

**JAMES BOSWELL, HESTER LYNCH
PIOZZI**

**ANECDOTES OF
THE LEARNED
PIG**

James Boswell
Hester Lynch Piozzi
Anecdotes of the Learned Pig

http://www.litres.ru/pages/biblio_book/?art=24179348

*Anecdotes of the Learned Pig / With Notes, Critical and Explanatory, and
Illustrations from Bozzy, Piozzi &c. &c.:*

Содержание

ANECDOTES

4

Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.

13

**James Boswell and
Hester Lynch Piozzi
Anecdotes of the Learned
Pig / With Notes, Critical and
Explanatory, and Illustrations
from Bozzy, Piozzi &c. &c**

**ANECDOTES
OF THE
LEARNED PIG ¹**

THE great and learned Pig, of which it is our hap to speak, was produced in a fty belonging to an old Tory, bookfeller, in²

¹ “He was not at all offended, when, comparing all our acquaintance to some animal or other, we pitched upon the elephant for his resemblance, adding, that the proboscis of that creature was like his mind most exactly, strong to buffet even the tyger, and pliable to pick up even the pin.” – Piozzi, p. 205. – N.B. For elephant our author probably read *pig*.

² We have sought for information concerning this fact, that the gentleman designated in the text was born in *Moorfields*, or that his father was a bookfeller there, which, however, we confess to have heard, but when or where we can by no means remember.

Moorfields. At that time *Moorfields* was distinguished by rails which³ fluttered with party writings and libels of every fort; and it is remarkable that his mother, during her pregnancy, tore down from those rails, and fairly devoured one whole volume of *Filmer* and all *Sacheverell's* sermons at a meal; after which she was observed to grunt more and louder, and to lie longer in the fun, and deeper in the mire, than it had before been her custom to do. She was delivered of our Pig on the morning of the *tenth of June*. He was strong and bony, but of an inelegant form, and betrayed a very uncommon roughness in his squeak; and it was soon after remarked by the neighbours, that his trottings after his mother were made in⁴ zig-zags, and not in straight lines as is usual with other pigs. After his mother, however, he resolutely trotted, and one morning, as ill fortune would have it, into a garden which had belonged to the great *Milton*, and was now in the possession of one of his daughters. Here he fed voraciously upon *white roses*, whilst his lady mother was busily employed in rooting up all the *red ones*. He was in this place seized by the owner, and so severely whipped, that he thought no other than that she was whipping him to death in preparation for a

³ Cloath spice, line trunks, or flutt'ring in a row, Befringe the rails of *Bedlam* or Soho. POPE'S IM. OF HORACE, Ep. I. B. 2.

⁴ "When in company where he was not free, or when engaged earnestly in conversation, he never gave way to such habits, which proves that they were not involuntary." I still, however, think, that these gestures were involuntary; for surely had not that been the case, he would have refrained them in the public streets. — Boswell's Tour, p. 9.

luxurious meal. Of this whipping he retained through life the highest resentment, and bore ever after the most inveterate hatred of the whole *Miltonic line*. On the fifth of November following he was taken up, without any warrant, by the rabble, for the uses of a *Whig feast*, and was very near being *roasted* at the same fire with the *Pope*, the *Devil*, and the *Pretender*; but this being discovered to be something *measly*, he was turned loose to be cured, as they deridingly said, by the⁵ *royal touch*. Of this event he retained the strongest sensibility, and considered ever after his fellow sufferers, the *Pope* and the *Pretender*, with great complacency, if not affection; but as to the other *party*, though exposed to the same dishonours, there was something in his horns and his tail which he could never be brought to endure. The touch already mentioned, though profanely sneered at by the *Whig*

⁵ The pretence of a miraculous power in the cure of the evil was the most extraordinary strain of that King-craft of which James the First so loudly boasted. No manly man, under the circumstances of the case, would have set up this pretence, or have expected any effect from it but that of public derision and contempt; but weak and credulous men take, perhaps, the best measure of human weakness and credulity, and so deep did this fraud strike its roots, that, authenticated as it was by the clergy, and annually certified by the surgeons and physicians of the royal household, it survived the civil war, was restored with Charles the Second, extended beyond the revolution, and was only extinguished by the act of settlement, which, taking the principles of the British government out of the clouds, placed them on the firm basis of the earth. The pretensions of Alexander were of a bolder and more rational sort, and held to be so important, that his successors, who had no kindred interest in the horns of Ammon, yet mingled them in their crowns and tiaras, till at last the Roman Titans tumbled from their seats one after another these fictitious gods. The most deceitful glimmer of divine claim seems to have had more influence on the mind of the person who seems to have been designated in the text, than the most solid principles of political right.

rabble, was soon afterwards in good earnest applied; but so great an obliquity of head had by this time taken place, that it could never be perfectly restored. Upon this memorable occasion there was placed about his neck a ribband of *true blue*, to which hung a silver coin, displaying royal lineaments of the *Stuart line*, making so strong an impression on his young fancy, that for that line he ever after retained the most⁶ passionate regard. Thus decorated, he considered himself, and was considered by others, as a kind of⁷ *Tantony*, or *St. Anthony's Pig*, belonging to the Crown. Not long after this period he was heard one morning as he lay in the fun to grunt forth, portentously the following rhymes:

Gruntledum, gruntledum, gruntledum, squeak,
I hope very soon to be able to speak;
Through my griftly proboscis, I find, that I can
Already cry Ay like a Parliament man:
Like a maid I squeak, like a lover can whine,
And snort like an Alderman laden with wine.
Gruntledum, gruntledum, gruntledum, squeak,
I hope very soon to be able to speak.

⁶ “I mentioned Lord Hailes as a man of anecdote – He was not pleased with him for publishing only such memorials as were unfavourable for the *Stuart* family.” – Boswell’s Tour, p. 312.

⁷ Tantony pigs were pigs who belonged formerly to the Convent of St. Anthony in the city. Collars were placed about their necks, inscribed *St. Anthony*. They fed all over the town, and out of respect to the fathers of that convent, it was usual for the passengers to give them biscuits, and other things carried for that purpose in their pockets. The pigs of course followed the passengers in this expectation; and hence came the expression of one person’s following another like a Tantony pig.

This being publicly known, the neighbours now put on him a human coat, in which condition he appeared as if the *Hog in armour* had descended from his sign-post to mingle in society, and converse with man. Nor did they stop here, but ventured also to recommend him for a pension to the great *ministerial hog*, though, for the present, however, without effect; for though it was evident enough that our learned Pig could say Ay, yet it did not follow that he would be always disposed to do so. He was therefore turned loose into the foil of this great town to subsist as he could, where, *idling* and *rambling*, he picked up sometimes flowers, and sometimes thistles, a great number of Greek and Hebrew roots, with an immense quantity of verbage of every sort ⁸. It is for his honour that he routed in this rich compost for years without giving any offence, except that, through resentment to the Miltonic line, he associated rather too long with a very obscene animal of the pig kind, called a⁹ *Lauder*; and except, that

⁸ The person here designed is allowed by the courtesy of the times to possess a nervous and elegant style; but so unhappy is the writer of this note, that he can by no means concur in the general praise. He has a notion of Saxon simplicity, from which all departure, not enforced by necessity, and regulated by taste, assimilating, as much as may be, foreign words to the genius of the Saxon tongue, is to him intolerable. But the writer here spoken of was wholly deficient in taste, and appears to refer his English to some foreign standard chanting forth polysyllables, and tiring the ear with dull returns of the same cadences, for ever advancing like a post horse, two up and two down, and incapable of changing his pace, without throwing both himself and his rider in the dirt. But hack writers, like hack horses, find it for their ease to practise an uniform rate.

⁹ *There is*, says a remarker on the life of Milton, *a high degree of prepollent probability*

he was taken sometimes with frange freaks, and fancied once

that the letter in the Gentleman's Magazine for the month of Auguft 1747, page 363 and 364, figned William Lauder, came from the amicable hand of the writer of that life. I do not, however, believe that the writer of Milton's life was in the feeret of Lauder's forgeries, the fact itfelf being of fo extraordinary a nature, that it is not probable that any two perfons, feeparately capable of committing it, fhould fo fortuitoufly meet together; yet fuch was his malevolence towards Milton, that we muft admit it to have greatly clouded his underftanding. He undoubtedly wrote the preface and the poftfcript to Lauder's publication: in allufion to which, Doctor Douglas fays, *that 'tis hoped, nay 'tis expected, that the the elegant and nervous writer, whofe judicious fentiments and inimitable ftyle point out author of Lauder's preface and poftfcript, will no longer allow one to plume himfelf with his feathers, who appears fo little to have deferved his affiftance.* Lauder confeffes his guilt in a letter to Doctor Douglas, and takes all the obloquy on himfelf; but in a fubfequent letter he declares, that the penitential one was written for him by that very gentleman, who has fince written the life of Milton, and makes fome complaints of a breach of friendfhip, *in which he had placed the moft implicit and unlimited confidence;* but as he never charged, that I know of, the writer of Milton's life with any participation in the forgery, we impute to him nothing but a frange malignity which darkened his underftanding. It muft be owned, however, that he cut off the wreck of Lauder with great management, as well as competent fuccefs. I remember that he boafts in his life of Milton of his having written a prologue to the Comus of Milton, for the benefit of one of his grand daughters. This, I fuppose, he would pafs for his benevolence; but he muft excufe me; I am not fo much the dupe of charity as to believe, that he who fo brutally calumniates Milton, his father, mother, uncles, wives, and children, *and all unfortunate fouls that trace him in his line,* would be moved by any charitable difpofition towards any defcendant of Milton's, as being fuch. The fact, I believe, is, that, finding Milton reduced by the labours of his friend Lauder to a level with his wifhes, he practifed, in concurrence with Mr. Lauder, one further act of malice, and endeavoured to fix an obligation on Milton in the perfon of his granddaughter, conferred by his moft inveterate foes as the effect of fatiated vengeance, converted into mingled pity and contempt. If there is any harfhnefs in this note, let it be remembered, that it fpeaks of a man who, in the inftance mentioned, let loofe the moft outrageous malignity againft one, who, whatever political errors he might have imbibed in common with a great majority of the nation, was, however, as

that he faw fomething in the¹⁰ fhape of a found of a knocking; and excepting alfo his too fonorous gruntulations, and that long concatenation of foapy bubbles which ufually frothed from his mouth¹¹. In the midft of thefe reſearches he had one morning the good fortune to throw up this ſentiment in rhyme:

Say, what is a Tory? A Tory is he
Who thinks kicking fhould paſs through every degree;
And that all political motion fhould go
From the toe to the bum, from the bum to the toe.

a private man, of fo exemplary a virtue, as to do the higheſt honour to literary purſuit, and whoſe genius, as a poet, conferred celebrity on the nation itſelf, and in whoſe protection therefore we ought to have taken a greater ſhare.

¹⁰ The hiſtory of this knocking is curious; it forms ſuch a drama of comedy, tragedy, and farce, from its firſt commencement in Cock Lane, paſſing through the ſolemn vaults of Clerkenwell, and then to Weſtminſter Hall, as, I believe, never was exhibited in any other country; a drama wherein childiſhneſs and age, gravity, dignities, folly, fraud, ſuperſtition, and credulity, were all largely and confuſedly thrown in to thicken the plot. That the perſon here deſignated fhould carry out of this ſcene any reſpectability of character, is a proof that either he muſt have poſſeſſed great intrinsic worth, who could bear ſuch large deductions, or that public opinion has ceaſed to be the teſt of merit, if any baſe metal can in this manner paſs current for gold.

¹¹ Our biographer fhould have told us alſo, that once he joined the train of fancy, and paſſing the limits of fact, entered by the Shakeſpearean gate into fairy land. But in an evil hour, “No favouring Sybil marked the devious way.” Never was man or pig ſo aftounded! and no wonder. He had ftumbled unaccountably on the creations of ſenſibility, and found no correſponding emotions within; yet, unconſcious of defect, he pretended a knowledge of the country, and even offered himſelf as an unerring guide; but not long; for, tired with the maze, he gave way, at length, to new adventurers, and fled as another Gulliver out of Lilliput, where he had only encumbered the land.

Then what is a¹² Whig? A dog full of knavery,
A rascal, a scoundrel impatient of slavery,
A malignant, a thief; – then tell me if Whig
Be any more better than gruntedum pig?

There needed no more; a penfion was immediately hung about his neck, and the letters L. L. D. soon afterwards impressed on his rump¹³. And now who but our Pig? lying in the sun, cheek by jowl, by the great ministerial Hog, routing in the political foil, and throwing up daily the most delicious pig-nuts with his snout; nor did these discoveries rest wholly in himself; for the great Hog would sometimes let fall, from behind, certain rich, but often crude and ill-digested, materials, which were taken up in the Westphalian mode by our Pig, and delivered again better concocted to the many-headed beast: and hence we were taught,

¹² “No man, however, was more jealously attached to his party; he not only loved a man the better, if he hated a *Whig*. Dear Bathurst, said he to me one day, was a man to my very heart’s content; he hated a fool, and he hated a rogue, and he hated a *Whig*; he was a very good hater.” – Piozzi’s Memoirs, p. 83. “*Pulteney* was as paltry a fellow as could be. He was a *Whig*, who pretended to be honest; and you know it is ridiculous for a *Whig* to pretend to be honest.” Boswell’s Journal, p. 424. Talking of Granger – “The dog is a *Whig*: I do not like much to see a *Whig* in any dress; but I hate to see a *Whig* in a parson’s gown.” —*Ibid.* p. 312.

¹³ Our author dashes away from thing to thing with very little method or order. He might, however, have touched on the occupation of a schoolmaster, so honourable for a *pig*; in proof of which, we could have furnished him with the following document: “At Edial, near Litchfield, in Staffordshire, young gentlemen are boarded and taught the Latin and Greek languages by Samuel Johnson.” ADVERTISEMENT IN THE GENT. MAG. 1736, p. 428.

that Taxation was no Tyranny, and that a good American war was a very commodious and salutary thing. Great applause ensued, but not unattended with envy, there being at the time many snarlers who have said, and now say, that it were better if our Pig had been, before this period, well soured in the pickling tub, and that even the great ministerial Hog himself had been hung up for bacon. I decide nothing on these brawls; yet, having respect to a certain supposed dignity in our Pig, it may, perhaps, excite some wonder, that he, whose politics were of no older a date than his pension, and who had hitherto never routed out of the moral track, should all at once lend himself out in this manner, and make his conscience responsible for measures, of the principles or effects of which he must have been so incompetent a judge. But I answer in few words, that, like all other politicians, he had his propensities; that it was, perhaps, the nature of the animal, and that mingling his humours and his reason together, there might have been a competent sincerity in the case. But what shall we say to the indecency of his turning up the graves of *Pope*

Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.

Текст предоставлен ООО «Литрес».

Прочитайте эту книгу целиком, [купив полную легальную версию](#) на Литрес.

Безопасно оплатить книгу можно банковской картой Visa, MasterCard, Maestro, со счета мобильного телефона, с платежного терминала, в салоне МТС или Связной, через PayPal, WebMoney, Яндекс.Деньги, QIWI Кошелек, бонусными картами или другим удобным Вам способом.