

O father, you can unperplex my mind,
My realm are for my marriage all inclined;
I love, but know not who she is, or where,
And to discover either, I despair;
Despairing, I in celibate would live,
Since I my heart can to no other give;
I feel too great a load in cares of state,
Care's conjugal may much increase the weight;
More hours I fain would in my closet spend,
Pure virgins best the affairs of Heaven attend.

Son, and the saint, if you both lives compare,
Both different ways may in God's favour share;
Prayers, meditations, and intentions pure,
A heart which no temptations can allure;
Self abnegation and a conscience clear
Enduring no one lust to dinner;
All graces which incarnate God enjoy'd,
The married equally with virgins find.

Contemplatives have easy loads to bear,
Free from trouble and distracting care,
Loose from the world, and disengaged from sense,
Their prayers may longer be, and more intense;
To no relations virgins have a tie
To pluck them back, but unmolested die;
A virgin priest the altar best attends,
Our Lord that state commands not, but commends.

Hawkins published the prose works, with a *Life*, in 1711, as did Keel in 1835, and Benham in 1883. Several works attributed to Keel are by most authorities regarded as spurious. Keel's poetical works included hymns; poems on gospel subjects and the attributes of God; two epics, *Edmund and Hymen* or *the Penitent* (each in thirteen books); *Quidnes*; *Preparations for Death*; and *Damonet and Porcia*, or *Chaste Love*, a pastoral. They were collected by Hawkins in 4 vols. (1721), and are mostly awkward and tedious. A selection of his 'Hymns and Poems for the Holy Days and Festivals of the Church' was published in 1808 as *Bishop Keel's Christian Year*. It is known that these hymns were highly prized by Keelie, who apparently took hence the idea of his own *Christian Year*. See *Lives* by Bowles (1831), Anderson (1851-54), Plumptre (2 vols. 1888), and Clarke (1896).

Jeremy Collier (1650-1726) is less remembered as the conscientious and persecuted Non-juring bishop than as the trenchant and unsparing castigat of the corrupt stage of his time. He was born at Stow-cum-Quy, Cambridgeshire, son of a clerical schoolmaster at Ipswich; and here and at Caius College, Cambridge, he was educated, afterwards becoming rector of Ampton near Bury St Edmunds, and lecturer at Gray's Inn. His reply to Burnet's *Inquiry into the State of Affairs* (1688) cost him some months in Newgate. He next waged warfare on the crown with incisive pamphlets, and was arrested in 1692 on suspicion of being involved in a Jacobite plot. In 1696 he gave absolution to the would-be assassins Friend and Parkyn on the scaffold, for which offence he was outlawed. In 1698 he published his *Short View of the Immorality of the English Stage*, which fell like a thunderbolt among the wits. 'It is inspiring,' says Macaulay, 'to see how gallantly the solitary outlaw advances to attack enemies, formidable separately, and, it might have been thought, irresistible when combined, distributes his swashing blows right and left among Wycherley, Congreve, and Vanbrugh.

treads the wretched D'Urfey down in the dirt beneath his feet, and strikes with all his strength full at the towering crest of Dryden.' Collier's argument carried the country with it, and helped to bring back the English drama to good morals and good sense. That excessive stage profligacy which was partly a reaction against the rigidity of Puritanism, and had far outrun the parallel laxity of contemporary social morals, was immediately to some extent checked. But it was not without a struggle that the wits consented to be worsted. Congreve and Vanbrugh, with many of the smaller fry, answered angrily but weakly, and were crushed anew by the redoubtable Nonjuror, who was 'complete master of the rhetoric of honest indignation.' 'Contest,' says Dr Johnson, 'was his delight; was not to be frightened from his purpose or his prey.' There were not merely replies but defences, second defences, and vindications of the *Short View* by the irrepressible *Censor Morum*. Even Congreve and Vanbrugh condescended to omit 'several expressions' from the *Double Dealer* and the *Provoked Wife*. The great Dryden stood apart at first, but at length in the preface to his *Fables* (1700) acknowledged he had been justly reprov'd. 'I shall say the less of Mr Collier,' he says, 'because in many things he has taxed me justly; and I have pleaded guilty to all thoughts and expressions of mine which can be truly argued of obscenity, profaneness, or immorality, and retract them. If he be my enemy, let him triumph; if he be my friend, as I have given him no personal occasion to be otherwise, he will be glad of my repentance. It becomes me not to draw my pen in the defence of a bad cause, when I have so often drawn it for a good one.'

But Dryden complained, and fairly, that his antagonist had often perverted his meaning, that he was 'too much given to horse-play in his raillery, and came to battle like a dictator from the plough;' and that 'if zeal for God's house had not eaten him up, it had at least devoured some part of his good manners and civility.' No doubt Collier erred by pedantry and want of discrimination. He treats with as fierce indignation whatever appears to him 'profane' as he does the grossest offences against decency. And amongst sins of profaneness he reckons not merely all light allusions to religious words, phrases, and subjects, but any disrespectful comments on Churchmen or ecclesiastical affairs. He does not merely protest against speaking of the clergy at large as hypocrites and impostors; even to assume that some of the clergy were unworthy of their cloth was with him a sin, and the usual ejaculations of impatience were treated as heinous examples of blasphemy. It must have been trying to him, a partisan of the Stewart cause, to have to attack an institution so intimately bound up as was the theatre with the principles of the Restoration, and painful to the High Churchman to be spoke of an argument usually associated with censorious Presbyterians.