

Mrs. Clark's case / [Sarah Clerke].

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Mrs. Clark's base.

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Mrs. Clark's
CASE.

Dulcis est Odor Lucri.



THE SECOND EDITION.

L O N D O N :

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Y Esterday came to my Hands a Reply to this Narrative; and to prevent a great Mistake, into which the Reader may be likely to fall, I declare to the World, that I who writ this Case of Mrs. Clark had not, directly or indirectly, the least Hand in writing or publishing the Answer to it, how plausible soever the Grounds may appear that I my self was the Author of it.





Mrs. *CLARK*'s

C A S E.

THE unjustifiable Treatment of this worthy Lady as a Lunatick, having made so much Noise in the Town, persuade my self, that this impartial and concise Account of the Matter of Fact, as well as the Observations made upon it, will not be unacceptable to the Publick.

Mrs. *Clark*, a Gentlewoman of Seventy Three Years of Age, was look'd upon as Distracted by her Relations, and were confirm'd in their Opinion by the Judgment of Four Physicians.

who were desir'd to visit her: The Sentence being past upon her Understanding, she was manag'd with all the Rigour and grievous Severities, which are employ'd for the Recovery of the most outrageous Madmen; her Doors were secur'd by hir'd Porters, her Goods sent away, her Money seiz'd, her Servants turn'd out, and her Friends deny'd to see her. Upon Complaint made to the Lord Chief Justice *Parker* the Case was heard before him, and upon the Credit of Dr. *M----*, Dr. *Fr----* Sir *Ed---d Turner* the Lady's Brother and Mrs. *Turner* her Niece, his Lordship did not think fit to enlarge her.

Five Days after, Sir *Thomas Clarges* a Justice of Peace, in great Compassion to her, rescu'd her by Force, and convey'd her to the House of one of her Relations. The Day following she appeared before the Lord Chief Justice, and the Case was re-heard; and then, upon the Opinion of Three other disinterested Physicians, who testify

she was of a sober Mind, which

they made good by many convincing Circumstances ; and upon her own giving a long, but coherent and moving Account of the whole Case, and her barbarous Usage ; my Lord, having ordered that she should be set at Liberty, and that her House and Goods should be restor'd, severely reprimanded her Relations for their dishonourable Behaviour in this Affair ; in the mean time he acted tenderly with respect to the Credit of the Doctors, one of whom has the Honour to be his Lordship's own Physician.

N. B. The Lord Chief Justice put to Mrs. *Clark* the Affidavits of the Physicians, upon which they grounded their Judgments of her Madness ; all which Passages of Words and Actions she well remembered, gave a rational Account of them, and shew'd plainly, that they were vilely turned against her.

One Physician's Deposition was this, that she fancied she had swallow'd Glass, which was Matter of Fact, but it was by Accident, as it was fully prov'd at the Hearing.

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Dr.

Dr. *M—*, to prove her Madness depos'd, that she held him by Force; the same Person carry'd Dr. *Hales* the Physician of *Bedlam* to Mrs. *Clark*, and these two visited the Lady after she was confin'd.

Now, it being suppos'd that this Narrative contains the true State of the Case, the following Observations naturally arise from it.

It must be acknowledg'd by all impartial Judges, that the Proceedings of the Doctors, as well as of the Relations, against Mrs. *Clark*, supported by such weak and unconvincing Evidence, as does not deserve a serious Confutation, were unwarrantable and cruel. There is no doubt but by various unworthy Pretences, some avaricious or indigent Practicers have sometimes pick'd the People's Pockets of their Money; but that any should take the Highway of Physick, compell Men to deliver their Reason, and rob them of their Wits in such a notorious Manner, is perhaps as unprecedented as it is Criminal. If
such

such licentious Practices should prevail, what can we expect, but that a terrible Persecution may soon be set on Foot by the violent Inquisitors of *Moorfields*, who upon the most slender and inconclusive Suggestions, may send out their inhumane Officers to seize, confine and torture any Persons, whose Understandings they shall pretend are fallen to decay, or who upon the slightest Grounds, and from dishonourable Views, are by near Relations informed against as frantick Hereticks, and Apostates from natural Light and common Sense.

It is an Instance of great Oppression and Inhumanity for the Doctors, upon such insignificant and frivolous Allegations as were brought against Mrs. *Clark*, to take away her Liberty and treat her with Violence, as a Distracted Person ; for if upon account of some Singularity in Manners, any peculiar Oddness of Temper, or whimsical Caprice, which however did not appear in this Case, Persons may be taken up by the Lictors and Apparitors of *Bedlam*, may be chain'd,
im-

imprison'd, and treated with the sharpest Discipline, while they are left as much without Remedy as the unhappy Outlaws of that Place; who does not see that a vast Part of this Nation, so much acquainted with the Effects of the Spleen and Hysterical Passions, may by their designing Kindred be prov'd guilty of incoherent Discourses, improper Excursions, and inconstant Temper, and thereupon be condemn'd as Lunatics, and manag'd as such? Should such Evidence, I say, be allow'd, what would become of the numerous Family of Coquets, and the not inferior Race of Impertinents, Fops and Coxcombs; and how would some of our greatest Wits themselves save their thin Partitions from being broken down, and preserve their Ill-fenced Inclosures from being laid in common with the Territories of *Bedlam*? And further, if these unwarrantable Proceedings are connived at, half our Houses may be shut up, and become the Prisons of the Inhabitants, with whom all Commerce and Conversation must be forbidden.

den, while the Plague of Distraction would be rife and universal, and Keepers would be wanting to attend the Lunaticks.

This Way of Proceeding without Proof, and treating pretended Madmen with Force and Cruelty, is indeed as an effectual Way to make a sober Man mad, as to cure one that is so; and this Advantage such Doctors will have, that those whom they did not find, they will make Lunaticks, and then the subsequent Marks of Distraction shall be alledg'd to back and justify the first unreasonable Charge.

Could it be suppos'd that the other Members of the learned Body of Physicians should act with equal Rashness and Indistinction in respect of the Patients of this Species, it must be allow'd that there would be more than one College of disturb'd Minds in this City.

But why were not gentle Methods prescrib'd by the Doctors at first to reduce this pretended Lunatick, before
C they

they came to Extremity? Why did they not direct Afs's Milk and Crabs Claws, so much in Fashion, not only in the greatest chronical Distempers, but all inflammatory and malignant Feavers? I do not know whether these powerful Remedies have been yet directed in Apoplexies, and for Prevention of suddain Death: But I am inform'd there is a Dissertation ready for the Press, in which they are recommended to be us'd in Clysters, instead of Cow's Milk and Sugar, for the cure of the most inveterate and obstinate Diseases; whence it appears, that the Milk of the Afs and the Claws of the Crab are endow'd with as great Variety of Wonder-working Vertues, as the Prayer address'd to the Virgin *Mary* for Women in Labour, which was form'd and printed some Years ago in *France*, to which as a Postscript was added, *And this Prayer is likewise good for Feavers and Thunder.* Now why, I say, were not these easy, generous and pleasant Medicines

medicines first try'd, before those Acts of Force and Cruelty were insisted on ?

It has been alledg'd that this Gentlewoman appear'd disorder'd in her Mind, from her Religious Disposition and frequent Strains of Devotion. Such Qualities are indeed, in the Opinion of some Physicians, an evident Mark of a distemper'd Head, who attribute all religious Principles and devout Passions to an exorbitant Melancholly, over-agitated Spirits, and splenetick Imagination. But it did not appear that this Gentlewoman's Piety was Enthusiastick, or by any Means inconsistent with a sound and undisturb'd Mind ; nor was there more Ground to believe that her Reason was overturn'd by too much Religion, than that the Faculties of the Doctors were prejudic'd by too much Learning.

N. B. This Lady's Relations, as well as the Physicians, do still persist in declaring not only that she was mad, but that she still continues so ; and the first

first give this, out as an Answer for not returning Bank Bills of 200 l. which were taken from her : The Physicians by this are ashamed to own they were mistaken, or which is the modestest Way to get off, impos'd upon by the Relations, which shews too plainly that it was a downright Conspiracy.

FINIS





