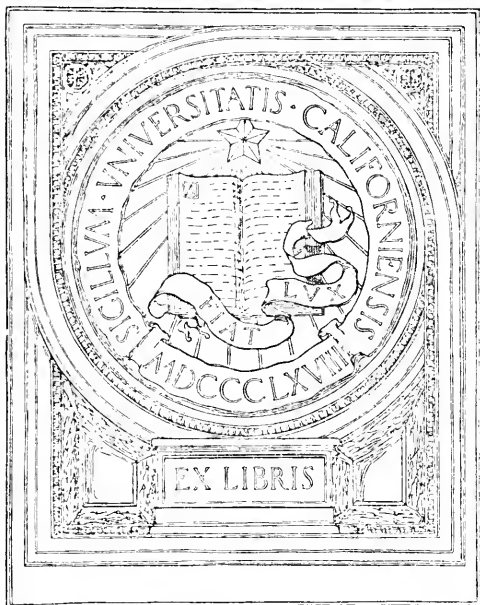


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From the Author

THE
A R T I F I C E;

A

C O M I C O P E R A.

I N

T W O A C T S.

AS IT IS PERFORMED AT

THE THEATRE ROYAL DRURY LANE,

WRITTEN BY
WILLIAM AUGUSTUS MILES.

L O N D O N:
Printed for T. CADELL in the STRAND,

M.DCC.LXXX.

(PRICE ONE SHILLING)

1911

1911

ANGLO-AMERICAN BANKING CORPORATION
NEW YORK

PR
5021
M42a

ADVERTISEMENT.

IT has long been remarked, that our Theatres are not in possession of one natural marine character, and that while our dramatic writers have been universally reproached with having exhibited sea officers on the Stage in caricature, no efforts have been made to rescue a very valuable and respectable class of men from public ridicule. Among the many offensive liberties which have been taken with the Navy, there are none which excite our indignation more than the whole group of characters in *The Fair Quaker of Deal*. Our Navy, in its rudest state of barbarism, never possessed an officer so lost to himself and his station, as Commodore Flip; neither have the refinements of modern times produced a character in the other extreme, answerable to that of Beau Mizen. This Comedy, it is said, has been altered by a captain in the navy, who is the less pardonable for suffering so gross an error, as well as so direct an insult to continue, when he had an opportunity to do justice to his brother officers, and to the service in which he holds so considerable a rank. The other gentleman, who has favoured us with a marine character *, has, indeed, some excuse, since he is not only apt to mistake the characters of individuals, but of nations.

After having said thus much of others, it will, perhaps, be expected that I should say something of myself; or, at least, that I have corrected the errors of my predecessors, and done justice to the corps of officers whose interest I have so warmly

* Capt. Ironsides, in the Brothers.

espoused.

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HARDING

espoused. But in a Piece of Two Acts, and especially where the Musician has almost as much to say as the Poet, it is impossible either to finish characters, or to draw them at full length—Sketches and portraits only can be attempted; and these I have endeavoured to draw as like the originals as possible.

I trust that the sea characters, in the following little Opera, will be found similar to those that are met with in real life; and that no lieutenant will hesitate, or blush to acknowledge Charles as a brother officer.—It does not follow that a knowledge of marine affairs and good breeding are incompatible. A vulgarity of manners will always prevail in the lower class of seamen; yet not more so among them, than among the other inferior orders of men; but even if it did, this truth is certain, that their bravery, their honesty, and their contempt of danger upon all occasions where the honor of the British flag is concerned, amply compensates for all their faults, and renders them the pride, as well as the guardians of their country.

RICHARD B. SHERIDAN, ESQ.

DEAR SIR,

THE dedications of our most celebrated writers have always appeared to me as so many indirect claims on the bounty of those to whom they have been addressed; and this remark arises from the profusion of virtues and good qualities with which they have been complimented; as if abilities and integrity were conferred like letters patent, by royal authority, and passed, in hereditary succession, from father to son. If it should, therefore, be inquired why I have not imitated former bards, and offered this Opera at the shrine of power or of riches? I answer, it is because I respect Genius before rank or affluence, and hold no patronage equal to your friendship. Accept then, my Dear Sir, of the following trifle, not only as a sincere testimony of the high
estima-

DEDICATION. vi

estimation in which I have ever held your literary talents ; but as a proof of the real regard with which I remain

Your most faithful,

and most obliged humble servant,

WILLIAM AUGUSTUS MILES.

London,
April 14, 1780.

DRA-

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

M E N.

SIR BENJ. BRIEF,	BY	Mr. Parsons.
BEVIL,	BY	Mr. Vernon.
CHARLES,	BY	Mr. Lamash.
VELLUM,	BY	Mr. Burton.
BOWLING,	BY	Mr. Bannister.
RALPH,	BY	Mr. Davis.
CROJACK,	BY	Mr. Wrighten.

Sailors, Servants and Attendants.

SCENE LONDON.

W O M E N.

MRS. BOBBIN,	} BY {	Mrs. Hopkins.
ELIZA,		Miss Wright.
MARGARITTA.		Mrs. Wrighten.



T H E
A R T I F I C E.

A C T I.

Scene an Apartment in Sir Benj. Brief's House.

Enter Sir B. BRIEF, calling Vellum.

VELLUM, why Vellum I fay ! where the devil
is this fellow got to ?

Enter V E L L U M.

V E L L U M.

Sir ?

S I R B E N J.

Sir ! Zounds I'm hoarse with calling you.—You
should always plead to a declaration, or judgment
will go against you by default.

V E L L U M.

Yes, Sir.

B

SIR

SIR BENJ.

Have you filed an information in the kitchen for dinner?

VELLUM.

Yes, Sir.

SIR BENJ.

And the cook will make the rule absolute?

VELLUM.

Nisi we shew cause to the contrary.

SIR BENJ.

Have you been at the stables?

VELLUM.

No, Sir.

SIR BENJ.

them Zounds, you should have gone ex officio.—Run this instant, and order Capias to take Replevin into Nisi Prius Field; let Fugitive remain in Banco Regis, and as to Justice and Equity, why turn out on the common.

VELLUM.

Yes, Sir.

SIR BENJ.

And do you hear, Vellum.

VELLUM?

V E L L U M. (*returning*)

Sir :

S I R B E N J.

Serve the gardener with notice to put on his best livery, and wait at table.

V E L L U M.

Yes, Sir.

[*Exit Vellum.*]

Enter R A L P H.

Ah, honest Ralph — I'm glad to see you. Where's your mistress and the young captain ?

R A L P H.

They'll be here anon, Sir Benjamin.

S I R B E N J.

What I suppose they have sent you on before to put in an appearance.

R A L P H.

They'll soon appear, Sir Benjamin; but the young captain has so laden the bough horses with hares, partridges, and pheasants, with Dutch turbot, and outlandish hams.

S I R B E N J.

Why what the deuce does the young dog think that I have no larder of my own; that my manors
in

4 THE ARTIFICE.

in the country afford no game, and that we can get nothing to eat in London?

RALPH.

Cant't say as to that, Sir Benjamin, but I told him you kept a good table.

SIR BENJ.

As any in the neighbourhood, though not so sumptuous?

RALPH.

And better, Sir Benjamin.

SIR BENJ.

No— not better, honest Ralph.

RALPH.

Yes, better, Sir Benjamin.

SIR BENJ.

No, no Ralph, it's a great deal to equal our neighbours now-a-days: Besides, you forget that I have a rich contractor on one side, and Sir Rapin Roupee, a Nabob, on the other, who consume as much beef in one day, as would make soup for the whole French nation a twelvemonth.—However, if all these good things are coming, the cook must be served with a Noli Prosequi to stay proceedings. Vellum! (*rings*) Vellum!

Enter VELLUM.

Is the cook gone to market?

No,

VELLUM.

No, Sir.

SIR BENJ.

Then lodge a detainer against her directly, and let the fat turkey from Norfolk be respited till farther notice.

VELLUM.

Yes, Sir.

SIR BENJ.

And take honest Ralph with you, and let him eat and drink of the best, though I am very angry with him for letting his master load the baugh horses, as he calls them.

RALPH.

A I R.

Lord, Sir, how you talk,
Should I dare but to baulk,
His intention or whimsical pleasure,
He'd cudgel my back,
Till he made my bones crack,
Without either mercy or measure.

To make him my foe,
And receive but one blow,
Would finish at once my career,
I dread his huge hand,
Obey each command,
And worship the devil through fear.

[Exeunt Ralph and Vellum.]

SIR

SIR BENJ. (*solus.*)

So, now my nephew will soon be here, and as I have dismissed his rival, there can be no objections why judgment should not be passed. But who comes here? (*looking*) Egad it's Eliza, and pleading to herself as I live. — Well, well, I will say that for her: she is one of the best tempered creatures in the world, never appeals from my jurisdiction,—no: but always submits. — O how those fathers who have got obstinate daughters would envy my happiness. — (*looking*) What the deuce can she be saying to herself—Egad I'll listen,
(*retires*)

Enter ELIZA.

A I R.

Love! O hear my ardent pray'r,
Let a virgin claim your care:
Long disown'd, but now confess'd,
Pleading pow'r by all address'd!
Pious airs shall grace thy name,
Holy as a hermit's flame.
To thy votary then incline:
See! I own thee all divine.

SIR BENJ. (*aside.*)

This is some of the nonsense with which the girls of this age cram their heads from novels and romances.

ELIZA.

O Bevil, Bevil, how unkind after so long an absence!

SIR

SIR BENJ. (*aside*)

What! my nephew's rival?

ELIZA.

Not to apprize me of your arrival.

SIR BENJ.

I'm thunderstruck! — I can't believe my ears!
It can't be— (*aside*)

ELIZA.

Not to contrive one message to me, though my
father has retracted his promise.—

Enter MARGARITTA.

Well, Margaritta: what news? tell me, have you
found him?

MARGARITTA.

No tidings of him no where, Ma'am, he's not
at his uncle's.

A I R.

I've enquir'd, dear Madam, to find out your spark,
But return'd, as you see, full as much in the dark,
I've search'd the town over,
But cannot discover,

He's gone,

We're undone,

And you've lost a lover:

My heart I am sure, now goes pity pat,

Poor Man!

What plan

Shall we take to get at him,

Suppose we pursue him,

And so play old Square Toes a trick tit for tat.

SIR

8 THE ARTIFICE.

SIR BENJ. *(aside)*

There's a jezebel!

MARGARITTA.

The moment he received Sir Benjamin's note, he left his lodgings, and they don't know where he is gone to. For my part, I've a vast notion that he's gone home to Marlow, and if I might advise.

ELIZA.

What would you do?

MARGARITTA.

Why I'd follow him, Ma'am, I'm sure he would not take it amiss.

SIR BENJ. *(aside)*

There's a jade! I believe in my conscience, that Eve gave Satan a retaining fee to be council to her female posterity for ever.

ELIZA.

To follow him at an uncertainty would be the height of imprudence.

MARGARITTA:

Not if you love him, Ma'am.

SIR BENJ. *(discovering himself)*

I can hold no longer.—You lie you, huffey.—It would be imprudent. It would be worse: it would be infamous in her, seduction in him, and hard

THE ARTIFICE, 9

hard labour in Bridewell for you. — As to you, Madam, (*to Eliza*) I'll confine you to your chamber without bail or mainprize; and as to you I'll banish you immediately (*to Margaritta*).

ELIZA.

I beseech you, Sir, to tell me.

SIR BENJ.

File your bill, and then I'll answer you. So away, away, both of you—away in I say.

MARGARITTA:

Away, away, both of us!—Lord, Sir, we are not in a hurry if you are.

SIR BENJ.

No rejoindres I say, but away in. (*pushes them off*) [Exeunt.

SCENE, a Rendezvous, Colours flying, Drums and Fifes, and Sailors standing at the Door.

BOWLING.

Welcome, welcome, brother failors,
Spite of all fresh water railers,
We who brave the stormy main,
Lead lives of pleasure free from pain;
Let the welcome then go round,
May our Ship ne'er run on ground,
May our grog pot ne'er ebb dry,
Nor British tars from Frenchmen fly,

Full Chorus.

Let the welcome, &c.

C

VOLUNTEER

VOLUNTEER.

How merrily a failor's life paffes?

BOWLING.

Right, mess-mate! when he's on shore with plenty of money in both pockets. — Some more grog, ho, from within.

(Enter a Sailor from the house with a bucket full of grog and a tin-pot.)

BOWLING.

But who comes here? — Clear the gangway: another volunteer mayhap.

Enter BEVIL.

BEVIL.

Mercy on me, what a distance have I come, and to no purpose. — Faugh! What a contaminated atmosphere!

BOWLING.

Fear! What is that he fays about fear?

BEVIL.

I've not feen a civiliz'd creature these two hours; and what with the stench of pitch, tar, train-oil, salt-fish, and tobacco, I am almost suf-focated. — But what have we here? — Another rendezvous! Then there are hopes yet. Hearkee, friend — Is this a rendezvous?

BOWLING.

A rendezvous! Aye, and such an one as you won't meet again in a hurry, let me tell you. So
if

if you'll enter, I'll insure you a good berth in a well-mann'd ship, civil treatment from Mother Double-score, and plenty of grog all weathers— So what say you? — (*Gives him a slap on his shoulder*) Take my advice, and enter.

SAILOR.

Aye, take his advice, and enter, ship-mate. You may go farther, and fare worse.

(*Seamen get about him, and are clamorous for him to enter.*)

BEVIL.

Egad, I must humor these fellows! — Why, gentlemen, I have no great objections to enter, provided—

BOWLING.

Provided! O, never fear that. I'll take care you shall be provided with every thing.

BEVIL.

I say, gentlemen, that I'll enter, provided I like your ship.

BOWLING.

Like our ship!—Lord love you, who can dislike a copper-bottom frigate the first of a Spanish war? Dollars and doobloons at the mast, my boys—

BEVIL.

You seem to be a set of jolly, honest-hearted fellows, and if you'll conduct me to your officer I'll tell him more of my mind.

C 2

BOWLING.

BOWLING.

Say you so—Then give us your hand. Huzza, for the honor of Captain Luttrell, and another flap at Omoa. — Yoa, ho, within there! Hand out some more grog for the volunteer. Come, here's the young Prince and the British fleet—

(Drinks, and gives the pot to Bevil, who tastes, and spits the grog out.)

Why, you make as many faces at it, as if it was a dose from the doctor in the cockpit. Hand it here, if you don't like it. There's nothing better in this world, whatever there may be in the next. It comforts us when nobody else will—

SAILOR.

Aye, and in old age, when we're laid up as unserviceable at Greenwich, and oblig'd to drink four small-beer, and eat bull-beef instead of good pork and salt junk.

BOWLING.

Well said, old Frosty-face.

BEVIL.

Well, now, my honest fellow.

BOWLING.

Avast heaving, ship-mate—None of your fellow, bad as the times are.

BEVIL.

'Zounds, he's choleric—

SAILOR.

SAILOR. (*looking.*)

But yonder comes our Lieutenant.

BEVIL. (*looking.*)

What do I see! It is him—It is Charles himself.

Enter CHARLES.

My dear Charles, I'm overjoy'd to see you.

CHARLES.

Bevil! Is it possible! What in the name of wonder brought you back so soon?

BOWLING. (*aside.*)

My dear Charles, and my dear Bevil! — Why how's this! They're as great as two inkle-weavers.

SAILOR. (*aside to Bowling.*)

Why, don't you see as how he's the officer's friend. — I wish your tongue was coil'd away in your mouth for a full due.

BEVIL.

My return to England was rather unexpected—

CHARLES.

Unexpected indeed! I should as soon have thought of meeting his Holiness the Pope.

BEVIL.

It is, however, lucky that you came as you did,
or I believe in my conscience these honest fellows
(pointing

14. THE ARTIFICE.

(*pointing to the gang*) would have dispos'd of me in one of his Majesty's ships.

SAILOR. (*aside to Bowling.*)

I wish you was stow'd away in the ground tier, or moor'd head and stern like the Nore lights—

CHARLES.

What, Bowling, I suppose, has been holding forth as usual — That fellow's a perpetual plague to me——

BOWLING.

That's what the French Governor at Martinico said of my old mess-mate Sam. Spun yarn last war, when he commanded a *petit-augre* privateer out of St. Kit's.—But, poor fellow, he'll never plague the *foup-meagre* rascals any more—

BEVIL.

What's he dead?

BOWLING.

As a herring, your honour—He miss'd stays off Port Royal in Jamaica, and I put him to bed with the pick-axe and spade, in Spring Path, my ownself —He was a seaman! (*Wipes his eyes.*)

SAILOR.

Well, well! "*Wipe away the spray from your bowsprit, and keep fast the topping lifts of your heart.*"—He's gone, and we must follow—

BEVIL.

B E V I L.

Nay, nay, never mind him — Take this, and drink to his memory. *(Gives money.)*

[Exeunt Charles and Bevil.]

B O W L I N G.

That I will, and success to your honor into the bargain.—I have met with a great deal of rough weather, hard knocks, and ill-luck myself, but a quid of tobacco, a kind wench, and a can of grog make all smooth again.

A I R.

Whene'er it blows a gale of wind,
We seamen scud, or else lay too;
But when a calm succeeds again,
We fear no danger, feel no pain,
Free from all sorrow, free from care,
Prepar'd for tempest or for war.

[Exit Bowling, follow'd by the Sailors.]

Scene the Inside of the Rendezvous.

C H A R L E S and B E V I L *(talking.)*

B E V I L.

Even so — and without your assistance, your sister, who is dearer to me than life, will be snatch'd from me for ever.

C H A R L E S.

I admire the constancy of your affections of all things.

B E V I L.

B E V I L.

Nay, now be ferious.

A I R.

Forbear to laugh at plighted faith,
At faith sincere like mine;
I dare to boast untainted love,
And own my flame divine.

Let libertines pretend to rail
At constancy in love,
Let them their every art essay,
I'll ne'er inconstant prove.

Eliza's charms have fixt my soul,
To her my vows were giv'n,
And perjur'd lovers well deserve
The utmost wrath of heav'n.

C H A R L E S.

Bravo! And in any other company you'd be encor'd.—But to be as serious as you wish—How do you know that Sir Benjamin has resolv'd to marry my sister to his nephew? Have you seen him?

B E V I L.

That honor was denied me; but here's proof positive—Read this, and be convinc'd.

C H A R L E S (*reads*)

“ Sir Benjamin Brief presents his compliments to Mr. Bevil, is happy to hear of his re-
turn

turn to England ; but as an event has lately taken place, which renders the visits of Mr. Bevil unnecessary, Sir Benjamin begs leave to decline bringing the matter to an issue"——

This is one of his genuine notes indeed—— Law-phrases ill applied and wantonly introduced distinguish his correspondence and conversation at all times. —— What's to be done ?

BEVIL.

That's the question. — I am satisfied that Eliza will not give her heart to my rival, though Sir Benjamin may force her to give him her hand.

CHARLES.

And you are seriously resolv'd upon marriage ?

BEVIL.

What a question ? —

CHARLES.

I think we can be a match for the old gentleman.—

BEVIL.

As how ? —

CHARLES.

By going directly to the house.

BEVIL.

Ruin to my hopes past redemption.

D

CHARLES;

C H A R L E S.

Don't you know that in love, as in war, we should sometimes venture neck or nothing. — Venus has her forlorn hopes, her *enfants perdus*, as well as Mars. — Confide in me, and I'll ensure you success. — Is the Dowager to accompany her son?

B E V I L.

So it is said.

C H A R L E S.

So much the better: for though she is a character, yet she has many good qualities, and may possibly be our friend.

B E V I L.

Her son, it seems, is in the militia, in consequence of which she sports a regimental riding-habit, and I am told, is camp mad—

C H A R L E S.

They call her Brigadier Bet at Coxheath: and from being as industrious a weaver of lace as any in the county of Bucks, she has become qualified for the office of adjutant-general; she reads no books but Cæsar's Commentaries and Vauban's Fortification; she idolizes the Macedonian chief; sleeps every night with the file of Gazettes under her pillow, and declares the defence of Prevoſt at Savannah was equal to that of Charles the 12th at Bender.

B E V I L.

She must be mad.

C H A R L E S.

CHARLES.

No doubt of it — Her son, however, having less of the foldier in him, prefers the futler's tent to the parade, you shall personate him, I'll give you a letter as from his mother, full of military terms, and follow to keep you in countenance.

BEVIL.

To put me out of countenance you mean; but suppose the old gentleman should file a bill against us.

CHARLES.

Pshaw, there's not the least danger.

Enter CROJACK.

Well, Crosjack, what luck last night—a frigate's complement, I hope.—

CROJACK.

Not quite so many, Sir: we cruized in the wrong latitude—We steered to the westward, and in luffing round the Piazzas in Covent-Garden, we fell in with some of the play actors: One of them was in a monstrous passion at being taken, and said he was Hamlet the Dane, but as my orders were to take all nations I did not much care for Dane or Swede: Another was a woman dres'd in man's cloaths.

BEVIL.

A female Sir Harry Wildair, ready dres'd for the character.

CROJACK.

CRO SJACK.

They call'd her captain.

CHARLES.

Captain Mackheath beyond a doubt.

BEVIL.

Captain Mackheath, by a woman, Charles?

CHARLES.

Aye, Bevil! most of our theatrical dames from the Queen of Denmark down to Miss in her Teens, have been seized with a furor for breeches. It was but the last week that the love-sick Juliet insisted on playing Richard the third: Portia has requested to do *Œdipus*, and Lady Macbeth now lays at the point of death at having been refused the part of Hamlet.

BEVIL.

Ha! ha! ha!

CHARLES.

And as to the Beggar's Opera, at *one* of the theatres, we hav'nt had a male Macheath these three years. — Did you get any men from the public office in Bow-Street? *(to Crosjack.)*

CRO SJACK.

No, Sir. They demanded a crown a head, and on being refused, they said, they would let them run till next sessions, when they were sure of capitally convicting them, and then they should get the reward.

CHARLES.

CHARLES.

Mercenary, inhuman rascals!

CROSSJACK.

I believe, Sir, that some Volunteers might be picked up at Stepney bowling-green.

CHARLES.

Say you so: Then take out the gang and beat up. Tell them that a ship sailed from Lima last week laden with gold and silver for Old Spain, and that if they'll bear a hand, and fit out the Charon, we shall catch her off the western Islands. Where's Bowling?

[*Exeunt.*]

Scene changes to Tower-Hill.

Enter BOWLING from the house half tipsy.

BOWLING.

Here's Bowling: who calls him? — Ah, your honour (*to Bevil*). I have changed one of your guineas. It has ran end for end, and damn the itiver that's left.

CHARLES.

Well, before you get all your grog on board, call the gang out, and go with Crossjack a cruize for volunteers.

BOWLING.

Ho, within there, shipmates! tumble out, tumble out, every man and mother's son of you. Tumble out, I say.

*Enter Sailors from the house, with colours flying,
drums beating, and fifes playing.*

BOWLING.

Let the French, if they please, still continue to
boast

An intention to visit and pillage our coast ;

We're a match for Monfieurs with our troops and
our fleet,

They beat us alone in finesse and deceit.

Let murm'ring slaves at fate repine,

We freedom claim by right divine.

Thus conquer'd and humbled, no longer shall Spain

The empire with Britons dispute o'er the main ;

Whilst taught by that conduct which Rodney dis-
play'd,

Prince William shall guard both our freedom and
trade.

Let murm'ring slaves, &c.

Huzza for Old England, let's cheerful advance,

To punish the falshood and baseness of France,

Sound the fife, beat the drum, let the signal be giv'n,

Since justice and freedom are aided by Heav'n.

Let murm'ring, &c.

[*Exeunt omnes.*]

End of the First Act.

A C T II.

S C E N E I.

Enter SIR BENJAMIN BRIEF and VELLUM.

SIR BENJAMIN.

WELL, have you discharg'd that devil's
prime minister, Margaret?

V E L L U M.

No, Sir.

S I R B E N J.

No, Sir! — And why not, Sir!

V E L L U M.

She moves an arrest of judgment.

S I R B E N J.

It shan't be granted.

V E L L U M.

Not if she files an affidavit that the plea differs
from the deed?

S I R B E N J.

No.

V E L L U M.

Nor in case of a misnomer?

S I R

S I R B E N J.

'Zounds no, I tell you.

V E L L U M.

You have call'd her Peggy, and her name is Margaritta.

S I R B E N J.

Suppose I had call'd her Sancho Pancho, what's that to you, Sirrah?—I say, Margaritta indeed!—'Zounds, we shan't have a plain Molly, Peggy, or Betty, left in the kingdom. They are all chang'd into Maria's, Margaritta's, and Eliza's. I say, discharge her this instant——

V E L L U M.

Besides, her's is a covenant *de facto* with Miss Eliza.

S I R B E N J.

Why, hearkee me, Sirrah.

V E L L U M.

And you cannot *de jure* of your own right discharge her.

S I R B E N J.

Get out of my sight.

V E L L U M.

For her agreement being *special*, and not *general*——

S I R

SIR BENJ.

Get out of my house (*drives him out*) an impudent rascal! I'll special and general him too——
Who's here? Another council for the defendant?

Enter SERVANT.

Captain Bobbin, Sir! [*Exit Servant.*]

Enter BEVIL.

SIR BENJ.

Captain, you are welcome. Your arrival has happen'd very opportunely —— but where's my sister?

BEVIL.

On the road, uncle: but an unlucky accident, which those *dispatches* will explain, (*presents a letter*) having detain'd her, I came on before by forc'd marches.

SIR BENJ.

Forc'd marches! Lord! Lord! (*looking at him,*
But what says the letter? (*reads*)

“ Dear brother,

“ Having made an admirable disposition for
“ marching”——

For marching! what the deuce, did you walk here?

BEVIL.

O la! no: we mounted our cavalry when the Reveilly beat.

E

SIR

SIR BENJ.

When what beat?

BEVIL.

The Reveilly, Sir.

SIR BENJ.

The Reveilly!—He's crack'd, I find. (*afide*)

Reads.

“—for marching to Effoign-House; and having
“ occasion to pass a river, we halted.”—Halted!
O that's to demur, I suppose—“But my son neg-
“ lecting to superintend the embarkation”—To su-
perintend the embarkation! She's certainly mad—
“one of the chargers plung'd into the river, and
“ was drowned.”—Charger! Why, what the
deuce can she mean by a charger?

BEVIL.

A charger is a horse, uncle.

SIR BENJ.

A charger a *horse*! I should as soon have sus-
pected it was the Lord Chancellor—A charger
a horse! That's too much, ha! ha!

BEVIL. (*afide.*)

What can detain Charles all this time, that he
does not come to my relief.

SIR

SIR BENJ. (*reads.*)

“ I have therefore dispatch’d my aid-de-camp,
 “ *your* nephew, to desire you would ratify
 “ the articles of the convention between
 “ the contracting parties, as I shall pro-
 “ ceed by slow marches to Effoign-house.”

By slow marches! Well said, Sister Bet, I will defy even the commander in chief to have written a more military letter.—Well, then, we have nothing to do but to proceed to business.—You have no objections to a handsome girl, I suppose, and a good fortune?

B E V I L.

None, Sir.

SIR BENJ.

Well, I’ll secure you a verdict in your favor, and now we’ll go to Eliza.

Enter SERVANT.

Captain Charles is come, Sir.

SIR BENJ.

Adso, this is unlucky; who the deuce could have serv’d him with a subpœna?—Shew him up. [*Exit servant.*]

Enter CHARLES.

Well, Sir, and what brought you here?

C H A R L E S.

Being so near, I thought it my duty to pay my respects to you, Sir.—

SIR BENJ.

That's a confounded lie (*aside*) are you not afraid of being return'd, *Non est inventus*.

CHARLES.

You mean, Absent without leave, Sir—Not in the least.

SIR BENJ.

Then let me introduce you to my nephew—
Capt. Bobbin. (*They shake hands.*)
He'll be nearer related to you before dinner.

BEVIL, (*aside.*)

I hope so—

CHARLES.

As how, Sir?

SIR BENJ.

By marrying your sifter.

CHARLES.

Eliza, Sir!

SIR BENJ.

Yes, Eliza, Sir. I know of no other sifter you have.—Have you any objections?

CHARLES.

Not I Sir, if my sifter has none, but I understood that she was engaged to Mr. Bevil.

SIR

SIR BENJ.

Why so she was : but he has turn'd fop, speaks French, takes snuff, and has become an errant coxcomb by travelling; so I dismiss'd him.

CHARLES.

And not without reason, Sir, if that's the case.

SIR BENJ.

Certainly not.—I was not to be caught with a feather and fine speeches. — I hate the French : but above all, I hate a frenchified Englishman,

CHARLES.

And it's not very ealy, Sir, to escape your penetration.

BEVIL.

No, no, uncle is too knowing to be taken by surprize.

SIR BENJ.

Right, nephew.—Egad, they must rise betimes who deceive me.

CHARLES (*aside to Bevil.*)

Bevil, what time did you get up this morning?

SIR BENJ.

Besides your sifter can't do better than to marry a soldier.

CHARLES

CHARLES.

I have no doubt, Sir, but the gentleman will do honor to your choice.

SIR BENJ.

Charles, give me your hand — You're an honest fellow — Egad, the beau is nonsuited; and what's worse for him, he can't bring a writ of error.

CHARLES *and* BEVIL.

Ha! ha! ha!

CHARLES.

The error will be on his side, if he does. Ha! ha! ha!

SIR BENJ. CHARLES, *and* BEVIL.

Ha! ha! ha!

BEVIL.

But, uncle, have you made any preparations for dinner?

SIR BENJ.

Adso, I had like to have forgot—I must provide, as my sifter won't be here in time.

BEVIL.

Mother will be here before the second drum beats.

SIR

SIR BENJ.

Aye, but that will be too late, I am afraid ; so we muſt proceed without her, and you ſhall be eaterer.

BEVIL.

With all my heart, uncle : I love to ſee a table well ſpread—beſides, a wedding-dinner ſhould be ſumptuous.

CHARLES.

True, becauſe it happens but once in a man's life.

SIR BENJ.

Right, Charles, unleſs a man ſhould be damn'd lucky indeed.—So, nephew, conſider this houſe as your own, and order as you pleaſe.

S O N G.

BEVIL.

“ Let the lank-fided miſer,
 “ Our wiſer
 “ Advifer,
 “ Count over his treasures, and ſtarve with his hoard ;
 “ O God's, in creating,
 “ The pleaſure of eating,
 “ No luxury equals a full ſmoaking board.
 “ Ye God's, grant me this bleſſing,
 “ Increasing,
 “ Unceaſing,
 “ An appetite ample this gift to enjoy :

“ A

“ A stomach capacious,
 “ A hunger voracious,
 “ Continu’d repletion, but never to cloy.

SIR BENJ.

“ I long for my dinner, he’s made my mouth water
 “ Adzooks, what a wish! I shall die sure with
 laughter :
 “ Like princes we’ll dine, and this chorus give
 after :

CHARLES, BEVIL, *and* SIR BENJ.

“ O the roast beef of Old England,
 “ And O the Old English roast beef!
 [Exeunt.]

S C E N E II.

CHARLES, ELIZA, *and* BEVIL.

C H A R L E S.

Come, come Eliza, he has perform’d to admiration ; and, whatever you may think, he is entitled to your affections

B, E V I L.

If sincerity can give me a claim.—

A I R.

“ What tender passions, eager joy,
 “ Invade my breast when you appear ;
 “ Eliza, you my soul employ
 “ With all that’s sweet, with all that’s dear :
 “ When

“ When you your lovely mind reveal,
 “ A softness steals thro’ every part ;
 “ My reason fails, and soon I feel
 “ A something melting at my heart.
 “ Alternate passions wildly rise ;
 “ I swell with Hope ; I faint with fear ;
 “ My fluttering soul springs to my eyes,
 “ In hopes to tell *it’s* story there—
 “ Then take the heart that must be thine ;
 “ Eliza, see it kindly us’d ;
 “ So dear an inmate who’d resign,
 “ That thought the gift wou’d be abus’d ?

C H A R L E S.

There, now do you think him perfidious?—
 Look at that melancholy face of his, and doubt the
 sincerity of it if you can.

E L I Z A.

I own my suspicions were ill-founded, but they
 were the effect of love—I will now do what-
 ever you may advise for our mutual happiness.

C H A R L E S.

Or you do not deserve to have him—So take
 her, Bevil ; for faith she’s your right.—A parson
 attends with a special licence ; and you may be
 back before you’ll be missed.

Enter M A R G A R I T T A.

Lord Ma’am, and Lord, Mr. Bevil—What’s to
 be done?—You’ll be ruin’d, Ma’am, and I shall
 be ruin’d, and we shall all be ruin’d.

F

C H A R L E S.

C H A R L E S.

Ruin'd ! How ?

M A R G A R I T T A.

Lord, Sir, there's my master like a madman roaring about the house.—I believe he's out of his wits with joy.

E L I Z A.

That won't ruin us—

M A R G A R I T T A.

To be sure it won't, Ma'am ; but he is bawling all over the house for Mr. Ralph, Mr. Bobbin's man, and—

B E V I L.

Ralph ! What the devil has the enemy's advanced guard got possession already ?

E L I Z A.

He has been here this hour.

C H A R L E S.

The deuce he has ; then there's no time to lose.

M A R G A R I T T A.

No, to be sure there is not ; and so, Ma'am, hearing my master call for Mr. Ralph, I lock'd him up in the butler's pantry with Mr. Vellum, who has fallen desperately in love with me, Ma'am—And so Ma'am as I was saying before, (tho' hang
me

me if I don't forget what I was saying)—O, now I recollect it—and so, Ma'am, as I was saying before, he's calling Mr. Ralph ; and if he should get at him, he will find out that Mr. Bevil is not what he should be, and then Ma'am— And I am so frighten'd.

ELIZA.

For heaven's sake, Charles, what's to be done ?

CHARLES.

To buy him over to our interest, to be sure while the priest ties the indissoluble knot—Gold will purchase the fidelity of half the party colour'd tribe in England.

BEVIL.

Aye, and of any other tribe that you can mention, from the Duke to the Dustman.

ELIZA.

Fie, Mr. Bevil, how censorious you are ?

BEVIL.

Ne'er mind that ; let us take his advice, and decamp before my rival comes.

ELIZA.

Suppose my father should meet us going out ?

F 2

BEVIL.

B E V I L.

What then? He can have no suspicion's, and why will you hesitate to secure your future happiness.

C H A R L E S.

'Pshaw! Take her away at once—and do you go and secure Ralph. *(to Margaritta.)*

E L I Z A.

Yet stay, Margaret, one moment.

M A R G A R I T T A.

Lord, Ma'am, I dare not.

A I R.

Engag'd in your service, I'll do what I can,

“ To outwit the old man,

“ Who wou'd you trepan,

“ And give you a booby in marriage :

“ So let me be gone,

“ Or, as sure as a gun,

“ A detection will cause a miscarriage.”

[Exeunt.]

Enter S I R B E N J. B R I E F.

No bad thought, to enter a caveat against beaux and coxcombs — Ha! ha! ha! — How the sailor fell into the trap. — Poor Charles, thou hast no great head-piece. — He'll never be Lord Chancellor. — Thanks to my ingenuity, the day's my own —

Enter S E R V A N T.

Well, Sir, what's your commands?

S E R.

SERVANT.

Another of Madam Bobbin's servants is arrived, Sir Benjamin.

SIR BENJ.

Another! Zounds, she'll quarter the whole regiment upon me, and turn my house into a barrack—

SERVANT.

His mistress will be here directly.

SIR BENJ.

So much the better — Let Capias be ready to take the horses into custody. Order him to move the coach into the Rolls, and be sure put the phaeton into the Marshalsea.

SERVANT.

Yes, Sir.

SIR BENJ.

And d'ye hear—Let a writ of enquiry be issued to the chambermaid about the beds.

SERVANT.

Will you have a fire for the servants in the Court of Requests?

SIR BENJ.

To be sure I will—

SERVANT.

And in the Exchequer?

SIR

SIR BENJ.

Aye, aye, fire both sides of the Exchequer.

This is lucky—This is as it ought to be, and I'll
go and meet her. [Exit Servant.]
[Exit.]

Scene VELLUM and RALPH at a table; a mug of ale.

VELLUM.

Come, here's to Margaritta—that dear bewitching wench. I pleaded a flaw in the indictment, and prevented sentence being pass'd against her—She's a delicious girl!

RALPH.

Here's to Margaritta then (*drinks*) I love a wench to my life, Master Vellum, and often wish that I was the *only* man in the world. — I'll drink her again. But she seems monstrous proud and piniated.

VELLUM.

That's because she's monstrous handsome, Master Ralph, and all handsome women are monstrous proud, you know. O, if I could but get her to give a verdict in my favor! She is the most compact little freehold, and I'd rather be seiz'd of it entail, than be made Lord Chancellor.

RALPH.

Zounds, Master Vellum, I'd make her marry me.

VELLUM.

Make her!

RALPH.

R A L P H.

Aye, make her—Women must always be forc'd to do that that they love best. I forc'd my wench to go to the parson.

V E L L U M.

Your wench! What, are you married?

R A L P H.

Been married these three days, and to as smart a little wench as any in the county of Bucks.

V E L L U M.

There's a fellow — He does not know Hilary Term from Michaelmas Term, and yet he has contriv'd to get himself a wife. (*aside.*) Married these three days!

R A L P H.

Aye, and I'll tell you how I caught her.

A I R.

When first my fond Phillis I met in the grove,
 In vain did I whisper my passion of love;
 I try'd to no purpose to conquer her heart,
 But vain was entreaty, in vain was my art;
 She never beheld me but from me she ran,
 Crying, Ralph, you *may* catch me—Catch me
 now if you can.

Thus jeer'd, and thus vext, I pursu'd the sly maid,
 How delicious the chace, when the toil's so well
 paid?

I caught

I caught her, and press'd her, and swore she was
 mine,
 While each kiss that I seiz'd gave me transports
 divine;
 To the church we repair'd, and since I'm the man,
 She cries, My dear Ralph, love me now while you
 can.

V E L L U M.

Then you was never nonsuited.

R A L P H.

Nan!

V E L L U M.

That is, you was never—(*looking*) But what do
 I see? My Margaritta—Here she is, and now for it.

Enter M A R G A R I T T A.

Mrs. Margaritta, we've been drinking your
 health.

M A R G A R I T T A.

And more shame for you, you sot — you two
 fots! and at this time of day too! when the whole
 house is in confusion, and Sir Benjamin has been
 calling you these two hours. You must come
 along with me, both of you, this minute.

R A L P H.

Must! — That's more than our high-sheriff
 would say.

V E L L U M.

By those sweet lips (*offers to kiss*) Nay, I must
 kiss them.

M A R -

MARGARITTA.

A nasty troublesome old fool (*aside*). Well, I'll give you a dozen if you'll come along with me.

RALPH.

Hang her, let's have 'tother mug.

MARGARITTA.

Not one drop to save your life.

VELLUM.

A dozen kiffes, and one on demand!

MARGARITTA.

Any thing to get you away.

RALPH.

I say t'other mug, Master Vellum, never mind her.

VELLUM.

What, after she offers to join issue with me—
No, no—Master Ralph.

MARGARITTA (*to Ralph*).

Very well, Mr. Guzzle, t'other mug, eh!—
Come along with me, both of you.

RALPH (*to Vellum*)

Happy man in such a wife.

[*Exeunt.*]

G

Enter

Enter Mrs. BOBBIN conducted by a Servant.

Sir Benjamin, Madam will be here in an instant. O! here my master is.

MRS. BOBBIN.

Very well, my lad, return to your post. A centinel should never quit it. [*Exit Servant.*]

Enter SIR BENJ.

O! here comes the Commander in Chief.

Mrs. Bobbin salutes him, as with a spontoon; and Sir B. starts back in surprize.

Here's discipline, brother, I have penetrated to the very centre of your garrison without meeting a single creature---What would become of you if the enemy should attack you by surprize.

SIR BENJ.

The law says, that the parties must be serv'd with notice of trial, in order to prepare a defence.

MRS. BOBBIN.

Notice, indeed! What notice, did brave Rodney give the Spanish Admiral when he carried him into Gibraltar. (*Feels in her pocket.*)

And here read Prevost's letter, dated Savannah in Georgia, September, 1779—I always carry the Gazette about me—There you'll see what time our General had to prepare for his defence when D'Estaing came upon him like a thief in the night.

SIR.

SIR BENJ.

The French practice differs from that of ours, sister.

MRS. BOBBIN.

I hope, brother, that ours will always differ from their's.

SIR BENJ.

I hope so too, sister; but what, in the name of wonder, did you make all those flourishing motions with your whip, when I came in?

MRS. BOBBIN.

Flourishes, Brother! it was a salute—You have received the honours due to a General Officer.

SIR BENJ.

That a salute!--Zounds, I always thought that a salute was a kiss.

MRS. BOBBIN.

It was a salute *en militaire*, brother.

SIR BENJ.

She's gone! a writ of recovery would'nt bring her back again (*aside*) Sister, I like your martial spirit.

MRS. BOBBIN.

No such thing, brother---You don't like it.

SIR BENJ.

Why sister, I don't like flat contradictions, I own; but in times like the present, I approve of the military associations, and wish they were more general.

MRS. BOBBIN,

Set the example, then, at your house in the country, and throw up an entrenchment within the park paling; the terrace will do for a battery *en barbette*, and flank the pass by the kitchen garden---A breast-work, with an abbatiss fence, will prevent the enemy destroying your turnips, or coming upon you in your rear, while a chain of small r-doubts will secure the cow-house and stables, and cover the dairy and pig-sties. Then you should reconnoitre the ground for five miles round, and take the heights and levels, in order to possess yourself of some out-posts.

SIR BENJ.

Heights and levels! Zounds, sister, would you wish to see me in Newgate for high treason? Why, if I wanted to sell my estate, I wou'd'nt venture to have it *survey'd*---No, no, the times are dangerous---Bravoes and Informers are abroad, and prudent men should be cautious---But, who comes here---Another aid de camp?

Enter DRILL.

MRS. BOBBIN.

No---This is my orderly serjeant---Where's the book?

[*Drill presents a book.*

We

We military people always write our orders the day before. *(writes and returns the book.)*
Have you got the billets for the horses ?

D R I L L.

Yes, Ma'am.—

S I R B E N J.

Billets ! she means clogs, I suppose, for their feet—*(aside)* Why, sister, will you give yourself any trouble about these matters ? — I'll dirty your horses to break any of my fences, besides, I have stabling enough for twice the number.

M R S. B O B B I N.

That's what I mean, brother ; but you are ignorant of the art *militaire*.— *[Exit Drill.]*

S I R B E N J.

What ! because I don't understand your jargon, and will neither convert my house into a fortification, nor my farm into an encampment, I am ignorant !

M R S. B O B B I N.

Suppose the enemy should land ?

S I R B E N J.

They know better, sister.

M R S. B O B B I N.

They'll find no difficulty in coming over.

S I R

S I R B E N J.

No ; but they'll find a very great one in getting back ; and till that can be reduced to a certainty, I'll engage that the boldest Frenchman will not venture his famished carcase on British ground.— Besides, don't you know that both they and the Spaniards are always cast, or nonsuited in their actions with us.

M R S. B O B B I N.

Fine talking ! and now the troops are gone into winter quarters, what's to hinder the French from marching to London ?

S I R B E N J.

The British channel ; and if that won't do, why the British fleet to be sure. But don't you think it would be monstrous unpolite in the Monfieurs to come and take the city from us, after we have been at the pains of new paving, watching and lighting the streets, and civilizing the inhabitants ? However, hang the French, they are not worth our thoughts, so let us attend to our own affairs—That was an ugly accident that befel you this morning as well as a great loss.

M R S. B O B B I N. (*surpriz'd.*)

Accident, and loss, brother !

S I R B E N J.

Aye, the charger !

M R S.

MRS. BOBBIN.

The charger ! What charger ?

SIR BENJ.

Why, the charger that you lost this morning.

MRS. BOBBIN.

The man's mad—I lost a charger !

SIR BENJ.

Egad, it's you that are mad, and not I — Didn't you halt this morning ?

MRS. BOBBIN.

To be sure I did — You would not have me come by quick marches, and fatigue my party ?

SIR BENJ.

Her very words — Well, then, I mean the charger—the horse that you lost when you halted.

MRS. BOBBIN.

Nonsense—I lost no horse, brother.

SIR BENJ.

You did not lose a horse this morning, when my nephew, your aide-camp, neglected to superintend the embarkation ?

MRS. BOBBIN.

I really don't understand you — I know of no embarkation but that at Havre-de-Grace.

SIR

S I R B E N J.

I hope you won't deny your own hand writing:
—There! read that and be convinc'd.

(gives the letter.)

M R S. B O B B I N.

Under my own hand—How's this? *(reads)*
“ Dr. Brother,”

S I R B E N J.

I hope you are convinc'd.

M R S. B O B B I N.

I am—that this is not my hand-writing.

S I R B E N J.

How! not your hand-writing?

M R S. B O B B I N.

Not one syllable of it.

S I R B E N J.

I had it from Bob myself.

M R S. B O B B I N.

Now I am convinc'd it's a forgery — Bob staid behind to convoy the baugh horses, which he has loaded with provisions, and he won't be here these two hours.

S I R B E N J.

Then he need'nt come at all — I have been cheated, cozen'd and laugh'd at—Fool that I was — Vellum *(rings)* I shall go distracted.

Enter

Enter VELLUM.

Let a venire be seryed upon Eliza directly.

VELLUM.

Miss Eliza, Sir, has walked out with the two captains.

SIR BENJ.

Walk'd out with the two captains! then I'm ruin'd and undone; send Habeas and the other servants to bring them back, *vi et armis*.—

MRS. BOBBIN.

And my party shall reinforce the detachment.

SIR BENJ.

Fool that I was, not to see thro' their sham pleadings.

[*Exit Vellum.*

Bevil has personated your son, and Charles is a particeps criminans.

MRS. BOBBIN.

This comes of your want of discipline, brother! No one should go from head-quarters without leave.—Then where's your piquets and quarter-guards?

SIR BENJ.

Zounds, sister, I'm not oblig'd to answer interrogatories. Who comes here? (*looking*)—Egad; its Vellum returned already; and madam herself with him, and that confederate rogue Charles.—

Enter VELLUM,

Followed by ELIZA, BEVIL, CHARLES, and Servants.

VELLUM.

We met Miss Eliza, Sir, as we were going out.

H

Eliza

(*Eliza and Bevil approach Sir Benj.*)

SIR BENJ.

So, madam, where have you been? And who are you, Sir?

BEVIL.

Bevil, Sir, and at your service.—

SIR BENJ.

Impossible!—You are an impostor.

BEVIL.

I am not the person that I represented; but having obtain'd my purpose, I am willing to resign the name and title to the gentleman who has a better claim to it.—

SIR BENJ.

You shall be prosecuted, Sir.

MRS. BOBBIN.

Is this generalship, brother! To let the enemy steal a march upon you—O, fie!

CHARLES.

Nay, madam — Stratagem in love as well as in war is fair.

SIR BENJ.

No, Sir, it is not fair, in love or in war—False pretences are illegal.—

MRS. BOBBIN.

Pardon me, brother; in war it's fair, all the great generals have admitted it, from the siege of Troy, down to the taking of Mud island.

SIR

SIR BENJ.

Zounds, but it is not fair, and it shan't be fair
—It's against law—

MRS. BOBBIN.

A fig for law, brother, where it obstructs justice.

SIR BENJ.

Come along with me, madam.

BEVIL.

Hold, Sir, that lady is my wife, and as such I
shall protect her against all violence.

SIR BENJ.

Your wife?

CHARLES. (*aside to Sir Benj.*)

Aye, Sir, the beau is certainly cast, and what is
worse he can't bring a writ of error.

SIR BENJ.

Get out of my house, get out of my house this
instant.—As to you, madam.

ELIZA *to* SIR BENJ.

S O N G.

Since then love's resistless power,
Has denied your after choice,
Blame me not if I've obey'd,
Decisive nature's early voice;

You approv'd his profer'd suit,
Obedience urg'd my tender heart;
To admit his every word,
Shall I act a faithless part?

SIR BENJAMIN.

And you are *bona fide*, married?

ELIZA.

I am, indeed, Sir——

SIR BENJ.

Then Miss, or Madam, since you *are* married, you and your husband shall quit the premises directly.

MRS. BOBBIN.

Nay, now brother, you are wrong again—If they are married, it is of no use to refuse them a parly—A flag of truce is always a step preparatory to an accommodation.

BEVIL.

How, this!

MRS. BOBBIN.

And domestic broils are both ruinous and disgraceful.

ELIZA. (*Kneeling to Mrs. Bobbin.*

This is generous, indeed.

MRS.

MRS. BOBBIN.

Rise, child! You have been too premature; and on that account I blame you—Come, brother, give them your hand: in the army indeed, *we* punish disobedience with death; but in children, if it is ever excusable it is in their election of a husband or a wife, as their future promotion in a great measure, depends upon the choice which they make—Fate has resolved that this alliance should take place.

SIR BENJ.

Say you so—then its in vain to appeal from so high an authority—Here—take my blessing—As to you, Charles—I o take a brief against your father, you rogue!

CHARLES.

A generous heart, Sir, will always risque something in the cause of love and friendship; and the regard which I have for my sister and Bevil will, I trust, plead my excuse.

SIR BENJ.

Well, well, I reverse the out-lawry, and acquit you—So let us devote the day to mirth and good humour.

VAUDEVILLE.

MRS. BOBBIN.

'Tis we who boast a thousand arts
To captivate and keep your hearts,
Though you resist—A world in arms
Arn't equal to a woman's charms!

Then

Then let sweet hope, this festive day,
 To every heart
 New joys impart,
 And crown our happy roundelay.

B E V I L.

Possessed of her whom I adore,
 And blest'd in love, I ask no more:
 From every wish and care set free,
 Except, dear girl, the care of thee.
 Then let sweet hope, this festive day,
 To every heart,
 New joys impart,
 And crown our happy roundelay.

E L I Z A.

As marriages are made above,
 'Tis not for us to disapprove;
 Since no degree can 'ere be given
 Against the chancery of Heaven.
 Then let sweet hope, &c.

F I N I S.



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