

Cambridge University Press

978-1-107-43276-5 - Samuel Butler: Hudibras: Written in the Time of the Late Wars  
The Text Edited by A. R. Waller

Excerpt

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# HUDIBRAS.

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*The First and Second Parts.*

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Written in the Time of the

Late Wars.

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CORRECTED & AMENDED,  
With  
Several Additions and Annotations.

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L O N D O N :

Printed by *T. N.* for *John Martyn* and *Henry Herringman*, at the *Bell* in *St. Pauls Churchyard*, and at the *Anchor* in the Lower Walk of the *New Exchange*, 1678.

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# HUDIBRAS.

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## The ARGUMENT of the First CANTO.

*Sir Hudibras his passing worth,  
The manner how he sally'd forth :  
His Arms and Equipage are shown ;  
His Horse's Vertues, and his own.  
Th' Adventure of the Bear and Fiddle  
Is sung, but breaks off in the middle.*

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## CANTO I.

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WHEN *civil* fury first grew high,  
And men fell out they knew not why,  
When hard *Words*, *Jealousies*, and *Fears*,  
Set Folks together by the Ears,  
And made them fight, like mad or drunk,  
For Dame *Religion* as for Punk,  
Whose honesty they all durst swear for,  
Though not a man of them knew wherefore :  
When *Gospel-Trumpeter* surrounded,  
With long-ear'd rout to Battel sounded,  
And Pulpit, Drum Ecclesiastick,  
Was beat with fist, instead of a stick :  
Then did Sir *Knight* abandon dwelling,  
And out he rode a Colonelling.

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A Wight he was, whose very sight wou'd  
 Entitle him *Mirror of Knighthood*;  
 That never bent his stubborn knee  
 To any thing but Chivalry,  
 Nor put up blow, but that which laid  
 Right worshipful on Shoulder-blade:  
 Chief of Domestick Knights and Errant,  
 Either for Chartel or for Warrant:  
 Great on the Bench, Great in the Saddle,  
 That could as well bind o'er, as swaddle.  
 Mighty he was at both of these,  
 And styl'd of *War* as well as *Peace*.  
 (So some Rats of amphibious nature,  
 Are either for the Land or Water)  
 But here our Authors make a doubt,  
 Whether he were more wise, or stout.  
 Some hold the one, and some the other:  
 But howsoe'er they make a pother,  
 The difference was so small, his Brain  
 Outweigh'd his Rage but half a Grain:  
 Which made some take him for a Tool  
 That Knaves do work with, call'd a Fool.  
 And offer to lay wagers that  
 As *Mountaigne* playing with his Cat,  
 Complains she thought him but an Ass,  
 Much more she would Sir *Hudibras*.  
 (For that's the Name our valiant Knight  
 To all his Challenges did write.)  
 But they're mistaken very much,  
 'Tis plain enough he was no such.  
 We grant, although he had much wit,  
 H' was very shie of using it,  
 As being loath to wear it out,  
 And therefore bore it not about.  
 Unless on Holy-days, or so,  
 As Men their best Apparel do.  
 Beside, 'tis known he could speak *Greek*,  
 As naturally as Pigs squeek:  
 That *Latine* was no more difficile,  
 Than to a Black-bird 'tis to whistle.

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## FIRST PART, CANTO I

Being rich in both, he never scanted  
 His Bounty unto such as wanted;  
 But much of either would afford,  
 To many that had not one word.  
 For *Hebrew Roots*, although th' are found  
 To flourish most in barren ground,  
 He had such plenty as suffic'd  
 To make some think him circumcis'd:  
 And truely so perhaps, he was  
 'Tis many a Pious Christians case.

He was in *Logick* a great Critick,  
 Profoundly skill'd in Analytick.  
 He could distinguish, and divide  
 A Hair 'twixt *South* and *South-West* side:  
 On either which he would dispute,  
 Confute, change hands, and still confute.  
 He'd undertake to prove by force  
 Of Argument, a Man's no Horse.  
 He'd prove a Buzard is no Fowl,  
 And that a *Lord* may be an Owl,  
 A Calf an *Alderman*, a Goose a *Justice*,  
 And Rooks *Committee-men*, and *Trustees*;  
 He'd run in Debt by Disputation,  
 And pay with Ratiocination.  
 All this by Syllogism, true  
 In mood and Figure, he would do.

For *Rhetorick* he could not ope  
 His mouth, but out there flew a Trope:  
 And when he hapned to break off  
 I'th' middle of his speech, or cough,  
 H' had hard words, ready to shew why,  
 And tell what Rules he did it by.  
 Else when with greatest Art he spoke,  
 You'd think he talk'd like other folk,  
 For all a Rhetoricians Rules,  
 Teach nothing but to name his Tools,  
 His ordinary Rate of Speech  
 In loftiness of sound was rich,

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A *Babylonish* dialect,  
Which learned Pedants much affect.  
It was a parti-colour'd dress  
Of patch'd and pyball'd Languages:  
'Twas English cut on *Greek* and *Latin*,  
Like Fustian heretofore on Sattin.  
It had an odd promiscuous Tone,  
As if h' had talk'd three parts in one.  
Which made some think when he did gabble,  
Th' had heard three Labo'ers of *Babel*;  
Or *Cerberus* himself pronounce  
A Leash of Languages at once.  
This he as volubly would vent  
As if his stock would ne'er be spent.  
And truly to support that charge  
He had supplies as vast and large.  
For he could coin or counterfeit  
New words with little or no wit:  
Words so debas'd and hard, no stone  
Was hard enough to touch them on.  
And when with hasty noise he spoke 'em,  
The Ignorant for currant took 'em.  
That had the Orator who once,  
Did fill his Mouth with Pibble Stones  
When he harangu'd, but known his Phrase,  
He would have us'd no other ways.

In *Mathematicks* he was greater  
Than *Tycho Brahe*, or *Erra Pater*:  
For he, by *Geometrick* scale,  
Could take the size of *Pots of Ale*;  
Resolve by Signs and Tangents streight,  
If *Bread* or *Butter* wanted weight;  
And wisely tell what hour o'th' day  
The Clock doth strike, by *Algebra*.

Beside he was a shrewd *Philosopher*,  
And had read every Text and gloss over:  
What e'er the crabbed'st Author hath  
He understood b' implicit Faith,

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## FIRST PART, CANTO I

What ever *Sceptick* could inquire for;  
 For every *why* he had a *wherefore*;  
 Knew more than forty of them do,  
 As far as words and terms could go.  
 All which he understood by Rote,  
 And as occasion serv'd, would quote;  
 No matter whether right or wrong:  
 They might be either said or sung.  
 His Notions fitted things so well,  
 That which was which he could not tell;  
 But oftentimes mistook th' one  
 For th' other, as great Clerks have done.  
 He could reduce all things to Acts,  
 And knew their Natures by Abstracts,  
 Where Entity and Quiddity  
 The Ghosts of defunct Bodies flie;  
 Where Truth in Person does appear,  
 Like words congeal'd in Northern Air.  
 He knew *what's what*, and that's as high  
 As *Metaphysick* Wit can fly,  
 In *School Divinity* as able  
 As he that hight *Irrefragable*;  
 Profound in all the Nominal  
 And real ways beyond them all;  
 And with as delicate a Hand,  
 Could twist as tough a Rope of Sand.  
 And weave fine Cobwebs, fit for Skull  
 That's empty when the Moon is full;  
 Such as take Lodgings in a Head  
 That's to be lett unfurnished.  
 He could raise Scruples dark and nice,  
 And after solve 'em in a trice:  
 As if Divinity had catch'd  
 The Itch, of purpose to be scratch'd;  
 Or, like a Mountebank, did wound  
 And stab her self with doubts profound,  
 Only to shew with how small pain  
 The sores of faith are cur'd again;  
 Although by woful proof we find,  
 They always leave a Scar behind.

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## HUDIBRAS

He knew the Seat of Paradise,  
 Could tell in what degree it lies:  
 And as he was dispos'd, could prove it,  
 B[e]low the Moon, or else above it.  
 What *Adam* dreamt of when his Bride  
 Came from her Closet in his side:  
 Whether the Devil tempted her  
 By a *High Dutch* Interpreter:  
 If either of them had a Navel;  
 Who first made Musick malleable:  
 Whether the Serpent at the fall  
 Had cloven Feet, or none at all.  
 All this without a Gloss or Comment,  
 He would unriddle in a moment:  
 In proper terms, such as men smatter  
 When they throw out and miss the matter.

For his *Religion* it was fit  
 To match his Learning and his Wit:  
 'Twas *Presbyterian* true blew,  
 For he was of that stubborn Crew  
 Of Errant Saints, whom all men grant  
 To be the true Church *Militant*:  
 Such as do build their Faith upon  
 The holy Text of *Pike* and *Gun*;  
 Decide all Controversies by  
 Infallible *Artillery*;  
 And prove their Doctrin Orthodox  
 By Apostolick *Blows* and *Knocks*;  
 Call Fire and Sword and Desolation,  
 A *godly-thorough-Reformation*,  
 Which always must be carry'd on,  
 And still be doing, never done:  
 As if Religion were intended  
 For nothing else but to be mended.  
 A Sect, whose chief Devotion lies  
 In odd perverse Antipathies;  
 In falling out with that or this,  
 And finding somewhat still amiss:  
 More peevish, cross, and splenetick,



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## FIRST PART, CANTO I

Than Dog distract, or Monky sick.  
 That with more care keep Holy-day  
 The wrong, than others the right way:  
 Compound for Sins, they are inclin'd to;  
 By damning those they have no mind to;  
 Still so perverse and opposite,  
 As if they worshipp'd God for spight,  
 The self-same thing they will abhor  
 One way, and long another for.  
 Free-will they one way disavow,  
 Another, nothing else allow.  
 All Piety consists therein  
 In them, in other Men all Sin.  
 Rather than fail, they will defie  
 That which they love most tenderly,  
 Quarrel with *minc'd Pies*, and disparage  
 Their best and dearest friend, *Plum-porridge*;  
 Fat *Pig* and *Goose* it self oppose,  
 And blaspheme *Custard* through the *Nose*.  
 Th' Apostles of this fierce Religion,  
 Like *Mahomet's*, were Ass and *Widgeon*,  
 To whom our Knight, by fast instinct  
 Of Wit and Temper was so linkt,  
 As if Hipocrisie and Non-sence  
 Had got th' Advouson of his Conscience.

Thus was he gifted and accouter'd,  
 We mean on th' inside, not the outward:  
 That next of all we shall discuss;  
 Then listen Sirs, it followeth thus:

His tawny *Beard* was th' equal grace  
 Both of his Wisdom and his Face;  
 In Cut and Dy so like a Tile,  
 A sudden view it would beguile:  
 The upper part thereof was Whey,  
 The nether Orange mixt with Grey.  
 This hairy Meteor did denounce  
 The fall of Scepters and of Crowns;  
 With grizly type did represent

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Declining Age of Government ;  
 And tell with Hieroglyphick Spade,  
 Its own grave and the State's were made.  
 Like *Sampson's* Heart-breakers, it grew  
 In time to make a Nation rue ;  
 Though it contributed its own fall,  
 To wait upon the publick downfall.  
 It was Canonick, and did grow  
 In Holy Orders by strict vow ;  
 Of Rule as sullen and severe,  
 As that of rigid *Cordeliere* :  
 'Twas bound to suffer Persecution  
 And Martyrdome with resolution ;  
 T' oppose it self against the hate  
 And vengeance of th' incensed State :  
 In whose defiance it was worn,  
 Still ready to be pull'd and torn,  
 With red-hot Irons to be tortur'd,  
 Revil'd, and spit upon, and martyr'd.  
 Maugre all which, 'twas to stand fast,  
 As long as Monarchy should last.  
 But when the State should hap to reel,  
 'Twas to submit to fatal Steel,  
 And fall, as it was consecrate  
 A Sacrifice to fall of State ;  
 Whose thred of life the fatal Sisters  
 Did twist together with its Whiskers,  
 And twine so close, that time should never,  
 In life or death, their fortunes sever ;  
 But with his rusty Sickle mow  
 Both down together at a blow.

So learned *Taliacotius* from  
 The brawny part of Porter's Bum,  
 Cut supplemental Noses, which  
 Would last as long as Parent breech :  
 But when the Date of *Nock* was out,  
 Off dropt the Sympathetick Snout.