

Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-07404-9 - *The Life and Errors of John Dunton, Citizen of London: With the Lives and Characters of More than a Thousand Contemporary Divines and Other Persons of Literary Eminence: Volume 1*

Edited by John Nichols

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

CAMBRIDGE LIBRARY COLLECTION

Books of enduring scholarly value

Printing and Publishing History

The interface between authors and their readers is a fascinating subject in its own right, revealing a great deal about social attitudes, technological progress, aesthetic values, fashionable interests, political positions, economic constraints, and individual personalities. This part of the Cambridge Library Collection reissues classic studies in the area of printing and publishing history that shed light on developments in typography and book design, printing and binding, the rise and fall of publishing houses and periodicals, and the roles of authors and illustrators. It documents the ebb and flow of the book trade supplying a wide range of customers with products from almanacs to novels, bibles to erotica, and poetry to statistics.

The Life and Errors of John Dunton, Citizen of London

This two-volume work, originally published in 1705 and now reissued in John Nichols' edition of 1818, was one of the earliest examples of autobiographical writing in English. John Dunton (1659–1732), a highly eccentric bookseller and publisher, was also responsible for one of the first periodicals in London, the *Athenian Gazette*, which invited its readers to submit questions on any topic, to be answered by the Athenian Society, a group of learned men (in fact, Dunton himself and some cronies). However, he was not a practical businessman, and the death of his wife and his own illness led to poverty, and to hack-work for others. *The Life and Errors* was followed by pamphlets attacking those whom he blamed for his misfortunes. The work gives a fascinating picture of authors and the book trade in Restoration London. Volume 1 contains Dunton's autobiography, preceded by a short biography by Nichols.

Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-07404-9 - The Life and Errors of John Dunton, Citizen of London: With the Lives and Characters of More than a Thousand Contemporary Divines and Other Persons of Literary Eminence: Volume 1

Edited by John Nichols

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

Cambridge University Press has long been a pioneer in the reissuing of out-of-print titles from its own backlist, producing digital reprints of books that are still sought after by scholars and students but could not be reprinted economically using traditional technology. The Cambridge Library Collection extends this activity to a wider range of books which are still of importance to researchers and professionals, either for the source material they contain, or as landmarks in the history of their academic discipline.

Drawing from the world-renowned collections in the Cambridge University Library and other partner libraries, and guided by the advice of experts in each subject area, Cambridge University Press is using state-of-the-art scanning machines in its own Printing House to capture the content of each book selected for inclusion. The files are processed to give a consistently clear, crisp image, and the books finished to the high quality standard for which the Press is recognised around the world. The latest print-on-demand technology ensures that the books will remain available indefinitely, and that orders for single or multiple copies can quickly be supplied.

The Cambridge Library Collection brings back to life books of enduring scholarly value (including out-of-copyright works originally issued by other publishers) across a wide range of disciplines in the humanities and social sciences and in science and technology.

Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-07404-9 - The Life and Errors of John Dunton, Citizen of London: With the Lives and Characters of More than a Thousand Contemporary Divines and Other Persons of Literary Eminence: Volume 1

Edited by John Nichols

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

The Life and Errors of John Dunton, Citizen of London

*With the Lives and Characters
of More than a Thousand Contemporary Divines
and other Persons of Literary Eminence*

VOLUME 1

EDITED BY JOHN NICHOLS



CAMBRIDGE
UNIVERSITY PRESS

Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-07404-9 - The Life and Errors of John Dunton, Citizen of London: With the Lives and Characters of More than a Thousand Contemporary Divines and Other Persons of Literary Eminence: Volume 1

Edited by John Nichols

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

CAMBRIDGE
UNIVERSITY PRESS

University Printing House, Cambridge, CB2 8BS, United Kingdom

Cambridge University Press is part of the University of Cambridge.
It furthers the University's mission by disseminating knowledge in the pursuit of education, learning and research at the highest international levels of excellence.

www.cambridge.org

Information on this title: www.cambridge.org/9781108074049

© in this compilation Cambridge University Press 2014

This edition first published 1818

This digitally printed version 2014

ISBN 978-1-108-07404-9 Paperback

This book reproduces the text of the original edition. The content and language reflect the beliefs, practices and terminology of their time, and have not been updated.

Cambridge University Press wishes to make clear that the book, unless originally published by Cambridge, is not being republished by, in association or collaboration with, or with the endorsement or approval of, the original publisher or its successors in title.

Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-07404-9 - The Life and Errors of John Dunton, Citizen of London: With the Lives and Characters of More than a Thousand Contemporary Divines and Other Persons of Literary Eminence: Volume 1

Edited by John Nichols

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-07404-9 - The Life and Errors of John Dunton, Citizen of London: With the Lives and Characters of More than a Thousand Contemporary Divines and Other Persons of Literary Eminence: Volume 1

Edited by John Nichols

Frontmatter

[More information](#)*F. Knight Del.**J. Swaine Sc.**After M^r Gucht.*

JOHN



DUNTON,

*Born 1659.**Died 1733.**Published by J. Nichols & C^o. Nov. 7. 1697.*

Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-07404-9 - The Life and Errors of John Dunton, Citizen of London: With the Lives and Characters of More than a Thousand Contemporary Divines and Other Persons of Literary Eminence: Volume 1

Edited by John Nichols

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

THE
Life and Errors
OF
JOHN DUNTON,
CITIZEN OF LONDON;
WITH THE
LIVES AND CHARACTERS OF MORE THAN A THOUSAND
CONTEMPORARY DIVINES,
AND OTHER PERSONS OF LITERARY EMINENCE.
TO WHICH ARE ADDED,
DUNTON'S CONVERSATION IN IRELAND;
Selections
FROM HIS OTHER GENUINE WORKS;
AND A FAITHFUL PORTRAIT OF THE AUTHOR.

VOL. I.

PRINTED BY AND FOR J. NICHOLS, SON, AND BENTLEY,
AT THE PRINTING-OFFICE OF THE VOTES OF THE HOUSE OF COMMONS,
25, PARLIAMENT STREET, WESTMINSTER:

SOLD ALSO AT THEIR OLD OFFICE IN RED LION PASSAGE,
FLEET STREET, LONDON.

1818.

Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-07404-9 - The Life and Errors of John Dunton, Citizen of London: With the Lives and Characters of More than a Thousand Contemporary Divines and Other Persons of Literary Eminence: Volume 1

Edited by John Nichols

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-07404-9 - The Life and Errors of John Dunton, Citizen of London: With the Lives and Characters of More than a Thousand Contemporary Divines and Other Persons of Literary Eminence: Volume 1

Edited by John Nichols

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

CONTENTS.

	Page
BRIEF Memoirs of the Author	v
JOHN DUNTON'S LIFE AND ERRORS :	
The Author's Speaking Picture, drawn by himself	iii
Mr. Warper's Poetical Compliment to Dunton	v
Mr. Freind's Verses on Dunton's Idea of a New Life	ix
Dunton's Address to the Impartial Readers	xi
Chap. I Stage I. From his Birth to his Fifteenth Year	21
II. An Idea of a New Life ; or, the Manner how I would think, and speak, and act, might I live over again these Fourteen Years	28
III. Stage II. Life and Errors, through his Seven Years Apprenticeship	38
IV. Idea of a New Life during the Years of Apprenticeship	50
V. Stage III. Of Bachelorship. Life and Errors from the Time of his Freedom to the Day of his Marriage	60
VI. Idea of a New Life, during the Stage of Bachelorship	71
VII. Stage IV. Life and Errors from the Day of his Marriage to Mrs. Elizabeth Annesley, till the Day of her decease	77
VIII. Idea of a New Life, might I live over again my married State with Iris	296
IX. Brief Characters of some eminent Persons	333
X. The After-Thought ; or, a further Account of the Life and Errors of John Dunton, with the Manner how he would correct or shun them, might he live over his Days again	381
SELECTIONS FROM THE OTHER WORKS OF DUNTON.	
XI. Dunton's Journal, Part II. or, a Panegyrick on the most eminent Persons for Piety, Learning, Courage, Moderation, Charity, and other Accomplishments, now living in the Three Kingdoms, 1706	413
Secret History of the Weekly Writers	423
Character of Mr. George Larkin, Senior	439
XII. The Living Elegy ; or Dunton's Letter, being a Word of Comfort to his few Creditors	442
XIII. Dunton's Shadow : or, the Character of a Summer Friend	482
XIV. Extracts from " The Dublin Scuffle, being a Challenge sent by John Dunton to Patrick Campbell, Bookseller in Dublin	491
Dunton's last Farewell to his Acquaintance in Dublin	509
Account of his Conversation in Ireland	530

Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-07404-9 - The Life and Errors of John Dunton, Citizen of London: With the Lives and Characters of More than a Thousand Contemporary Divines and Other Persons of Literary Eminence: Volume 1

Edited by John Nichols

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

C O N T E N T S.

	Page
Extracts from Dunton's Athenian Project :	
The Court and Character of Queen Mary I. : with a brief History of her private Cabals, and the Methods she used for introducing Popery	648
The Mathematic Funeral ; or, a Monument erected to the Memory of the late pious and learned Dr. J. Wallis	658
The Nightingale ; or, an Ode upon the Death of Mr. Henry Purcell	662
Dignified and Distinguished ; or, a Character of the most eminent Conformists in the Queen's Dominions . .	664
A Narrative of the Scotch Commencement ; or, an Account of what passed in the several Assemblies at Edinburgh, Glasgow, and Aberdeen, at the late Promotion of Mr. Daniel Williams, Mr. Benjamin Calamy, and Mr. Nathaniel Oldfield, to the Degree of Doctor in Divinity, &c.—with a Character of the Scotch Professors. By the Rev. Mr. M—— A——	678
The Dissenting Doctors ; a Poem on the same Occasion	695
Extracts from Mordecai's Memorial ; or, There's Nothing done for him	730
An Appeal to King George the First	735
List of Dunton's Political Tracts	744
Analysis of his MSS. preserved in Dr. Rawlinson's Collections in the Bodleian Library	751

Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-07404-9 - The Life and Errors of John Dunton, Citizen of London: With the Lives and Characters of More than a Thousand Contemporary Divines and Other Persons of Literary Eminence: Volume 1

Edited by John Nichols

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

MEMOIRS OF THE AUTHOR.

A BRIEF Analysis of the Life of this ingenious but eccentric Bookseller, whose latter years were strongly tinged with insanity, will prepare the Reader for the undisguised and desultory Narrative which he has given of himself and his numerous Friends and Contemporaries; amongst whom will be found the most eminent Divines both of the Established Church and among the Nonconformists; and nearly all the Printers, Engravers, Booksellers, Stationers, and Binders, of that period.

John Dunton was a most voluminous Writer, as he seems to have had his pen always ready, and never to have been at a loss for a subject to exercise it upon: but, though he generally put his name to what he wrote, it would be a difficult task to get together a complete collection of his various publications*. As containing notices of many persons and things not to be found elsewhere, they certainly

* This dipper into *a thousand* Books formed *ten thousand* Projects, six hundred of which he appears to have thought he had completely methodized. His mind seemed to be like some tables, where the actuals have been ill-sorted, and worse dressed.

Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-07404-9 - The Life and Errors of John Dunton, Citizen of London: With the Lives and Characters of More than a Thousand Contemporary Divines and Other Persons of Literary Eminence: Volume 1

Edited by John Nichols

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

have their use; and his accounts, it must be acknowledged, are often interesting*.

Dunton's Father (John †) was born on the 10th of June, 1628, at Little Missenden, Bucks, the place where *his* Father and Grandfather (both whose names were John) had been Ministers.

At the age of 16, he was sent to Trinity College, Cambridge, where he continued till he took his Master's Degree. On quitting the University, he travelled into foreign parts; and, on his return, obtained the Rectory of St. Mary's in Bedford. After staying there five years, he removed to Graffham, in Huntingdonshire, where he married Mrs. Lydia Carter; by whom he had one Son, John, the Hero of our History, born May 4, 1659; and in three months after, he also lost his Wife, who was buried at Graffham.

He resolved not to marry again for seven years; and kept his word by retiring into Ireland, where he

* Dunton is honoured with an incidental notice in the *Dun-
ciad*, II. 144; on which Warburton remarks, that "he was an Auction-bookseller, and an abusive scribbler. He wrote 'Neck or Nothing,' a violent satire on some Ministers of State; a libel on the Duke of Devonshire and the Bishop of Peterborough, &c." — As a Satirist, he appears to most advantage in his Poems intituled "The Beggar mounted;" "The Dissenting Doctors" (see p. 706); "Parnassus hoa! or, Frolicks in Verse," preserved in his "Athenianism;" "Dunton's Shadow; or, the Character of a Summer-Friend" (see p. 482). In most of his Writings, however, he is occasionally prolix and tedious, and sometimes obscure. His "Case is altered; or, Dunton's Re-marriage to his own Wife," has some singular notions, but very little merit in the composition.

† He had three Sisters. The eldest, Anne, married Mr. William Reding, of Dungrove, in Chesham Parish, and had six Children, William, John, Nathaniel, Robert, Thomas, and Anne. His second Sister, Mary, married the Rev. Mr. Woolhouse, Minister of Prince Resbrow, Bucks. He had by her seven Children, Mary, Margaret, Elizabeth, John, Anne, Richard, and Sarah. The youngest Sister married William Pratt, and died shortly after of the small-pox.

Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-07404-9 - The Life and Errors of John Dunton, Citizen of London: With the Lives and Characters of More than a Thousand Contemporary Divines and Other Persons of Literary Eminence: Volume 1

Edited by John Nichols

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

MEMOIRS OF THE AUTHOR.

vii

was for some time Chaplain to Sir Henry Ingoldsby. After his return, he was instituted to the Rectory of Aston Clinton, Bucks; and had not long been settled there, before he married a second Wife, Mary Lake, by whom he had four children; Sarah, Mary, Elizabeth, and Lake.

The younger JOHN DUNTON, who at a very early age had been placed in the school of Mr. William Reading, at Dungrove, near Chesham, was taken under his Father's own immediate tuition, with a view to an education for the Church. The acquirement of Latin he found easy; but the difficulty of Greek overcame all his resolution. He made some little progress in Logic, Metaphysics, and Morality; but, at the age of 14, was found too volatile for the Church, to the no small mortification of his Father, who was himself the *third John Dunton*, in a lineal descent, that had been a Minister.

When nearly 15, to suit the peculiarity of his genius, he was apprenticed to Mr. Thomas Parkhurst*, a respectable Bookseller.

On the 4th of November, 1676, he lost his Father; who was buried in the Chancel of Aston Clinton.

In 1684, when his apprenticeship was nearly expired, young Dunton made himself conspicuous, in a political dispute between the Tories and the Whigs. Being a prime mover on the part of the Whig Apprentices, and selected for their Treasurer, the Tories, to the number of 5000, presented an Address to the King against the Petitioning for Parliaments. The Dissenting Party made their remonstrances to the former in a Counter Address, which they presented to Sir Patience Ward, then Lord Mayor of London, who promised he would acquaint the King with their Address; and then

* Of whom see hereafter, p. 205.

Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-07404-9 - The Life and Errors of John Dunton, Citizen of London: With the Lives and Characters of More than a Thousand Contemporary Divines and Other Persons of Literary Eminence: Volume 1

Edited by John Nichols

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

viii

MEMOIRS OF THE AUTHOR.

ordered them to return home, and mind the business of their respective Masters.

By Dunton's own statement, his conduct during the seven years was not very regular; and at the expiration of the term, no less than 100 Apprentices were invited to celebrate *the funeral*. He soon entered on business as a Bookseller on his own account; but, to avoid too large a rent, took only half a shop, a warehouse, and a fashionable chamber. "Printing," he says, "was the uppermost in my thoughts; and Hackney Authors began to ply me with specimens, as earnestly, and with as much passion and concern, as the Watermen do Passengers with oars and scullers. I had some acquaintance with this generation in my Apprenticeship, and had never any warm affection for them; in regard I always thought their great concern lay more in *how much a sheet*, than in any generous respect they bore to the Commonwealth of Learning; and, indeed, the learning itself of these gentlemen lies very often in as little room as their honesty; though they all pretend to have studied you six or seven years in the *Bodleian Library*, to have turned over the Fathers, and to have read and digested the whole compass both of Human and Ecclesiastic History: when, alas! they have never been able to understand a single page of Saint Cyprian, and cannot tell you whether the Fathers lived before or after Christ. And as for their honesty, it is very remarkable, they will either persuade you to go upon another man's *Copy*, to steal his thought, or to *abridge* his Book, which should have got him bread for his life-time. When you have engaged them upon some Project or other, they will write you off three or four sheets, perhaps; take up three or four pounds upon an urgent occasion, and you shall never here of them more."

Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-07404-9 - The Life and Errors of John Dunton, Citizen of London: With the Lives and Characters of More than a Thousand Contemporary Divines and Other Persons of Literary Eminence: Volume 1

Edited by John Nichols

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

MEMOIRS OF THE AUTHOR.

ix

“The first Copy,” he adds, “I would venture to print, was ‘The Sufferings of Christ,’ written by the Reverend Mr. *Thomas Doolittle*. This Book fully answered my end; for, exchanging it through the whole Trade*, it furnished my shop with all sorts of Books saleable at that time; and it also brought me acquainted with those ingenious gentlemen, Mr. Waters, Mr. Shewel, Mr. Clark, Mr. Benson, Mr. Wells, and Mr. Sanders, who were then Students under the care of Mr. Doolittle. There was a Copy of Greek Verses prefixed to this Book, which occasioned a Poetical Duel between the two private Academies of Islington and Stepney; Mr. *Wesley*†, then Pupil under the Reverend Mr. *Edward Veal*, endeavouring to ridicule the Poem; with whom, and Mr. *Kingston*, his Fellow Student, I contracted a very intimate friendship. Mr. Wesley was much celebrated for his vein at Poetry; though those that allow of no second-rate in that art have endeavoured to lessen his reputation.

“The second adventure I made in Printing, was ‘Daniel in the Den; or, the Lord President’s Imprisonment, and miraculous Deliverance;’ written

* An extensive exchange of Books appears to have been at this period a very material circumstance in the Bookselling Trade.

† Samuel Wesley was son of John Wesley, M. A. a Nonconformist Divine. His Mother was niece to Dr. Fuller, the Historian of “The Worthies of England.” He was born in 1666, at Winterborn Whitchurch, where his father was vicar. He was educated first at the Free-School at Dorchester, and then in a private academy among the Dissenters, whom he soon left, and was admitted a servitor, at the age of 18, of Exeter College, Oxford, 1684. He proceeded B. A. 1688; and, taking orders, was rector of South Ormesby, co. Lincoln; and afterwards obtained the rectory of Epworth, in the Isle of Axholme, in the same County. He was chaplain also to the Marquis of Normanby, afterwards duke of Buckingham, who recommended him for an Irish Bishoprick. [Hence Dunton, in his “Life and Errors,” often styles him “a Dignitary.”]

Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-07404-9 - The Life and Errors of John Dunton, Citizen of London: With the Lives and Characters of More than a Thousand Contemporary Divines and Other Persons of Literary Eminence: Volume 1

Edited by John Nichols

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

x

MEMOIRS OF THE AUTHOR.

by Mr. *Stephen Jay*, Rector of Chinner. It was dedicated to Lord Shaftesbury, and published upon the occasion of his being acquitted by an Ignoramus Jury. This piece was well furnished with wit, and, being published at the critical time, sold well. This extraordinary success in my first attempts gave me an ungovernable itch to be always intriguing that way.

“The next thing I printed was, ‘A Sermon, preached by the Rev. Mr. *John Shower*, at the Funeral of Madam Anne Barnardiston.’ The growing reputation of the Author made the Sermon move very well. There have been *three editions** of it, two of my own printing, and a third by my worthy Friend Mr. John Lawrence.

“When I was thus fixed in the Trade, I resolved to make public a Collection of Funeral Discourses preached by my Reverend Father, Mr. John Dunton, intituled, ‘The House of Weeping†.’ The success was well enough; but my chief design was to perpetuate my Father’s name, for whose memory I have always entertained a very great and just veneration.”

Dunton’s reputation grew with his circumstances; and, Aug. 3, 1682, he married Elizabeth, one of the daughters of Dr. Samuel Annesley, who at that time was a celebrated Preacher among the Dissenters.

He now opened a shop at the Black Raven, at the corner of Princes-street, near the Royal Exchange; and published in 1685, “*Maggots*; or, Poems on several Subjects never before handled. By a Scholar ‡.” This Work is here particularly no-

* The exceeding large sale of single Sermons in those days must be considered as a phænomenon by a Bookseller of the present day, when 250 copies are in general too many.

† To these Discourses Dunton prefixed “The Holy Life and Triumphal Death of that faithful and eminent Servant of Christ, Mr. John Dunton, late Minister of Aston Clinton, near Aylesbury, in the County of Bucks.”

‡ “I once printed a Book, I remember, under the title of ‘Maggots;’ but it was written by a *Dignitary* of the Church of England.”—The Frontispiece to the Volume is an anonymous

Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-07404-9 - The Life and Errors of John Dunton, Citizen of London: With the Lives and Characters of More than a Thousand Contemporary Divines and Other Persons of Literary Eminence: Volume 1

Edited by John Nichols

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

MEMOIRS OF THE AUTHOR.

xi

ticed as a production, at the age of 19, of Mr. *Samuel Wesley*; who, by marrying a daughter* of Dr. Annesley, became the brother-in-law of Dunton, and was connected with him in several of his speculations in trade; though they afterwards parted with an irreconcilable hatred †.

The general business of Dunton was carried on very prosperously, till the universal damp upon Trade, which was occasioned by the defeat of the Duke of Monmouth in the West; when, having 500*l.* owing him in New England, he determined, after much deliberation, to make a trip thither, and, after a long and tedious voyage of four months, and the loss of a *Venture* of 500*l.* in another ship, which was cast-away, he arrived safe at Boston in February 1685-6; and opened a warehouse for the sale of the Books which he had taken thither.

Carrying with him powerful recommendations, and his Books being of a class adapted to the Puritans,

Portrait of the Author; the Picture of a Man writing at a table, a Maggot on his Forehead, and underneath are these lines:

“ In’s own defence the Author writes:
Because, when this foul Maggot bites,
He ne’er can rest in quiet:
Which makes him make so sad a face,
He’d beg your Worship, or your Grace,
Unseen, unseen, to lay it.

* Who is said to have been a Woman of extraordinary abilities. Her letters to her Children bear the marks of sublime piety and great sense; particularly one to her eldest Son, on the principles of natural religion, which was some time in the possession of Dr. Priestley, with many others equally sensible and curious. By this excellent Woman Mr. Samuel Wesley had one Daughter, Mehetabel Wright, Authoress of several ingenious Poems; and three Sons, Samuel, Head-Master of Tiverton School, and John and Charles, the two celebrated Founders of the modern sect of Methodists. “*Literary Anecdotes*,” vol. V. pp. 212—247.

† Dunton, however, says, “I could be very *maggoty* on the character of this Conforming Dissenter; but, except he further provokes me, I bid him farewell, till we meet in Heaven; and there I hope we shall renew our friendship, for I believe Sam Wesley a pious Man.”

Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-07404-9 - The Life and Errors of John Dunton, Citizen of London: With the Lives and Characters of More than a Thousand Contemporary Divines and Other Persons of Literary Eminence: Volume 1

Edited by John Nichols

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

the success was equal to his wishes. His Rivals in trade were few; Mr. Usher, Mr. Philips, Mynheer Brunning, and Duncan Campbell, an industrious Scotchman, being then the only Booksellers in Boston; and Mr. Green the principal if not the only Printer. He had taken with him a steady Apprentice, Samuel Palmer, to whom he entrusted the whole charge of his business; which left him at leisure to make many pleasant excursions.

He visited Harvard College particularly, and the town of Salem; where he opened another warehouse for his Books. He also visited Wenham, an inland town; where he was most kindly received by Mr. Gery, the then Minister of that place. And in a ramble to Ipswich he had an opportunity of seeing much of the customs of the Indians.

In the Autumn of 1686 he returned to London; and, being received by his Wife and her Father with every mark of kindness and respect, expected nothing but a golden life for the future, though all his bright prospects soon withered; for, being deeply entangled in pecuniary engagements for a Sister-in-law, he was not suffered to step over the threshold for ten months.

Wearied with this confinement, he determined to take a trip to Holland, Flanders, Germany, &c.; and stayed four months at Amsterdam; whence he travelled to Cleves, Rhineberg, Dussledorp, Cologne, Mentz, &c.; and returning through Rotterdam to London, Nov. 15, 1688, found his Wife in health, and all her affairs in peace.

On the day the Prince of Orange came to London, he again opened shop, at the Black Raven, opposite the Poultry Compter, where he traded ten years, with a variety of success and disappointments.

“Of 600 Books which he had printed, he had only to repent,” he says, “of seven: ‘The Second Spira,’ ‘The Postboy robbed of his Mail,’ ‘A Voyage

Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-07404-9 - The Life and Errors of John Dunton, Citizen of London: With the Lives and Characters of More than a Thousand Contemporary Divines and Other Persons of Literary Eminence: Volume 1

Edited by John Nichols

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

MEMOIRS OF THE AUTHOR.

xiii

round the World; or, a Pocket Library, divided into several Volumes; the first of which contains the rare Adventures of *Don Kainophilus*, from his Cradle to his 15th Year*, 1691,' 'The new Quevedo,'

* This rhapsody is noticeable for its extreme rarity, and for two elegant pieces of poetry, which, if John's own, entitle him to a higher degree of praise than he has been usually thought to merit. It is obscurely noticed in his "Life and Errors;" but the Anagram of the Author's name prefixed to a copy of verses declares him. It has a frontispiece, which is a large folding cut, with 24 circles, exhibiting the Author's adventures.—To this Work was prefixed Panegyric Verses, "by the Wits of both Universities," who, however, offer no evidence of their residence or their quality; and may be suspected to be Wits of the University of Grub-street. One of these wretched panegyrics tells us that "the Author's name, when anagrammatised, is *hid unto none*," by which *John Dunton* would, and would not, conceal himself. These volumes were published in our Scribbler's thirtieth year, on his return from America; and are, in fact, a first essay towards that more mature "Life and Errors" which he gave the World in 1705. He seems to have projected a series of what he calls "The Cock-rambles of all my Four and Twenty Volumes;" but his Readers, probably, deserted him at the third. *Kainophilus*, as he calls himself, "signifies a *Lover of News*, not any thing of *Kain*, as if I were a-kin to him." It is a low rhapsody; but it bears a peculiar feature, a certain whimsical style, which he affects to call his own, set off with frequent dashes, and occasionally a banter on false erudition. These cannot be shewn without extracts. I would not add an idle accusation to the already injured genius of STERNE; but I am inclined to think he might have caught up his project of writing Tristram's life, in "twenty-four Cock-rambling" volumes; have seized on the whim of Dunton's style; have condescended even to copy out his breaks and dashes. But Sterne could not have borrowed wit or genius from so low a scribbler.—The elegant pieces of poetry were certainly never composed by Dunton, whose mind had no elegance, and whose rhymes are doggrel. On a rapid inspection, I have detected him transcribing from Francis Osborn and Cowley, without acknowledgment; and several excellent passages, which may be discovered amidst this incoherent mass, could not have been written by one who never attained the slightest arts of composition. He affects, however, to consider himself as "a great Original" in what he calls "this hop-stride-and-jump round the World:" and says, "So great a glory do I esteem it to be the *Author* of these *Works*, that I cannot, without great injury to myself and justice, endure that every one should own them, who have nothing to do

Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-07404-9 - The Life and Errors of John Dunton, Citizen of London: With the Lives and Characters of More than a Thousand Contemporary Divines and Other Persons of Literary Eminence: Volume 1

Edited by John Nichols

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

xiv

MEMOIRS OF THE AUTHOR.

‘The Pastor’s Legacy,’ ‘Heavenly Pastime,’ ‘The Hue and Cry after Conscience.’”

All these he heartily wished he had never seen, and advised all who had them to burn them.

After confessing his *Errors* in Printing, he says, “As to Bookselling and Traffick, I dare stand the test, with the same allowance that every man under the same circumstance with me would wish to have, for the whole trading part of my life. Nay, I challenge all the Booksellers in London to prove I ever over reached them or deceived them in any one instance. And when you come to that part of my Life that relates to the Auctions I made in Dublin, you will find that, in all the notes I made for Dublin, that I put the same price to every man. And would any Bookseller be at the pains to compare all my notes together (though I *exchanged with all the Trade*), for every penny he finds charged more to himself than to other men, he shall have ten pounds reward, and a thousand thanks into the bargain, for rectifying a mistake I never designed.”

In 1692, “having been put in possession of a considerable estate upon the decease of a Cousin, the Master and Assistants of the Company of Stationers began to think him sufficient to wear a Livery, and honoured him with the Cloathing; and the year following, Mr. Harris (his old Friend and Partner), and about fifty more of the Livery, entered into a Friendly Society, and obliged themselves to pay

with them; like the fellow at Rome who pretended to Virgil’s Verses. But I need take no other way to refute these *plagiaries* than *Virgil* himself did, requiring the tally to his *Vos non Vobis*. Let any man write on at the rate this is already written, and I will grant he is the Author of this book, that before, and all the rest to the end of the Chapter. No: there is such a sort of a *Whim in the Style*, something so like myself, so incomprehensible (not because it is nonsense), that whoever throws but half an eye on that and me together, will swear ‘twas spit out of the mouth of *Kainophilus*.”—*For this Note the Editor is indebted to the worthy and intelligent Author of the Curiosities of Literature.*”

Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-07404-9 - The Life and Errors of John Dunton, Citizen of London: With the Lives and Characters of More than a Thousand Contemporary Divines and Other Persons of Literary Eminence: Volume 1

Edited by John Nichols

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

MEMOIRS OF THE AUTHOR.

iv

twenty shillings a man yearly to the *Renter Warden*, as that honour was usually once a year attended with a costly entertainment to the whole Company.

“The first year I wore the Livery,” he adds, “Sir William Ashhurst being then Lord Mayor, I was invited by our Master and Wardens to dine with his Lordship. We went in a body from the Poultry Church to Grocers Hall; where the entertainment was very generous, and *a noble Spoon he sent to our Wives*.

“The World now smiled on me*. I sailed with wind and tide; and had humble servants enough among the Booksellers, Stationers, Printers, and Binders; but especially my own Relations, on every side, were all upon the very height of love and tenderness, and I was caressed almost out of my five senses. And now, making a considerable figure in the Company of Stationers, the Earl of Warrington did me the honour to send me a letter in behalf of Mr. Humphreys, desiring all the interest I could make, to procure him the Clerk’s place to the Company of Stationers †. Upon my reading the Earl’s letter, I did all that lay in my power to get Mr. Humphreys chosen Clerk, though by the majority of voices it was carried against him. However, the many civilities I received from the Company of Stationers for the fifteen years I traded amongst them, do oblige me, out of mere gratitude, to draw the

* Dunton at various times employed more than thirty Printers; and dealt largely with the principal Stationers in the Metropolis.

† “For Mr. Dunton, Bookseller.

“MR. DUNTON, London, October 28, 96.

“The long knowledge myself and our Family have had of the Bearer, Mr. Humphrey’s fidelity and ability, makes me request all your assistance and interest you can make to procure for him the Clerk’s place to your Company at the next election, which I am informed will be ere long. Therein you will oblige

Your friend to serve you, WARRINGTON.”

Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-07404-9 - The Life and Errors of John Dunton, Citizen of London: With the Lives and Characters of More than a Thousand Contemporary Divines and Other Persons of Literary Eminence: Volume 1

Edited by John Nichols

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

xvi

MEMOIRS OF THE AUTHOR.

character of the most eminent of that profession in the Three Kingdoms.”

In delineating the Characters of others, Mr. Dunton has not forgot to describe his own *Projects*; “having been sufficiently convinced that, unless a man can either think or perform something out of the old beaten road, he will find nothing but what his forefathers have found before him. A Bookseller, if he is a man of any capacity and observation, can tell best what to go upon, and what has the best prospect of success.”

One of the most ingenious (and, perhaps, the most useful) of his various Projects was, “The Athenian Gazette *,” afterwards called “The Athe-

* In a long and laboured Dedication to the Athenian Society, prefixed by Dunton to his “Athenianism, or New Projects,” he says, “My first Project was ‘The Athenian Gazette. As the Athenian Society had their first Meeting in my brain, so it has been kept ever since religiously secret.—I need not tell you (you have heard it so often in letters sent to the Black Raven) how universally the writings of the Athenian Society have obtained in the World; for the several Editions of the Athenian Oracle sufficiently evince it: but though Athenianism was entirely John Dunton’s thought (I mean both the Athenian Mercury, the Athenian Oracle, and even the Athenian Society itself), yet this age affording more Poets than Patrons, (for nine Muses may travel long ere they can find one Mæcenas,) I had not presumed to inscribe the general Collection of all my Writings to your celebrated Names, had not your great humility, as well as learning, unanimously voted the Athenian Society the fittest Patron to protect, and defend a Work entitled ‘Athenianism.’ If it were not that most Writers have a sordid present gain in view, when they design a Dedication, I am confident we should see few Noblemen’s names at the beginning of their Works, since it must be confessed it would be more for the advantage of their reputation to choose one another for Patrons, a Writer being better qualified to defend that which he has once espoused with his Pen, than any great Man with his empty Name, or a long catalogue of Titles.—As you thought good to honour me so far as to dedicate one whole Volume of the Athenian Mercuries to myself, and another to the Pindaric Lady (Madam Singer), whose Poems so greatly recommended the Athenian Project, and to whose Platonic friendship my Six Hundred Projects owe their birth, it would be a high ingratitude should I dedicate Dunton’s Athe-

Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-07404-9 - The Life and Errors of John Dunton, Citizen of London: With the Lives and Characters of More than a Thousand Contemporary Divines and Other Persons of Literary Eminence: Volume 1

Edited by John Nichols

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

MEMOIRS OF THE AUTHOR.

xvii

nian Mercury," commenced March 17, 1689-90, and continued till February 8, 1695-6*. The plan of this Work originated in his own prolific brain; but in a short time he entered into a sort of partnership in the publication with his Brother-in-law Samuel Wesley, and Mr. Richard Sault †, and was occasionally assisted by Dr. Norris. The Work was also countenanced by several of the most eminent Writers of the age; and was honoured in particular with a commendatory Poem by Swift ‡.

Among the Patrons of Dunton was Sir Peter Pett, of whom see pp. 178, 194; and from whom he received the following Letter:

"For my worthy Friend Mr. John Dunton, Bookseller, at the Raven, in the Poultry, London.

"SIR,

July 24, 1694.

"I have taken notice of your publication of the second volume of the "French Book of Martyrs;" and when your man comes my way, I shall be glad if he will bring me

nianism to any other than to the Athenian Society. What though our Athenian Brother (Dr. Norris) is preferred; our Divine (Mr. Wesley) dignified (and I would say, deserved it, had he not left the Whigs that gave him bread, to herd with the High-Flyers); and our Mathematic Brother (Mr. Sault) has exchanged his beloved Algebra for a Demonstration in Heaven. However, Gentlemen, I hope your *new Preferments* have not so far made you forget our former intimacy and friendship, as to deny your Patronage to the Work."

* "With this day's Number [No. 30, Feb. 8, 1695-6], which concluded the *nineteenth* volume, John Dunton thought it right to discontinue his weekly publication, "as the Coffee-houses had the *Votes* every day, and *nine* Newspapers every week;" and proposed to publish his *Mercuries* in Quarterly Volumes, "designing again to continue it as a weekly paper, as soon as the *glut of news* is a little over."

† Their original Articles of Agreement, dated April 10, 1691, are preserved in the Bodleian Library. See p(757)

‡ This was one of the earliest poetical productions of the Dean. Dr. Johnson says, "I have been told that Dryden having perused these verses, said, 'Cousin Swift, you will never be a Poet;' and that this denunciation was the motive of Swift's perpetual malevolence to Dryden." See the Poem in the Dean's Works, edit. 1808, vol. XVI. p. 23.

Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-07404-9 - The Life and Errors of John Dunton, Citizen of London: With the Lives and Characters of More than a Thousand Contemporary Divines and Other Persons of Literary Eminence: Volume 1

Edited by John Nichols

Frontmatter

[More information](#)*xviii*

MEMOIRS OF THE AUTHOR.

one to read for a week. If I keep it a day longer (provided he then calls again upon me for it), or if there be the least damage done to it, I shall be content to pay for the book. I would be glad, likewise, if you would lend me, by him, for that time, to look over, the papers of Bishop Barlow you had from the Minister of Gainsborough, when he was in town.

“Your man wrote out the copy of Bishop Barlow’s Will from the Prerogative Registers, and left it with me. It is very pious, and fit to be printed in the next edition of his Remains, and when I see your man, I shall send it you by him. But I am here to tell you that I, going lately to the said Registry, to see the Will of the famous Lord Falkland (whose Memoirs I am now about), Mr. Welham, the Register, told me that the Bookseller’s man (*i. e.* yours) had copied out Bishop Sanderson’s Will, as well as Bishop Barlow’s, *gratis*, for my sake, and that the fee for each would have been a guinea otherwise, but that he would be contented with any one Book from you that I had published. I thereupon told him you should give him an “Anglesey’s Memoirs;” and so I shall be glad if you will do, and let your man deliver it as your gift into Mr. Welham’s own hand. He is always to be heard of at the Registry. And when you have so done, I shall send your man to copy out my Lord Falkland’s Will there, which must needs be both pious, and wise, and ingenious. I wish you health and happiness, and am

Your very humble servant, P. PETT.

Send my man to Mr. Mount about Boyse.”

In 1697 Dunton lost his Wife, whose death he bitterly lamented; though in the same year he consoled himself by another marriage * with Sarah, daughter of Mrs. Nicholas, of St. Alban’s. With this lady he does not appear to have added much to his comforts or his fortune. He left her, soon after the marriage, on an expedition to Dublin with a large cargo of Books. These were carried to a good market, though he became involved in a ridiculous dispute, which he afterwards detailed at large in “*The*

* The marriage ceremony was performed by the Rev. John Rochford, M.A. Vicar of St. Peter’s 54 years. He died in 1715.

Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-07404-9 - The Life and Errors of John Dunton, Citizen of London: With the Lives and Characters of More than a Thousand Contemporary Divines and Other Persons of Literary Eminence: Volume 1

Edited by John Nichols

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

MEMOIRS OF THE AUTHOR.

xix

Dublin Scuffle; a Challenge sent by John Dunton, Citizen of London, to Patrick Campbell, Bookseller in Dublin; together with the small Skirmishes of Bills and Advertisements. To which is added, some Account of his Conversation in Ireland, intermixed with particular Characters of the most eminent Persons he conversed with in that Kingdom; but more especially in the City of Dublin: 1699."

The volume is inscribed "To the Honourable Colonel Butler, a Member of the House of Commons in Ireland;" as a compliment due to the generous encouragement that gentleman had been pleased to give to his Auctions at Dublin in 1698, and the extraordinary and unmerited kindnesses he had received. The "Scuffle" is amusing, though not very generally interesting. But the "Account of his Conversation in Ireland" contains a pleasing description of several parts of that Island not generally known to an English Reader.

This was followed by "The Case of John Dunton with respect to Madam Jane Nicholas of St. Alban's, his Mother-in-law, 1700," 4to.

This "Case" produced the following Letter from his Wife, dated St. Alban's, Feb. 28, 1701.

"I write to let you know that, if you think much of providing for me, I am very willing you should have all your *yoke and burden*, as you call it being married, removed, and return me my fortune and we will be both single; and you shall have your land if you will return me my money, and sure that will please you; for I, and all good people, think you never married me for love, but for my money*; and so you have had the use of it all this while to banter and laugh at me and my mother by your maggoty Printers:—and still you justify your wicked reflections in your printed Case."—Again,—
"Larkin has nothing but made a laugh and derision of me and my mother," &c. &c. †

* See some Letters of this Lady, in a different strain, p. 464.

† The Original is in the Bodleian Library; see p(756) 156

Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-07404-9 - The Life and Errors of John Dunton, Citizen of London: With the Lives and Characters of More than a Thousand Contemporary Divines and Other Persons of Literary Eminence: Volume 1

Edited by John Nichols

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

xx

MEMOIRS OF THE AUTHOR.

His next regular Work was, "The Life and Errors of John Dunton, late Citizen of London; written by himself in Solitude *, 1705" (the Work now presented to the Reader in a Second Edition.) This genuine and simple narrative is a very curious performance, and abounds in literary history of an interesting nature. It was written, as he expresses it, "in solitude;" he being at that time under the necessity of secreting himself from his Creditors; by some of whom he was pursued with harshness, and soon after actually put under arrest.

This was followed, in 1706, by "Dunton's Whipping-post; or, a Satire upon every body. With a Panegyrick on the most deserving Gentlemen and Ladies in the Three Kingdoms; &c. &c. To which is added, The Living Elegy; or, Dunton's Letter to his few Creditors; with the Character of a Summer Friend. Also, the secret History of the Weekly Writers, in a distinct Challenge to each of them."

In this little Volume he fairly states his situation; and names a day, at the distance of about two years, in which he thought he could certainly be enabled to discharge all his debts; and states his property, in possession and reversion, to be then worth 10,000*l*.

One part of his dependance, however, was the expected bounty of his Mother-in-law, in which he was grievously disappointed.

A Quaker, who interested himself to reconcile the family disputes at that period, thus addressed him:

* At the end of this Volume was advertized, as preparing for the press, "A Ramble through Six Kingdoms, by John Dunton, late Citizen of London. Wherein he relates, 1. His Juvenile Travels. 2. The History of his Sea Voyages. 3. His Conversation-in Foreign Parts. With Characters of Men and Women, and almost every Thing he saw or conversed with. The like Discoveries (in such a Method) never made by any Traveller before. Illustrated with Forty Cuts, representing the most pleasant Passages in the whole Adventure. With Recommenda-tory Poems, written by the chief Wits in both Universities."

Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-07404-9 - The Life and Errors of John Dunton, Citizen of London: With the Lives and Characters of More than a Thousand Contemporary Divines and Other Persons of Literary Eminence: Volume 1

Edited by John Nichols

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

MEMOIRS OF THE AUTHOR.

xxi

“ My Friend,

March 31, 1706.

“ I thought good to inform thee that thy Wife is at present at my house. She came last week, and has left her Mother at Luton, who is but in a bad condition. I think she cannot live long, being so very much swelled in her body and legs; but my chief end of writing to thee is to advise thee to be reconciled to her, and take thy Wife to thee before she dies, otherwise thou must not expect any thing that is hers. And as for expecting any thing in her life-time, thou mayest be assured she will not give thee any thing. She has already given thee a good portion; and her fear is, if she should give thee more, thou wouldst waste it in Printing. I would have thee consider of it, and let me have a line or two from thee, who am, thy Friend,

STE. HUMBLE.

Thy Wife desires to be kindly remembered to thee, and could be glad thou wouldst take my advice ”

In his Mother-in-law's Will, dated Oct. 14, 1708, and proved in the Prerogative Court Dec. 18, the same year, she leaves to Mr. Archdeacon Cole £5. for preaching a sermon at her funeral, from Psalm lix. 16, 17; and desires to be buried in the Abbey Church, by her husband and children; and that the annuities stated in her Will* be expressly engraven on her tomb-stone, that the memory thereof may be preserved for future ages; but there is no stone, inscription, or memorial to be found in the whole Church commemorating her or her benefactions. She probably died at Luton.

Dunton's next publication was “ The Danger of living in a known Sin, and the Hazard of a Death-

* She devised, after the death of her daughter Sarah without child or children lawfully begotten, to William Child, William Hill, John Ware, Thomas Brickwell, and John Robarts, of Chesham, in the County of Bucks, all her Estate, real and personal, in trust, among other things, to pay, or cause to be paid, unto six poor Widows, or other the poorest people of the Parish of St. Alban's, 5*l.* apiece yearly, the first payment to be made within one year next after the decease of the said Sarah without child or children; and also 5*l.* apiece to two poor people of St. Peter's; and 5*l.* apiece to two poor people of St. Michael's near St. Alban's.

Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-07404-9 - The Life and Errors of John Dunton, Citizen of London: With the Lives and Characters of More than a Thousand Contemporary Divines and Other Persons of Literary Eminence: Volume 1

Edited by John Nichols

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

xxii

MEMOIRS OF THE AUTHOR.

bed Repentance fairly argued, from the Remorse of W[illiam] D[uke] of D[evonshire] 1708.”

“The Preaching Weathercock; written by John Dunton against William Richardson, once a Dissenting Teacher,” has no date.

The year 1710 produced “*Athenianism*; or, the new Projects of Mr. John Dunton, Author of the Answer to Dr. Burnet, intituled, ‘*The Hazard of a Death-bed Repentance*; being, six hundred distinct Treatises (in Prose and Verse) written with his own Hand; and is an entire Collection of all his Writings, both in Manuscript and such as were formerly printed. To which is added, *Dunton’s Farewell to Printing**, in some serious Thoughts on those Words of Solomon, ‘Of making many Books there is no End; and much Study is a Weariness of the Flesh.’ With the Author’s Effigies †, to distinguish the original and true Co-

* This, it is believed, he never completed.

† “I shall conclude, he observes, “with a short remark on Dunton’s Effigies; and shall introduce all I have to say on that subject with a short account of the original of drawing Faces; for it is so little known, the discovery of it is a sort of novelty.

“The first Limning that ever was owes its rise to the parting of two Lovers, in this manner: When the daughter of Deluriades, the Sycionian, was to take leave of her sweet-heart, now going to wars, to comfort herself in his absence she took his Picture with a coal upon the wall, as the candle gave the shadow, which her father admiring, perfected it afterwards; and it was the first Picture by report that ever was made. But the drawing of Dunton’s face owes its rise to the great wrong done me by Harris and other piratical Printers, and not to love (as was the case of the Sycionian Limner); for, being married, my Spouse and I wear each other’s Pictures in our hearts (being drawn and hung there), and so have no occasion for an outward Picture to comfort us; for neither absence, time, nor scarce death itself, can fade the colours where a united heart is the frame, and the picture true affection. So that you see, Gentlemen, it was mere Right and Property, and not the fear that my Wife should lose the idea of her Husband’s face, that tempted me to the exercise of so much patience as to sit three times to have (an’t please ye) my face drawn, to be stared on as often as the Reader pleases; yet I might affirm (did no modesty forbid me to

Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-07404-9 - The Life and Errors of John Dunton, Citizen of London: With the Lives and Characters of More than a Thousand Contemporary Divines and Other Persons of Literary Eminence: Volume 1

Edited by John Nichols

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

MEMOIRS OF THE AUTHOR.

xxiii

pies from such as are false and imperfect. Take care also of being cheated by Wooden Cuts: the right is that which is drawn and 'graved by those two celebrated Artists, *Knight* and *Vander Gucht* *. To this Work is prefixed an Heroic Poem † upon Dun-

give them their just praise), that *Knight* has limned, *Vander Gucht* graved, and *Freeman* worked off, my Picture so much to the life, you do not flatter them when you say,

They make my Picture seem to think and live,

“A Gentleman seeing a very good Picture of St. Bruno, the Founder of the Carthusian Order, and being asked his opinion of it, “Were it not,” says he, “for his silent rule, it would speak.” So I may say of Dunton's Picture (it is drawn so much to the life, 'bating a little flattery), that were not Pictures resolved on a perpetual silence (that is, had they not a rule to hold their tongues), this Picture would talk as loud and as often as the Original does by which it was drawn. So that, Gentlemen, you might well say of my two Limners,

Their pencil sure was made of flesh and blood.—

for, as speechless as my Picture is, it is drawn so much alive, it is hoped it will guard 'Dunton's *Athenianism*' from all piratical Printers, by distinguishing the original and true Copies from such as are false and imperfect.—So that you see, Gentlemen, it is merely the securing the benefit of my own copies, that has put me to the charge of a Copper-plate, and not the ambition to have a Face cut in Brass, with a Laurel about my Head, and Pegasus for my Arms, and eight Verses under my Picture, writ by the Athenian Society.”

* In the original Portrait, were these lines under a Pegasus :

“ATHENIANISM was John Dunton's thought,
And in these features to Perfection brought ;
For *Knight* and '*Gucht* that mystic Art did find,
To paint John's PROJECTS Person and his Mind.
They, with the Likeness, warmth and grace do give,
And make his Picture seem to think and live ;
And 's Heraldry he from the Muses farms,
For PEGASUS should be a Poet's Arms.”

† Of this “Heroic Poem” a few lines will be sufficient :

“Here 's Dunton's Phiz, that New ‡ Athenian Swain,
Who hatch'd six hundred Projects in his brain ;
The brood is large, but give him time to sit,
He will six hundred Projects more beget ;

‡ Referring to his “Athenian Oracle, or Question-Project,” as also to Old Athens, mentioned in Acts xvii. 21.

Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-07404-9 - The Life and Errors of John Dunton, Citizen of London: With the Lives and Characters of More than a Thousand Contemporary Divines and Other Persons of Literary Eminence: Volume 1

Edited by John Nichols

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

xxiv

MEMOIRS OF THE AUTHOR.

ton's Projects, written by the Athenian Society; with an Alphabetical Table of the several Projects, Questions, Novelties, Poems, and Characters."

This Volume, on the whole, is a strange mixture of sense and folly; containing some good articles in prose and verse, a few of a licentious turn, and some deeply tinctured with insanity*; a misfortune under which Dunton appears to have long laboured.

In the Dedication, which breathes all the pride of self-consequence, he informs his Readers "that he does not write to flatter, or for hire."

As like his Mind, as this is like his Phiz,
 For in this Face, Art and the Graver kiss;
 Yes, *Knight* and '*Gucht*' are here at equal strife,
 To draw John Dunton's features to the life;
 First *Knight* did limn, what *Van-'Gucht* after drew;
 They're matchless Artists, every line is *you*;
 For all do say, that see this painted frame,
 That 't is not Dunton's Picture, but the same.
 Surely this Phiz would to their praise redound,
 Could they but give the Shape they make, a Sound:
 What wants the Echo of a living Creature
 But Shape, and what but Voice this manly Feature?
 Yet both can't meet together, God alone
 Will have this secret art to be his own:
 Yet *Knight* and *Gucht* here copy so from Nature,
 We don't know Dunton's dead from living Feature.
 Such Art! such Life! a Phiz so nice and good,
 Their pencils sure are made of Flesh and Blood!
 So just a form they to his Picture give,
 So like 'J. D.' that it appears to live.
 This very Shadow charms beholders more
 Than Dunton's real substance did before.
 Thus *Knight* and '*Gucht*' in art have equal shares,
 Prometheus' work in Dunton's phiz appears,
 And from their paint it got the fires it bears. }
 Nay, Dunton's phiz is here so nicely wrought,
 That we can in his aspect read his thought;
 Or, in one word to sum our thoughts extent,
 The perfect piece all Dunton does present.
 So many Projects ev'ry line indites,
 You'd swear the very Picture lives and writes.
 Yet *D.* himself has drawn with better grace,
 His Book's his Picture, there's his living face.
 Fam'd *Knight* and '*Gucht*' drew but the outward rind,
 But Dunton's Projects draw his very mind."

* On this subject see his Appeal to King George I. p. 740.