

ADELAIDE UNIVERSITY  
THEATRE GUILD

THE  
TRAGEDY  
OF  
TRAGEDIES;  
OR THE  
LIFE and DEATH  
OF  
TOM THUMB *the Great.*

(HENRY FIELDING)

AT THE HUT  
Wednesday, July 21  
Thursday, July 22  
1943

# THE TRAGEDY of TRAGEDIES

Fielding was 23 years of age when he wrote the first version of his "Tom Thumb." It was acted as an after-piece at the Little Theatre at the Haymarket, and met with such success that he enlarged it into "The Tragedy of Tragedies." It is an attack on the bombast and absurdities of the tragedy popular in his day and, especially in the annotations, a satirical hit at pedantic learning. Such an extravaganza of burlesque and mock-heroics is, in its author's own words, "a wholesome physic for the mind."

The period and manner of the presentation are intended, like its conception, to be in the nature of parody.

## H. Scriblerus Secundus

### HIS P R E F A C E

*This town hath seldom been more divided in its Opinion than concerning the Merit of the following Scenes. Whilst some publicly affirm, That no Author could produce so fine a Piece but Mr. Pope, others have with as much Vehemence insisted, That no-one could write anything as bad but Mr. Fielding.*

*Now, if I can set my Country right in an affair of such Importance, I shall lightly esteem any Labour which it may cost. And this I the rather undertake knowing my self more capable of doing Justice to our Author than any other Man, as I have given my self more Pains to arrive at a thorough Understanding of this little Piece, having for ten Years together read nothing else; in which time, I think I may modestly presume, with the help of my English Dictionary, to comprehend all the Meanings of every Word in it.*

*I shall wave what hath caused such Feuds in the Learned World. Whether this piece was written by Shakespear, tho' certainly That, were it true, must add a considerable Share to its merit, especially with such who are so generous as to buy and to commend what they never read, from an implicit faith in the author only. A Faith! in which our Age abounds as much as it can be called deficient in any other.*

*As for the Sentiments and the Diction. What can be so proper for Tragedy as a Set of big sounding Words so contrived together as to convey no Meaning? Our Author excelleth in This. He is rarely within sight through the whole Play, either rising higher than the Eye of your Understanding can soar, or sinking lower than it careth to stoop. I could give numerous instances of Authors who have imitated him in this style, but think it fitter to leave it to the audience to determine their names. However, since those Writers who have borrowed the Sublimer Passages from our Author are difficultly read at all—it being easy to transcribe a Thought, but not the Want of one. In order that Readers should meet with due Satisfaction on this point, I have a young Commentator from the University, who is reading over all the modern Tragedies, at Five Shillings a Dozen, and collecting all that they have stole from our Author, which shall shortly be printed as an Appendix to this Work.*

H. S. S.

BEFORE THE PLAY, de FALLA'S "DANSE ESPAGNOLE" WILL BE  
DANCED BY WALTER DASBOROUGH.

# DRAMATIS PERSONAE

## M E N

King <b>Arthur</b> , a passionate sort of King, Husband to <b>Queen Dollalolla</b> , of whom he stands a little in Fear; Father to <b>Huncamunca</b> , whom he is very fond of; and in Love with <b>Glumdalca</b> .	}	SYDNEY DOWNIE
<b>Tom Thumb the Great</b> , a little Hero with a great Soul, something violent in his Temper, which is a little abated by his Love for <b>Huncamunca</b> .	}	OWEN EDEN
<b>Ghost of Gaffar Thumb</b> , a whimsical sort of Ghost.	}	BRUCE WILLIAMS
Lord <b>Grizzle</b> , extremely zealous for the Liberty of the Subject, very choleric in his Temper, and in Love with <b>Huncamunca</b> .	}	DAVID ROBIN
<b>Merlin</b> , a Conjuror, and in some sort Father to <b>Tom Thumb</b> .	}	ROY LEANEY
<b>Noodle</b> , } Courtiers in Place, and conse- quently of that Party that is } <b>Doodle</b> , } uppermost.	}	JEFFREY JOHNSON
<b>Foodle</b> , a Courtier that is out of Place, and consequently of that Party that is undermost.	}	STAUNTON McNAMARA
<b>Bailiff</b> , and } <b>Follower</b> , } Of the Party of the Plaintiff.	}	DAVID BARNES DAVID KERR
<b>Parson</b> , of the Side of the Church.	}	DAVID KERR
<b>Dancer</b> - - - - -	}	WALTER DASBOROUGH
<b>Musician</b> - - - - -	}	FRANK GARGARO

## W O M E N

Queen <b>Dollalolla</b> , Wife to King <b>Arthur</b> , and Mother to <b>Huncamunca</b> , a Woman entirely faultless, saving that she is a little given to Drink; a little too much a <b>Virago</b> towards her Husband, and in Love with <b>Tom Thumb</b> .	}	MARGARET HUBBARD
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The Princess **Huncamunca**, Daughter to their Majesties King **Arthur** and Queen **Dollalolla**, of a very sweet, gentle, and amorous Disposition, equally in Love with Lord **Grizzle** and **Tom Thumb**, and desirous to be married to them both. } **CECIL TEESDALE-SMITH**

**Glumdalca**, of the Giants, a Captive } Queen, belov'd by the King, but in Love with **Tom Thumb**. } **MARGARET CAUST**

**Cleora**, } Maids of Honour, } **JUDITH STOKES**  
**Mustacha**, } in Love with } **Doodle**. } **JOAN MATTHEWS**

Drums, Trumpets, Thunder and Lightning.

**SCENE** the Court of King **Arthur** and a Plain thereabouts.

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### S E Q U E N C E

**ACT I**—Scenes I to VI - - - - - The Throne Room

(There have not been wanting some who have represented these scenes in a ludicrous light, and, I believe, rather maliciously than ignorantly, reported them to have been intended a burlesque on the loftiest parts of Tragedy, and designed to banish what we generally call Fine Things from the Stage.—H.S.S.)

**ACT II**—Scenes I and II - - - - - A Street

(Human happiness is exceedingly transient, and Death is the Certain End of all Men!—H.S.S.)

**ACT II**—Scenes III to VIII - - - - - Princess Huncamunca's Apartment

(It is not difficult to perceive how these scenes have been copied by our Writers of Tragedy.—H.S.S.)

**ACT II**—Scenes IX to X - - - - - Another Room

(Mr. F. imagines this Parson to have been a Welshman from his simile.—H.S.S.)

**ACT III**—Scenes I to VI - - - - - The Battlements

(Of all the particulars in which the Modern Stage falls short of the Ancient, there is none to be so much lamented as the great scarcity of Ghosts in the latter.—H.S.S.)

**ACT III**—Scenes VII to IX - - - - - A Plain

(Note the Character of Merlin, which is wonderful throughout. Who, but our author, would have past by such an opportunity of being a Political Prophet?—H.S.S.)

**ACT III**—Scene X - - - - - The Throne Room

(I know of no tragedy which comes near to this charming and bloody catastrophe.—H.S.S.)

Performances by the University Students Group

Production - - - - - **ROMA WILLIAMS**

Scenery and Backdrop - - - - - **ALLAN SIERP**

Lighting - - - - - **THOMAS KEEN**

Electrician - - - - - **HERBERT KOLLOSCHÉ**

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### FORTHCOMING GUILD EVENING:

Early August—Catherine Shepherd's Australian Play, "Daybreak."