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Clandestine Marriage.

CHAMBERMAID Be quiet M^r Brush, I shall drop down with terror (*Brush half tipsy laying hold of her M^r Heuleberg & Miss Sterling watching behind.*)

THE
CLANDESTINE MARRIAGE.

A Comedy,

IN FIVE ACTS.

BY
G. COLMAN AND D. GARRICK.

WITH AN ILLUSTRATION AND REMARKS BY D.G.

THOMAS HAILES LACY,
THEATRICAL PUBLISHER,
LONDON.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

COVENT GARDEN, 1840			THEATRE ROYAL
<i>Lord Ogleby</i>	. . .	Mr. W. Farren	Mr. W. Farren
<i>Sir John Melvil</i>	. . .	Mr. Cooper	Mr. Cooper
<i>Sterling</i>	. . .	Mr. Bartley	Mr. Strickland
<i>Lovevell</i>	. . .	Mr. J. Vandenhoff	Mr. Hemmings
<i>Flower</i>	. . .	Mr. Granby	Mr. Gough
<i>Traverse</i>	. . .	Mr. Payne	Mr. T. F. Mathew
<i>Trueman</i>	. . .	Mr. Honner	Mr. Worrell
<i>Canton</i>	. . .	Mr. J. Bland	Mr. Webster
<i>Brush</i>	. . .	Mr. T. Green	Mr. Walter Lacy
<i>Servant</i>	. . .	Mr. Collet	Mr. Bishop
<i>Mrs. Heidelberg</i>	. . .	Mrs. C. Jones	Mrs. Glover
<i>Miss Sterling</i>	. . .	Mrs. Nisbett	Mrs. W. Lacy
<i>Fanny</i>	. . .	Mrs. W. Lacy	Miss Travers
<i>Betty</i>	. . .	Mrs. Orger	Miss Sallott
<i>Trusty</i>	. . .	Mrs. Emden	Miss Partridge
<i>Chambermaid</i>	. . .	Mrs. Humby	Miss Grove

Time in Representation, 2 hours and 45 minutes.

COSTUME.

LORD OGLEBY.—An elegant morning gown and cap, lined with pink satin—satin waistcoat and breeches. *Second dress:* Pink satin coat, trimmed with silver frogs.

SIR JOHN MELVIL.—Blue dress coat, gilt buttons—white waistcoat and breeches—shoes and buckles.

STERLING.—Maroon-coloured coat, gilt button. Green silk waistcoat—maroon-coloured breeches—shoes and buckles—red morning gown and night-cap.

LOVEVELL.—Slate-coloured coat and breeches—white waistcoat.

FLOWER, TRAVERSE, and TRUEMAN.—Black coats and breeches—buff waistcoats—high boots.

CANTON.—Green jacket—flowered waistcoat, and red breeches. *Second dress:* Black coat—satin waistcoat, and breeches.

BRUSH.—Scarlet coat—white waistcoat—and buff breeches.

SERVANT.—Buff livery, square cut.

MRS. HEIDELBERG.—Blue flowered silk gown, and petticoat. *Second dress:* Flowered satin saque, and petticoat. *Third dress:* white dressing-gown—hoop.

MISS STERLING.—Blue satin, trimmed with lace—small hoop.

FANNY.—Plain white muslin. *Second dress:* White satin, trimmed with flowers and lace—small hoop.

BETTY.—Coloured gown, looped behind—blue skirt—white apron.

TRUSTY.—Blue spotted brown cotton gown, looped behind—red skirt.

BLIND.—Coloured chintz gown, looped behind—red skirt, and white apron.

REMARKS.

The Clandestine Marriage.

A story is told in the *Biographia Dramatica*, on the authority of a gentleman who, it seems, had it from the mouth of Mr. Colman himself, that Garrick composed *two acts* of the *Clandestine Marriage*; which he sent to Colman, desiring that he would put them together, or do what he would with them; and that the latter took Davy at his word, by putting them into the fire, and writing the play himself. We believe the story to be a gross fabrication; but whether by the *gentleman* or *George*, we cannot tell. Colman was too good a judge to put two acts of a comedy written by Garrick into the fire—we can answer that his *son* would not be guilty of the like folly; that gentleman having a very commendable prudence in matters of this sort. It has been generally understood that Garrick's share in this comedy was Lord Ogleby, and the courtly family; and Colman's, Sterling, and the low-bred city family—a fair conclusion; since Lord Ogleby, in many points, bears a striking resemblance to Lord Chalkstone, in Garrick's farce of *Lethe*. In the advertisement originally prefixed to the play, *both parties* acknowledge themselves equally responsible for the whole, and express their obligations to Hogarth's *Marriage a-la-Mode*, from whence they derived their materials. But "wits have short memories:" they *forgot* to mention that the characters of Lord Ogleby, Mr. Stirling, and Brush, were borrowed from a farce, entitled "False Concord," acted at Covent Garden, March 20, 1764, for the benefit of Mr. Woodward; the author of which was the Rev. James Townley, formerly master of the Merchant Tailors' School. In this piece were three capital characters—Lord Lavender, a vain superannuated nobleman; Mr. Sudley, a wealthy soap-boiler; and a pert valet. *These*, with the *dialogue* of some of the scenes, nearly *verbatim*, were transferred to the *Clandestine Marriage*. Garrick, in his prologue, recommends—

"That each should neighbourly assist his brother,
And *steal* with decency from one another."

When, therefore, this comedy was published ("False Concord" has never been printed), the reputed authors should have admitted Mr. Townley into co-partnership with them.

The *Clandestine Marriage* is an extremely entertaining and popu-

lar play. The characters are drawn with spirit and truth; the incidents take an interesting and natural turn; and the dialogue is alternately witty, elegant, and affecting. Singularly enough, it ends without a wedding—that ceremony having been anticipated before its commencement—the *lovers* being, in fact, *man and wife*. The interview between Lord Ogleby and Fanny, when she resolves to disclose the secret of her marriage with Lovewell, and implore his lordship's intercession with her father—the distress and embarrassment of the lady—her blushes and sighs—her ambiguous expressions, which the vain old lord so whimsically applies to *himself*—and his raptures at fancying that *he* is the object of her passion, are admirably painted.—Equally so is the *equivoque* between Lovewell and Lord Ogleby: where the former conceives he has propitiated the old peer; while his lordship, equally mistaken, applies the various compliments paid to Miss Fanny's choice, to his own irresistible person and power of pleasing. The entrance of Sir John Melville, who comes for the special purpose of disclosing his passion, and requesting his lordship's good offices to promote his match with the *Countess of Ogleby, that shall be*, is highly apropos and comic. The nods and winks of the conceited amorous old peer—who, in the pride and vanity of his heart, makes sure of the lady—his gay, chivalrous, and frolicsome air, when he gives Sir John *permission* to court Fanny—and his significant leers, contrast well with the embarrassment and confusion of Lovewell. The breakfast-scene between Brush and the chamber-maid—Mr. Brush's affectation of high life—his well-bred *nonchalance*, when he hears his lordship's bell ring, and continues to sip his coffee—the perfect good-breeding with which he presents the abigail with a few cakes of chocolate for her own particular drinking, and desires nothing in return for his civility but to taste the perfume of her lips; at the same time *remarking* that, by an interchange of favours, he hopes the *country* and *retirement* may be rendered mutually agreeable, are characteristic and droll. The *dénouement* produces abundant merriment. The apropos introduction of Mr. Brush, half drunk, and laying hold of the chambermaid—his amorous protestations and promises—his queer *threat* regarding Mrs. Heidelberg, which brings out that venerable virago from her concealment—the hurry, bustle, and anxiety, that ensue, when the different guests emerge from their chambers—the unravelling of the mystery—the noble and generous conduct of Lord Ogleby, when the mercenary citizen threatens to turn his daughter out of doors—and the feeling and eloquent *amende honorable* of Sir John Melville, render the last scene of this comedy as effective as any on the stage. It has been objected that the Swiss nation has been illiberally caricatured in the part of Canton. The readiness of that people to *fight* for pay has long been proverbial; we, therefore, see no reason why they should not *flutter*, though they may do it more awkwardly. Sterling is a true picture of a sordid trader, whose heart is almost as bad as

his taste ; Mrs. Heidelberg, of wealthy ignorance ; and Miss Sterling, of Cheapside pertness and Whitechapel pride.

Garrick had originally intended to play Lord Ogleby himself ; but, illness intervening, he assigned the part to King, who raised himself to the top of his profession by his admirable performance. We pass from that period to the present day (for Cherry, Lovegrove and most of the Lord Ogleby's that we remember, were but futile fellows), and come to Farren ; whose acting throughout, whether in the exhibition of his lordship's natural infirmities or assumed spirit and gayety, is inimitable. His twinges of gout and rheumatism—his rallying into gallantry and good-humour—his courtship and self-conceit—and his generous enthusiasm, are so finely blended, that those who remember King miss nothing of his excellences in Mr. Farren, but *honest Tom's* stately step and dignity of deportment.

Kitty Clive was the original Mrs. Heidelberg. We have seen Miss Pope in the character, and can imagine nothing superior. Mrs. Davenport *vows* and *pertests* with humour. Farley's Canton is good ; but Wewitzer was your true clumsy obsequious Swiss.

☞ D—G.

THE CLANDESTINE MARRIAGE.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*A Room in Sterling's House.*

Enter MISS FANNY, R. H., and BETTY, L. H., meeting.

Bet. [*Running in.*] Ma'am! Miss Fanny! Ma'am—

Fan. What's the matter, Betty?

Bet. Oh la! Ma'am! as sure as I'm alive, here is your husband!

Fan. Hush! my dear Betty.

Bet. I saw him crossing the court-yard in his boots.

Fan. I'm glad to hear it.—But pray, now, my dear Betty be cautious. Don't mention that word again on any account. You know we have agreed never to drop any expressions of that sort, for fear of an accident.

Bet. Dear ma'am, you may depend upon me. There is not a more trustier creature on the face of the earth than I am. Though I say it, I am as secret as the grave—and if it is never told till I tell it, it may remain untold till doomsday, for Betty.

Fan. I know you are faithful—but in our circumstances we cannot be too careful.

Bet. Very true, ma'am; and yet I vow and protest there's more plague than pleasure with a secret; especially if a body mayn't mention it to four or five of one's particular acquaintance.

Fan. Do but keep this secret a little while longer, and then I hope you may mention it to any body. All I have to ask you is, to be faithful and secret, and not to reveal this matter till we disclose it to the family ourselves.

Bet. Me reveal it!—If I say a word, I wish I may be burned. I would not do you any harm for the world—and as for Mr. Lovewell, I am sure I have loved the dear gentleman ever since he got a tide-waiter's place for my brother.—But let me tell you both, you must leave off your soft looks to each other, and your whispers, and your glances, and your always sitting next to one another at dinner, and your long walks together in the evening.—For my part, if I had not been in the secret, I should have known you were a pair of lovers at least, if not man and wife, as—

Fan. See there now again! Pray be careful.

Bet. Well, well—nobody hears me.—Man and wife—I'll say no more.—What I tell you is very true, for all that—

Love. [L.—*Within.*] William!

Bet. Hark! I hear your husband—

Fan. What!

Bet. I say here comes Mr. Lovewell.—Mind the caution I give you—I'll be whipped, now, if you are not the first person he sees or speaks to in the family. [*Stops her, and crosses to R.*] However, if you choose it, it's nothing at all to me—as you sow, so you must reap—as you brew, so you must bake. I'll e'en slip down the back stairs, and leave you together. [*Exit, R. H.*]

Fan. I see, I see, I shall never have a moment's ease till our marriage is made public. New distresses crowd in upon me every day. The solicitude of my mind sinks my spirits, preys upon my health, and destroys every comfort of my life. It shall be revealed, let what will be the consequence.

Enter LOVEWELL, L. H.

Love. My love!—How's this?—In tears?—Indeed this is too much. You promised me to support your spirits, and to wait the determination of our fortune with patience. For my sake, for your own, be comforted! Why will you study to add to our uneasiness and perplexity?

Fan. Oh, Mr. Lovewell, the indelicacy of a secret marriage grows every day more and more shocking to me.

Love. Indeed, indeed, you are to blame. The amiable delicacy of your temper, and your quick sensibility, only serve to make you unhappy. To clear up this affair properly to Mr. Sterling, is the continual employment of my thoughts. Every thing now is in a fair train. It begins to grow ripe for a discovery; and I have no doubt of its concluding to the satisfaction of ourselves, of your father, and the whole family.

Fan. End how it will, I am resolved it shall end soon—very soon. I would not live another week in this agony of mind, to be mistress of the universe.

Love. Do not be too violent neither. Do not let us disturb the joy of your sister's marriage with the tumult this matter may occasion! I have brought letters from Lord Ogleby and Sir John Melvil, to Mr. Sterling. They will be here this evening—and I dare say within this hour.

Fan. I am sorry for it.

Love. Why so?

Fan. No matter—only let us disclose our marriage immediately.

Love. As soon as possible.

Fan. But directly.

Love. In a few days, you may depend on it.

Fan. To-night—or to-morrow morning.

Love. That, I fear, will be impracticable.

Fan. Nay, but you must.

Love. Must! why?

Fan. Indeed you must—I have the most alarming reasons for it.

Love. Alarming, indeed! for they alarm me, even before I am acquainted with them. What are they?

Fan. I cannot tell you.

Love. Not tell me?

Fan. Not at present. When all is settled, you shall be acquainted with every thing.

Love. Sorry they are coming!—must be discovered!—What can this mean? Is it possible you can have any reasons that need be concealed from me?

Fan. Do not disturb yourself with conjectures—but rest assured, that though you are unable to divine the cause, the consequence of a discovery, be it what it will, cannot be attended with half the miseries of the present interval.

Love. Well, well—I mean to discover it soon, but would not do it too precipitately. I have more than once sounded Mr. Sterling about it, and will attempt him more seriously the first opportunity. But my principal hopes are these:—my relationship to Lord Ogleby, and his having placed me with your father, have been, you know, the first links in the chain of this connection between the two families; in consequence of which, I am at present in high favour with all parties; while they all remain thus well affected to me, I propose to lay our case before the old lord; and if I can prevail on him to mediate in this affair, I make no doubt but he will be able to appease your father; and, being a lord, and a man of quality, I am sure he may bring Mrs. Heidelberg into good humour at any time. Let me beg you, therefore, to have a little patience, as, you see, we are upon the very eve of a discovery, that must probably be to our advantage.

Fan. Manage it your own way. I am persuaded.

Love. But in the mean time, make yourself easy.

Fan. As easy as I can, I will. We had better not remain together any longer at present.

Enter STERLING, R. H., *as she is going.*

Ster. Hey day! who have we got here?

Fan. [*Confused.*] Mr. Lovewell, sir.

[*Crosses to R.*]

Ster. And where are you going, hussy?

Fan. To my sister's chamber, sir.

[*Exit, R. H.*]

Ster. Ah, Lovewell! What! always getting my foolish girl, yonder, into a corner?—Well, well—let us but once see her eldest sister fast married to Sir John Melvil, we'll soon provide a good husband for Fanny, I warrant you.

Love. Would to heaven, sir, you would provide her one of my recommendation!

Ster. Yourself! eh, Lovewell?

Love. With your pleasure, sir.

Ster. Mighty well!

Love. And I flatter myself, that such a proposal would not be very disagreeable to Miss Fanny.

Ster. Better and better!

Love. And if I could but obtain your consent, sir—

Ster. What! you marry Fanny? No, no, that will never do, Lovewell: you're a good boy, to be sure—I have a great value for you, but can't think of you for a son-in-law.—There's no stuff in the case; no money, Lovewell.

Love. My pretensions to fortune, indeed, are but moderate; but though not equal to splendour, sufficient to keep us above distress. Add to which, that I hope by diligence to increase it, and have love, honour—

Ster. But not the stuff, Lovewell. Add one little r. and 0 to the sum total of your fortune, and that will be the finest thing you can say to me. You know I've a regard for you, would do any thing to serve you, any thing on the footing of friendship, but—

Love. If you think me worthy of your friendship, sir, be assured that there is no instance in which I should rate your friendship so highly.

Ster. Pshaw! pshaw! that's another thing, you know. Where money or interest is concerned, friendship is quite out of the question.

Love. But where the happiness of a daughter is at stake, you would not scruple, sure, to sacrifice a little to her inclinations.

Ster. Inclinations! why you would not persuade me that the girl is in love with you—eh, Lovewell?

Love. I cannot absolutely answer for Miss Fanny, sir; but am sure that the chief happiness or misery of my life, depends entirely upon her.

Ster. Why, indeed, now, if your kinsman, Lord Ogleby, would come down handsomely for you—but that's impossible. No, no, 'twill never do—I must hear no more of this.

Come, Lovewell, promise me that I shall hear no more of this.

Love. [*Hesitating.*] I am afraid, sir, I should not be able to keep my word with you, if I did promise you.

Ster. Why, you would not offer to marry her without my consent! would you, Lovewell?

Love. [*Confused.*] Marry her, sir!

Ster. Ay, marry her, sir! I know very well, that a warm speech or two, from such a dangerous young spark as you are, would go much further towards persuading a silly girl to do what she has more than a month's mind to do, than twenty grave lectures from fathers or mothers, or uncles or aunts, to prevent her. But you would not, sure, be such a base fellow, such a treacherous young rogue, as to seduce my daughter's affections, and destroy the peace of my family in that manner. I must insist on it, that you give me your word not to marry her without my consent.

Love. Sir—I—I—as to that—I—I—beg, sir.—Pray, sir, excuse me on this subject at present.

Ster. Promise, then, that you will carry this matter no further, without my approbation.

Love. You may depend on it, sir, that it shall go no further.

Ster. Well, well, that's enough—I'll take care of the rest, I warrant you. Come, come, let's have done with this nonsense. What's doing in town?—any news upon 'change?

Love. Nothing material.

Ster. And how are stocks?

Love. Fell one and a half this morning.

Ster. Well, well, some good news from America, and they'll be up again. But how are Lord Ogleby and Sir John Melvil?—when are we to expect them?

Love. Very soon, sir. I came on purpose to bring you their commands. Here are letters from both of them.

[*Giving letters.*]

Ster. Let me see—let me see—'Slife, how his lordship's letter is perfumed!—it takes my breath away. [*Opening it.*] And French paper, too!—with a slippery gloss on it that dazzles one's eyes. [*Reading.*] “*My dear Mr. Sterling*”—Mercy on me! his lordship writes a worse hand than a boy at his exercise. But how's this? eh!—“*With you to-night—lawyers to-morrow morning.*” To-night! that's sudden, indeed. Where's my sister Heidelberg? She should know of this immediately. [*Calling the Servants.*] Here—John! Harry! Thomas!—Harbye, Lovewell!

Love. Sir!

Ster. Mind, now, how I'll entertain his lordship and Sir John. We'll shew your fellows at the other end of the town, how we live in the city:—they shall eat gold, and drink gold, and lie in gold. [*Calling.*] Here, cook! butler!—What signifies your birth, and education, and titles!—Money, money!—that's the stuff that makes the great man in this country.

Love. Very true, sir.

Ster. True, sir!—Why then have done with your nonsense of love and matrimony. You're not rich enough to think of a wife yet. A man of business should mind nothing but his business.—Where are these fellows? [*Calling.*] John! Thomas!—Get an estate, and a wife will follow of course. Ah, Lovewell! an English merchant is the most respectable character in the universe. 'Slife, man, a rich English merchant may make himself a match for the daughter of a nabob.—Where are all my rascals? Here, William! [*Exit R., calling.*]

Love. So—as I suspected—Quite averse to the match, and likely to receive the news of it with great displeasure. What's best to be done. Let me see:—suppose I get Sir John Melvil to interest himself in this affair. He may mention it to Lord Ogleby with a better grace than I can, and more probably prevail on him to interfere in it. I can open my mind also more freely to Sir John. He told me, when I left him in town, that he had something of consequence to communicate, and that I could be of use to him. I am glad of it; for the confidence he reposes in me, and the service I may do him, will ensure me his good offices.—Poor Fanny! it hurts me to see her so uneasy, and her making a mystery of the cause, adds to my anxiety. Something must be done upon her account; for, at all events, her solicitude shall be removed. [*Exit L. H.*]

SCENE II.—*Miss Sterling's Dressing Room. Toilette-table R. H., chair on each side; 2 chairs, L. H.; loo-table, and two chairs, L. H.; toilette-stool. R. H.*

MISS STERLING, R., and FANNY, L. of table, discovered.

Miss S. O, my dear sister, say no more!—This is downright hypocrisy.—You shall never convince me that you don't envy me beyond measure.—Well, after all, it is extremely natural—It is impossible to be angry with you.

Fan. Indeed, sister, you have no cause.

Miss S. And you really pretend not to envy me?

Fan. Not in the least.

Miss S. And you don't in the least wish that you was just in my situation?

Fan. No indeed, I don't. Why should I?

Miss S. Why should you? What! on the brink of marriage, fortune, title—But I had forgot—There's that dear sweet creature Mr. Lovewell, in the case.—You would not break your faith with your true-love now, for the world, I warrant you.

Fan. Mr. Lovewell!—always Mr. Lovewell!—Lord what signifies Mr. Lovewell, sister?

Miss S. Pretty peevish soul!—O, my dear, grave, romantic sister!—a perfect philosopher in petticoats! Love and a cottage!—eh, Fanny.—Ah, give me indifference, and a coach and six!

Fan. And why not a coach and six without the indifference?—But pray when is this happy marriage of yours to be celebrated? I long to give you joy.

Miss S. In a day or two—I cannot tell exactly—Oh, my dear sister!—[*Aside.*] I must mortify her a little.—I know you have a pretty taste. Pray give me your opinion of my jewels. How do you like the style of this esclavage?

[*Showing jewels.*]

Fan. Extremely handsome, indeed, and well fancied.

Miss S. What d'ye think of these bracelets? I shall have a miniature of my father, set round with diamonds, to one, and Sir John's to the other.—And this pair of ear-rings! set transparent!—Here, the tops, you see, will take off, to wear in a morning, or in an undress—how d'ye like them?

[*Shows jewels.*]

Fan. Very much, I assure you. Bless me, sister, you have a prodigious quantity of jewels—you'll be the very queen of diamonds.

Miss S. Ha, ha, ha! very well, my dear!—I shall be as fine as a little queen, indeed.—I have a bouquet to come home to-morrow, made up of diamonds, and rubies, and emeralds, and topazes, and amethysts—jewels of all colours, green, red, blue, yellow, intermixed—the prettiest thing you ever saw in your life! The jeweller says I shall set out with as many diamonds as any body in town, except Lady Brilliant, and Polly What-d'ye-call-it, lord Squander's kept mistress.

Fan. But what are your wedding-clothes, sister?

Miss S. O, white and silver, to be sure, you know. I bought them at Sir Joseph Lutestring's; and sat above an hour in the parlour behind the shop, consulting Lady Lutestring, about gold and silver stuffs, on purpose to mortify her.

Fan. Fie, sister! how could you be so shamelessly provoking?

Miss S. Oh, I have no patience with the pride of your city-knights' ladies. Did you ever observe the airs of Lady Lutestring, dressed in the richest brocade out of her husband's shop, playing crown whist at Haberdasher's-hall—whilst the civil, smirking Sir Joseph, with a snug wig trimmed round his broad face, as close as a new cut yew hedge, and his shoes so black that they shine again, stands all day in his shop, fastened to his counter like a bad shilling?

Fan. Indeed, indeed, sister, this is too much—If you talk at this rate, you will be absolutely a bye-word in the city—You must never venture on the inside of Temple-bar again.

Miss S. Never do I desire it—never, my dear Fanny, I promise you. Oh, how I long to be transported to the dear regions of Grosvenor-square—far, far, from the dull districts of Aldersgate, Cheap, Candlewick, and Farringdon Without and Within!—my heart goes pit-a-pat, at the very idea of being introduced at court!—gilt chariot!—pieballed horses!—laced liveries!—and then the whispers buzzing round the circle: “Who is that young lady? Who is she?”—“Lady Melvil, ma'am!”—Lady Melvil! [*Crosses to R. H.*] My ears tingle at the sound. And then, at dinner, instead of my father perpetually asking—“Any news upon 'Change?”—to cry—“Well, Sir John! any thing new from Arthur's?”—or to say to some other woman of quality, “Was your ladyship at the duchess of Rubber's, last night?—Did you call in at lady Thunder's?—In the immensity of crowd, I swear I did not see you.—Scarcely a soul at the opera, last Saturday—Shall I see you at Carlisle-house, next Thursday?”—Oh, the dear beau monde! I was born to move in the sphere of the great world. [*Crosses to L. H.*]

Fan. And so in the midst of all this happiness, you have no compassion for me—no pity for us poor mortals in common life.

Miss S. [*Affectedly.*] You?—You're above pity. You would not change conditions with me.—You're over head and ears in love, you know. Nay, for that matter, if Mr. Lovewell and you come together, as I doubt not you will, you will live very comfortable, I dare say. He will conduct his business—you'll employ yourself in the delightful care of your family—and once in a season, perhaps, you'll sit together in a front box at a benefit play, as we used to do at our dancing master's, you know—and perhaps I may meet you in the summer, with some other citizens, at Tunbridge. For my part, I shall always entertain a proper regard for my relations.—You shan't want my countenance, I assure you.

Fan. Oh, you're too kind, sister!

Enter MRS. HEIDELBERG, R. H.

Mrs. H. [*At entering.*] Here this evening!—I vow and pertest we shall scarce have time to provide for them—Oh, my dear! [*To Miss Sterling.*] I am glad to see you're not quite in a dish-abilite. Lord Ogleby and Sir John Melvil will be here to-night.

Miss S. To-night, ma'am?

Mrs. H. Yes, my dear, to-night.—Oh, put on a smarter cap, and change those ordinary ruffles!—Lord, I have such a deal to do, I shall scarce have time to slip on my Italian lute-string?—Where is this dawdle of a housekeeper?

Enter TRUSTY, R. H.

Oh, here, Trusty! do you know that people of qualaty are expected here this evening?

Trus. Yes, ma'am.

Mrs. H. Well—Do you be sure now that every thing is done in the most genteelest manner—and to the honour of the family.

Trus. Yes, ma'am.

Mrs. H. Well—but mind what I say to you.

Trus. Yes, ma'am.

Mrs. H. His lordship is to lie in the chintz bed-chamber—d'ye hear?—and Sir John in the blue damask room—his lordship's valet-de-chamb in the opposite—

Trus. But Mr. Lovewell is come down—and you know that's his room, ma'am.

Mrs. H. Well—well—Mr. Lovewell may make shift—or get a bed at the George. [*Trusty is going, R.*] But harkye, Trusty!

Trus. Ma'am!

Mrs. H. Get the great dining-room in order as soon as possible. [*Trusty going.*] Unpaper the curtains, take the kivers off the couch and the chairs, and, do you hear—take the china dolls out of my closet, and put them on the mantlepiece, immediately—

Trus. Yes, ma'am.

[*Going.*]

Mrs. H. And mind, as soon as his lordship comes in, be sure you set all their heads a nodding.

Trus. Yes, ma'am.

[*Going.*]

Mrs. H. Be gone, then! fly, this instant!—Where's my brother Sterling?

Trus. Talking to the butler, ma'am.

Mrs. H. Very well.—And Trusty!

Trus. Yes, ma'am.

Mrs. H. Oh, nothing—that will do. [*Exit Trusty, R. H.*] Miss Fanny, I pertest I did not see you before—Lord, child, what's the matter with you?

Fan. With me! nothing, ma'am.

Mrs. H. Bless me! Why your face is as pale, and black, and yellow—of fifty colours, I vow and pertest. And then you have drest yourself as loose and as big—I declare there is not such a thing to be seen now, as a young woman with a fine waist—you all make yourselves as round as Mrs. Deputy Barter. Go, child! You know the qualaty will be here by-and-by. Go, and make yourself a little more fit to be seen. [*Exit Fanny, L. H.*] She is gone away in tears—absolutely crying, I vow and pertest. This ridicalous love! we must put a stop to it. It makes a perfect nataral of the girl.

Miss S. Poor soul! she can't help it. [*Affectedly, down R.*]

Mrs. H. Well, my dear! Now I shall have an opportunity of convincing you of the absurdity of what you was telling me, concerning Sir John Melvil's behaviour to you.

Miss S. Oh, it gives me no manner of uneasiness. But indeed, ma'am, I cannot be persuaded but that Sir John is an extremely cold lover. Such distant civility, grave looks, and lukewarm professions of esteem for me and the whole family! I have heard of flames and darts; but Sir John's is a passion of mere ice and snow.

Mrs. H. Oh, fie, my dear! I am perfectly ashamed of you. What you complain of as coldness and indiffarence, is nothing but the extreme gentility of his address; an exact pictur of the manners of qualaty.

Miss S. O, he is the very mirror of complaisance; full of formal bows and set speeches! I declare, if there was any violent passion on my side, I should be quite jealous of him.

Mrs. H. Jealous!—I say, jealous indeed.—Jealous of who, pray?

Miss S. My sister Fanny. She seems a much greater favourite than I am; and he pays her infinitely more attention, I assure you.

Mrs. H. Lord! d'ye think a man of fashion, as he is, cannot distinguish between the genteel and the vulgar part of the family!—Between you and your sister, for instance; or me and my brother?—Be advised by me, child; it is all politeness and good-breeding. Nobody knows the qualaty better than I do.

Miss S. In my mind, the old lord, his uncle, has ten times more gallantry about him, than Sir John. He is full of attentions to the ladies; and smiles, and grins, and leers, and

ogles, and fills every wrinkle of his old wizen face with comical expressions of tenderness. I think he would make an admirable sweetheart.

Enter STERLING, L. H.

Ster. [*At entering.*] No fish?—Why the pond was dragged but yesterday morning. There's carp and tench in the boat. Plague on't, if that dog Lovewell had any thought, he would have brought down a turbot, or some of the land-carriage mackerel.

Mrs. H. [*Crosses c.*] Lord, brother, I am afraid his lordship and Sir John, will not arrive while it is light.

Ster. I warrant you.—But pray, sister Heidelberg, let the turtle be dressed to-morrow, and some venison—and let the gardener cut some pine-apples—and get out some ice.—I'll answer for wine, I warrant you. I'll give them such a glass of champagne, as they never drank in their lives—no, not at a duke's table.

Mrs. H. Pray now, brother, mind how you behave; I am always in a fright about you, with people of qualaty. Take care that you don't fall asleep directly after supper, as you commonly do. Take a good deal of snuff, and that will keep you awake.—And don't burst out with your horrible loud horse laughs. It is monstus vulgar.

Canton. [*Without.*] So—Mons. Sterling this way, eh?

Ster. Never fear, sister!—Who have we here?

Mrs. H. It is Mons. Cantoon, the Swish gentleman that lives with his lordship, I vow and pertest.

Enter CANTON, L. H.

Ster. Ah, mounseer! your servant. I am very glad to see you, mounseer.

Can. Mosh oblige to Mons. Sterling.—Ma'am, I am yours—*Matemoiselle, I am your—* [*Bowing round.*]

Mrs. H. Your humble servant, Mr. Cantoon!

Can. Kiss your hand, matam!

Ster. Well, mounseer! and what news of your good family! When are we to see his lordship and Sir John?

Can. [*L.*] Mons. Sterling! milor Ogleby and Sir Jean Melvil, will be here in one quarter hour.

Mrs. H. What sir! what do you say!

Ster. I am glad to hear it.

Mrs. H. O, I am perdigious glad to hear it. Being so late, I was afeard of some accident. Will you please to have any thing, Mr. Cantoon, after your journey?

Can. No, tank you, ma'am.

Mrs. H. Shall I go and show you the apartments, sir?

Can. You do me great honour, ma'am. [*Crosses R.*]

Mrs. H. Come then!—come my dear. [*To Miss S.*]

[*Exeunt Can. Mrs. H. Miss S. and Ster. R. H.*]

END OF ACT I.

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*An Anti-room to Lord Ogleby's Bed-chamber. Table with chocolate, and small case for medicines, R.—Another table, L. H. with glass, rouge, tweezers, snuff-box, pocket-glass, and cakes of chocolate.—Chairs.*

BRUSH, L. H. and CHAMBERMAID, R. H. discovered.

Brush. You shall stay, my dear, I insist upon it.

Cham. Nay, pray sir, don't be so positive; I cannot stay indeed.

Brush. You shall drink one cup to our better acquaintance.

Cham. I seldom drinks chocolate; and, if I did, one has no satisfaction, with such apprehensions about one—if my lord should wake, or the Swish gentleman should see one, or Madam Heidelberg should know of it, I should be frightened to death. Besides, I have had my tea already, this morning—I'm sure I hear my lord. [*In a fright.*]

Brush. No, no, madam, don't flutter yourself—the moment my lord wakes, he rings his bell; which I answer sooner or later, as it suits my convenience.

Cham. But should he come upon us without ringing—

Brush. I'll forgive him if he does—this key—[*Takes a vial out of the case.*] locks him up, till I please to let him out.

Cham. Law, sir! that's potecary's stuff.

Brush. It is so—but without this he can no more get out of bed, than he can read without spectacles—[*Sips.*] What with qualms, age, rheumatism, and a few surfeits in his youth, he must have a great deal of brushing, oiling, screwing, and winding-up, to set him a-going for the day.

Cham. [*Sips.*] That's prodigious, indeed—[*Sips.*] My lord seems quite in a decay.

Brush. Yes, he's quite a spectacle. [*Sips.*] A mere corpse, till he is revived and refreshed from our little magazine here. When the restorative pills and cordial waters warm his stomach, and get into his head, vanity frisks in his heart, and then he sets up for the lover, the rake, and the fine gentleman.

Cham. [*Sips.*] Poor gentleman! but should the Swish gentleman come upon us! [*Frightened.*]

Srush. Why, then the English gentleman would be very

angry. No foreigner must break in upon my privacy. [*Sips.*] But I can assure you, Monsieur Canton is otherwise employed—He is obliged to skim the cream of half a score newspapers for my lord's breakfast—ha, ha, ha! Pray, madam, drink your cup peaceably. My lord's chocolate is remarkably good; he won't touch a drop, but what comes from Italy.

Cham. [*Sipping.*] 'Tis very fine, indeed! [*Sips.*] and charmingly perfumed—it smells for all the world like our young ladies' dressing-boxes.

Brush. You have an excellent taste, madam; and I must beg of you to accept of a few cakes for your own drinking; [*Takes them out of a drawer in the table.*] and, in return, I desire nothing but to taste the perfume of your lips. [*Kisses her.*] A small return of favours, madam, will make, I hope, this country and retirement, agreeable to us both. [*He bows, she courtesies.*] Come, pray sit down. Your young ladies are fine girls, faith; [*Sips.*] though, upon my soul, I'm quite of my old lord's mind about them; and were I inclined to matrimony, I should take the youngest. [*Sips.*]

Cham. Miss Fanny!—the most affablest, and the most best-natur'd creter—

Brush. And the eldest a little haughty or so—

Cham. More haughtier and prouder than Saturn himself—but this I say quite confidential to you; for one would not hurt a young lady's marriage, you know. [*Sips.*]

Brush. By no means; but you cannot hurt it with us—we don't consider tempers—we want money, Mrs. Nancy. Give us plenty of that, we'll abate you a great deal in other particulars—ha, ha, ha! [*Bell rings.*]

Cham. Bless me, here's somebody! Oh, 'tis my lord!—Well, your servant, Mr. Brush—I'll clean the cups in the next room.

Brush. Do so—but never mind the bell—I sha'n't go this half hour. Will you drink tea with me in the afternoon?

Cham. Not for the world, Mr. Brush. I'll be here to set all things to rights; but I must not drink tea, indeed—and so your servant. [*Exit with tea-board, L. H. Bell rings again.*]

Brush. Yes, yes, I hear you. It is impossible to stupify one's self in the country for a week, without some little flirting with the Abigails;—this is much the handsomest wench in the house, except the old citizen's youngest daughter, and I have not time enough to lay a plan for her. [*Bell rings.*] O, my lord— [*Going.*]

Enter CANTON, C. D., with newspapers in his hand.

Can. Monsieur Brush! Maistre Brush!—my lor stirra yet?

Brush. He has just rung his bell—I am going to him.

[*Exit, c. D.*]

Can. Depechez vous donc. [*Puts on his spectacles.*] I wish de deveil had all dese papiers—I forget as fast as I read—de Advertise put out of my head de Gazette, de Chronique, and so dey all go l'un après l'autre—I must get some nouvelle for my lor, or he'll be enragé contre moi. Voyons! [*Reads the paper.*] Here is nothing but Anti-Sejanus and advertise—

Enter Maid, L. H., with chocolate things.

Vat you want, emu?

Maid. Only the chocolate things, sir.

Can. O, ver well—dat is good girl—and very prit too.

[*Exit Maid, L. H.*]

Lord O. [*Within, c. D.*] Canton! [*Coughs.*] He, he!—Canton!—

Can. I come!—my—vat shall I do? I have no news—he will make great tintamarre?—

Lord O. [*Within.*] Canton! I say, Canton? Where are you?

Enter LORD OGLEBY, c. D., leaning on BRUSH.

Can. Here, my lor!—I ask pardon, my lor—I have not finish de papiers—

Lord O. D—n your pardon and your papiers—I want you here, Canton.

Can. [*Shuffles along.*] Den I run, dat is all.—[*Lord Ogleby leans upon Canton too, and comes forward.*]

Lord O. You Swiss are the most unaccountable mixture—you have the language and impertinence of the French, with the laziness of Dutchmen. [*Brush brings down large easy chair.*]

Can. 'Tis very true, my lor—I can't help—

Lord O. [*Cries out.*] O Diavolo! [*Sits, c.—very forward.*]

Can. You are not in pain, I hope, my lor?

Lord O. Indeed but I am, my lor. That vulgar fellow, Sterling, with his city politeness, would force me down his slope last night to see a clay-coloured ditch, which he calls a canal; and what with the dew and the east wind, my hips and shoulders are absolutely screwed to my body.

Can. A littel veritable eau d'arquibusade vil set all to right. [*Lord Ogleby sits down, and Brush gives chocolate.*]

Lord O. Where are the palsy drops, Brush?

Brush. [*L. H.*] Here, my lord.

[*Pours out.*]

Lord O. Quelle nouvelle avez vous, Canton?

Can. [*R. H.*] A great deal of papie, but no news at all.

Lord O. What! nothing at all, yer stupid fellow!

Can. Oui, my lor, I have little advertise here vil give you more plaisir den all de lies about nothing at all. La viola!

[*Puts on his spectacles.*]

Lord O. Come, read it, Canton, with good emphasis, and good discretion.

Can. I vil, my lor. [*Reads.*] “*Dere is no question but that the cosmetique royale vil utterly take away all heats, pimples, frecks, oder eruptions of de skin, and likewise de wrinque of old age, &c. &c.*”—A great deal more, my lor.—“*Be sure to ask for de cosmetique royale, signed by the docteur own hand. Dere is more raison for dis caution dan good men vil tink.*” Eh bien, my lor.

Lord O. Eh bien, Canton!—Will you purchase any?

Can. For you, my lor?

Lord O. For me, you old puppy? for what?

Can. My lor!

Lord O. Do I want cosmetics?

Can. My lor!

Lord O. Look in my face—come, be sincere. Does it want the assistance of art?

Can. [*With his spectacles.*] En verité non—’Tis very smoose and brillian—but tote dat you might take a little by way of prevention.

Lord O. You thought like an old fool, monsieur, as you generally do. The surfeit water, Brush! [*Brush pours out.*] What do you think, Brush, of this family we are going to be connected with?—eh!

Brush. [*L.*] Very well to marry in, my lord; but it would never do to live with.

Lord O. You are right, Brush,—there is no washing the blackmoor white. Mr. Sterling will never get rid of Blackfriars—always taste of the Borachio—and the poor woman, his sister, is so busy, and so notable, to make one welcome, that I have not yet got over the fatigue of her first reception; it almost amounted to suffocation! I think the daughters are tolerable. Where’s my cephalic snuff?

[*Brush gives him a box from toilette table.*]

Can. Dey tink so of you, my lor, for dey look at nothing else, ma foi.

Lord O. Did they? Why I think they did a little—Where’s my glass? [*Brush brings down toilette-table on Lord Ogleby’s L. H.*] The youngest is delectable. [*Takes snuff.*]

Can. O oui, my lor, very delect, inteed; she made doux yeux at you, my lor.

Lord O. She was particular.—The eldest, my nephew’s

lady, will be a most valuable wife ; she has all the vulgar spirits of her father and aunt, happily blended with the termagant qualities of her deceased mother.—Some peppermint water, Brush.—How happy is it, Canton, for young ladies in general, that people of quality overlook every thing in a marriage contract, but their fortune.

Can. Cest bien heureux, et commode aussi.

Lord O. Brush, give me that pamphlet by my bed-side.— [*Brush goes for it, c. d.*] Canton, do you wait in the anti-chamber, and let nobody interrupt me till I call you.

Can. Mush good may do your lordship. [*Exit, R. H.*]

Lord O. [*To Brush, who brings the pamphlet.*] And now, Brush, leave me a little to my studies. [*Exit Brush, R. H.*]—What can I possibly do among these women here, with this confounded rheumatism ! It is a most grievous enemy to gallantry and address. [*Gets off his chair.*] He ! courage, my lor ! by heavens, I'm another creature. [*Hums and dances a little, before a cheval-glass, R. H.*] It will do, faith. Bravo, my lor ! these girls have absolutely inspired me—If they are for a game of romps—me viola pret ! [*Sings and dances—appearing to be suddenly seized with pain, staggers to, and sinks into easy chair, L.*] Oh ! that's an ugly twinge—but it's gone.—I have rather too much of the lily this morning, in my complexion ; a faint tincture of the rose, will give a delicate spirit to my eyes for the day. [*Unlocks a drawer at the bottom of the glass, and takes out rouge : while he is painting himself, a knocking at the door.*] Who's there ? I won't be disturbed.

Can. [*Within, R.*] My lor ! my lor ! here is Monsieur Sterling, to pay his devoir to you this morn in your chambre.

Lord O. [*Softly.*] What a fellow ! [*Aloud.*] I am extremely honoured by Mr. Sterling.—Why don't you see him in, monsieur ? [*Softly.*] I wish he was at the bottom of his stinking canal. [*Door opens.*] Oh, my dear Mr. Sterling, you do me a great deal of honour.

Enter STERLING and LOVEWELL, R. H.

Ster. I hope my lord, that your lordship slept well last night—I believe there are no better beds in Europe than I have—I spare no pains to get them, nor money to buy them. His majesty, God bless him, don't sleep upon a better out of his palace ; and if I had said in, too, I hope no treason, my lord.

Lord O. Your beds are like every thing else about you—incomparable ! They not only make one rest well, but give one spirits, Mr. Sterling.

Ster. What say you then, my lord, to another walk in the

garden You must see my water by day-light, and my walks, and my slopes, and my clumps, and my bridge, and my flowering trees, and my bed of Dutch tulips. Matters looked but dim last night, my lord. I feel the dew in my great toe—but I would put on a cut shoe, that I might be able to walk you about: I may be laid up to-morrow.

Lord O. [*Aside.*] I pray heaven you may!

Ster. What say you, my lord?

Lord O. I was saying, sir, that I was in hopes of seeing the young ladies at breakfast. Mr. Sterling, they are, in my mind, the finest tulips in this part of the world, he, he, he!

Can. [L.] Bravissimo, my lor! ha, ha, ha, ha!

[*Lord Ogleby stops him.*]

Ster. They shall meet your lordship in the garden—we won't lose our walk for them; I'll take you a little round before breakfast, and a larger before dinner; and in the evening, you shall go the grand tour, as I call it, ha, ha, ha!

Lord O. Not a foot I hope, Mr. Sterling: consider your gout, my good friend—you'll certainly be laid by the heels, for your politeness, he, he, he!

Can. Ha, ha, ha! 'tis admirable, en verité!

[*Laughs very heartily—Lord O. stops him.*]

Ster. If my young man [*To Lovewell.*] here, would but laugh at my jokes, which he ought to do, as mounseer does at yours, my lord, we should be all life and mirth.

Lord O. What say you, Canton, will you take my kinsman into your tuition? You have certainly the most companionable laugh; and never out of tune.

Can. But when your lordship is out of spirits.

Lord O. Well said, Canton! But here comes my nephew, to play his part.

Enter SIR JOHN MELVIL, R. H.

Well, Sir John, what news from the island of love? Have you been sighing and serenading this morning?

Sir J. I am glad to see your lordship in such spirits this morning.

Lord O. I am sorry to see you so dull, sir. What poor things, Mr. Sterling, these very young fellows are! They make love with faces, as if they were burying the dead—though indeed a marriage sometimes may be properly called a burying of the living—eh, Mr. Sterling?

Ster. Not if they have enough to live upon, my lord—Ha, ha, ha!

Can. Dat is all Mons. Stirling tink of.

Sir J. [*Apart to Lovewell.*] Pr'ythee, Lovewell, come with

me into the garden; I have something of consequence for you, and I must communicate it directly.

Love. [*Apart.*] We'll go together. If your lordship and Mr. Sterling please, we'll prepare the ladies to attend you in the garden. [*Exeunt Sir John Melvil and Lovewell, R. H.*]

Ster. My girls are always ready; I make them rise soon, and to bed early; their husbands shall have them with good constitutions and good fortunes, if they have nothing else, my lord.

Lord O. [*L.*] Fine things, Mr. Sterling.

Ster. Fine things indeed, my lord!—Ah, my lord, had you not run off your speed in your youth, you had not been so crippled in your age, my lord.

Lord O. Very pleasant, he, he, he! [*Half laughing.*]

Ster. [*R.*] Here's mounseer, now, I suppose is pretty near your lordship's standing; but having little to eat, and little to spend in his own country, he'll wear three of your lordship out—eating and drinking kills us all.

Lord O. Very pleasant, I protest! [*Aside.*] What a vulgar dog!

Can. [*L.*] My lor so old as me! He is chicken to me—and look like a boy to pauvre me.

Ster. Ha, ha, ha! Well said, mounseer; keep to that, and you'll live in any country of the world—ha, ha, ha! But, my lord, I will wait upon you in the garden: we have but a little time to breakfast. I'll go for my hat and cane, fetch a little walk with you, my lord, and then for the hot rolls and butter!

[*Exit, R. H.*]

Lord O. I shall attend you with pleasure.—Hot rolls and butter in July! I sweat with the thoughts of it—

Can. C'est un barbare.

Lord O. He is a vulgar dog; and if there was not so much money in the family, which I can't do without, I would leave him and his hot rolls and butter directly. Come along, monsieur!

[*Exeunt, R. H.*]

SCENE II.—*The Garden.*

Enter LOVEWELL and SIR JOHN MELVIL, L. H.

Love. In my room this morning? Impossible!

Sir J. Before five this morning, I promise you.

Love. On what occasion?

Sir J. I was so anxious to disclose my mind to you, that I could not sleep in my bed—but I found that you could not sleep neither. The bird was flown, and the nest long since cold. Where was you, Lovewell?

Love. Pooh! pr'ythee! ridiculous!

Sir J. Come now, which was it; Miss Sterling's maid? a pretty little rogue!—or Miss Fanny's Abigail? a sweet soul too—or—

Love. Nay, nay, leave trifling, and tell me your business.

Sir J. Well, but where was you, Lovewell?

Love. Walking—writing—what signifies where I was?

Sir J. Walking! yes, I dare say. It rained as hard as it could pour. Sweet, refreshing showers to walk in! No, no, Lovewell. Now would I give twenty pounds to know which of the maids—

Love. But your business! your business, Sir John!

Sir J. Let me a little into the secrets of the family.

Love. Pshaw!

Sir J. [*Aside.*] Poor Lovewell! he can't bear it, I see. She charged you not to kiss and tell, eh, Lovewell?—However, though you will not honour me with your confidence, I'll venture to trust you with mine.—What do you think of Miss Sterling?

Love. What do I think of Miss Sterling?

Sir J. Ay, what do you think of her?

Love. An odd question!—but I think her a smart, lively girl, full of mirth and sprightliness.

Sir J. All mischief and malice, I doubt.

Love. How?

Sir J. But her person—what d'ye think of that?

Love. Pretty and agreeable.

Sir J. A little grisette thing.

Love. What is the meaning of all this?

Sir J. I'll tell you. You must know, Lovewell, notwithstanding all appearances—[*A loud laugh heard without.*] We are interrupted.—When they are gone, I'll explain.

Enter CANTON, LORD OGLEBY, STERLING, MRS. HEIDELBERG, MISS STERLING, and FANNY, L. H. U. E.

Lord O. Great improvements indeed, Mr. Sterling! wonderful improvements! The four seasons in lead, the flying Mercury, and the bason with Neptune in the middle, are in the very extreme of fine taste.

Ster. [R.] The chief pleasure of a country house is to make improvements, you know, my lord. I spare no expense, not I. This is quite another-guess sort of a place than it was when I first took it, my lord. We were surrounded with trees—I cut down above fifty to make the lawn before the house, and let in the wind and the sun—smack smooth—as you see. Then I made a green-house out

of the old laundry, and turned the brew-house into a pinery. The high octagon summer-house, you see yonder, is raised on the mast of a ship, given me by an East Indian captain, who has turned many a thousand of my money. It commands the whole road. All the coaches, and chariots, and chaises, pass and repass under your eye. I'll mount you up there in the afternoon, my lord.

Lord O. No, I thank you, Mr. Sterling.

Ster. 'Tis the pleasantest place in the world to take a pipe and a bottle, and so you shall say, my lord.

Lord O. Ay, or a bowl of punch, or a can of flip, Mr. Sterling; for it looks like a cabin in the air. If flying chairs were in use, the captain might make a voyage to the Indies in it still, if he had but a fair wind.

Can. Ha, ha, ha, ha!

Mrs. H. [L.] My brother's a little comical in his ideas, my lord!—But you'll excuse him. I have a little Gothic dairy, fitted up entirely in my own taste.—In the evening, I shall hope for the honour of your lordship's company to take a dish of tea there, or a sullabub warm from the cow.

Lord O. I have every moment a fresh opportunity of admiring the elegance of Mrs. Heidelberg—the very flower of delicacy and cream of politeness.

Mrs. H. [*Leers at Lord Ogleby.*] O, my lord!

Lord O. [*Leers at Mrs. Heidelberg.*] O, madam!

Ster. How d'ye like these close walks, my lord?

Lord O. A most excellent serpentine! It forms a perfect maze, and winds like a true-lover's knot.

Ster. Ay, here's none of your straight lines here—but all taste—zigzag—crinkum-crankum—in and out—right and left—to and again—twisting and turning like a worm, my lord!

Lord O. Admirably laid out, indeed, Mr. Sterling; one can hardly see an inch beyond one's nose any where in these walks. You are a most excellent economist of your land, and make a little go a great way. It lies together in as small parcels, as if it was placed in pots out at your window in Grace-church-street.

Can. Ha, ha, ha, ha!

Lord O. What d'ye laugh at, Canton?

Can. Ah! que cette similitude est drole! so clever what you say, mi lor.

Lord O. [*To Fanny.*] You seem mightily engaged, madam. Wha. are those pretty hands so busily employed about?

[*Sterling and Mrs. H. go up, L.*]

Fan. [R.] Only making up a nosegay, my lord! Will your lordship do me the honour of accepting it? [*Presents it.*]

Lord O. [L.] I'll wear it next my heart, madam. [*Aside.*] I see the young creature doats on me!

Miss S. [L.] Lord, sister! you've loaded his lordship with a bunch of flowers as big as the cook or the nurse carries to town, on a Monday morning, for a beauport. [*Crosses to Lord O.—Fanny crosses behind to L.*] Will your lordship give me leave to present you with this rose, and a sprig of sweet-briar?

Lord O. The truest emblems of yourself, madam: all sweetness and poignancy. [*Aside.*] A little jealous, poor soul!

Ster. Now, my lord, if you please, I'll carry you to see my ruins.

Mrs. H. You'll absolutely fatigue his lordship with overwalking, brother!

Lord O. Not at all, madam! We're in the garden of Eden, you know; in the region of perpetual spring, youth, and beauty. [*Leers at the women.*]

Mrs. H. [*Aside.*] Quite the man of qualaty, I vow and pertest.

Can. [R.] Take a my arm, mi lor.

[*Lord Ogleby leans on him.*]

Ster. I'll only show his lordship my ruins, and the cascade, and the Chinese bridge, and then we'll go in to breakfast.

Lord O. Ruins did you say, Mr. Sterling?

Ster. Ay, ruins, my lord! and they are reckoned very fine ones, too. You would think them ready to tumble on your head. It has just cost me a hundred and fifty pounds to put my ruins in thorough repair. This way, if your lordship pleases. [*Crosses to R.*]

Lord O. [*Going, stops.*] What steeple's that we see yonder?—the parish church, I suppose.

Ster. Ha, ha, ha! that's admirable. It is no church at all, my lord: it is a spire that I have built against a tree, a field or two off, to terminate the prospect. One must always have a church, or an obelisk, or something to terminate the prospect, you know. That's a rule in taste, my lord.

Lord O. Very ingenious, indeed! For my part, I desire no finer prospect than this I see before me. [*Leers at the women.*] Simple, yet varied; bounded, yet extensive. Get away, Canton! [*Pushes Canton away.*] I want no assistance—I'll walk with the ladies.

Ster. This way, my lord.

Lord O. Lead on, sir; we young folks here will follow you.

Madam! Miss Sterling! Miss Fanny! I attend you. [Mrs. H. crosses to Sterling, who gives her his arm, and exeunt, R. H., followed by Lord O., gallanting the ladies.]

Can. [Following.] He is cock o'de game, ma foi. [Exit, R.]

Sir J. Harkye, Lovewell; you must not go—at length, thank heaven! I have an opportunity to unbosom. I know you are faithful. Lovewell, and flatter myself you would rejoice to serve me

Love. Be assured you may depend upon me.

Sir J. You must know, then, notwithstanding all appearances, that this treaty of marriage between Miss Sterling and me, will come to nothing.

Love. [L.] How?

Sir J. It will be no match, Lovewell.

Love. No match?

Sir J. No.

Love. You amaze me. What should prevent it?

Sir J. I.

Love. You! Wherefore?

Sir J. I don't like her.

Love. Very plain indeed. I never supposed that you were extremely devoted to her from inclination, but thought you always considered it as a matter of convenience rather than affection.

Sir J. Very true. I came into the family without any impressions on my mind—with an unimpassioned indifference, ready to receive one woman as soon as another. I looked upon love, serious sober love, as a chimera, and marriage as a thing of course, as you know most people do. But I, who was lately so great an infidel in love, am now one of its sincerest votaries. In short, my defection from Miss Sterling proceeds from the violence of my attachment to another.

Love. [L.] Another! So, so! here will be fine work. And pray who is she?

Sir J. [R.] Who is she! who can she be but Fanny—the tender, amiable, engaging Fanny?

Love. Fanny! what Fanny?

Sir J. Fanny Sterling, her sister. Is not she an angel, Lovewell?

Love. Her sister? Confusion!—You must not think of it, Sir John.

Sir J. Not think of it? I can think of nothing else. Nay, tell me, Lovewell, was it possible for me to be indulged in a perpetual intercourse with two such objects as Fanny and her sister, and not find my heart led by insensible attraction to

wards her? You seem confounded. Why don't you answer me?

Love. Indeed, Sir John, this event gives me infinite concern. Why did not you break this affair to the family before?

Sir J. Under such embarrassed circumstances as I have been can you wonder at my irresolution or perplexity? Nothing but despair, the fear of losing my dear Fanny, could bring me to a declaration even now; and yet I think I know Mr Sterling so well, that strange as my proposal may appear, if I can make it advantageous to him as a money transaction, as I am sure I can, he will certainly come into it.

Love. But even suppose he should, which I very much doubt, I don't think Fanny herself would listen to your addresses.

Sir J. You are deceived a little in that particular.

Love. You'll find I'm in the right.

Sir J. I have some little reason to think otherwise.

Love. You have not declared your passion to her already?

Sir J. Yes, I have.

Love. Indeed! And—and—and how did she receive it?

Sir J. I think it is not very easy for me to make my addresses to any woman, without receiving some little encouragement.

Love. Encouragement!—did she give you any encouragement?

Sir J. I don't know what you call encouragement—but she blushed, and cried, and desired me not to think of it any more: upon which I pressed her hand, kissed it, swore she was an angel—and I could see it tickled her to the soul.

Love. And did she express no surprise at your declaration?

Sir J. Why, faith, to say the truth, she was a little surprised—and she got away from me, too, before I could thoroughly explain myself. If I should not meet with an opportunity of speaking to her, I must get you to deliver a letter for me.

Love. I!—a letter!—I had rather have nothing—

Sir J. Nay, you promised me your assistance—and I am sure you cannot scruple to make yourself useful on such an occasion. You may, without suspicion, acquaint her verbally of my determined affection for her, and that I am resolved to ask her father's consent.

Love. As to that, I—your commands, you know—that is, if she—Indeed, Sir John, I think you are in the wrong.

Sir J. Well, well—that's my concern—Ha! there she goes.

by heaven! along that walk yonder, d'ye see? I'll go to her immediately. [Going, R.]

Love. You are too precipitate. Consider what you are doing.

Sir J. I would not lose this opportunity for the universe!

Love. Nay, pray don't go. Your violence and eagerness may overcome her spirits. The shock will be too much for her. [Detains him.]

Sir J. Nothing shall prevent me—Ha! now she turns into another walk—Let me go! [Breaks from him.] I shall lose her. [Going, turns back.] Be sure, now, to keep out of the way. If you interrupt us, I shall never forgive you.

[Exit hastily, R. H.]

Love. 'Sdeath, I can't bear this. In love with my wife! acquaint me with his passion for her! make his addresses before my face!—I shall break out before my time. This was the meaning of Fanny's uneasiness, She could not encourage him—I am sure she could not. Ha! they are turning into the walk, and coming this way. Shall I leave the place? leave him to solicit my wife? I can't submit to it. They come nearer and nearer. If I stay, it will look suspicious; it may betray us, and incense him. They are here—I must go—I am the most unfortunate fellow in the world! [Exit, L.]

Re-enter FANNY and SIR JOHN MELVIL, R. H.

Fan. Leave me, Sir John—I beseech you, leave me! Nay, why will you persist to follow me with idle solicitations, which are an affront to my character, and an injury to your own honour.

Sir J. I know your delicacy, and tremble to offend it: but let the urgency of the occasion be my excuse. Consider, madam, that the future happiness of my life depends on my present application to you. Consider that this day must determine my fate; and these are perhaps the only moments left me to incline you to warrant my passion, and to entreat you not to object to the proposals I mean to open to your father.

Fan. For shame, for shame, Sir John! Think of your previous engagements. Think of your own situation, and think of mine! What have you discovered in my conduct that might encourage you to so bold a declaration? I am shocked that you should venture to say so much, and blush that I should even dare to give it a hearing. Let me begone.

[About to go.]

Sir J. Nay, stay, madam, but one moment. Your sensibility is too great.—Engagements! what engagements have been pretended on either side, more than those of family

convenience? I went on in the trammels of a matrimonial negotiation, with a blind submission to your father and Lord Ogleby; but my heart soon claimed a right to be consulted. It has devoted itself to you, and obliges me to plead earnestly for the same tender interest in yours.

Fan. Have a care, Sir John! do not mistake a depraved will for a virtuous inclination. By these common pretences of the heart, half our sex are made fools, and a greater part of yours despise them for it.

Sir J. Affection, you will allow, is involuntary. We cannot always direct it to the object on which it should fix—but when it is once inviolably attached, inviolably as mine is to you, it often creates reciprocal affection. When I last urged you on this subject, you heard me with more temper, and I hoped with some compassion.

Fan. You deceived yourself. If I forbore to exert a proper spirit, nay, if I did not even express the quickest resentment at your behaviour, it was only in consideration of that respect I wish to pay you in honour to my sister; and be assured, sir, woman as I am, that my vanity could reap no pleasure from a triumph, that must result from the blackest treachery to her.

[*Going, R. H.*]

Sir J. [*Stops her.*] One word, and I have done.—Your sister, I verily believe, neither entertains any real affection for me, or tenderness for you. Your father, I am inclined to think, is not much concerned by means of which of his daughters the families are united. Now, as they cannot, shall not be connected, otherwise than by my union with you, why will you, from a false delicacy, oppose a measure so conducive to my happiness, and, I hope, your own? I love you, most passionately and sincerely love you—and hope to propose terms agreeable to Mr. Sterling. If, then, you don't absolutely loath, abhor, and scorn me—if there is no other happier man—

Fan. Hear me, sir; hear my final determination—Were my father and sister as insensible as you are pleased to represent them; were my heart for ever to remain disengaged to any other, I could not listen to your proposals.—What! you on the very eve of a marriage with my sister; I, living under the same roof with her, bound not only by the laws of friendship and hospitality, but even the ties of blood, to contribute to her happiness and not to conspire against her peace, the peace of a whole family, and that of my own too! Away, away, Sir John!—At such a time, and in such circumstances, your addresses only inspire me with horror. Nay, you must detain me no longer—I will go.

[*Crosses to B.*]

Sir J. Do not leave me in absolute despair!—Give me a glimpse of hope! [Fall on his knees.

Fan. I cannot.—Pray, Sir John!— [Struggles to go.

Sir J. Shall this hand be given to another! [Kisses her hand.] No, I cannot endure it.—My whole soul is yours, and the whole happiness of my life is in your power.

Re-enter MISS STERLING, R. H.

[c.—Rises.] Miss Sterling!

Miss S. I beg pardon, sir! You'll excuse me, madam!—I have broke in upon you a little unopportunately, I believe—but I did not mean to interrupt you—I only came, sir, to let you know that breakfast waits, if you have finished your morning's devotion.

Sir J. [L.] I am very sensible, Miss Sterling, that this may appear particular, but—

Miss S. O dear, Sir John, don't put yourself to the trouble of an apology—the thing explains itself.

Sir J. It will soon, madam.—In the mean time, I can only assure you of my profound respect and esteem for you, and make no doubt of convincing Mr. Sterling of the honour and integrity of my intentions.—And—and—your humble servant, madam! [Exit in confusion, L. H.

Miss S. Respect!—Insolence!—Esteem!—Very fine, truly.—And you, madam! my sweet, delicate, innocent, sentimental sister! will you convince my papa too, of the integrity of your intentions?

Fan. Do not upbraid me, my dear sister! Indeed, I don't deserve it, Believe me, you can't be more offended at his behaviour than I am; and I am sure it cannot make you half so miserable.

Miss S. Make me miserable!—You are mightily deceived madam; it gives me no sort of uneasiness, I assure you. A base fellow! As for you, miss, the pretended softness of your disposition, your artful good-nature, never imposed upon me.—I always knew you to be sly, envious, and deceitful. [Crosses R.

Fan. Indeed you wrong me.

Miss S. Oh, you are all goodness, to be sure! Did not I find him on his knees before you? Did not I see him kiss your sweet hand? Did not I hear his protestations? Was not I a witness of your dissembled modesty?—No, no, my dear? don't imagine that you can make a fool of your elder sister so easily.

Fan. Sir John I own is to blame; but I am above the thoughts of doing you the least injury.

Miss S. We shall try that, madam.—I hope, miss, you'll be able to give a better account to my papa and my aunt, for they shall both know of this matter, I promise you. [*Exit, R.*]

Fan. Mr. Lovewell must now become acquainted with Sir John's behaviour to me, and in a manner that may add to his uneasiness. My father, instead of being disposed by fortunate circumstances to forgive any transgressions, will be previously incensed against me. My sister and my aunt will become irreconcilably my enemies, and rejoice in my disgrace.—Yet, at all events, I am determined on a discovery.

[*Exit, L. H.*]

END OF ACT II.

ACT III.

SCENE I.—*A Hall.*

Enter a Servant, conducting in SERJEANT FLOWER, and COUNSELLORS TRAVERSE and TRUEMAN, L. H., all jotted.

Serv. This way if you please, gentler¹ my master is at breakfast with the family at present, but I'll let him know, and he will wait on you immediately.

Flow. Mighty well, young man, mighty well.

Serv. Please to favour me with your names, gentlemen.

Flow. Let Mr. Sterling know that Mr. Serjeant Flower, and two other gentlemen of the bar, are come to wait on him, according to his appointment.

Serv. I will, sir.

[*Going.*]

Flow. And harkye, young man—[*Servant returns.*] desire my servant—Mr. Serjeant Flower's servant, to bring in my green and gold saddle-cloth and pistols, and lay them down here in the hall, with my portmanteau.

Serv. I will, sir.

[*Exit, R. H.*]

Flow. Well, gentlemen! the settling these marriage articles falls conveniently enough—almost just on the eve of the circuits. Let me see! the Home, the Midland, and Western; ay, we can all cross the country well enough to our several destinations. Traverse, when do you begin at Hertford?

Tra. The day after to-morrow.

Flow. That is commission-day with us at Warwick too; but my clerk has retainers for every cause in the paper, so it will be time enough if I am there next morning. Besides, I've half a dozen cases that have lain by me ever since the spring assizes, and I must tack opinions to them before I see my country clients again; so I'll take the evening before me, and then *currente calamo*, as I say; eh, Traverse?

Tra. True; and pray, Mr. Serjeant, are you concerned in Jones and Thomas, at Lincoln?

Flow. I am—for the plaintiff.

Tra. And what do you think on't?

Flow. A nonsuit.

Tra. I thought so.

Flow. Oh, no manner of doubt o'nt—*luce clarius*—we have no right in us. We have but one chance.

Tra. What's that?

Flow. Why, my lord chief does not go the circuit this time, and my brother Puzzle being in the commission, the cause will come on before him.

True. [L.] Ay, that may do indeed, if you can but throw dust in the eyes of the defendant's counsel.

Flow. True.—Mr. Trueman, I think you are concerned for Lord Ogleby in this affair? [Crosses L.]

True. I am, sir. I have the honour to be related to his lordship, and hold some courts for him in Somersetshire—go the Western circuit, and attend the sessions at Exeter, merely because his lordship's interests and property lie in that part of the kingdom.

Flow. Ha!—and pray, Mr. Trueman, how long have you been called to the bar?

True. About nine years and three quarters.

Flow. Ha!—I don't know that I ever had the pleasure of seeing you before.—I wish you success, young gentleman.

Enter STERLING, R. H.

Ster. Oh, Mr. Serjeant Flower, I am glad to see you—your servant, Mr. Serjeant! gentlemen, your servant! Well, are all matters concluded? Has that snail-paced conveyancer, old Ferret, of Gray's-inn, settled the articles at last? Do you approve of what he has done? Will his tackle hold, tight, and strong?—Eh, master serjeant?

Flow. My friend Ferret's slow and sure, sir—[Crosses R. c.] But then, *serius aut citius*, as we say, sooner or later, Mr. Sterling, he is sure to put his business out of hand as he should do. My clerk has brought the writings, and all other instruments along with him; and the settlement is I believe as good a settlement as any settlement on the face of the earth!

Ster. But that d—n'd mortgage of sixty thousand pounds.—There don't appear to be any other incumbrance, I hope?

Tra. I can answer for that, sir—and that will be cleared off immediately on the payment of the first part of Miss Sterling's portion.—You agree, on your part, to come down with eighty thousand pounds.

Ster. Down on the nail. Ay, ay, my money is ready to-morrow, if he pleases—he shall have it in India bonds, or notes, or how he chooses. Your lords, and your dukes, and your people at the court end of the town, stick at payments sometimes—debts unpaid, no credit lost with them—but no fear of us substantial fellows—Eh, Mr. Serjeant?

Flow. Sir John having last term, according to agreement, levied a fine and suffered a recovery, has hitherto cut off the entail of the Ogleby estate, for the better effecting the purposes of the present intended marriage; on which above-mentioned Ogleby estate, a jointure of two thousand pounds per annum is secured to your eldest daughter, now Elizabeth Sterling, spinster; and the whole estate, after the death of the aforesaid earl, descends to the heirs male of Sir John Melvil, on the body of the aforesaid Elizabeth Sterling lawfully to be begotten.

Tra. Very true—and Sir John is to be put in immediate possession of as much of his lordship's Somersetshire estate, as lies in the manors of Hogmore and Cranford, amounting to between two and three thousand pounds per annum, and at the death of Mr. Sterling, a further sum of seventy thousand—

Enter SIR JOHN MELVIL, R. H.

Ster. Ah, Sir John! Here we are—hard at it—paving the road to matrimony.

Sir J. I am sorry to interrupt you, sir; but I hope that both you and these gentlemen will excuse me. [*To Ster.*] Having something very particular for your private ear, I took the liberty of following you, and beg you will oblige me with an audience immediately.

Ster. Ay, with all my heart!—Gentlemen, Mr. Serjeant, you'll excuse it—business must be done, you know. The writings will keep cold till to-morrow morning.

Flow. I must be at Warwick, Mr. Sterling, the day after.

Ster. Nay, nay, I shan't part with you to-night, gentlemen, I promise you. My house is very full, but I have beds for you all—beds for your servants, and stabling for all your horses. Will you take a turn in the garden, and view some of my improvements before dinner? Or will you amuse yourselves on the green, with a game at bowls and a cool tankard?—My servants shall attend you. Do you choose any other refreshment?—Call for what you please; do as you please; make yourselves quite at home, I beg of you.—Here, Thomas! Harry! William!—wait on these gentlemen!—
[*Follows the Lawyers out, L. H. bawling and talking, and then*

returns to Sir John.] And now, sir, I am entirely at your service. What are your commands with me, Sir John?

Sir J. After having carried the negotiation between our families to so great a length; after having assented so readily to all your proposals, as well as received so many instances of your cheerful compliance with the demands made on our part, I am extremely concerned, Mr. Sterling, to be the involuntary cause of any uneasiness.

Ster. Uneasiness! what uneasiness?—Where business is transacted as it ought to be, and the parties understand one another, there can be no uneasiness. You agree, on such and such conditions to receive my daughter for a wife, on the same conditions I agree to receive you as a son-in-law; and as to all the rest, it follows of course, you know, as regularly as the payment of a bill after acceptance.

Sir J. [R.] Pardon me, sir, more uneasiness has arisen than you are aware of. I am myself, at this instant, in a state of inexpressible embarrassment; Miss Sterling, I know, is extremely disconcerted too; and unless you will oblige me with the assistance of your friendship, I foresee the speedy progress of discontent and animosity through the whole family.

Ster. What the deuce is all this? I don't understand a single syllable.

Sir J. In one word, then—it will be absolutely impossible for me to fulfil my engagements in regard to Miss Sterling.

Ster. How, Sir John? Do you mean to put an affront upon my family? What! refuse to—

Sir J. Be assured, sir, that I neither mean to affront nor forsake your family. My only fear is, that you should desert me; for the whole happiness of my life depends on my being connected with your family, by the nearest and tenderest ties in the world.

Ster. Why, did not you tell me, but a moment ago, that it was absolutely impossible for you to marry my daughter?

Sir J. True—but you have another daughter, sir—

Ster. Well!

Sir J. Who has obtained the most absolute dominion over my heart. I have already declared my passion to her; nay, Miss Sterling herself is also apprised of it; and if you will but give a sanction to my present addresses, the uncommon merit of Miss Sterling will no doubt recommend her to a person of equal, if not superior rank to myself, and our families may still be allied by my union with Miss Fanny.

Ster. Mighty fine, truly! Why, what the plague do you

make of us, Sir John? Do you come to market for my daughter, like servants at a statute-fair? Do you think that I will suffer you, or any man in the world, to come into my house, like the grand seignior, and throw the handkerchief first to one, and then to t'other, just as he pleases? Do you think I drive a kind of African slave-trade with them, and—

Sir J. A moment's patience, sir! Nothing but the excess of my passion for Miss Fanny, should have induced me to take any step that had the least appearance of disrespect to any part of your family; and even now I am desirous to atone for my transgression, by making the most adequate compensation that lies in my power.

Ster. [L.] Compensation! what compensation can you possibly make in such a case as this, Sir John?

Sir J. Come, come, Mr. Sterling, I know you to be a man of sense, a man of business, a man of the world. I'll deal frankly with you; and you shall see that I don't desire a change of measures for my own gratification, without endeavouring to make it advantageous to you.

Ster. What advantage can your inconstancy be to me, Sir John?

Sir J. I'll tell you, sir.—You know that by the articles at present subsisting between us, on the day of my marriage with Miss Sterling, you agree to pay down the gross sum of eighty thousand pounds.

Ster. Well!

Sir J. Now, if you will but consent to my waving that marriage—

Ster. I agree to your waving that marriage? Impossible, Sir John!

Sir J. I hope not, sir; as, on my part, I will agree to wave my right to thirty thousand pounds of the fortune I was to receive with her.

Ster. Thirty thousand, d'ye say?

Sir J. Yes, sir; and accept of Miss Fanny with fifty thousand, instead of fourscore.

Ster. Fifty thousand—

[Pausing.]

Sir J. Instead of fourscore.

Ster. Why—why—there may be something in that.—Let me see—Fanny with fifty thousand, instead of Betsy with fourscore.—Why, to do you justice, Sir John, there is something fair and open in your proposal; and since I find you do not mean to put an affront upon the family—

Sir J. [R.] Nothing was ever further from my thoughts, Mr. Sterling. And, after all, the whole affair is nothing ex-

traordinary—such things happen every day; and as the world has only heard generally of a treaty between the families, when this marriage takes place, nobody will be the wiser, if we have but discretion enough to keep our own counsel.

Ster. True, true; and since you only transfer from one girl to the other, it is no more than transferring so much stock, you know.

Sir J. The very thing!

Ster. Odso! I had quite forgot—we are reckoning without our host here—there is another difficulty—

Sir J. You alarm me! What can that be?

Ster. I can't stir a step in this business without consulting my sister Heidelberg. The family has very great expectations from her, and we must not give her any offence.

Sir J. But if you come into this measure, surely she will be so kind as to consent—

Ster. I don't know that; Betsy is her darling, and I can't tell how far she may resent any slight that seems to be offered to her favourite niece. However, I'll do the best I can for you. You shall go and break the matter to her first, and by the time I may suppose that your rhetoric has prevailed on her to listen to reason, I will step in to re-inforce your arguments.

Sir J. I'll fly to her immediately—you promise me your assistance?

[Crosses to L.

Ster. I do.

Sir J. Ten thousand thanks for it! And now, success attend me!

[Going, L. H.

Ster. Harkye, Sir John. [Sir John returns.] Not a word of the thirty thousand to my sister, Sir John.

Sir J. O, I am dumb, I am dumb, sir.

[Ging.

Ster. You'll remember it is thirty thousand?

Sir J. To be sure I do.

Ster. But, Sir John—one thing more. [Sir John returns.] My lord must know nothing of this stroke of friendship between us.

Sir J. Not for the world. Let me alone! let me alone!

[Offering to go.

Ster. [Holding him.] And when every thing is agreed, we must give each other a bond to be held fast to the bargain.

Sir J. To be sure. A bond by all means; a bond, or whatever you please.

[Exit hastily, L. H.

Ster. I should have thought of more conditions—he's in a humour to give me every thing. Why, what mere children are your fellows of quality, that cry for a plaything one minute, and

throw it by the neck!—as changeable as the weather, and as uncertain as the stocks. Special fellows to drive a bargain; and yet they are to take care of the interest of the nation, truly. Here does this whirligig man of fashion offer to give up thirty thousand pounds in hard money, with as much indifference as if it was a China orange. Well, thus it is, that the children of citizens who have acquired fortunes, prove persons of fashion; and thus it is, that persons of fashion who have ruined their fortunes, reduce the next generation to cits.

[*Exit, L. H.*]

SCENE II.—*Another Apartment—Table and two Chairs, c.*

Enter MISS STERLING and MRS. HEIDELBERG, R. H.

Miss S. This is your gentle-looking, soft-speaking, sweet-smiling, affable Miss Fanny, for you!

Mrs. H. My Miss Fanny! I disclaim her. With all her arts, she never could insinuate herself into my good graces; and yet she has a way with her, that deceives man, woman, and child, except you and me, niece.

Miss S. O ay—she wants nothing but a crook in her hand, and a lamb under her arm, to be a perfect picture of innocence and simplicity.

Mrs. H. Just as I was drawn at Amsterdam, when I went over to visit my husband's relations.

Miss S. And then she's so mighty good to servants—"Pray, John, do this—pray, Thomas, do that—thank you, Jenny"—and then so humble to her relations—"To be sure, papa—as my aunt pleases—my sister knows best."—But with all her demureness and humility, she has no objection to be Lady Melvil, it seems, nor to any wickedness that can make her so.

Mrs. H. She Lady Melvil! Compose yourself, niece! I'll ladyship her, indeed:—a little creppin cantin—She sha'n't be the better for a farden of my money. But tell me, child, how does this intriguing with Sir John correspond with her partiality to Lovewell? I don't see a concatenation here.

Miss S. There I was deceived, madam. I took all their whisperings and stealings into corners, to be the mere attraction of vulgar minds; but, behold! their private meetings were not to contrive their own insipid happiness, but to conspire against mine. But I know whence proceeds Mr. Lovewell's resentment to me. I could not stoop to be familiar with my father's clerk, and so I have lost his interest.

Mrs. H. [R.] My spirit to a T. My dear child! [*Kisses her.*] Mr. Heidelberg lost his election for member of [parliament]

ment, because I would not demean myself to be slobbered about by drunken shoemakers, beastly cheesemongers, and tallow-chandlers. However, niece, I can't help differing a little in opinion from you in this matter. My experience and sagacity makes me still suspect that there is something more between her and that Lovewell, notwithstanding this affair of Sir John. I had my eye upon them the whole time of breakfast. Sir John, I observed, looked a little confounded, indeed, though I knew nothing of what had passed in the garden. You seemed to sit upon thorns too; but Fanny and Mr. Lovewell made quite another-guess sort of a figure! and were as perfect a picture of two distressed lovers, as if it had been drawn by Raphael Angelo. As to Sir John and Fanny, I want a matter of fact.

Miss S. [L.] Matter of fact, madam! Did not I come unexpectedly upon them? Was not Sir John kneeling at her feet, and kissing her hand? Did not he look all love, and she all confusion? Is not that matter of fact? And did not Sir John, the moment that papa was called out of the room to the lawyer-men, get up from breakfast, and follow him immediately? And I warrant you, that by this time he has made proposals to him to marry my sister, Oh, that some other person, an earl or a duke, would make his addresses to me, that I might be revenged on this monster! [*Crosses to R.*]

Mrs. H. Be cool, child! you shall be Lady Melvil, in spite of all their caballins, if it cost me ten thousand pounds to turn the scale. Sir John may apply to my brother, indeed; but I'll make them all know who governs in this fammaly.

Miss S. As I live, madam, yonder comes Sir John. A base man! I can't endure the sight of him. I'll leave the room this instant. [*Disordered.*]

Mrs. H. Poor thing! Well, retire to your own chamber, child! I'll give it him, I warrant you; and by-and-by I'll come and let you know all that has passed between us.

Miss S. Pray do, madam. [*Looking back.*] A vile wretch!

[*Exit in a rage, R. H.*]

Enter SIR JOHN MELVIL, L. H.

Sir J. Your most obedient humble servant, madam.

[*Bowing very respectfully.*]

Mrs. H. Your servant, Sir John.

[*Dropping a half courtesy, and pouting.*]

Sir J. [L.] Miss Sterling's manner of quitting the room on my approach, and the visible coolness of your behaviour to me, madam, convince me that she has acquainted you with what passed this morning.

Mrs. H. [R.] I am very sorry, Sir John, to be made acquainted with any thing that should induce me to change the opinion which I would always wish to entertain of a person of quality. [Pouting.]

Sir J. It has always been my ambition to merit the best opinion from Mrs. Heidelberg; and when she comes to weigh circumstances, I flatter myself—

Mrs. H. You do flatter yourself, if you imagine that I can approve of your behaviour to my niece, Sir John.—And give me leave to tell you, Sir John, that you have been drawn into an action much beneath you, Sir John; and that I look upon every injury offered to Miss Betty Sterling, as an affront to myself, Sir John. [Warmly.]

Sir J. I would not offend you for the world, madam; but when I am influenced by a partiality for another, however ill-founded, I hope your discernment and good sense will think it rather a point of honour to renounce engagements which I could not fulfil so strictly as I ought; and that you will excuse the change in my inclinations, since the new object, as well as the first, has the honour of being your niece, madam.

Mrs. H. I disclaim her as a niece, Sir John; Miss Sterling disclaims her as a sister; and the whole family must disclaim her, for her monstrous baseness and treachery.

Sir J. Indeed she has been guilty of none, madam. Her hand and her heart are, I am sure, entirely at the disposal of yourself and Mr. Sterling. And if you should not oppose my inclinations, I am sure of Mr. Sterling's consent, madam.

Enter STERLING, L. H. U. E.

Mrs. H. Indeed?

Sir J. Quite certain, madam.

Ster. [Behind.] So! they seem to be coming to terms already. I may venture to make my appearance.

Mrs. H. To marry Fanny? [Sterling advances by degrees.]

Sir J. Yes, madam.

Mrs. H. My brother has given his consent, you say?

Sir J. In the most ample manner, with no other restriction than the failure of your concurrence, madam. [Sees Sterling.] Oh, here's Mr. Sterling, who will confirm what I have told you.

Mrs. H. What! have you consented to give up your eldest daughter in this manner, brother?

Ster. [In centre.] Give her up, heaven forbid; no, not give her up, sister; only in case that you—[Apart to Sir J.] Zounds, I am afraid you have said too much, Sir John.

Mrs. H. Yes, yes; I see now that it is true enough what

my niece told me. You are all plottin and caballin against her. Pray, does Lord Ogleby know of this affair?

Sir J. I have not yet made him acquainted with it, madam.

Mrs. H. No, I warrant you. I thought so.—And so his lordship and myself, truly, are not to be consulted till the last.

Ster. What! did not you consult my lord? Oh, fie for shame, Sir John!

Sir J. Nay, but Mr. Sterling—

Mrs. H. We, who are the persons of most consequence and experunce in the two fammalies, are to know nothing of the matter, till the whole is as good as concluded upon. But his lordship, I am sure, will have more generosaty than to countenance such a perceding. And I could not have expected such behaviour from a person of your qualaty, Sir John.—And as for you, brother—

Ster. [R.] Nay nay, but hear me, sister.

Mrs. H. I am perfectly ashamed of you. Have you no spurrit? no more concern for the honour of our fammaly, than to consent—

Ster. Consent! I consent! As I hope for mercy, I never gave my consent. Did I consent, Sir John?

Sir J. Not absolutely, without Mrs. Heidelberg's concurrence. But in case of her approbation—

Ster. Ay, in case I grant you; that is, if my sister approved. [To Mrs. H.] But that's quite another thing, you know.

Mrs. H. Your sister approve, indeed!—I thought you knew her better, brother Sterling! What! approve of having your eldest daughter returned upon your hands, and exchanged for the younger? I am surprised how you could listen to such a scandalous proposal.

Ster. [c.] I tell you, I never did listen to it. Did not I say, that I would be entirely governed by my sister, Sir John? And unless she agreed to your marrying Fanny—

Mrs. H. [R.] I agree to his marrying Fanny! abominable!—The man is absolutely out of his senses.—Can't that wise head of yours foresee the consequence of all this, brother Sterling? Will Sir John take Fanny without a fortune?—No!—After you have settled the largest part of your property on your youngest daughter, can there be an equal portion left for the eldest?—No! Does not this overturn the whole system of the fammaly?—Yes, yes, yes! [Goes up, Sterling after her—come down again directly] You know I was always for my niece Betsy's marrying a person of the very first qualaty. That was my maxum: and, therefore much the largest settle-

ment was, of course, to be made upon her. As for Fanny, if she could, with a fortune of twenty or thirty thousand pounds, get a knight, or a member of parliament, or a rich common council-man, for a husband, I thought it might do very well.

Sir J. [L.] But if a better match should offer itself, why should it not be accepted, madam?

Mrs. H. What! at the expense of her elder sister? O fie, Sir John!—How could you bear to hear such an indignity, brother Sterling?

Ster. I! Nay, I sha'n't hear of it, I promise you. I can't hear of it, indeed, Sir John.

Mrs. H. But you have heard of it, brother Sterling—you know you have, and sent Sir John to propose it to me. But if you can give up your daughter, I sha'n't forsake my niece, I assure you. Ah, if my poor dear Mr. Heidelberg, and our sweet babes had been alive, he would not have behaved so.

Ster. Did I, Sir John?—[*Apart to Sir John.*] Nay, speak! Bring me off, or we are ruined.

Sir J. Why, to be sure, to speak the truth—

Mrs. H. To speak the truth!—To speak the truth; I'm ashamed of you both. But have a care what you are about, brother! have a care, I say. The counsellors are in the house, I hear; and if every thing is not settled to my liking, I'll have nothing more to say to you, if I live these hundred years—I'll go over to Holland, and settle with Mr. Vanderspraeken, my poor husband's first cousin, and my own family shall never be the better for a farden of my money, I promise you.

[*Exit, R. H.*]

Ster. I thought so. I knew she would never agree to it.

Sir J. 'Sdeath, how unfortunate. What can we do, Mr. Sterling?

Ster. Nothing.

[*Crosses to R.*]

Sir J. What, must our agreement break off the moment it is made, then?

Ster. It can't be helped, Sir John. The family, as I told you before, have great expectations from my sister; and if this matter proceeds, you hear yourself that she threatens to leave us. My brother Heidelberg was a warm man—a very warm man, and died worth a plum at least:—a plum! ay, I warrant you, he died worth a plum and a half.

Sir J. Well; but if I—

Ster. And then, my sister has three or four very good mortgages, a deal of money in the three-per-cents., and old South Sea annuities, besides large concerns in the Dutch and

French funds. The greatest part of all this she means to leave to our family.

Sir J. I can only say, sir—

Ster. Why, your offer of the difference of thirty thousand was very fair and handsome, to be sure, Sir John.

Sir J. Nay, but I am willing to—

Ster. Ay, but if I was to accept it against her will, I might lose a hundred thousand; so you see the balance is against you, Sir John.

Sir J. Suppose I was to prevail on Lord Ogleby to apply to her, do you think that would have any influence over her?

Ster. I think he would be more likely to persuade her to it than any other person in the family. She has a great respect for Lord Ogleby. She loves a lord.

Sir J. I'll apply to him this very day. And if he should prevail on Mrs. Heidelberg, I may depend on your friendship, Mr. Sterling?

Ster. Ay, ay, I shall be glad to oblige you, when it is in my power; [*Crosses to L.*] but as the account stands now, you see, it is not upon the figures. And so, your servant, Sir John. [*Exit, L. H.*]

Sir J. What a situation am I in!—Breaking off with her whom I was bound by treaty to marry; rejected by the object of my affections; and embroiled with this turbulent woman, who governs the whole family. And yet opposition, instead of smothering, increases my inclination—I must have her. I'll apply immediately to Lord Ogleby; and if he can but bring over the aunt to our party, her influence will overcome the scruples and delicacy of my dear Fanny, and I shall be the happiest of mankind. [*Exit, R.*]

END OF ACT III.

ACT IV.

SCENE II.—*A Room, as before.*

Enter MR. STERLING, MRS. HEIDELBERG, and MISS STERLING, R. H.

Ster. What! will you send Fanny to town, sister?

Mrs. H. To-morrow morning. I've given orders about it already.

Ster. Indeed!

Mrs. H. Positively.

Ster. But consider, sister, at such a time as this, what an odd appearance it will have.

Mrs. H. Not half so odd as her behaviour, brother. This

time was intended for happiness, and I'll keep no incendiaries here to destroy it. I insist on her going off to-morrow morning.

Ster. I'm afraid this is all your doing, Betsy?

Miss S. No indeed, papa. My aunt knows that it is not. For all Fanny's baseness to me, I am sure I would not do or say any thing to hurt her, with you or my aunt, for the world.

Mrs. H. Hold your tongue, Betsy; I will have my way.—When she is packed off, every thing will go on as it should. Since they are at their intrigues, I'll let them see that we can act with vigour on our part; and the sending her out of the way, shall be the purluminary step to all the rest of my proceedings.

Ster. Well, but sister—

Mrs. H. It does not signify talking, brother Sterling, for I'm resolved to be rid of her, and I will. [*To Miss Sterling.*] Come along, child. The post-shay shall be at the door by six o'clock in the morning; and if Miss Fanny does not get into it, why I will—and so there's an end of the matter. [*Bounces out with Miss Sterling, R. H.; then returns.*] One word more, brother Sterling—I expect that you will take your eldest daughter in your hand, and make a formal complaint to Lord Ogleby of Sir John Melvil's behaviour. Do this, brother! show a proper regard for the honour of your family yourself, and I shall throw in my mite to the raising of it. If not—but now you know my mind. So act as you please, and take the consequences. [*Exit, R. H.*]

Ster. The devil's in the women for tyranny! Mothers, wives, mistresses, or sisters, they always will govern us. As to my sister Heidelberg, she knows the strength of her purse, and domineers upon the credit of it. [*Mimicking.*] “I will do this,” and “you shall do that,” and “you shall do t'other—or else the fammaly sha'n't have a farden of”—So absolute with her money. But, to say the truth, nothing but money can make us absolute, and so we must e'en make the best of her. [*Exit, L. H.*]

SCENE II.—*The Garden.*

Enter LORD OGLEBY and CANTON, L. H.

Lord O. What! Mademoiselle Fanny to be sent away?—Why?—Wherefore?—What's the meaning of all this?

Can. Je ne sçais pas—I know nothing of it.

Lord O. It can't be—it sha'n't be: I protest against the measure. She's a fine girl; and I had much rather that the rest of the family were annihilated, than that she should

leave us. Her vulgar father, that's the very abstract of Change-alley—the aunt, that's always endeavouring to be a fine lady—and the pert sister, for ever shewing that she is one, are horrid company indeed, and without her would be intolerable. Ah, la petite Fanchon! she's the thing: isn't she, Canton?

Can. Dere is very good sympatie entre vous and dat young lady, my lor.

Lord O. I'll not be left among these Goths and Vandals; your Sterlings, your Heidelbergs, and Devilbergs—if she goes, I'll positively go too.

Can. In de same post-chay, my lor? You have no objection to dat, I believe, nor mademoiselle neither too—ha, ha, ha!

Lord O. Pr'ythee hold thy foolish tongue, Canton. Does thy Swiss stupidity imagine that I can see and talk with a fine girl without desires? My eyes are involuntarily attracted by beautiful objects—I fly as naturally to a fine girl—

Can. As de fine girl to you, my lor, ha, ha, ha! you always fly togedre, like un pair de pigeons—

Lord O. [*Mocks him.*]—Like un pair de pigeons. Vous êtes un sot, Mons. Canton. Thou art always dreaming of my intrigues; and never see'st me badiner, but you suspect mischief, you old fool you.

Can. I am fool, I confess, but not always fool in dat, my lor, he, he, he!

Lord O. He, he, he!—Thou art incorrigible, but thy absurdities amuse me. Thou art like my rappee here, [*Takes out his box.*] a most ridiculous superfluity; but a pinch of thee now and then is a most delicious treat. [*Crosses to L. H.*]

Can. You do me great honneur, mi lor.

Lord O. 'Tis fact, upon my soul. Thou art properly my cephalic snuff, and art no bad medicine against megrims, vertigoes, and profound thinking—ha, ha, ha!

Can. Your flatterie, my lor, vil make me too prode.

Lord O. The girl has some little partiality for me, to be sure: but pr'ythee, Cant, is not that Miss Fanny, yonder?

Can. [*Looks with a glass.*] Ah—lavoila! En verite, 'tis she, mi lor—'tis one of de pigeons—de pigeons d'amour.

Lord O. Don't be so ridiculous, you old monkey, [*Smiles.*]

Can. I am monkee, I am ole; but I have eye, I have ear, and a little understand, now and den.

Lord O. Taisez vous bête?

Can. Elle vous attend, my lor.—She vil make a love to you.

Lord O. Will she? Have at her then! A fine girl can't oblige me more. Egad, I find myself a little enjoué.—Come

along. Cant! she is but in the next walk—but there is such a deal of this d—ned crinkum-crankum, as Sterling calls it, that one sees people for half an hour, before one can get to them.—Allons, Mons. Canton, allons, done!

[*Exeunt, singing in French, R. H.*]

SCENE III.—*Another part of the Garden.*

Enter LOVEWELL and FANNY, L. H.

Love. My dear Fanny, I cannot bear your distress; it overcomes all my resolutions, and I am prepared for the discovery.

Fan. But how can it be effected before my departure?

Love. I'll tell you.—Lord Ogleby seems to entertain a visible partiality for you; and notwithstanding the peculiarities of his behaviour, I am sure that he is humane at the bottom. He is vain to an excess; but withal extremely good-natured, and would do any thing to recommend himself to a lady.—Do you open the whole affair of our marriage to him immediately. It will come with more irresistible persuasion from you than from myself; and I doubt not but you'll gain his friendship and protection at once. His influence and authority will put an end to Sir John's solicitations, remove your aunt's and sister's unkindness and suspicions, and, I hope, reconcile your father and whole family to our marriage.

Fan. Heaven grant it! Where is my lord?

Love. I have heard him and Canton, since dinner, singing French songs, under the great walnut-tree, by the parlour door. If you meet with him in the garden, you may disclose the whole immediately,—He approaches—I must retire.—Speak, my dear Fanny, speak, and make us happy! [*Exit, R.*]

Fan. Good heavens, what a situation I am in! What shall I do? What shall I say to him? I am all confusion.

Enter LORD OGLEBY and CANTON, L. H.

Lord O. To see so much beauty so solitary, madam, is a satire upon mankind, and 'tis fortunate that one man has broke in upon your reverie, for the credit of our sex. I say one, madam; for poor Canton here, from age and infirmities, stands for nothing.

Can. Nothing at all, indeed.

Fan. Your lordship does me great honour.—I had a favour to request, my lord.

Lord O. A favour, madam?—To be honoured with your commands, is an inexpressible favour done to me, madam.

Fan. If your lordship could indulge me with the honour of a moment's—[*Aside.*] What's the matter with me?

Lord O. [*Aside.*] The girl's confused—Hey!—here's something in the wind, faith—I'll have a tete-a-tete with her. [*To Canton.*] Allez vous en ?

Can. [*Apart to Lord O.*] I go—Ah, pauvre mademoiselle! My lor, have pitié upon de poor pigeone!

Lord O. [*Smiles.*] I'll knock you down, Cant.

Can. [*Shuffles along.*] Den I go. [*Aside.*] You are mosh please, for all dat. [*Exit, L. H.*]

Fan. [*Aside.*] I shall sink with apprehension.

Lord O. [*Aside.*] What a sweet girl!—she's a civilized being, and atones for the barbarism of the rest of the family.

Fan. [*Courtesies and blushes.*] My lord! I—

Lord O. I look upon it, madam, to be one of the luckiest circumstances of my life, that I have at this moment the honour of receiving your commands, and the satisfaction of confirming with my tongue, what my eyes perhaps have but too weakly expressed—that I am literally the humblest of your slaves.

Fan. I think myself greatly honoured by your lordship's partiality to me; but it distresses me that I am obliged, in my present situation, to apply to it for protection.

Lord O. I am happy in your distress, madam, because it gives me an opportunity to show my zeal.—Beauty to me is a religion, in which I was born and bred a bigot, and would die a martyr. [*Aside.*] I'm in tolerable spirits, faith!

Fan. There is not, perhaps, at this moment, a more distressed creature than myself. Affection, duty, hope, despair, and a thousand different sentiments, are struggling in my bosom; and even the presence of your lordship, to whom I have flown for protection, adds to my perplexity.

Lord O. Does it, madam? Venus forbid! [*Aside, and smiling.*] My old fault; the devil's in me I think, for perplexing young women. Take courage, madam! dear Miss Fanny explain.—You have a powerful advocate in my breast, I assure you—My heart, madam. I am attached to you by all the laws of sympathy and delicacy.—By my honour, I am.

Fan. Then I will venture to unburthen my mind.—Sir John Melvil, my lord, by the most misplaced and mistimed declaration of affection for me, has made me the unhappiest of women.

Lord O. How, madam! Has Sir John made his addresses to you?

Fan. He has, my lord, in the strongest terms. But I hope it is needless to say, that my duty to my father, love to my sister, and regard to the whole family, as well as the great

respect I entertain for your lordship, [*Courtesies.*] made me shudder at his addresses.

Lord O. [*L.*] Charming girl!—Proceed, my dear Miss Fanny, proceed!

Fan. [*R.*] In a moment—give me leave, my lord!—But if what I have to disclose should be received with anger or displeasure—

Lord O. Impossible, by all the tender powers!—Speak, I beseech you, or I shall divine the cause before you utter it.

Fan. Then, my lord, Sir John's addresses are not only shocking to me in themselves, but are more particularly disagreeable to me at this time—as—as— [*Hesitates.*]

Lord O. As what, madam?

Fan. As—pardon my confession—I am entirely devoted to another.

Lord O. [*Aside.*] If this is not plain, the devil's in it. But tell me, my dear Miss Fanny, for I must know; tell me the how, the when, and the where.—Tell me—

Re-enter CANTON, hastily, L. H.

Can. My lor, my lor, my lor!

Lord O. D—n your Swiss impertinence! how durst you interrupt me in the most critical, melting moment, that ever love and beauty honoured me with.

Can. I demande pardonne, my lor! 'Sir John Melvil, my lor, sent me to beg you do him de honour to speak a little to you, my lor.

Lord O. I'm not at leisure—I am busy.—Get away, you stupid old dog, you Swiss rascal, or I'll—

Can. Fort bien, my lor. [*Goes out on tiptoe, L. H.*]

Lord O. By the laws of gallantry, madam, this interruption should be death! But as no punishment ought to disturb the triumph of the softer passions, the criminal is pardoned and dismissed. Let us return, madam, to the highest luxury of exalted minds—a declaration of love from the lips of beauty.

Fan. [*Aside.*] The entrance of a third person has a little relieved me, but I cannot go through with it; and yet I must open my heart with a discovery, or it will break with its burthen.

Lord O. [*Aside.*] What passion in her eyes! I am alarmed to agitation. I presume, madam, (and as you have flattered me, by making me a party concerned, I hope you'll excuse the presumption), that—

Fan. Do you excuse my making you a party concerned, my lord, and let me interest your heart in my behalf, as my future happiness or misery in a great measure depend—

Lord O. Upon me, madam?

Fan. Upon you, my lord.

[*Sighs.*]

Lord O. There's no standing this: I have caught the infection—her tenderness dissolves me.

[*Sighs.*]

Fan. And should you too severely judge of a rash action which passion prompted, and modesty has long concealed—

Lord O. [*Takes her hand.*] Thou amiable creature, command my heart, for it is vanquished. Speak but thy virtuous wishes, and enjoy them.

Fan. I cannot, my lord; indeed I cannot. Mr. Lovewell must tell you my distresses; and when you know them, pity and protect me.

[*Exit in tears, R. H.*]

Lord O. How the devil could I bring her to this?—It is too much—too much—I can't bear it—I must give way to this amiable weakness. [*Wipes his eyes.*] My heart overflows with sympathy, and I feel every tenderness I have inspired. [*Stifles a tear.*] Can I be a man and withstand it? No—I'll sacrifice the whole sex to her. But here comes the father, quite apropos. I'll open the matter immediately, settle the business with him, and take the sweet girl down to Ogleby-house to-morrow morning. But what the devil! Miss Sterling too! What mischief's in the wind now? No conquest there—no, no, that would be too much desolation in the family.

Enter STERLING and MISS STERLING, L. H.

Ster. My lord, your servant! I am attending my daughter here upon rather a disagreeable affair. Speak to his lordship, Betsy.

[*Puts her over to c.*]

Lord O. Your eyes, Miss Sterling, for I always read the eyes of a young lady, betray some little emotion. What are your commands, madam?

Miss S. I have but too much cause for my emotion, my lord.

Lord O. I cannot commend my kinsman's behaviour, madam. He has behaved like a false knight, I must confess. I have heard of his apostacy. Miss Fanny has informed me of it.

Miss S. [*c.*] Miss Fanny's baseness has been the cause of Sir John's inconstancy.

Lord O. [*R.*] Nay now, my dear Miss Sterling, your passion transports you too far. Sir John may have entertained a passion for Miss Fanny; but believe me, my dear Miss Sterling, believe me, Miss Fanny has no passion for Sir John. She has a passion, indeed, a most tender passion. She has opened her whole soul to me, and I know where her affections are placed.

[*Conceitedly.*]

Miss S. Not upon Mr. Lovewell, my lord.

Lord O. Lovewell! no, poor lad! she does not think of him. [Smiles.]

Miss S. Have a care, my lord, that both the families are not made the dupes of Sir John's artifice, and my sister's dissimulation! You don't know her; indeed, my lord, you don't know her; a base, insinuating, perfidious!—It is too much—she has been beforehand with me. I perceive, endeavouring to prejudice your lordship in her favour; and I am to be laughed at by every body. Such unnatural behaviour to me! But since I see I can have no redress, I am resolved that some way or other I will have revenge. [Exit, L. H.]

Ster. [L.] This is foolish work, my lord!

Lord O. [R.] I have too much sensibility to bear the tears of beauty.

Ster. It is touching, indeed, my lord; and very moving for a father.

Lord O. To be sure, sir! You must be distressed beyond measure! Wherefore, to divert your too exquisite feeling, suppose we change the subject, and proceed to business

Ster. With all my heart, my lord.

Lord O. You see, Mr. Sterling, we can make no union in our families by the proposed marriage.

Ster. I am very sorry to see it, my lord.

Lord O. Have you set your heart upon being allied to our house, Mr. Sterling?

Ster. 'Tis my only wish at present, my omnium, as I may call it.

Lord O. Your wishes shall be fulfilled.

Ster. Shall they, my lord?—but how—how?

Lord O. I'll marry in your family.

Ster. [L.] What! my sister Heidelberg?

Lord O. [A half scream.] Ah! You throw me into a cold sweat, Mr. Sterling. No, not your sister, but your daughter.

Ster. My daughter?

Lord O. Fanny!—now the murder's out!

Ster. What you, my lord?

Lord O. Yes, I, I, Mr. Sterling

Ster. No, no, my lord; that's too much. [Smiles.]

Lord O. Too much! I don't comprehend you.

Ster. What you, my lord, marry my Fanny? Bless me! what will the folks say?

Lord O. Why, what will they say?

Ster. That you are a bold man, my lord; that's all.

Lord O. Mr. Sterling, this may be city wit, for aught I know. Do you court my alliance?

Ster. To be sure, my lord.

Lord O. Then I'll explain:—my nephew won't marry your eldest daughter, nor I neither. Your youngest daughter won't marry him; I will marry your youngest daughter.

Ster. What! with a youngest daughter's fortune, my lord?

Lord O. With any fortune, or no fortune at all, sir. Love is the idol of my heart, and the demon interest sinks before him. So, sir, as I said before, I will marry your youngest daughter; your youngest daughter will marry me.

Ster. Who told you so, my lord?

Lord O. Her own sweet self, sir.

Ster. Indeed!

Lord O. Yes, sir; our affection is mutual; your advantage double and treble; your daughter will be a countess directly—I shall be the happiest of beings, and you'll be father to an earl instead of a baronet.

Ster. But what will my sister say? and my daughter?

Lord O. I'll manage that matter; nay, if they won't consent, I'll run away with your daughter, in spite of you.

Ster. Well said, my lord! your spirit's good; I wish you had my constitution; but if you'll venture, I have no objection, if my sister has none.

Lord O. I'll answer for your sister, sir. Apropos, the lawyers are in the house. I'll have articles drawn, and the whole affair concluded to-morrow morning.

Ster. Very well! and I'll dispatch Lovewell to London immediately for some fresh papers I shall want; you must excuse me, my lord, but I can't help laughing at the match.—He, he, he! what will the folks say? [*Exit, L. H.*]

Lord O. What a fellow am I going to make a father of! He has no more feeling than the post in his warehouse. But Fanny's virtues tune me to rapture again, and I won't think of the rest of the family.

Re-enter LOVEWELL, hastily, R. H.

Love. I beg your lordship's pardon; are you alone, my lord?

Lord O. No, my lord, I am not alone; I am in company: the best company.

Love. My lord!

Lord O. I never was in such exquisite, enchanting company, since my heart first conceived, or my senses tasted, pleasure.

Love. Where are they, my lord? [*Looks about.*]

Lord O. In my mind's eyes, Horatio.

Love. What company have you there, my lord? [*Smiles.*]

Lord O. My own ideas, sir, which so crowd upon my imagination, and kindle in it such a delirium of ecstacy, that wit, wine, music, poetry, all combined, and each in perfection, are but mere mortal shadows of my felicity.

Love. [R.] I see that your lordship is happy, and I rejoice at it.

Lord O. You shall rejoice at it, sir; my felicity shall not selfishly be confined, but shall spread its influence to the whole circle of my friends. I need not say, Lovewell, that you shall have your share of it.

Love. Shall I, my lord?—then I understand you; you have heard. Miss Fanny has informed you—

Lord O. She has; I have heard, and she shall be happy; 'tis determined.

Love. Then I have reached the summit of my wishes. And will your lordship pardon the folly?

Lord O. O yes, poor creature, how could she help it? 'Twas unavoidable—fate and necessity.

Love. It was indeed, my lord. Your kindness distracts me.

Lord O. And so did the poor girl, faith.

Love. She trembled to disclose the secret, and declare her affections?

Lord O. The world, I believe, will not think her affections ill placed.

Love. [Bows.] You are too good, my lord. And do you really excuse the rashness of the action?

Lord O. From my very soul, Lovewell.

Love. [Bows.] I was afraid of her meeting with a cold reception.

Lord O. More fool you, then—

Who pleads her cause with never failing beauty,

Here finds a full redress.

[Strikes his breast.

She's a fine girl, Lovewell.

[Crosses to R. H

Love. Her beauty, my lord, is her least merit. She has an understanding—

Lord O. Her choice convinces me of that.

Love. [Bows.] That's your lordship's goodness. Her choice was a disinterested one.

Lord O. No, no, not altogether; it began with interest, and ended in passion.

Love. Indeed, my lord, if you were acquainted with her goodness of heart, and generosity of mind, as well as you are with the inferior beauties of her face and person—

Lord O. I am so perfectly convinced of their existence, and

so totally of your mind, touching every amiable particular of that sweet girl, that were it not for the cold, unfeeling impediments of the law, I would marry her to-morrow morning.

Love. My lord!

Lord O. I would, by all that's honourable in man, and amiable in woman.

Love. Marry her!—What do you mean, my lord?

Lord O. Miss Fanny Sterling that is; the countess of Ogleby that shall be.

Love. I am astonished!

Lord O. Why, could you expect less from me?

Love. I did not expect this, my lord.

Lord O. Trade and accounts have destroyed your feeling.

Love. No indeed, my lord. [Sighs.]

Lord O. The moment that love and pity entered my breast, I was resolved to plunge into matrimony, and shorten the girl's tortures—I never do any thing by halves, do I, Lovewell?

Love. [Sighs.] No indeed, my lord. [Aside.] What an accident!

Lord O. She said that you would explain what she had not power to utter; but I wanted no interpreter for the language of love.

Love. But has your lordship considered the consequences of your resolution?

Lord O. No, sir, I am above consideration, when my desires are kindled.

Love. But consider the consequences, my lord, to your nephew, Sir John.

Lord O. Sir John has considered no consequences himself, Mr Lovewell.

Love. Mr. Sterling, my lord, will certainly refuse his daughter to Sir John.

Lord O. Sir John has already refused Mr. Sterling's daughter.

Love. But what will become of Miss Sterling, my lord?

Lord O. What's that to you?—You may have her, if you will. I depend upon Mr. Sterling's city philosophy to be reconciled to Lord Ogleby's being his son-in-law, instead of Sir John Melvil, baronet. Don't you think that your master may be brought to that, without having recourse to his calculations, eh, Lovewell?

Love. But, my lord, that is not the question.

Lord O. Whatever is the question, I'll tell you my answer.—I am in love with a fine girl, whom I resolve to marry.

Enter SIR JOHN MELVIL, L. H.

What news with you, Sir John? [*Crosses, c.*] You look all hurry and impatience—like a messenger after a battle.

Sir J. After a battle indeed, my lord. I have this day had a severe engagement; and wanting your lordship as an auxiliary, I have at last mustered up resolution to declare what my duty to you and to myself have demanded from me some time.

Lord O. To the business, then, and be as concise as possible, for I am upon the wing—eh, Lovewell?

[*Smiles, and Lovewell bows, R.*

Sir J. I find 'tis in vain, my lord, to struggle against the force of inclination.

Lord O. Very true, nephew; I am your witness, and will second the motion—shan't I, Lovewell?

[*Smiles, and Lovewell bows.*

Sir J. Your lordship's generosity encourages me to tell you, that I cannot marry Miss Sterling.

Lord O. [*c.*] I am not at all surprised at it—she's a bitter potion, that's the truth of it; but as you were to swallow it, and not I, it was your business, and not mine.—Any thing more?

Sir J. [*L.*] But this, my lord; that I may be permitted to make my addresses to the other sister.

Lord O. O yes, by all means—have you any hopes there nephew? Do you think he'll succeed, Lovewell?

[*Smiles and winks at Lovewell.*

Love. [*Gravely.*] I think not, my lord.

Lord O. I think so too; but let the fool try.

Sir J. Will your lordship favour me with your good offices to remove the chief obstacle to the match, the repugnance of Mrs. Heidelberg?

Lord O. Mrs. Heidelberg?—Had not you better begin with the young lady first? [*Smiles.*] It will save you a great deal of trouble, won't it, Lovewell? [*Conceitedly.*] But do what you please, it will be the same thing to me: won't it, Lovewell? Why don't you laugh at him?

Love. I do, my lord.

[*Forces a smile.*

Sir J. And your lordship will endeavour to prevail on Mrs. Heidelberg to consent to my marriage with Miss Fanny?

Lord O. I'll speak to Mrs. Heidelberg about the adorable Fanny as soon as possible.

Sir J. Your generosity transports me.

Lord O. [*Aside.*] Poor fellow, what a dupe! he little thinks who's in possession of the town.

Sir J. And your lordship is not in the least offended at this seeming inconstancy?

Lord O. Not in the least. Miss Fanny's charms will even excuse infidelity. I look upon women as the *feræ naturæ*—lawful game—and every man who is qualified, has a natural right to pursue them;—Lovewell as well as you, and you as well as he, and I as well as either of you.—Every man shall do his best, without offence to any—what say you, kinsmen?

Sir J. You have made me happy, my lord.

Love. And me, I assure you, my lord.

Lord O. And I am superlatively so—allons done! To horse and away, boys!—you to your affairs, and I to mine—*[Sings.]*—suivons l'amour.

[Exeunt Love. and Lord O. L. H., Sir J. R. H.]

END OF ACT IV.

ACT V.

SCENE I.—*Fanny's Apartment—Stage a little darkened.*

Enter LOVEWELL and FANNY, L. H., followed by BETTY, who goes to R.

Fan. Why did you come so soon, Mr. Lovewell? the family is not yet in bed, and Betty certainly heard somebody listening near the chamber-door.

Bet. *[R.]* My mistress is right, sir! evil spirits are abroad; and I am sure you are both too good, not to expect mischief from them.

Love. But who can be so curious, or so wicked?

Bet. I think we have wickedness and curiosity enough in this family, sir, to expect the worst.

Fan. I do expect the worst.—Pr'ythee, Betty, return to the outward door, and listen if you hear any body in the gallery; and let us know directly.

Bet. I warrant you, madam—the Lord bless you both.

[Exit, R. H. D.]

Fan. What did my father want with you this evening?

Love. He gave me the key of his closet, with orders to bring from London some papers relating to Lord Ogleby.

Fan. And why did not you obey him?

Love. Because I am certain that his lordship has opened his heart to him about you, and those papers are wanted merely on that account. But, as we shall discover all tomorrow, there will be no occasion for them, and it would be idle in me to go.

Fan. Hark!—hark! bless me, how I tremble!—I feel the

terrors of guilt. Indeed, Mr. Lovewell, this is too much for me—this situation may have very unhappy consequences.

[Weeps.

Love. But it shan't. I would rather tell our story this moment to all the house, and run the risk of maintaining you by the hardest labour, than suffer you to remain in this dangerous perplexity.

Fan. Hush! hush! for heaven's sake, my dear Lovewell; don't be so warm! your generosity gets the better of your prudence; you will be heard, and we shall be discovered.—I am satisfied—indeed I am. Excuse this weakness, this delicacy, this what you will. My mind's at peace—indeed it is—think no more of it, if you love me!

Love. That one word has charmed me, as it always does, to the most implicit obedience; it would be the worst of ingratitude in me to distress you a moment. [Kisses her.

Re-enter BETTY, R. H. D.

Bet. [In a low voice.] I'm sorry to disturb you.

Fan. Ha! what's the matter? [Crosses to c.

Love. Have you heard any body?

Bet. Yes, yes, I have; and they have heard you too, or I'm mistaken—if they had seen you too, we should have been in a fine quandary.

Fan. Pr'ythee don't prate now, Betty!

Love. What did you hear?

Bet. [Crosses to c.] I was preparing myself, as usual, to take me a little nap—

Love. A nap!

Bet. Yes, sir, a nap; for I watch much better so than wide awake; and when I had wrapped this handkerchief round my head, for fear of the ear-ache from the key-hole, I thought I heard a kind of a sort of a buzzing, which I first took for a gnat, and shook my head two or three times, and went so with my hand.

Fan. Well—well—and so—

Bet. And so, madam, when I heard Mr. Lovewell a little loud, I heard the buzzing louder too—and pulling off my handkerchief softly, I could hear this sort of noise—

[Makes an indistinct sort of noise, like speaking.

Fan. Well, and what did they say?

Bet. O! I could not understand a word of what was said.

Love. The outward door is locked?

Bet. Yes; and I bolted it too, for fear of the worst.

Fan. Why did you? they must have heard you, if they were near.

Bet. And I did it on purpose, madam, and coughed a little too, that they might not hear Mr. Lovewell's voice—when I was silent, they were silent; and so I came to tell you.

Fan. What shall we do? [Crosses L.]

Love. Fear nothing; we know the worst; it will only bring on our catastrophe a little too soon—but Betty might fancy this noise—she's in the conspiracy, and can make a man a mouse at any time.

Bet. I can distinguish a man from a mouse as well as my betters—I'm sorry you think so ill of me, sir.

Fan. He compliments you;—don't be a fool! [To Lovewell.] Now you have set her tongue a running, she'll mutter for an hour. I'll go and hearken myself. [Exit, R. H. D.]

Bet. [Half aside, muttering.] I'll turn my back upon no girl for sincerity and service.

Love. Thou art the first in the world for both; and I will reward you soon, Betty, for one and the other.

Bet. I am not mercenary neither—I can live on a little, with a good carreter.

Re-enter FANNY, R. H. D.

Fan. All seems quiet.—Suppose, my dear, you go to your own room. [Crosses c.] I shall be much easier then, and to-morrow we will be prepared for the discovery.

Bet. [Half aside, and muttering.] You may discover, if you please; but for my part, I shall still be secret.

Love. Should I leave you now, if they still are upon the watch, we shall lose the advantage of our delay. Besides, we should consult upon to-morrow's business. Let Betty go to her own room, and lock the outward door after her; we can fasten this; and when she thinks all safe, she may return and let me out as usual.

Bet. [R.] Shall I, madam?

Fan. [c.] Do let me have my way to-night, and you shall command me ever after.

Love. I live only to oblige you, my sweet Fanny! I'll be-gone this moment. [Going.]

Fan. Betty shall go first, and if they lay hold of her—

Bet. They'll have the wrong sow by the ear, I can tell them that. [Going hastily.]

Fan. Softly—softly—Betty! don't venture out, if you hear a noise. Softly, I beg of you! See, Mr. Lovewell, the effects of indiscretion!

Love. But love, Fanny, makes amends for all.

Exeunt, softly, R. H. D.

SCENE II—*A Gallery, which leads to several Bed Chambers. The Stage dark.—Table R.*

Enter MISS STERLING, R. H. U. E. leading MRS. HEIDELBERG, in a Night-Cap.

Miss S. This way, dear madam, and then I'll tell you all.

Mrs. H. [R.] Nay but, niece—consider a little—don't drag me out this figure; let me put on my fly-cap!—If any of my lord's fammaly, or the counsellors at law should be stirring, I should be prodigus disconcerted.

Miss S. [L.] But, my dear madam, a moment is an age, in my situation. I am sure my sister has been plotting my disgrace and ruin in that chamber!—O! she's all craft and wickedness.

Mrs. H. Well, but softly, Betsy!—you are all in emotion—your mind is too much frustrated—you can neither eat, nor drink, nor take your natural rest—compose yourself, child; for if we are not as warisome as they are wicked, we shall disgrace ourselves and the whole fammaly.

Miss S. We are disgraced already, madam. Sir John Melvil has forsaken me; my lord cares for nobody but himself; or if any body, it is my sister: my father, for the sake of a better bargain, would marry me to a 'Change broker; so that if you, madam, don't continue my friend—if you forsake me—if I am to lose my best hopes and consolation—in your tenderness—and affections—I had better—at once—give up the matter—and let my sister enjoy—the fruits of her treachery—trample with scorn upon the rights of her elder sister—the will of the best of aunts—and the weakness of a too interested father. [*She pretends to be bursting into tears during this speech.—Both embrace and see saw.*]

Mrs. H. Don't, Betsy—keep your spirit—I hate whimpering—I am your friend—depend upon me in every particular.—But be composed, and tell me what new mischief you have discovered.

Miss S. I had no desire to sleep, and would not undress myself, knowing that my Machiavel sister would not rest till she had broke my heart:—I was so uneasy that I could not stay in my room, but when I thought that all the house was quiet, I sent my maid to discover what was going forward;—she immediately came back and told me, that they were in high consultation; that she had heard only, for it was in the dark, my sister's maid conducting sir John Melvil to her mistress, and then lock the door.

Mrs. H. I'm petrified! And how did you conduct yourself in this dilemma?

Miss S. I returned with her, and could hear a man's voice, though nothing that they said distinctly; and you may depend upon it, that Sir John is now in that room, that they have settled the matter, and will run away together before the morning, if we don't prevent them.

Mrs. H. Why, the brazen slut! she has got her sisters husband (that is to be) lock'd up in her chamber! at night too!—I'm scarified I tremble at the thoughts!

Miss S. Hush! madam! I hear something!

Mrs. H. You frighten me—let me put on my fly-cap—I would not be seen in this figur for the world.

Miss S. 'Tis dark, madam; you can't be seen.

Mrs. H. I protest there's a candle coming, and a man too!

Miss S. Nothing but servants;—let us retire a moment!

[*They retire, R. H. U. E.*]

Enter BRUSH, L. H. U. E., half drunk, laying hold of the CHAMBERMAID, who has a candle in her hand.

Chamb. Be quiet, Mr. Brush; I shall drop down with terror!

Brush. [L.] But my sweet, and most amiable chambermaid, if you have no love, you may hearken to a little reason; that cannot possibly do your virtue any harm.

Cham. [R.] But you may do me harm, Mr. Brush, and a great deal of harm too; pray let me go; I am ruined if they hear you; I tremble like an asp.

Brush. But they shan't hear us; and if you have a mind to be ruined, it shall be the making of your fortune, you little slut, you! therefore, I say it again, if you have no love, hear a little reason!

Cham. I wonder at your impudence, Mr. Brush, to use me in this manner; this is not the way to keep me company, I assure you. You are a town-rake, I see; and now you are a little in liquor, you fear nothing.

Brush. Nothing, by heavens! but your frowns, most amiable chambermaid: I'm a little electrified, that's the truth on't; I am not used to drink port, and your master's is so heady, that a pint of it oversets a claret drinker. Come now, my dear little spider-brusher!

Cham. Don't be rude! bless me!—I shall be ruined—what will become of me?

Brush. I'll take care of you, by all that's honourable.

Cham. You are a base man to use me so—I'll cry out, if

you don't let me go. This is Miss Sterling's chamber, that Miss Fanny's, and that Madam Heidelberg's.

Brush. We know all that. And that Lord Ogleby's, and that my Lady What-d'ye-call-em's: I don't mind such folks when I'm sober, much less when I am whimsical—rather above that too.

Cham. More shame for you, Mr. Brush!—you terrify me—you have no modesty.

Brush. O, but I have, my sweet spider-brusher—for instance, I reverence Miss Fanny—she's a most delicious morsel, and fit for a prince. With all my horrors of matrimony, I could marry her myself.—But for her sister—

Miss S. [*Behind, c.*] There, there, madam, all in a story.

Cham. Bless me, Mr. Brush!—I heard something!

Brush. Rats, I suppose, that are gnawing the old timbers of this execrable old dungeon.—If it was mine, I would pull it down, and fill your fine canal up with the rubbish; and then I should get rid of two d—n'd things at once.

Cham. Law! law! how you blaspheme!—we shall have the house upon our heads for it.

Brush. No, no, it will last our time—but as I was saying, the eldest sister—Miss Jezebel—

Cham. Is a fine young lady, for all your evil tongue.

Brush. No—we have smoked her already; and unless she marries our old Swiss, she can have none of us. No, no, she won't do—we are a little too nice.

Cham. You're a monstrous rake, Mr. Brush, and don't care what you say.

Brush. Why, for that matter, my dear, I am a little inclined to mischief; and if you don't have pity upon me, I will break open that door, and ravish Mrs. Heidelberg.

Mrs. H. [*Coming forward.*] There's no bearing this—you profligate monster!

Cham. Ha! I am undone!

Brush. Zounds! here she is, by all that's monstrous.

[*Runs off, L. H.*]

Miss S. [*R.*] A fine discourse you have had with that fellow.

Mrs. H. [*L.*] And a fine time of night it is to be here with that drunken monster!

Miss S. What have you to say for yourself?

Cham. [*c.*] I can say nothing—I'm so frightened, and so ashamed.—But indeed I am virtuous—I am virtuous, indeed.

Mrs. H. Who cares for your virtue!—Well, well—don't tremble so; but tell us what you know of this horrible plot here.

Miss S. We'd forgive you, if you'll discover all.

Cham. Why, madam, don't let me betray my fellow servants—I sha'n't sleep in my bed if I do.

Mrs. H. Then you shall sleep somewhere else to-morrow night.

Cham. [c.] O dear! what shall I do?

Mrs. H. Tell us this moment, or I'll turn you out of doors directly.

Cham. Why, our butler has been treating us below in his pantry—Mr. Brush forced us to make a kind of a holiday night of it.

Miss S. Holiday! for what?

Cham. Nay, I only made one.

Miss S. Well, well; but upon what account.

Cham. Because as how, madam, there was a change in the family, they said—that his honour, Sir John, was to marry Miss Fanny instead of your ladyship.

Miss S. And so you make a holiday for that.—Very fine!

Cham. I did not make it, ma'am.

Mrs. H. But do you know nothing of Sir John's being to run away with Miss Fanny to-night?

Cham. No indeed, ma'am.

Miss S. Nor of his being now locked up in my sister's chamber?

Cham. No, as I hope for mercy, ma'am.

Mrs. H. Well, I'll put an end to all this directly—do you run to my brother Sterling—

Cham. Now, ma'am?—'Tis so very late, ma'am—

Mrs. H. I don't care how late it is. Tell him there are thieves in the house—that the house is on fire—tell him to come here immediately—Go, I say.

Cham. I will, I will. But if I meet Mr. Brush ma'am?

Mrs. H. If you meet the devil you shall go. [*Pushes her off, L.*] Do you watch here, my dear; and I'll put myself in order to face them. We'll plot 'em, and counterplot 'em too.

[*Exit into her chamber, R. H. U. E.*

Miss S. I have as much pleasure in this revenge, as in being made a countess.—Ha! they are unlocking the door.—Now for it! [*Retires.*

Fanny's door is unlocked, and BETTY comes out, R. H. D. Miss Sterling approaches her.

Bet. [*Calling within.*] Sir! sir!—now's your time—all's clear [*Seeing Miss Sterling.*] Stay, stay—not yet—we are watched.

Miss S. And so you are, madam Betty. [*Miss Sterling toys*

hold of her while Betty locks the door, and puts the key into her pocket.]

Bet. [Turning round.] What's the matter, madam?

Miss S. Nay, that you shall tell my father and aunt, madam.

Bet. I'm no tell-tale, madam, and no thief. [*Aside.*] They'll get nothing from me.

Miss S. You have a great deal of courage, Betty, and considering the secrets you have to keep, you have occasion for it.

Bet. My mistress shall never repent her good opinion of me, ma'am.

Enter STERLING, L. H. D., *with a candle.*

Ster. What's all this? What's the matter? Why am I disturbed in this manner?

Miss S. This creature, and my distresses, sir, will explain the matter.

Re-enter MRS. HEIDELBERG, R. H. U. E., *with another head-dress.*

Mrs. H. Now I'm prepared for the rancounter.—Well, brother, have you heard of this scene of wickedness?

Ster. Not I. But what is it? speak. I was got into my little closet, all the lawyers were in bed, and I had almost lost my senses in the confusion of Lord Ogleby's mortgages, when I was alarmed with a foolish girl, who could hardly speak; and whether it's fire, or thieves, or murder, or a rape, I'm quite in the dark.

Mrs. H. No, no, there's no rape, brother!—all parties are willing, I believe.

Miss S. Who's in that chamber?

[*Detaining Betty, who seemed to be stealing away.*

Bet. [R.] My mistress.

Miss S. And who's with your mistress?

Bet. Why, who should there be?

Miss S. Open the door, then, and let us see.

Bet. The door is open, madam. [*Miss Sterling goes to the door.*] I'll sooner die than peach.

[*Crosses and exit hastily, L. H. D.*

Miss S. The door is locked, and she has got the key in her pocket.

Mrs. H. There's impudence, brother! piping hot from your daughter Fanny's school!

Ster. But zounds! what is all this about? You tell me of a sum total, and you don't produce the particulars.

Mrs. H. Sir John Melvil is locked up in your daughter's bed-chamber.—There is the particular.

Ster. The devil! he is!—That's bad.

Miss S. And he has been there some time, too.

Ster. Ditto!

Mrs. H. Ditto! Worse and worse, I say. I'll raise the house, and expose him to my lord, and the whole fammaly.

Ster. [L.] By no means! we shall expose ourselves, sister!—The best way is to insure privately—let me alone! I'll make him marry her to-morrow morning.

Miss S. Make him marry her! this is beyond all patience!—You have thrown away all your affection, and I shall do as much by my obedience; unnatural fathers, make unnatural children. My revenge is in my own power, and I'll indulge it.—Had they made their escape, I should have been exposed to the derision of the world: but the deriders shall be derided; and so—Help, help, there!—Thieves! thieves!

Mrs. H. Tit-for-tat, Betsy! you are right, my girl.

Ster. Zounds! you'll spoil all—you'll raise the whole family.—The devil's in the girl.

Mrs. H. No, no; the devil's in you, brother; I am ashamed of your principles.—What! would you connive at your daughter's being locked up with her sister's husband? Help! thieves, thieves, I say! [Cries out.]

Ster. Sister, I beg of you!—daughter, I command you!—If you have no regard for me, consider yourselves!—we shall lose this opportunity of ennobling our blood, and getting above twenty per cent. for our money.

Miss S. What, by my disgrace and my sister's triumph? I have a spirit above such mean considerations: and to show you that it is not a low-bred, vulgar, 'Change-alley spirit—Help! help! Thieves! thieves! thieves, I say. [Bells ring without.]

Ster. Ay, ay, you may save your lungs—the house is in an uproar.

Enter CANTON, L. H. U. E. in a night-gown and slippers.

Can. Eh, diable! vat is de raison of dis great noise, dis tintamarre?

Ster. Ask those ladies, sir; 'tis of their making.

Lord O. [Calls within.] Brush!—Brush!—Canton!—where are you? What's the matter? [Rings a bell.] Where are you?

Ster. 'Tis my lord calls, Mr. Canton.

Can. [Lord O. still rings.] I com, my lor! [Exit, L. U. E.]

Flow. [Calls within.] A light! a light, here!—where are the servants? Bring a light for me and my brothers.

Ster. Lights, here! lights for the gentlemen! [Exit, L. U. E.]

Mrs. H. My brother feels, I see!—your sister's turn will come next.

Miss S. Ay, ay, let it go round, madam; it is the only comfort I have left.

Re-enter STERLING, L. U. E., *with lights, before* SERJEANT FLOWER, *with one boot and a slipper, and* TRAVERSE.

Ster. This way, sir! this way, gentlemen!

Flow. [L. C.] Well but, Mr. Sterling, no danger, I hope?—Have they made a burglarious entry? Are you prepared to repulse them? I am very much alarmed about thieves at circuit time. They would be particularly severe with us gentlemen of the bar.

Tra. No danger, Mr. Sterling—no trespass, I hope?

Ster. None, gentlemen, but of those ladies' making.

Mrs. H. You'll be ashamed to know, gentlemen, that all your labours and studies about this young lady, are thrown away—Sir John Melvil is at this moment locked up with this lady's younger sister.

Flow. The thing is a little extraordinary, to be sure; but why were we to be frightened out of our beds for this? Could not we have tried this cause to-morrow morning?

Miss S. But, sir, by to-morrow morning, perhaps, even your assistance would not have been of any service—the birds now in that cage, would have flown away.

Enter LORD OGLEBY, L. U. E., *in his robe-de-chambre, night-cap, &c., leaning on* CANTON.

Lord O. I had rather lose a limb than my night's rest. What's the matter with you all?

Ster. Ay, ay, 'tis all over!—Here's my lord, too.

Lord O. What's all this shrieking and screaming! Where's my angelic Fanny? She's safe, I hope?

Mrs. H. Your angelic Fanny, my lord, is locked up with your angelic nephew, in that chamber.

Lord O. My nephew! Then will I be excommunicated.

Mrs. H. Your nephew, my lord, has been plotting to run away with Miss Fanny, and Miss Fanny has been plotting to run away with your nephew: and if we had not watched them and called up the fammaly, they had been upon the scamper to Scotland by this time.

Lord O. Look ye, ladies! I know that Sir John has conceived a violent passion for Miss Fanny: and I know, too, that Miss Fanny has conceived a violent passion for another person. And I am so well convinced of the rectitude of her affections, that I will support them with my fortune, my honour, and my life. Eh, sha'n't I, Mr. Sterling? [*Smiling.*] What say you?

Ster. [*Sulkily.*] To be sure, my lord. [*Aside.*] These bawling women have been the ruin of every thing.

Lord O. But come, I'll end this business in a trice—If you ladies will compose yourselves, and Mr. Sterling will ensure Miss Fanny from violence, I will engage to draw her from her pillow [*Crosses to R.*] with a whisper through the key-hole.

Mrs. H. The horrid creatures!—I say, my lord, break the door open.

Lord O. Let me beg of your delicacy not to be too precipitate! Now to our experiment! [*Advancing towards the door.*]

Miss S. Now, what will they do? My heart will beat through my bosom.

Re-enter BETTY, with the key, L. H.

Bet. There's no occasion for breaking open doors, my lord; we have done nothing that we ought to be ashamed of, [*Crossing, R.*] and my mistress shall face her enemies.

[*Going to unlock the door, R.*]

Mrs. H. There's impudence!

Lord O. The mystery thickens. Lady of the bed-chamber, [*To Betty.*] open the door; and entreat Sir John Melvil (for the ladies will have it that he is there) to appear, and answer to high crimes and misdemeanors.—Call Sir John Melvil into the court!

Enter SIR JOHN MELVIL, L. H.

Sir J. I am here, my lord.

Mrs. H. Hey-day!

Sir J. What's all this alarm and confusion? There is nothing but hurry in this house! What is the reason of it?

Lord O. Because you have been in that chamber;—have been! nay, you are there at this moment, as these ladies have protested, so don't deny it—

Tra. This is the clearest alibi I ever knew, Mr. Serjeant.

Flow. *Luce clarius.*

Mrs. H. Lucy Clarius—who's she? It's Fanny Sterling.

[*Exeunt Lawyers c. D., with a candle.*]

Lord O. Upon my word, ladies, if you have often these frolics, it would be really entertaining to pass a whole summer with you. But come, [*To Betty.*] open the door, and entreat your amiable mistress to come forth and dispel all our doubts with her smiles.

Bet. [*Opening the door.*] Madam, you are wanted in this room. [*Pertly.*]

Enter FANNY, in great confusion, R. H. D.

Miss S. You see she's ready dressed—and what confusion she's in!

Mrs. H. Ready to pack off, bag and baggage! Her guilt confounds her!

Fan. I am confounded, indeed, madam!

Lord O. Don't droop, my beautiful lily! but with your own peculiar modesty declare your state of mind.—Pour conviction into their ears, and rapture into mine. [*Smiling.*]

Fan. I am at this moment the most unhappy—most distressed—the tumult is too much for my heart—and I want the power to reveal a secret, which to conceal, has been the misfortune and misery of my— [*Faint away.*]

Lord O. She faints!—help, help! for the fairest and best of women!

Bet. [*Running to her.*] Oh, my dear mistress! help, help, there!

Sir J. Ha! let me fly to her assistance!

TOGETHER

LOVEWELL rushes out of the chamber, R. H. D.

Love. My Fanny in danger! I can contain no longer! Prudence were now a crime; all other cares were lost in this! Speak, speak, speak to me, my dearest Fanny! let me, but hear thy voice: open your eyes, and bless me with the smallest sign of life! [*During this speech they are all in amazement.*]

Miss S. Lovewell!—I am easy.

Mrs. H. I am thunderstruck!

Lord O. I am petrified!

Sir J. And I undone.

Fan. [*Recovering.*] O, Lovewell!—even supported by thee, I dare not look my father nor his lordship in the face.

Ster. What now! Did not I send you to London, sir?

Lord O. Eh!—What! How's this? By what right and title have you been half the night in that lady's bed-chamber?

Love. By that right which makes me the happiest of men; and by a title which I would not forgo for any the best of kings could give.

Bet. I could cry my eyes out to hear his magnanimity.

[*Exit, R.*]

Lord O. I am annihilated!

Ster. I have been choked with rage and wonder; but now I can speak.—Lovewell, you are a villain;—You have broken your word with me. [*Crosses to R. H.*]

Fan. Indeed, sir, he has not—you forbade him to think of me, when it was out of his power to obey you—we have been married these four months.

Ster. And he sha'n't stay in my house four hours. What baseness and treachery! As for you, you shall repent this step as long as you live, madam!

Fan. Indeed, sir, it is impossible to conceive the tortures I have already endured in consequence of my disobedience. My heart has continually upbraided me for it; and though I was too weak to struggle with affection, I feel that I must be miserable for ever without your forgiveness.

Ster. Lovewell, you shall leave my house directly! and you shall follow him, madam!

Lord O. And if they do, I will receive them into mine. Lookye, Mr Sterling, there have been some mistakes, which we had all better forget for our own sakes; and the best way to forget them, is to forgive the cause of them; which I do from my soul.—Poor girl! I swore to support her affection with my life and fortune; 'tis a debt of honour, and must be paid—[*Crosses to R. H.*]—You swore as much too, Mr. Sterling! but your laws in the city will excuse you, I suppose; for you never strike a balance without—errors excepted.

Ster. [R.] I am a father, my lord; but for the sake of other fathers, I think I ought not to forgive her, for fear of encouraging other silly girls, like herself, to throw themselves away without the consent of their parents.

Love. I hope there will be no danger of that, sir. Young ladies, with minds like my Fanny's, would startle at the very shadow of vice; and when they know to what uneasiness only an indiscretion has exposed her, her example, instead of encouraging, will rather serve to deter them.

Mrs. H. Indiscretion, quotha! a mighty pretty delicate word to express disobedience!

Lord O. For my part, I indulge my own passions too much to tyrannize over those of other people. Poor souls! I pity them. And you must forgive them too. Come, come, melt a little of your flint, Mr. Sterling!

Ster. Why, why, as to that, my lord—to be sure, he is a relation of yours, my lord—What say you, sister Heidelberg?

Mrs. H. The girl's ruined, and I forgive her.

Ster. Well—so do I then.—Nay, no thanks—[*To Lovewell and Fanny, who seem preparing to speak.*] there's an end of the matter.

Lord O. But, Lovewell, what makes you dumb all this while?

Love. Your kindness, my lord—I can scarce believe my own senses—they are all in a tumult of fear, joy, love, expectation, and gratitude! I ever was, and am now more bound in duty to your lordship.—For you, Mr. Sterling, if every moment of my life, spent gratefully in your service, will in some measure compensate the want of fortune, you perhaps

will not repent your goodness to me. And you ladies, I flatter myself, will not for the future suspect me of artifice and intrigue—I shall be happy to oblige and serve you.—As for you, Sir John—

[Crosses to him.

Sir J. No apologies to me, Lovewell; I do not deserve any. All I have to offer in excuse for what has happened, is my total ignorance of your situation. Had you dealt a little more openly with me, you would have saved me, yourself, and that lady (who I hope will pardon my behaviour), a great deal of uneasiness. Give me leave, however, to assure you, that light and capricious as I may have appeared, now my infatuation is over, I have sensibility enough to be ashamed of the part I have acted, and honour enough to rejoice at your happiness.

[Taking his hand.

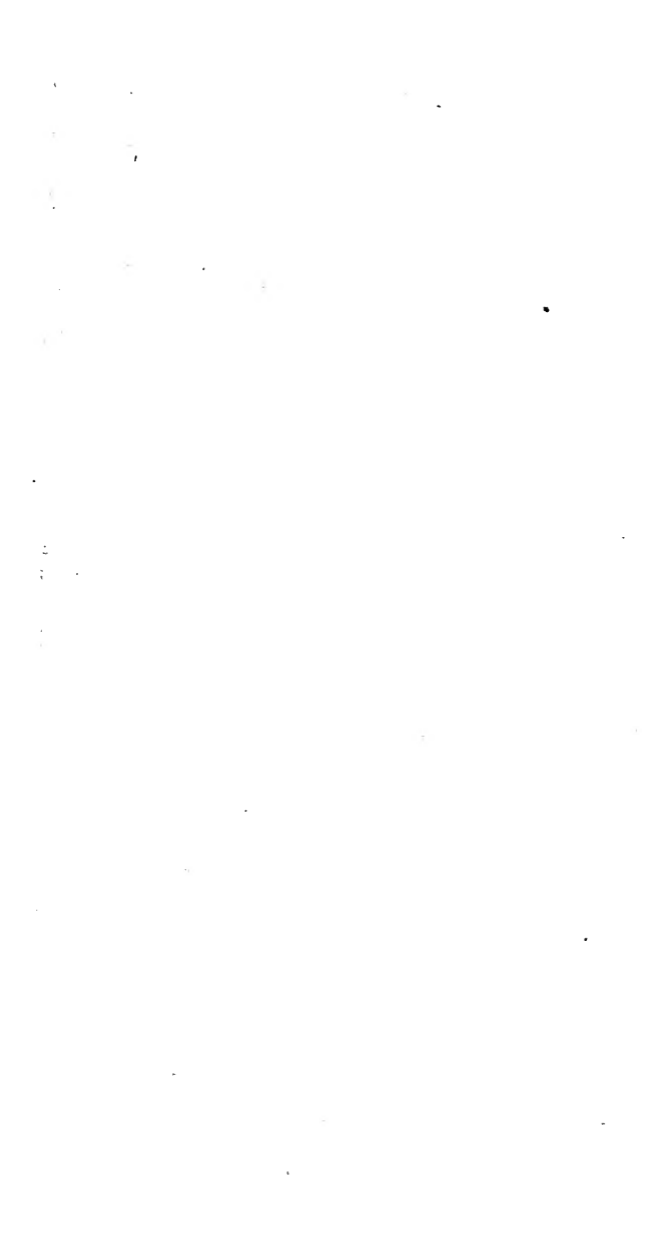
Love. And now, my dearest Fanny, though we are seemingly the happiest of beings, [Crosses back to c.] yet all our joys will be damped, if his lordship's generosity and Mr. Sterling's forgiveness should not, be succeeded by the indulgence, approbation, and consent of these our best benefactors.

[To the audience.

DISPOSITION OF THE CHARACTERS AT THE FALL OF THE CURTAIN.

SEPER. LORD O. FAN. LOV. MRS. H. MISS S. SIR J.
R. L.

THE END.



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