

'Character of Sir Medicus Oculorum', uit: Ned Ward, *The London Terrae-filius: or, the Satirical Reformer* number 6 (Londen 1708), p. 13-23.

Pray Gentlefolks stand by, and make room for that Worshipful Emperick Knight, and no Gentleman, Sir *Medicus Oculorum*, Operator in Ordinary to all the poor Blind Quality of *Great Britain*. Edge close, Brethren, that his swanking Sides, and *Flemish* Buttocks may have liberty to strut like a managed Horse upon a Training Day, and his Legs and Arms have space enough to Swing and Straddle to the utmost Extent of his Prodigal Deportment: There's an *Atlas* of a *Quack* for you, who, if he had but Youth enough of his side, seems to have Strength enough in his Back to be Stallion to a *Semiramis*: It is a mighty wonder to see his Worshipful Hulkiness out of his Coach; for ever since he has kept one, he has taken as much Pains to shew his Grandure to the Town, as ever he did to make himself known to be an expert Fidler; but now I suppose his Leathern Conveniency is a little out of Repair, and gone to be mended, or else he would scarce have Condescended to have honour'd the Ground with his Colossus Strides, who, in the meanest of his Circumstances, was never without a Stage to bear him out of the Dirt in the worst of Weathers, and to Exalt his Merits far above the Heads of the Groveling Multitude; but now, to convince the World that Honour, which makes other Men Proud, makes him Humble; tho' he has a Stage to Mount upon, and a Coach to Ride in, yet you may see him in the Crowd on Foot, as if he had a mind to verifie the Old Proverb, *That between two Stools the A-s comes to the Ground*. But however, lest the Rabble should only remember the *Mountebank*, and forget the *Knight*, and consider the Doctor abstracted from his Quality, he has all his Retinue behind him, that his Attendance may

Hy was een groot vierkant kaerel, die als hy te voet ging zo prat scharrelde, gelyk als een pikeurs paard in een plechtige ry-staatsi, of als een substituyt Drost gevolgt door een gespan menschevangers van het brutaalste soort.

Een zeker juffer getuygde van hem op het eerste gezigt, dat hy een Atlas van een quakzalver was, die, indien hy een handvol jeugd meer te baat had gehad, kracht genoeg scheen te hebben om een stalmeester te zyn by Semiramis.

distinguish him, as well as his Lac'd Jacket, from the common Herd; his chief Servant is his *Welsh* Coachman, who has the Honour to dress his Master as often as his Horses;

a fellow that looks as if he fed upon nothing but *Red-Herring* and *Leek-Porridge*; and that he serv'd in *London* for the same Wages he did in *Clamorganshire*;

the next is his *Footman* that seems by the dirtiness of his Countenance, to be the Runaway Apprentice of some Country *Vulcan*, who, hating hard Labour in hot Weather, had chosen to serve his *Medicinal* Worship, more for the sake of a Lazy Life, than a large Sallery; his third Vassal is an *AEthiopean* scarecrow for the Country People to gaze at, from whence they imagine his Worship to be a very cunning *Quacksalver*, because they think he has the Devil in such wonderful Subjection, as to make him wait at his Elbow. Pray observe with what singular Vanity and Ostentation he steps cross a Kennel at the Head of his Equipage, in as much Pomp as a Master *Bailiff* attended with a Tyburn-faced Gang of his lousie *Followers* and *Setters*; and, perhaps, the main Business that his Worship is going about, in all this Grandure, is to welcome to Town some *Orvieton* Brother, or to pay a Visit to the traveling Doxy of a famous *Rope-Dancer*: Pray take Notice, as he Walks, with what ridiculous Pride he turns his *Platter Countenance* over his *Porterly Shoulder*, on purpose that his *Ragamuffins* may pull off their Weather-beaten *Felts*, that Passengers may know, by their Obedience, who is the Master of the Vermin: But this is nothing to the State he takes upon him when he Travels; for were you to see him Strut thro' a Country Corporation, if you knew him not, you would not take him to be a

Zyn voornaamste knegt was eertyds koetsier geweest by een Littauwsch ambachtsheer, en gewoon zyn meester zo dikmaals te roskammen, als zyn koetspaarden: en dat bevoordeelde den Baron van Syberg, dewyl hy toen een kamerdienaar kon bespaaren door dien eygen koetsier.

Zyn vierde vassaal was een oude schalk, die zo vet scheen als of hy dagelyks op ongewykte stokvisch wiert vergast; [...]

Den tweede lyfknegt was een: jonge schalk, die door de baldaadigheyt van zyn gedrag al het air had van leerjongen by een zuykerbakker te zyn geweest, die uyt haat van zwaaren arbeyd te zullen doen in heet weer, zich had in dienst begeeven by dien schelmschen Baron, meer ter liefde van een luy leven, als op hoop van een groote huur.

als een substituyt Drost gevolgt door een gespan menschevangers van het brutaalste soort.

Maar het was de aandacht eens twyfelaars waardig, om zyn Wel Edht. van het hoofd tot aan de voeten toe te bezien, als hy, door die hofstoet gevolgt, uytging om een heromzwerende Haagsche kamerduyf; of een koopman in Orvietaan te gaan bezoeken. Dan draaide hy zyn sarazynskop over 'zyn vierkante schouders, ten eynde dat zyn havelooze volgdienaars hunne verweerde vilten zouden afligten, op dat de voorbygangers mogten zien uyt die gehoorzaamheyt, wie dat den meester was van dat ongediert. Doch dat alles was niets, in vergelyking van als hy verreysde uyt 's Gravenhage naar Amsterdam, of uyt Amsterdam na Zoetermeer [...]

less Person than the *Lord Lieutenant* of the County; for his Dress is so vain Glorious, his Department so Stately, and his Attendance so Numerous, that you would think, instead of his Living by a little Powder of *Tutty*, and the management of the *Couching-Needle*, that he was at least a Man of Ten Thousand a Year, that scorn'd to get Money by any means inferior to the flattery of a Prince, or Cheating the Publick. He never Travels without his Side board or Plate, which consists of such variety, that it is Copious enough, at least, to furnish a *Lottery*, or a *Raffling-Shop*, and is so very Circumspect in the measure of his *Wine*, that he has a Silver Seal'd Quart, which his *Negro* carries after him, wheresoever he goes, lest the *Vintner*, or the *Inn-keeper*, should wrong him in the Quantity; yet he is Extravagantly Generous wherever he comes, and Purchases Respect at so profuse a rate, that he has as good a Title to the Bows of his Host, as any Travelling Nobleman, for he pays for them as plentifully: Nor is it a wonder to me that so famed an *Oculist* should be able, by his Business, to support his Honour with such agreeable Grandure, since his wonderful promotion has Taught us to believe, it is easie to impose upon the Weak-sighted; or, sure it would be difficult to Live so profusely by peeping into *Sore-Eyes*, were not his Patient's Understanding, as well as their Eye-sight, equally subject to the same dimness. Some Sanguinary Heroes, who have won their Honour by the Sword, may, perhaps, grumble that an *Emperick* should be Proudly distinguish'd by the same Venerable Badge. But thus much the Doctor may plead in his behalf, That he has no ways lessen'd the dignity of Knighthood, since he has gain'd his Honour by the Skillful use of as sharp an Instrument of the same Mettle; for

Echter vind ik my in myn gewisse verpligt om alhier te getuygen, ten voordeele van dien linkschen Alchemist, dat hy zich zeer buytenspooriglyk genereus aanstelde in ieder dorpskasteleny, om niet te zeggen in ieder boerekroeg, waar door hy zo gerechtig was als eenig reyzent edelman, en tot de beleefde afneeming van den hoed, en de buyging des hoofs van een waard, dewyl het een en het ander rykelyk by zyn Wel Edht. wiert betaalt.

there is no truer *Steel* in the *Killing-Sword* than in the *Couching-Needle*; and if they are willing to determine the Merits of the Cause by the points of their Weapons, in all probability the Doctor's would prove the sharpest; besides, our great Grannum *Eve*, by sewing her Apron, most plainly proves she was a *Sempstress*, long before *Cain* slew *Abel*, so that in all likelihood the *Needle* is of greater Antiquity than the *Sword*, and consequently in *Heraldry* must be more Honourable; so that the *Soldier* has no more reason to envy the *Quack*, than a *Lawyer* has to grumble when he sees the Honour of Knighthood confer'd upon a *Plot-Evidence*, for his good and faithful Service. No sooner does our Knight of the Dim-Peepers make his Publick Entry, in his Coach and four Horses, into a Country Town, with his Servants Mounted upon *Smithfield* Hackneys, Arm'd with *Musquatoon* and *Blunderbus*, to Defend his Person and his Plate from the dangerous Insults of the *Rapparees*, but the common People, with their Loud Huzza's, wellcome him to his Inn, as an Ambassador of Health to all the Sick and Wounded; and astonish'd at his fine Laced Coat, and the number of his Attendance, make their Eyes even Sore by gazing at his Equipage; insomuch that, *Lover* like, they are forc'd to apply to the very Object for a Cure who has occasion'd their Distemper; and no sooner has he chosen the best Room for the Entertainment of his Worship, and that Publick Intelligence is scatter'd of his Arrival, but the *Blind* and the *Lame*, from all the Corners of the Town, some Groaping, and some Hopping, flock in Shoals to his Inn, like so many *London* Mumpers to an *Old Street* Feast, each Soliciting the Doctor's Attendance for an Early admittance; some with only Prayers in their Mouths; and others with Money in their Hands, according to their Circumstances. But his Worship is always so tired with his Journey,

Zo dra als dien Hooggebooren quakzalver zyn publieke intree deet in eenig dorp, gezeten in een met vier paarden bespannen koets, verzelt door zyn verplukte narrenstoet , waar van 'er altoos eenige waaren uytgerust met pistoolen of musketons, om zyn persoon, zilver servies, en drinkbaar goud, te beschermen tegens de beleedigingen van struykroovers, en tegens de messen van het bezoopen geboert, of de dorpelingen ontvingen zyn Wel Edht, met een vreugdegeschreeuw, en geleyden hem tot in zyn kasteleny.

Na dat hy had post gevat, en zyn adelyke leden had uytgerust, kwaamen de kreupelen en de lammen, de flerecynisten en de krankzinnigen, de met de nachtmeer behexte weduwen en de krytwitte jonge meysjes, benevens meer andere lyders afzakken na zyn Wel Edhts. logement, beyde om van hunne quaalen en penningen te worden ontheft. Die kranken wier tongen waaren beslaagen met gebeden, wierden uytgesteld, of, geheelyk als ongeneeslyken den toegang tot dien Eskulaap ontzegt:

the first Night, that none are introduc'd but those who approach him with Gilded Fingers, and the rest are assign'd over to a more Leisure Opportunity: Now the Bells begin to Ring, by the management of his Servants; and after a short Visit paid to the *Mayor*, some of the *Aldermen* are Invited to Sup with him, but, to be sure, no *Appothecary* amongst 'em, lest our Travelling *Esculapius* should be found as Ignorant of what he pretended to, as an *American* physician; as his Money flows in Easily, so he spends it Generously; pays Liberally; sends the *Ringers* a Crown; orders a Barrel of Drink for the *Poor*, and by such means gains a popular Esteem without Merit; as Cunning Women get good Husbands by their subtile Management without Fortunes. When his Worship has Sup'd, and his Servants are at Leisure, their Business is to sit in the Publick Kitchen, and Talk of nothing but the wond'rous Cures of their Master, whose Name must be Sir'd up at every word, to beget the Reverence in the Hearers: Also to Insinuate, by the by, how his Fees are advanc'd upon his Honour of Knighthood; and what an Affront it would be to sully his clean Gloves with Silver, lest they made an Apology for want of *Gold*, or the Necessity of their Circumstances: For, by the way, you must consider that his Worship thinks it a Degradation to his Honour, to keep a Stage as formerly, therefore, like a *Country Attorney*, he only now follows *Chamber Practice*, takes up the best Room in the *Inn*, and there Bubbles his *Patients*, as the other does his *Clients*, Strutting in as much State at a Window next the Street, upon a Market-Day, as a *High-Sheriff* of a County in the time of the *Sizes*, or a *Mayor* of a Corporation upon the Day of his *Triumphs*. His Table, at Dinner, is every Day Publick for any of the Heads of the Town that are pleas'd to honour him

maar de lyders wier handen blonken door het gemunt drinkbaar goud, ontfong den Baron in genade, en hun geneezing wiert zo onfeylbaar gestelt, als de besluyten des Paus. Vervolgens wierden de inwooners van rang, als ook den geduchten Schout, den meegaanden Sekretaris, en den stichtelyken Paftoor ten eeten genoodigt by den Baron van Syberg, Heer van Ermelinghoven en Bonckersbek; maar doorgaans wiert den gepunten, barbier, benevens den bekruyden apotheeker, op het vergeetboek geplaatst, uyt vreeze dat de onkunde van zyn, Wel Edht. mogt werden ontdekt, en ten toon gestelt.

Als zyn Wel Edht. had geavondmaalt, viel het de knechts to beurt om hun rol te spelen tot voordeel van den Baron. Dan verkoos dat gespuys de keuken of den gemeenen haard tot hun toneel, welke plaats gemeenlyk by die gelegendheyt was bezet met den dorpskoster, schoenmaaker, baardscheerder, dorpsbode, hapschaars, en bestgegoede kinkels. Dan veyzelde dat geliveryt vee hun meester op tot boven de wolken. Den Baron van Syberg wiert opgebazuynnt als den afgezant en gevolmagtigden ambassadeur van de gezondheid, en als een onfeylbaar geneesheer voor allerhande ongeneeslyke ziekten en quaalen. Op ieder woord wierden de adelyke tytels van heer Baron van Syberg, Vryheer van Ermelinghoven en Bonckersbek uytgegalmt, om de harten der toehoorders te kneeden tot eerbied, en derzelve beurzen te ontstrikken tot dankbaarheyt.

with their Company; and there is as much a Fuss and Bussle in the *Inn* where he Quarters, as if he was a Foreign Ambassador. And tho' his Worship, at Night, takes up with so sparing a Supper as a Groats worth of *Eggs*, yet all his Scoundrel *Mermidons* must do their Duty at the Table, in as much State as if he was the Proud-head of a *Scotch-Clan*, Travelling in Pomp to *Edenborough-Fair*, with all his Vassals to attend him.

In this Expensive Grandure he continues in a Town as long as he finds the *Fools Pence* flow in fast enough to defray the Charge, with such a Profit to himself as he thinks agreeable to his Quality; and when that fails he thinks it high time to remove further a Field in quest of new Customers. Thus he takes his Progress from Place to Place, guarded by an Arm'd Retinue of *St. Bartholomew's* Champions, Blinding *Some*, and Curing *Others*, filling his own *Bags* by emptying the *Purses* of *Rural Novices*, and so returns to *London*, where, in an Ostentatious Manner, he Lavishes his *Gleannings* to support his *Honour* and *Reputation* amongst *Quacks*, *Foolls*, and *Rope-Dancers*. But, good your Worship, stop a little, (if not upon the gainful Business of *Life* and *Death*) that your ill looking Equipage stand bare the while to let the gazing Multitude see whose Fools they are. Pray think it not inconsistent with a Man of your Worships Honour and Character to loiter away a few Minutes in lending me your Attention, since I have waded, with Pleasure, up to the Ankles in Kennel Dirt, near *Clare-Market*, when a School-Boy, to delight my Ears with the witty Dialogues between your Learned Worship

Maar meermaals heb ik hartiglyk gelagchen, als dien Syberg niet boven een gekookt half dozyn eyers en een handvol salaa had geordonneert voor zyn avondmaal, dewyl echter zyn deugeniets gespuys van knechts hun dienst moesten waarneemen aan die kortegaards tafel, met zo veel staatelykheyt, als of den Lord Major van Londen by zyne bediendens wiert opgewacht, op het feest van zyn Wel Edhts. huldiging in de * vergulde saal der Britsche Vroedschap en Opperschouten.

* *Guild Hall*.

Op die wyze, en in die grootsheyt, heeft den zogenaamde Johan Hendrik, Baron van Syberg, zich onthouden in onze Nederlanden, tot zo lange als de kontanten snel genoeg kwamen invloeien, en de ligtgeloovige gulde esels hunne geldkisten geliefden te openen, tot onderhoud van zyn prodigaliteyt.

and a Notable Merry Fellow in a *Blue-Jacket*; therefore I hope, since meer Accident has brought you to be one of my Auditory, that you will Patiently spare me a quarter of an hour, by way of Requitall; for tho' you are a Man of more Honour than I can pretend to, yet he that undertakes to give a Natural Description of all the Beasts in the Field, ought not to spare either *Fox*, *Wolf*, or *Ass*, because the *Lyon* has blow'd upon 'em. Were your Profession render'd as *Dishonest*, thro' your *Ignorance*, as heretofore it has been accounted *Scandalous*, yet I cannot in Respect to your distinguishing Title, advise you to renounce it, lest your Worship should be soon forc'd to send your *Horses* to *Smithfield*, and your *Servants* to *Virginia*, and be suddenly be reduc'd to Walk on Foot, like abundance of your *Betters*, more worthy of a Coach; but wanting your Modest assurance are content to Trot thro' the Dirt without a lolling Conveniency: Besides, were your Worship to renounce that *Emperical Trade*, by which your Grandure is supported, it must certainly prove a most Stabbing Vexation to a Man of your Quality to be compel'd, by Necessity, to re-assume your *Primitive Occupation* of *Disbearding* of Higlars, and *Scraping* to your Customers, because we have no Precedent in all our Books of *Heraldry*, that ever a *Knight Batchelour* condescended so low, as to get his Living by *Shaving* and *Fiddling*: Therefore, since these must be the Consequences of your totally abandoning your Skillful Pretentions to that Noble Art, in which you have hitherto been no more, as most People think, than a *Sham-Student*, all the honest Counsel I shall, at this time, give you, is, That you would use more Conscience in your Dealings, and give your Ignorant *Patients* your *Lame Assistance* at more reasonable Rates, and not, like a *Jugling Gipsie*, pick the Pockets of the Credulous, when you know you want the Judgment to do 'em equivalent Service: For, in short, I

think your *Honour* and your *Skill* are both fully comprehended in the following Character, which is, That you are a *Knight* without a *Scutcheon*, and a *Physician* without *Learning*.

*Since Dub'd Sir Quack to ease his Pride,
Must in his Worship's Chariot ride,
Well may the Sons of Art reproach,
Not only Honour, but a Coach.*