

**THE JOBSIAD: A GROTESCO-
COMICO-HEROIC
POEM FROM THE GERMAN
BY CHARLES T. BROOKS**

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The Jobsiad: A Grottesco-Comico-Heroic Poem from the German by Charles T. Brooks by Dr. Carl Arnold Kortum & Charles T. Brooks

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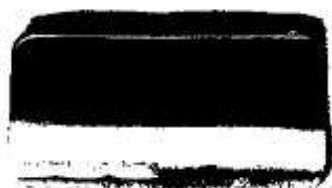
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DR. CARL ARNOLD KORTUM & CHARLES T. BROOKS

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The Iobsiad

A

GROTESCO-COMICO-HEROIC POEM

FROM THE GERMAN

OF

Dr. Carl Arnold Hartum

BY

CHARLES T. BROOKS

TRANSLATOR OF "FAUST," "TITAN," ETC., ETC.



NEW YORK:
LEYPOLDT & HOLT.

1887.

†

THE

Life, Opinions, Actions, and Fate

OF

Hieronimus Jobs,

THE

CANDIDATE,

A

MAN WHO WHILOM WON GREAT RENOWN,

AND DIED

AS

Night-Watch in Schildeburg Town.



*Throughout, beginning, end, and middle,
Adorned with wood-cuts, neat as a fidale,
A gay historic, pithy and terse,
Writ in neo-fashion daggard verse.*

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TRANSLATOR'S PREFACE.

CARL ARNOLD KORTÜM, the author of this unique poem—which may almost be said to form a genus by itself—was born at Mühlheim in 1745, and died as Physician, at Bochum, a small town in Westphalia, in 1824, in the eightieth year of his age. If we knew the particulars of his life, we might perhaps find in him an answer to Solomon's question in regard to laughter: "What doeth it?" namely, It prolongeth man's days.

The *Johfad* enjoys a great and general popularity in its native country,* and is, of course, a particular

* In Marggraff's *House-treasury of German humor* occurs the following:—

"The *Johfad* first appeared anonymously in 1784, and has now reached its Tenth Edition, [of several thousand copies each] which may well be regarded as a proof of the power of this jolly book to stand the test of time. A book may attain to several editions in swift succession, and then after all be suddenly forgotten or no more read; but when, after half a century, new editions of a book are still called

favorite of students, several of whom the translator has heard recite passages from it—"pompously squaring the circle described by the wrinkle round the mouth," as Jean Paul says of Schoppe—with exceeding richness of comic effect. Perhaps, indeed, to be perfectly

for and pass out of print again,—this is certainly a proof of its having a kernel of national and lasting vitality. The *Jobhad* owes the popularity which it still continues to find as well to its drastic drollery in the invention and management of characters and situations, and their ethico-historical interest, as to the circumstance, that pedantry, with its innumerable absurdities, (which, indeed, forms the main object of this comic poem) has not even to this day died out in Germany, and will hardly ever die out, though it should from time to time assume different forms. The treatment betrays an original *vis comica* and a naive drollery such as are at this day seldom found; nay, the comic rises sometimes even to humor, insofar as we may regard it as one of the peculiarities of humor, that the Poet tosses about the world, which he sees at his feet, with sovereign caprice, with an ideal whimsicality, that never suffers itself to be degraded, by the follies on which it exercises its perisage, to the level of hypochondriacal moodiness or a schoolmaster-like pedantry. . . . The *Jobhad* owes a great part of its effect to the peculiar daggereel, since become typical, managed by him with the most riotous extravagance of whimsy, and yet at the same time with the sure hand of a master, which Kortüm, with happy hit, himself originally created for his epic."

enjoyed and appreciated, such a production should be heard as read by some one who has the skill and spirit to give it the proper tone and *twang*, or, perhaps, it might advantageously be accompanied with a scale of musical and *sasal* intonation.

By way of giving the reader all the help the case seems to admit, in the absence of the desiderata just referred to, the translator will add a few remarks in respect to rhyme and rhythm.

It will be observed, as one of the commonest requirements in making out the measure and securing the comic effect, that all sorts of liberties are taken, for instance, with accent. Thus, for the sake of rhyme, such words as *Baron*, *Turkey*, *Father*, and many others, have the stress transferred to the last syllable; and so, too, *frequently*, *contrary*, *necessary*, will sometimes have the emphasis thrown on the last syllable but one.—Equal licence is allowed in spelling. *Swabia* is spelt *Swaby* to rhyme with *baby*. *Nature* is spelt *Natur* to rhyme with *Senator*. The final *g* is repeatedly cut off from participles. Thus *spinning* becomes *spinnin'* for the sake of making it rhyme with *women*.—But the reader's Yankee sense will do justice to all these things as he goes along, and practice will beget smoothness, the rough quality being gradually worn off by the friction and heat of a rapid movement.