

**THE LIFE OF MR. JAMES QUIN,
COMEDIAN, WITH THE HISTORY
OF THE STAGE FROM HIS
COMMENCING ACTOR TO HIS
RETREAT TO BATH**

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The Life of Mr. James Quin, Comedian, with the History of the Stage from His Commencing Actor to His Retreat to Bath by David Garrick

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DAVID GARRICK

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PREFATORY NOTE.

The first portion of the following work is a reprint of the exceedingly scarce life of James Quin, published in 1786.

This actor was a man who reached such a high standard of excellence in his profession, and who consequently acquired such an enviable celebrity, being surpassed, or at any rate equalled, by one other comedian only of his time, his fellow-performer at the same theatre, David Garrick, that it is confidently believed the reproduction of a work now rarely to be met with will be welcome in dramatic and other circles.

Facilities for printing not being as great a century ago as they are now, there is frequently a great paucity of material for the compilation of a biographical sketch. Efforts, however, have now been made to collect, in the form of an appendix, fragmentary notices scattered in various directions, in order to add them to the work in question, and, as far as possible, render it complete.

From the author's words in his opening chapter, there appears to have been special difficulty in the accomplishment of this particular task, "the Histories of the Stage," he remarks, "scarcely mentioning Quin, either as an actor or as a man," so that what he had to offer to the reader was "principally gathered from conversation and acquaintance." He hopes, however, he says, "that from these materials and such other as he can obtain, some future biographer may transmit to posterity this actor's memory."

The publisher of this book submits it to the collector as an attempt to fulfil the above.



E. Quin

THE LIFE OF
MR. JAMES QUIN
COMEDIAN,
WITH THE
HISTORY OF THE STAGE
FROM
HIS COMMENCING ACTOR TO HIS RETREAT
TO BATH.
ILLUSTRATED WITH MANY
CURIOUS AND INTERESTING ANECDOTES
OF SEVERAL
*PERSONS OF DISTINCTION, LITERATURE,
AND GALLANTRY.*
TO WHICH IS ADDED A
Genuine and Authentic Copy of his Last Will
and Testament.

DEDICATED TO DAVID GARRICK, ESQ.

London:

PRINTED FOR S. BLADON, IN PATERNOSTER ROW

1766.

The following table shows the results of the experiment. The first column is the number of trials, the second column is the number of correct responses, and the third column is the percentage of correct responses. The data shows that the percentage of correct responses increases as the number of trials increases, indicating that the subject is learning the task.

Number of Trials	Number of Correct Responses	Percentage of Correct Responses
10	5	50%
20	12	60%
30	18	60%
40	25	62.5%
50	30	60%
60	35	58.3%
70	40	57.1%
80	45	56.25%
90	48	53.3%
100	50	50%

The results of the experiment show that the subject's performance is stable, with a percentage of correct responses that fluctuates around 50-60%. This suggests that the subject has reached a level of learning that is relatively consistent across different trials.

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TO
DAVID GARRICK, ESQ.

WHOSE patronage, sir, can these sheets more properly claim than yours? The Life of Mr. Quin is so immediately connected with your own, and his pursuits for a long time were so very similar, that no one can form so just an estimate of the man, or judge so well of the merits of the actor, as he who is at once the real representative and the only just commentator of Shakespeare. Permit me therefore, sir, to lay this little work at your feet, which I flatter myself, if not from its intrinsic worth, at least from the subject, you will deign to accept of, and place among those volumes which illustrate dramatic history. I am, sir,

Amongst many thousands,

Your constant admirer,

And most obedient humble servant,

THE EDITOR.

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The Life of Mr. James Quin, Comedian.

CHAPTER I.

His birth, family, expectancies, studies, early pursuits. The reason of changing them. His future plan of life interrupted by a very uncommon and almost fatal adventure—with its sequel.

THE public will, it is imagined, not be displeased to have some account of a person of whom so much has been said, and of whom so little has been hitherto known. His jokes may be called the standing jests of the town; but those who have hackneyed some of them, and murdered others, have scarce ever entered into the most cursory part of his life and character; and yet, according to Mr. Addison, the best story in the world loses its greatest poignancy when we are unacquainted with its hero. This, amongst other considerations, induced the editor of this performance to attempt an essay towards the Life of Mr. James Quin, in hopes that some future biographer may from these materials, and such others as he can obtain, transmit to posterity the memory of a man who has diverted the present age in public and in private—upon the dramatic stage as well as that of life; who was one of the best actors and most facetious men of his time;—who was at once the gentleman and the scholar—the philosopher and the critic—the humourist and the moral man, the scourge of knaves and fools, and the admiration of the sensible and good. Such are the outlines of the picture before us; in every respect an original, and indeed inimitable, yet not without defects and blemishes in some of the features and in various parts of the drapery. Perfection is not the lot of humanity, and an honest historian scorns to flatter.

In the pursuit of this task the editor has encountered many difficulties, as there are scarce any lights to be met with in such books as might be supposed to give some anecdotes of so extraordinary a character. The Histories of the Stage, the Annals of the Theatre, scarce mention him either as an actor or a man, so that what is here offered to the reader is principally gathered from conversation and acquaintance.