

THE BEGGAR'S OPERA

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649763597

The beggar's opera by John Gay

Except for use in any review, the reproduction or utilisation of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the permission of the publisher, Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd, PO Box 1576 Collingwood, Victoria 3066 Australia.

All rights reserved.

Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.
Cover @ 2017

This book is sold subject to the condition that it shall not, by way of trade or otherwise, be lent, re-sold, hired out, or otherwise circulated without the publisher's prior consent in any form or binding or cover other than that in which it is published and without a similar condition including this condition being imposed on the subsequent purchaser.

www.triestepublishing.com

JOHN GAY

**THE BEGGAR'S
OPERA**



THE
B E G G A R's
O P E R A.

WRITTEN by Mr. *GAY*.

To which is Prefixed the
MUSICK to each SONG.



Nos hæc novimus esse nihil.—MART.

L O N D O N :
WILLIAM HEINEMANN

1 9 2 1

*To J. G. and to G. L. F., without whom I should have been powerless, do I dedicate my share
in this book.*

C. L. F., 1921.



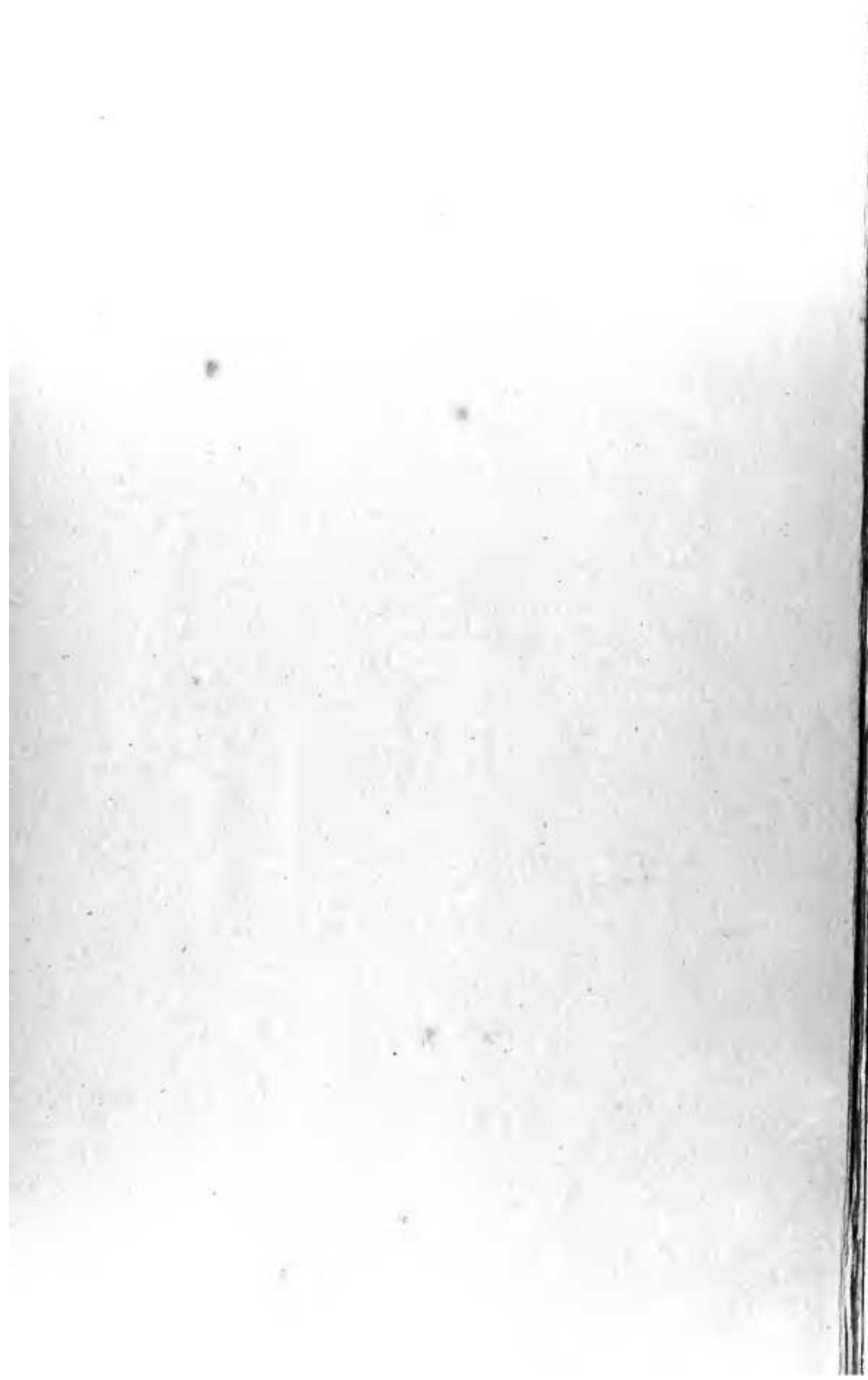
PR
3473
B6
1921

*Note—The Text here given is taken from the edition of 1956. The
series have been re-numbered to the modern method denoting actual
changes of place or intervals of time.*

*First published September 1921
New Impression October 1921*

LIST OF THE PLATES

I. THE BEGGAR	<i>Frontispiece</i>
II. MRS. PEACHUM	<i>To face page</i> 6
III. POLLY PEACHUM	" 18
IV. SCENE: A TAVERN NEAR NEWGATE	" 28
V. CAPTAIN MACHEATH	" 40
VI. LUCY LOCKIT	" 56
VII. PEACHUM	" 70
VIII. LOCKIT	" 82



CLAUD LOVAT FRASER

*That when I die this word may stand for me—
He had a heart to praise, an eye to see,
And beauty was his king.*

DEAD at the age of thirty-one after a sudden operation, Claud Lovat Fraser was as surely a victim of the war as though he had fallen in action. He was full of vigour for his work, but shell-shock had left him with a heart that could not stand a strain of this kind, and all his own fine courage could not help the surgeons in a losing fight. We are not sorry for him—we learn that, not to be sorry for the dead. But for ourselves? This terror is always so fresh, so unexampled. I had telephoned to him to ask whether he would help me in a certain theatrical enterprise. I was told by his servant that he was ill, but one hears these things so often that one gave but little thought to it beyond sending a telegram asking for news; and now this. Personal griefs are of no public interest, but here is as sad a public loss as has befallen us, if the world can measure truly, in our generation.

But it is not, I think, of our loss that we should speak now. These desolations, strangely, have a way of bringing their own fortitude. A few hours after hearing, without any warning, of Lovat Fraser's death, I was walking among the English landscape that he loved so well, and I felt there how poor and inadequate a thing death really was, how little to be feared. This apparent intention to destroy a life and genius so young, so admirable, and so rich in promise, seemed, for all the hurt, in some way wholly to have failed. We all knew that, given health, the next ten years would show a splendid volume of work from the new power and understanding to which he had been coming in these later days. But just as it seems to me not the occasion to lament our own loss, so does it seem idle to speculate with regret upon what art may have lost by this sudden

stroke. It is, rather, well to be glad that so few years have borne so abundantly. Not only is the work that Lovat Fraser has left full in volume, it is decisive in character beyond all likelihood in one of his years. Greatly as he would have added to our delight, and wider as his influence would have grown, nothing he might have done could have added to our knowledge of the kind of distinction that was his and that will always mark his fame.

The man himself had a charm of unusual definition. One might go to his studio at five o'clock and find him lumbering with his great frame among a chaos of the rare and curious books that he loved, stacked pell-mell on to the shelves, littered on tables and the floor, his clothes and face and fingers streaked with paint. And then an hour or two later he would come dressed ready for the theatre, an immaculate beau of the 'fifties, his top coat with waist and skirts, his opera hat made to special order by a Bond Street expert on an 1850 last. And then, before setting off, he would talk of some fellow-artist who was a little down and out, and wonder whether some of his drawings might not be bought at a few guineas apiece. Then to book, as it were, such an order gave salt to his evening, and if the evening meant contact with some of his own exquisite work, a word of admiration was taken with that wistful gratitude that it is now almost unbearable to remember.

The theatre is a complex, co-operative affair, and it is idle to inquire who gives more than another to it. But on one side of its effort nobody in these later years has fought for light and beauty more surely and courageously than Claud Lovat Fraser. Like every fine artist, he was sometimes a little puzzled, a little hurt, that the critics could not see the clear motives inspiring his work. But the purpose never faltered. *As You Like It*, *The Beggar's Opera*, *If*, the exquisite designs for Madame Karsavina's later ballets—these made it plain enough that a new genius of extraordinary power and fertility was at work on the stage. With a knowledge of tradition that combined the widest learning with profound intuition, Lovat Fraser in his design touched the life of five