

**LITERARY ANECDOTES AND  
CONTEMPORARY  
REMINISCENCES OF PROFESSOR  
PORSON AND OTHERS. VOLUME  
II,**

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Literary Anecdotes and Contemporary Reminiscences of Professor Porson and Others. Volume II, by E. H. Barker

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**E. H. BARKER**

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LITERARY ANECDOTES

AND

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CONTEMPORARY REMINISCENCES,

OF PROFESSOR PORSON AND OTHERS;

FROM THE MANUSCRIPT PAPERS OF THE LATE

E. H. BARKER ESQ. OF THETFORD,

NORFOLK.

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# PORSONIANA,

OR

ANECDOTES OF PROFESSOR PORSON,

&c.

## I.

HEACHAM, near LYNN, visited DR DAVY about Aug. or Sept. 1834. AKERS lived at BRANCASTER; he was a famous writer; DAVY has seen beautiful specimens of his writing.

PORSON's father was a weaver, and WORSTED is in the neighbourhood; on the Revocation of the Edict of Nantz, many weavers came over thither.

PORSON always spoke highly of his mother.

DR DAVY never saw TOM PORSON or any other Members of the family, [unless it were Siday Hawes Junior.]

I think that PORSON was described by him as something of an *Adonis*.

DR D. had marked a passage in A. GELL. 13, 8. where *wisdom* is described as made up of *use* and *memory*.



WARNER, in his *Literary Recollections*, tells a story about PORSON's having written 1000 *Epigrams* in one night.

#### 2. THE TRINITY.

*Porson* was walking with a Trinitarian friend; they had been speaking of the Trinity; a buggy came by with three men in it; 'There,' says he, 'is an illustration of the Trinity;' 'No,' said his friend *Porson*, 'you must shew me one man in *three* buggies, if you cau.' So, says Mr Rodd.

Mr Epps says that the father of the present Sheepshanks destroyed some Letters of Sir Isaac Newton because they were not considered creditable to his memory:—Most probably religious opinions. The destruction was wicked.

Basil was actually expelled from the Astronomical Society, for non-payment of arrears of subscription-money.

Sir Isaac Newton's Niece, on the death of the Marchioness of Halifax, became Mistress to the Marquis; money was bought into the funds in his and her name, so that he was privy to the transaction.

#### 3.

MR BASIL MONTAGU says that PORSON was asked if he had dined? He replied, 'Yesterday.'

#### 4. PORSON'S WIFE.

Miss Raine is the Lady, to whom Mr Kidd alludes as having specimens of *Porson's* writing etc.

Mrs Luxmore, wife of Dr Luxmore, Bp of St Asaph, has Porson's *Frying-pan out of the Fire*, and the Bishop must have Letters from Porson.

Tom Atkins, well known at Newmarket, [on whose authority no great reliance can be placed,] met Porson carrying something under his arm, and asked him what it was? It is a pair of breeches, which I am carrying to my wife's husband to mend. Porson had married Mrs Luman, who was divorced from her husband by the Scotch law, and that husband was a tailor.

Mr Kidd at my house, July. 14, 1829.

Some one said to Porson that he had been told something by a friend about *the peace of Antalcidas* [*with the i pronounced short*]; and I said Porson was told by a friend yesterday that it was Antalcidas [*with the i long*].

## 5.

## ANECDOTE OF HORNE TOOKE AND PROFESSOR PORSON.

The Professor, it seems, at Mr Tooke's own table, had threatened to kick and cuff him. Tooke, however persisted in fighting it out 'in a couple of quarts of brandy,' a kind of duel sufficiently to the Professor's taste, but which soon laid him senseless on the floor. Upon this, the victor, in this new Olympic game, taking hold of his antagonist's limbs in succession, exclaimed, 'This is the foot, that was to have kicked, and the hand that was to have cuffed me.' And then drinking one glass more to the speedy recovery of his prostrate adversary, ordered that great care should be taken of Mr P., and withdrew into an adjacent apartment, where tea and coffee had been prepared, with the same seeming calmness, as if nothing

had happened." *Wit and Wisdom, or, The World's Jest-Book*, 2nd Edition, 1828, 12mo, p. 66.

## 6.

Diogenes Laertius states that Aristippus, when reading the Socratic Dialogues of *Æschines*, called out, 'Where did you get these from, you thief?' He pretended to have received his Dialogues from Xanthippe, wife of Socrates. Little reliance, says my *Lempriere*, can be placed in this account.

See my *Lempriere in Callicrates*.

## 7. PROFESSOR PORSON.

We have seldom read a better story, to say the least of it, than the following. As to the *facts* of it, we can only say that the statement rests on the authority of the author of *Lacon*, whence it is extracted:—Porson was once travelling in a stage-coach, when a young Oxonian, fresh from College, was amusing the Isdics with a variety of talk, and amongst other things, with a quotation, as he said, from Sophocles. A Greek quotation, and in a coach too, roused our slumbering Professor from a kind of dog-sleep, in a snug corner of the vehicle. Shaking his ears, and rubbing his eyes, 'I think, young gentleman,' said he, 'you favored us just now with a quotation from Sophocles; I do not happen to recollect it there.' 'Oh, Sir,' replied our tyro, 'the quotation is word for word as I have repeated it, and in Sophocles too; but I suspect, Sir, that it is some time since *you* were at College.' The Professor applying his hand to his great-coat, and taking out a small pocket-edition of Sophocles, quietly asked him if he would be kind enough to shew him the passage in question in that little book. After rammaging the leaves for some time, he replied, 'On second