

FOUR GREAT COMEDIES

of the restoration and 18th century



the country wife
william wycherley

the way of the world
william congreve

she stoops to conquer
oliver goldsmith

the school for scandal
richard brinsley sheridan



with an introduction by
brooks atkinson



a b a n t a m c l a s s i c



FOUR GREAT WRITERS OF COMEDY

The plays in this volume reflect the drive and vitality of their creators, whose careers swerved from adventure to misadventure, from gaiety to misery, often with a speed and abandon that might seem reckless to more provident souls.

But these were men of their times, the product of rebellion against a confining age. Implicit in the works of Wycherley and Congreve is a good hard blow at the stultifying Puritanism of the Cromwell regime; in those of Goldsmith and Sheridan a loud and defiant shout at the sentimentality and humorlessness of the House of Hanover.

Artists and critics, these four men were lovers of life and living, wells of energy, mirth and wit. Their riant spirits will evermore refresh a too sober world.

Canta

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