

**THE ECCLESIAZUSAE, OR,  
FEMALE PARLIAMENT,  
TRANSLATED FROM  
ARISTOPHANES**

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The Ecclesiazusae, or, Female Parliament, Translated from Aristophanes by Rowland Smith

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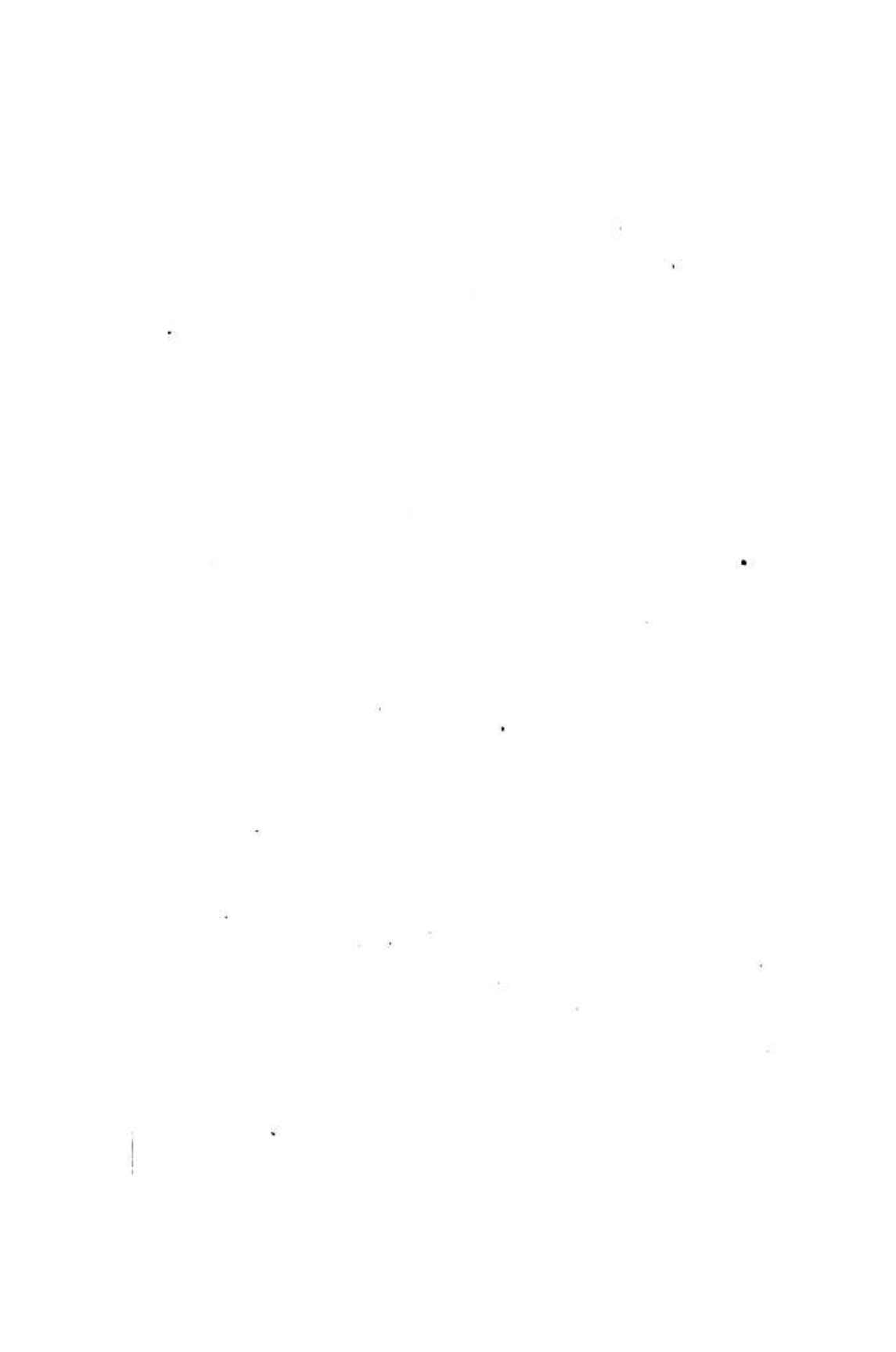
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**ROWLAND SMITH**

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**ECCLESIAZUSÆ.**



THE  
**ECCLESIAZUSÆ,**  
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TRANSLATED FROM

**ARISTOPHANES,**

BY THE

**REV. ROWLAND SMITH, M.A.**  
OF ST. JOHN'S COLLEGE, OXFORD.

—  
“ Our plot is a good plot, as ever was laid, our friends true and  
“ constant; a good plot, and full of expectation; an excellent plot.”

HENRY IV.

—  
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315.





## PREFACE.

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THE difficulty of embodying in a modern language the force and spirit of the authors of antiquity, will be admitted by every one who is at all conversant with classical literature; and that difficulty will be allowed to exist to a far greater extent, in the case of the great comic poet of ancient Greece. There occur in the pages of Aristophanes numerous allusions to persons and passing events of those times, too obscure to be known at the present day, as well as numerous jokes and "jeux de mots," some of which cannot be transferred into any other language, while others are of so coarse a nature as to be totally unsuited to the refinement of modern times. Supposing these obstacles could be overcome, there will still remain for the translator the almost hopeless task of keeping pace with the poet in his ever-varying style: he is continually shifting from "grave to gay," according as his object is to

convey a maxim of policy, to introduce a pun, or to deal a biting sarcasm; at one time he<sup>a</sup> rivals in his poetry the strains of the Tragic Muse, at another time, he descends to the utmost verge of broad comic license. In how great a degree these difficulties may nevertheless be surmounted, the labours of Mr. Mitchell have afforded ample proof; who, rejecting the *dross* of the poet, has retained the *pure ore*, with greater success than can reasonably be expected from any less able scholar.

In making choice of this Play, the Translator has been chiefly influenced by the circumstance, that it has never before appeared in an English dress; in addition to this, the graphic representation given of the popular assemblies of Athens cannot, he imagines, prove otherwise than interesting to the lovers of classical literature. The version will, he

<sup>a</sup> Respecting his excellence as a poet, Schlegel says, "In language and versification, his excellence is not barely acknowledged; it is such as to entitle him to take his place among the first poets to whom Greece has given birth. In many passages of serious and earnest poetry which he has here and there introduced, Aristophanes shews himself to be a true poet, and capable, had he so chosen, of reaching the highest eminence even in the more dignified departments of his art." *History of Dramatic Literature.*