

**THE REIGN OF
HUMBUG: A SATIRE**

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The Reign of Humbug: A Satire by Anonymous

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ANONYMOUS

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THE
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Poetico

THE
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A SATIRE.

'Αλλ' ὑμεῖς μὲ ποτε δίσουθ', ὡς κομμῶσαι τὰ δίκαια'
Φησὶ δ' ὑμᾶς πολλὰ διδάξαι ἀγνάθ', ὡς ἐδάμνασθε ἴσται.

ARISTOPH. ACHARN. 655.

SECOND EDITION.



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PELHAM RICHARDSON, CORNHILL;

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OXFORD.

1836.

664.

Σωκ.—Ταύτας μίττοι σὺ θεὰς εὔσαις οὐκ ᾔδης, οὐδ' ἰομίξεις;

Στρ.—Μὰ Δι' ἄλλ' ἑμίχλην καὶ δρόσον αὐτὰς ἠγούμην καὶ κωνὸν εἶναι.

Σωκ.—Οὐ γάρ, μὰ Δι' ἄλλ' ἴσθ' ὅτι κλείστευς αὐταὶ βόσκουσι σοφιστάς,

Θουριομάττας, ἰατροτίχτας, σφραγιδοιουχαμφορέτας,

Κυκλῶν τε χορῶν ἄσματοκάμτας, ἄνδρας μεταμορφίαντας·

ARISTOPH. NUBES, 329.

(*The Clouds enter.*)

SOCRATES.—Didst thou not know that these were goddesses?

STREPSIADES.—No! by the Thunderer, I always fancied
That they were mist, and fog, and dew, and smoke.

SOCRATES.—Not so, by Jove, these are the foster-mothers
Of all our sophist spouters, crisis prophets,
Quack-med'cine venders, lisping essenc'd dandies,
Writers of tales of fashion, ballet-masters,
And gazers after comets.

ARISTOPHANES, CLOUDS, ACT 1.

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PREFACE

TO THE

FIRST EDITION.

I TRUST that the public will receive with much indulgence this attempt to expose the wretched sophistry that pervades so many affairs, whether public or private, in the present day. I have used the term *Humbug* to designate this principle, considering that it is now adopted into our language as much as the words Dunce, Jockey, Cheat, Swindler, &c. which were formerly only colloquial terms, and because I know of no word in any language, ancient or modern, that so fully expresses not only the cant but the very acts of our modern pretenders. I have ventured to choose the style

adopted by the authors of the *Lutrin*, *Dunciad*, and of many other works far superior to mine; but I believe that I shall not be found to belong to the "servum pecus" of imitators, much less shall I be charged with the greater sin—that of being a copyist.

I attack no one's opinions *per se*, provided they are such that Englishmen may form and avow; but I attack, and I wish I had ten times the power to do it, the effeminacy, the inconsistency, the cant, the rapacity we are unfortunately too well acquainted with. The reforming place-hunter, the tyrannical spouter about liberty, the theorist, the heartless philanthropist, the projector, the quack, whether medical or political, have succeeded so well lately that it is time some effort were made to stop them. How feeble soever this effort may be, still the feeblest attempt is of use, and I trust that the public will give me the encouragement due to the straightforward and plain-spoken.

There is an observation of Pitt's that John Bull was like an ass,—he would bear almost any burden

provided it was put on a little at a time. "Put on too much at once," said he, "and you'll get your brains kicked out." Both rich and poor, Tory and Radical, have been pretty well burthened lately; but some how or other no one kicks. The poor have had successively the selling their carcasses to the Anatomist,—the transporting their young to Canada and Sierra Leone,—the Poor-law Bill, and the Bastille system in prisons; the rich landlord has had his rents lowered,—the rich merchant has been ruined by the free-trade system, yet all submit, and why? the poor are humbugged with the word liberty, and the rich by the word liberalism. The Radical was encouraged to form *political* unions, but when he formed *trades'* unions they transported him; he was permitted to sell unstamped papers till he threw their inconsistency in their teeth, then he was persecuted without pity, and made to feel the tender mercies of small handcuffs and the silent system; yet such is the power of humbug, that I have no doubt if the Whigs were to resign to-morrow, and were to "agitate" and