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**A Collection Of Poems In Six Volumes. By Several Hands**

**Dodsley, Robert**

**London, 1758**

Prologue to Comus. By the Same. Performed for the Benefit of the General Hospital at Bath, 1756; And spoken by Miss Morrison, in the Character of a Lady Fashion.

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PROLOGUE to COMUS.

By the Same.

Performed for the Benefit of the General Hospital  
at BATH, 1756 ;

And spoken by Miss MORRISON, in the Character of a  
Lady of Fashion.

She enters with a Number of Tickets in her Hand.

WELL, I've been beating up for volunteers,  
But find that—charity has got no ears.

I first attack'd a colonel of the guards——

Sir, charity——consider its rewards.

With healing hand the saddest sores it skins,

And covers—oh!—a multitude of sins.

He swore, the world was welcome to his thoughts :

'Twas damn'd *hypocrisy* to hide one's faults ;

And with that sin his conscience ne'er was *twitted*——

The only *one* he never had committed.

Next to my knight I plead. He—shook his head ;

Complain'd the stocks were low——and trade was dead.

In these Bath-charities a tax he'd found

More heavy than—four shillings in the pound.

What

What with the play-houſe, hoſpital, and abbey,  
 A man was *ſtrip'd*—unleſs he'd look quite ſhabby.  
 Then ſuch a train, and ſuch expenſe to fit!  
 My lady, all the brats, and couſin Kit—  
 He'd ſteal, himſelf—perhaps—into the pit.

Old lady Slipſlop, at her morning cards,  
 Vows that all works of *genus* ſhe regards;  
 Raffles for Chineſe Gods, card-houſes, ſhells,  
 Nor grudges to the muſic, or the bells,  
 But has a ſtrange *antiquity* to naſty *oſpitals*.

I hope your lordſhip—then my lord replies—  
 No doubt, the governors are—very wiſe;  
 But, for the play, he—wonder'd at their choice.  
 In Milton's days ſuch ſtuff might be the taſte,  
 But faith! he thought it was damn'd dull, and chaſte.  
 Then ſwears, he; o the charity is hearty,  
 But can't, in honour, break his evening party.

When to the gouty alderman I ſued,  
 The naſty fellow, ('gad!) was downright rude.  
 Is begging grown the faſhion, with a pox!  
 The mayor ſhou'd ſet ſuch houſewives in the ſtocks.  
 Give you a guinea! z—ds! replied the beaſt,  
 'T'wou'd buy a ticket for a turtle-feaſt.  
 Think what a guinea-a-head might ſet before ye—  
 Sir, mullet—turbot—and a grand John Dorey.  
 I'll never give a groat, as I'm a finner,  
 Unleſs they gather 't in a diſh, at dinner.

I truſt,