

**INTERCEPTED LETTERS; OR,
THE TWOPENNY
POST-BAG. TO WHICH ARE
ADDED, TRIFLES REPRINTED**

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Intercepted Letters; Or, the Twopenny Post-Bag. To Which Are Added, Trifles Reprinted by Thomas Brown

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THOMAS BROWN

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&c.

INTERCEPTED LETTERS;

OR, THE

Twopenny Post-Bag.

TO WHICH ARE ADDED,

TRIFLES REPRINTED.

BY

THOMAS BROWN,

THE YOUNGER.

Thomas Brown

Elapse manibus occidere tabellæ.

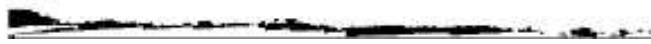
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Fourth Edition.

LONDON:

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1813.



PREFACE.

THE Bag, from which the following Letters are selected, was dropped by a Twopenny Postman about two months since, and picked up by an emissary of the Society for the S—pp—ss—n of V—e, who, supposing it might materially assist the private researches of that Institution, immediately took it to his employers and was rewarded handsomely for his trouble. Such a treasury of secrets was worth a whole host of informers; and, accordingly, like the Cupids of the poet (if I may use so profane a simile) who “fell at odds

about the sweet-bag of a bee*," those venerable Suppressors almost fought with each other for the honour and delight of first ransacking the Post-Bag. Unluckily, however, it turned out upon examination, that the discoveries of profligacy which it enabled them to make, lay chiefly in those upper regions of society, which their well-bred regulations forbid them to molest or meddle with.—In consequence, they gained but very few victims by their prize, and, after lying for a week or two under Mr. H—rch—d's counter, the Bag, with its violated contents, was sold for a trifle to a friend of mine.

It happened that I had been just then seized with an ambition (having never

* Herrick.

tried the strength of my wing but in a Newspaper) to publish something or other in the shape of a Book; and it occurred to me that, the present being such a letter-writing era, a few of these Twopenny Post Epistles, turned into easy verse, would be as light and popular a task as I could possibly select for a commencement. I did not think it prudent, however, to give too many Letters at first, and, accordingly, have been obliged (in order to eke out a sufficient number of pages) to reprint some of those trifles, which had already appeared in the public journals*. As in the battles of ancient times, the

* It is but fair to mention that some of these reprinted *jeux-d'esprit* (as the Parody on the R—G—T's Letter, the Insurrection of the Papers, the New Costume of the Ministers, and the Sale of the Tools) are not *misæ*—but they appeared to be

shades of the departed were sometimes seen among the combatants, so I thought I might remedy the thinness of my ranks, by conjuring up a few dead and forgotten ephemerons to fill them.

Such are the motives and accidents, that led to the present publication; and as this is the first time my Muse has ever ventured out of the go-cart of a Newspaper, though I feel all a parent's delight at seeing little Miss go alone, I am also not without a parent's anxiety, lest an unlucky fall should be the consequence of the experiment; and I need not point out the many living instances there are, of Muses that

so perfectly *in keeping* with my own, and were so very convenient in filling up my pages, that I trust their Author (whoever he may be) will excuse the liberty I have taken in making use of them.