

TAP. At his own peril. Do not put yourself  
In too much heat, there being no water  
near  
To quench your thirst; and sure, for  
other liquor, 20  
As mighty ale or beer, they are things, I  
take it,  
You must no more remember—not in a  
dream, sir.

WELL. Why, thou unthankful villain,  
dar'st thou talk thus?

Is not thy house, and all thou hast, my  
gift?

TAP. I find it not in chalk; and Timothy  
Tapwell  
Does keep no other register.

WELL. Am not I he  
Whose riots fed and clothed thee? Wert  
thou not  
Born on my father's land, and proud to  
be  
A drudge in his house?

TAP. What I was, sir, it skills ' not;  
What you are, is apparent. Now, for a  
farewell, 30  
Since you talk of father, in my hope it  
will torment you,  
I'll briefly tell your story. Your dead  
father,

My quondam master, was a man of wor-  
ship,  
Old Sir John Wellborn, justice of peace  
and quorum,<sup>2</sup>

And stood fair to be *custos rotularum*; <sup>2</sup>  
Bare the whole sway of the shire, kept a  
great house,

Relieved the poor, and so forth; but, he  
dying,

And the twelve hundred a year coming  
to you,

Late Master Francis, but now forlorn  
Wellborn—

WELL. Slave, stop, or I shall lose my-  
self!

FROTH. Very hardly; 40  
You cannot out of your way.

TAP. But to my story.  
You were then a lord of acres, the prime  
gallant,  
And I your underbutler. Note the change  
now.

<sup>1</sup> Matters.

<sup>2</sup> One of the most eminent justices.

<sup>3</sup> Custodian of the records.

You had a merry time of 't—hawks and  
hounds,  
With choice of running horses; mistresses  
Of all sorts and all sizes, yet so hot  
As their embraces made your lordships <sup>4</sup>  
melt,

Which your uncle, Sir Giles Overreach,  
observing,

Resolving not to lose a drop of 'em  
On foolish mortgages, statutes, and  
bonds, 50

For a while supplied your looseness, and  
then left you.

WELL. Some curate hath penned this in-  
vective, mongrel,  
And you have studied it.

TAP. I have not done yet.  
Your land gone, and your credit not  
worth a token,<sup>5</sup>

You grew the common borrower; no man  
scaped

Your paper pellets,<sup>6</sup> from the gentle-  
man

To the beggars on highways, that sold  
you switches

In your gallantry.

WELL. I shall switch your brains out!  
TAP. Where poor Tim Tapwell, with a  
little stock,

Some forty pounds or so, bought a small  
cottage, 60

Humbled myself to marriage with my  
Froth here,

Gave entertainment—

WELL. Yes, to whores and canters,<sup>7</sup>  
Clubbers by night.

TAP. True, but they brought in profit,  
And had a gift to pay for what they  
called for,

And stuck <sup>8</sup> not like your mastership.  
The poor income

I gleaned from them hath made me in my  
parish

Thought worthy to be scavenger, and in  
time

May rise to be overseer of the poor,  
Which if I do, on your petition, Wellborn,

I may allow you thirteence a quarter,  
And you shall thank my worship.

<sup>4</sup> Estates.

<sup>5</sup> A counter used as a substitute for money.

<sup>6</sup> I. e., L.O.U.'s.

<sup>7</sup> Users of thieves' cant.

<sup>8</sup> I. e., delayed payment.