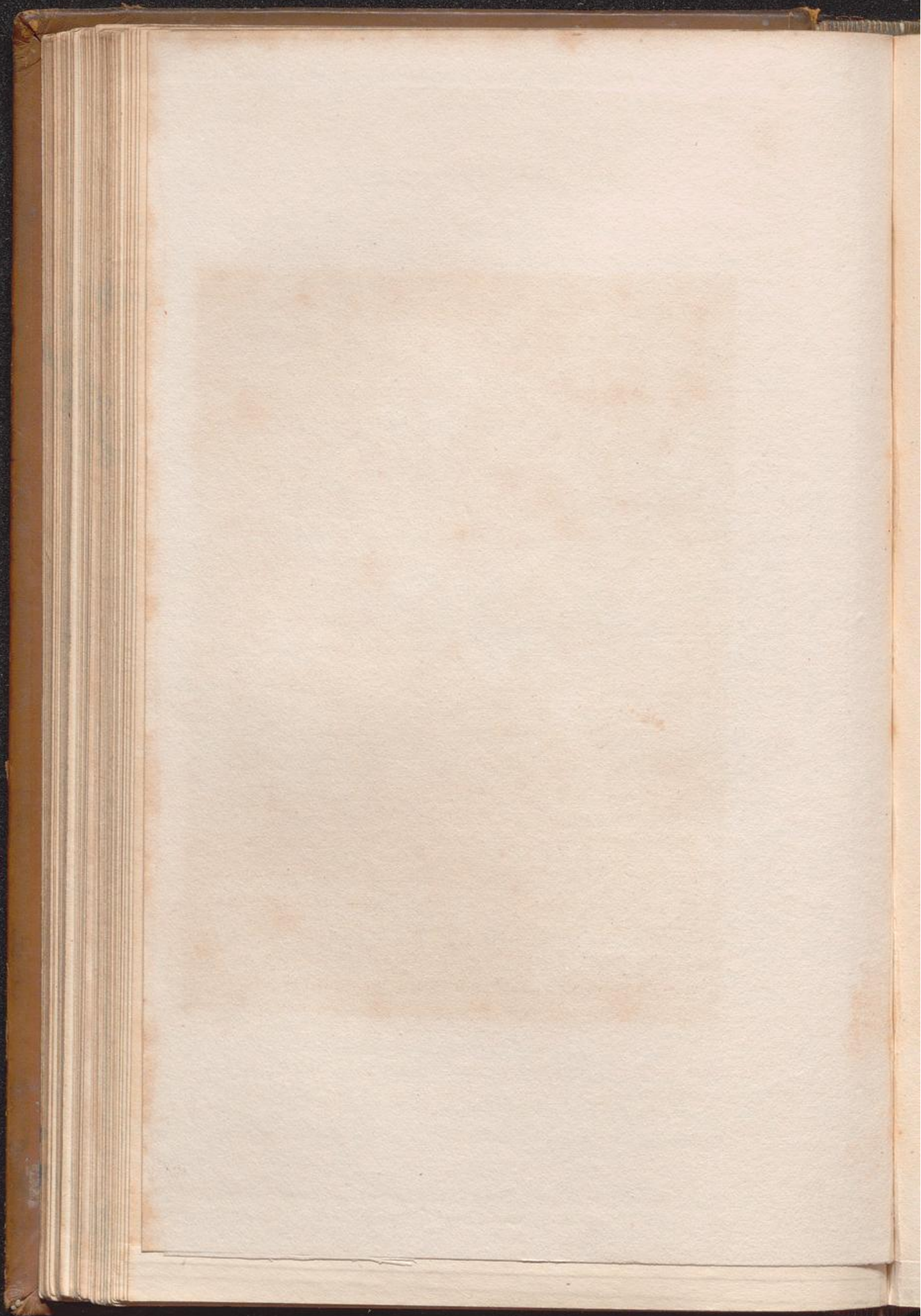
## PLATE IV.

The whig party having, with the greatest difficulty, obtained that victory they wished for, see them now chairing their members, for though one only is in sight, the shadow against the court-house declares the other not a great way off. A tumultuous procession of this kind never fails of producing a general confusion. They are here supposed to have just passed a farmer s yard, hurrying pigs, geese, and every thing before them ; and as one accident seldom comes alone, behold the sow, having just overset a woman, who is near being trampled on by the mob. To add to this scene of uproar, out runs a thresher from the barn, in defence of his pigs, and rashly strikes with his flail at the first person in his way, a bold courageous tar, who repays him smartly in his own coin. The necessity this poor man is reduced to, of leading about a dancing bear, for maintenance, is a most severe reflection on the ingratitude of the government, who will suffer an honest seaman, who has undergone the greatest hardships, nay, lost his limbs in the defence of the nation, to stroll about the country, begging, as it were, the charity of his fellow-subjects, and depending on strangers for that relief he is supposed to be denied by those, who were very particularly indebted to him. This winnow of



W. H. Johnson, sc.  
THE ELECTION. - PL. 4.

*Published by John Mason 50, Fleet Street, Sept. 11, 1831.*





corn, in raising his flail, accidentally strikes one of the carriers on his temples ; stuns him with the blow, and deprives him of his strength, which had near proved fatal to the member, by a sudden overthrow, had it not been prevented by the immediate assistance of another. An accident so unexpected frightens a young lady looking over the churchyard-wall, who seems by her fainting to have a greater concern in the gentleman's misfortune, than we might at first be aware of. To increase this confusion, behold the bear falling foul of the tubs of garbage, the monkey squealing, and his piece taking fire. The action of the chimney-sweeper on the wall, must be allowed a fine stroke of moral humour. "Avast," says he, "my lads," to the thresher and the sailor, "avast, death, (imitating its ghastly grin) has put on its spectacles, and watches an opportunity to lay you by the heels," intimating, that unless they speedily desist, the loss of life may be the dreadful consequence. Against the church is a sun-dial, with the motto, WE MUST ; a pun, alluding to the name of the time-piece it is on ; viz. "We must die—all." Mr. Hogarth has in this taken an opportunity of transmitting to future ages the excessive ignorance of a certain monied man, of good family, who, thinking it extremely smart, had it immediately painted upon his clock in the front of his house. A convincing proof that it is not always in the power of education to impart sense. To shew us, that fighting and feasting are the usual attendants of tumultuous rejoicing, he has thrown into this piece a woman beating her husband for leaving his business, who, by his thread round his neck, and the scissors by his side, is supposed to be a tailor. Why tailors should be represented as the most cowardly and hen-pecked of mortals, unless it be, that working with a needle unmans them, I am at a loss

to determine ; but such is the general contempt that profession lies under, as, in all cases of meanness, to be the butt of ridicule. In one corner of this plate is a soldier, whom we are to understand, by his being stripped, by his broken sword, and by his wounds, to have been also fighting, and who is now comforting himself with a quid of the best virginia, which is generally to the lower class of people a heal for every sore. With respect to feasting, see two men carrying out a barrel of beer to the populace : another licking the dregs of an empty cask ; and to complete the whole, a dinner of many covers, conveying to the best house in the place, that of the attorney's (known by a clerk writing in an upper room), for the entertainment of some particular persons, to whom feasting at a public house would have been disagreeable : among these, a group of whom we see at the window, is a certain popular nobleman\* (distinguishable by the ribbon) who is universally known to busy himself greatly at these particular seasons, establishing an interest by making court to the lowest of the people. One other thing I cannot help taking notice of, which is the introduction of a French cook, who is looking on the naked soldier with an eye of contempt. A sufficient declaration of the insincerity of modern popularity, who, while she roars out, " England for ever, betrays in her luxurious appetite, a dislike of her country, in the loathing of its natural food, and a craving for the unsubstantial dainties of the French. Thus in these, as in all other scenes of life, hypocrisy is the reigning principle and the tongue is a constant traitor to the heart.

Though my intention is only to explain these plates, I cannot close this subject, without one observation ; which is, that mankind, from the highest to the lowest, are slaves

\* The Duke of Newcastle.

to venality ; and it is something strangely astonishing, that men should exclaim against the very thing they are guilty of themselves. Can we much wonder at being sold, when we absolutely sell ourselves, or should we be angry at that, which we are studious to bear a part in ? I cannot endure to hear men exclaim against placemen and pensioners, when, had they an opportunity, they would act the very same. If it is in any respect dangerous, that our properties should be in the disposal of such men, why do we suffer it, when in our power to prevent it ? A man no sooner accepts a place, than he vacates his seat in the house of commons ; if, therefore, it was the determined resolution never to elect a person who holds any post under the government, the complaint would immediately cease, and we should hold our properties in our own hands ; but when the venal constituents abandon their interest, by selling their votes, it must be acknowledged that they are instrumental to their own misfortunes, and bring their miseries on themselves.\*

\* [Wonderfully rich in character and incident as are each of these four subjects, the first plate is considered greatly to surpass the rest for highly wrought humour. Mr. Charles Lamb in his elegant Essay on Hogarth's genius and character, observes that more than thirty distinct classes of face, are here brought together into a room and so disposed about, and so partaking of the spirit of the occasion, that nothing but an election could have assembled them. The same author, also, justly remarks upon the dumb rhetoric of the scenery—"for tables and chairs, and joint stools in Hogarth are living and significant things." Mr. Ireland has given us Hogarth's own remarks on two of the characters in this piece—the butcher with "*pro patria*" in his cap and his wounded companion. The truth is, that he was his own commentator, as far as delicacy permitted, and that all the essential information as to the real meaning of his works came directly from himself. Dr. Trusler having simply access to the same papers afterwards possessed by Mr. Ireland—but during our author's life, he was chiefly anxious to get his thoughts

transferred to the French language, in order to increase the sale of his works abroad; and for this purpose, he employed Roquet the enameller—whose task, however, ends with the March to Finchley. The contents of his pamphlet are brought forward by Dr. Trusler, “These two patriots, says Hogarth, who, let what party will prevail, can be no gainers, yet spend their time, which is *their* fortune, for what they suppose right, and for a glass of gin lose their blood, and sometimes their lives in support of the cause, are, as far as I can see, entitled to an equal portion of fame with many of the emblazoned heroes of ancient Rome: but such is the effect of prejudice, that though the picture of an antique wrestler is admired as a grand character, we necessarily annex an idea of vulgarity to the portrait of a modern boxer. An old blacksmith in his tattered garb is a coarse and low being;—strip him naked, tie his leathern apron round his loins,—chisel out his figure in free-stone or marble, precisely as it appears,—he becomes elevated, and may pass for a philosopher or a deity.”

With respect to the amazing variety of countenances presented in the works of Hogarth, it is quite plain that whenever he saw a remarkable one, he knew at once the cause of it. Whether it were a freak of nature, a professional distortion in high or low life, or one of the thousand and one ridiculous shapes assumable by that best of all friends to a comic painter—AFFECTATION! Accordingly he introduced into his works, on suitable occasions, what he never omitted any opportunity of adding to his sketch book; or when that was not at hand, he drew the faces upon his thumb-nail. Mr. Dallaway extracts the following curious article from Mr. Baker's sale catalogue: “Six sheets containing sixty-four small sketches of heads, very spiritedly executed with a pen, belonging to many of the prominent characters subsequently introduced into his principal works.” It was sold for 31*l.* 10*s.*]