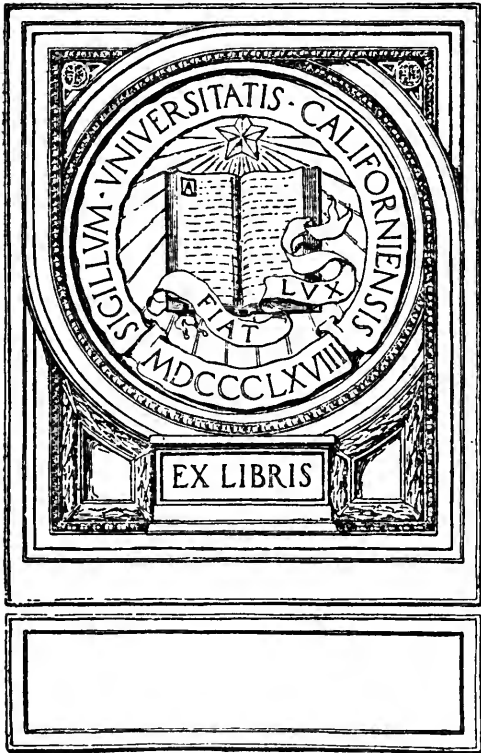




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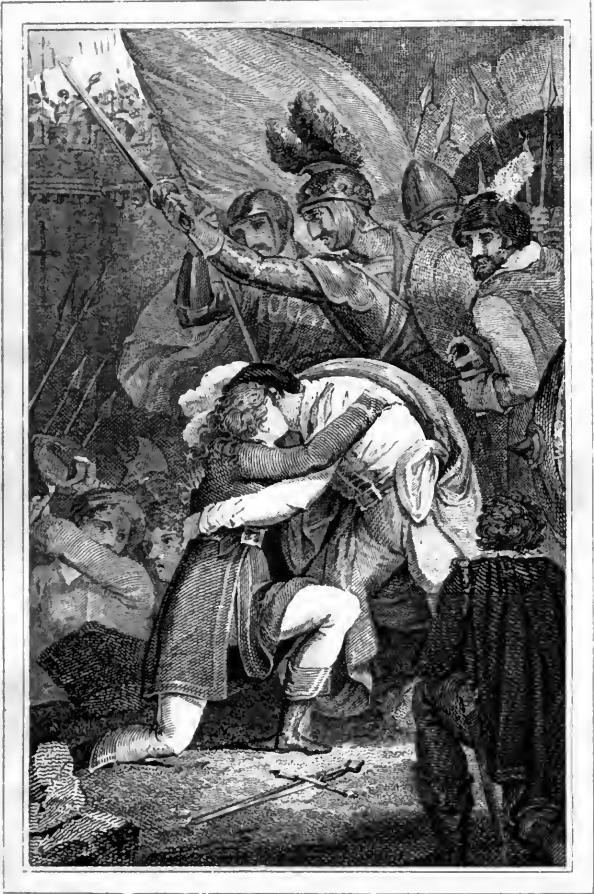


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Richard Coeur de Lion.
Act 3. Scene 2

Published Jan. 29. 1827. by Doatchend & Letterman Ave Maria Lane.

THE
DRAMATIC AND POETICAL
WORKS

OF THE LATE
LIEUT. GEN. J. BURGOYNE;

TO WHICH IS PREFIXED,
MEMOIRS OF THE AUTHOR.

EMBELLISHED WITH COPPER-PLATES.

VOL. II.

LONDON:

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1808.

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THE
HEIRESS,

A

COMEDY

IN FIVE ACTS.

AS PERFORMED AT

THE THEATRE ROYAL, DRURY LANE.

Spectatores, ad pudicos mores facta hæc fabula est:
Qui pudicitiaẽ esse vultis præmium, plausum date.

PLAUTUS.



TO THE
EARL OF DERBY.

MY DEAR LORD,

OUR connection and friendship, as well as the partiality I know you will entertain in favour of any attempt at regulated Drama, mark you as the person to whom, with the most propriety and inclination, I can inscribe the Comedy of the Heiress.

It also comes to your Lordship's hand with a secondary claim to your acceptance, as owing its existence to the leisure and tranquillity I enjoyed during the two last summers at Knowsley.

I long intended, as your Lordship can witness, to keep the name of the author

concealed. After the success with which the Play has been honoured, I must expect that the change of my design will be imputed by many to vanity: I shall submit, without murmuring, to that belief, if I may obtain equal credit for the sincerity of another pride which this discovery gratifies—that of testifying, in the most public manner, the respect and affection with which I have the honour to be,

MY DEAR LORD,

Your most obedient,

And most humble servant,

J. BURGOYNE.

*Hertford Street,
Feb. 1, 1786.*

PREFACE.

THE approbation the following Comedy has received upon the stage, and the candour with which every criticism, that has come to the author's knowledge, has been accompanied, might encourage him to trust it to the closet without any other preface, than an acknowledgment of his gratitude to the public, for the honours done to him. And if he detains the reader a few moments more, it is not to disavow what has been hinted at in some of the daily prints, as a species of plagiarism, but to plead it in behalf of dramatic writing in general, against rules, that, if carried to the extent they lead to, would fix shackles upon genius, and give a very undue limitation to variety.

In point of fable, for instance—Is it a reproach to borrow?

Surely the dramatist, like the architect, brings his talents equally to the test, whether he builds upon another man's ground or his own. And if, instead of small and detached parts, the writer of the

Heiress had taken the complete plot of his play from a novel, he would have imitated the examples (the only imitation to which he has any pretence) of the best dramatic Poets of every age.

In point of originality of characters—It is humbly hoped this Comedy is not without it. But present instances apart, it is submitted to the judicious, whether such an exaction of novelty as would make a resemblance to any thing ever seen upon the stage before unacceptable, might not materially vitiate the public taste, carry the major part of writers beyond the scope of nature and probability, and deprive the spectator of that pleasing and infinite diversity of shape and colouring that the leading passions, vices, and follies of civilized life admit. Love, avarice, misanthropy, &c. &c. if drawn a thousand and a thousand times with new shades, and in different points of view, will do as much credit to invention, and have as just an effect in exhibition, as if Moliere or Congreve had never touched the subjects. It is not whether there may not be personages in the Heiress, in whom we may discover family features, that is asked, but whether they are not still individuals, with whom we have been hitherto unacquainted—a question, not for the author to determine.

Original thought—It has been observed that there is an image, in a speech of Lord Gayville, copied closely from Rousseau. Very possibly it may be so. The author of the Heiress certainly has read that elegant writer; and to shew how easily invention may be deceived, he will quote another writer (in his estimation still more elegant) who thus accounts, and apologizes for, unconscious plagiarism—‘ Faded ideas,’ says Mr. Sheridan, ‘ float in the fancy like half forgotten dreams; and imagination, in its fullest enjoyments, becomes suspicious of its offspring, and doubts whether it has created or adopted.’

More sentiments and expression due to the imaginations of others, may possibly be challenged, though they are equally out of the recollection of the author. He would only wish the candid to admit the probability, that while he believed them his own, he thought them his best.

Many of the scenes now submitted to perusal have been shortened in representation, and a few words have been altered occasionally to preserve connection—a circumstance necessary to be known, lest the performers should be suspected of negligence, when, on the contrary, too much cannot be

said of their attention and zeal. When all have been eminent, it would be unnecessary, if not ^{abominating} ~~invi-~~ di- ^{between the friends} dious, to particularize any: there is nevertheless a Lady, to whom, by her standing separately and individually in one part of the performance, the author, without departing from his maxim, may express his more than ordinary obligation. Miss Farren, by her inimitable manner of delivering the Epilogue, has made a better apology to the public than any his pen could have produced, for a composition which, from an accident, was much too hastily written in some parts, and in others pieced together with a like insufficiency of time.

The Epilogue excepted, no defects in the following sheets can be covered by the excuse of hurry. They cannot be so, consistently with truth, nor indeed, with inclination: for the author had rather be thought incapable of pleasing, after his greatest cares, than wanting in the attention and respect which every man, who ventures to publish a production of this nature, owes to the world and to himself—Not to let it pass from his hands without frequent revisal, and the best-considered finish his abilities can give.

PROLOGUE.

BY THE RIGHT HON. RICHARD FITZPATRICK.

SPOKEN BY MR. KING.

As sprightly sunbeams gild the face of day,
When low'ring tempests calmy glide away,
So when the Poet's dark horizon clears,
Array'd in smiles, the Epilogue appears,
She, of that house the lively emblem still,
Whose brilliant speakers start what themes they will,
Still varying topics for her sportive rhymes
From all the follies of these *fruitful* times,
Uncheck'd by forms, with flippant hand may cull,
Prologues, *like peers*, by privilege are dull.
In solemn strain address th' assembled Pit,
The legal judges of dramatic wit,
Confining still, with dignified decorum,
Their observations—to the Play before 'em.

Now when each bachelor a helpmate lacks,
(That sweet exemption from a double tax)
When laws are fram'd with a benignant plan
Of lightning *burdens* on the married man,
And Hymen adds one solid comfort more
To all those *comforts* he conferr'd before,
To smooth the rough laborious road to fame
Our bard has chosen—an *alluring name*.

As wealth in wedlock oft is known to hide
 The imperfections of a homely bride,
 This tempting title, he perhaps expects,
 May heighten beauties, and conceal defects :
 Thus sixty's wrinkles, view'd through fortune's glass,
 The rosy dimples of sixteen surpass :
 The modern suitor grasps his fair-one's hand,
 O'erlooks her person, and adores—*her laud* ;
Leers on her houses with an *ogling eye*,
 O'er her rich acres heaves an *am'rous* sigh,
 His *heartfelt* pangs through groves of—*timber* vents,
 And runs distracted for—*her three per cents*.

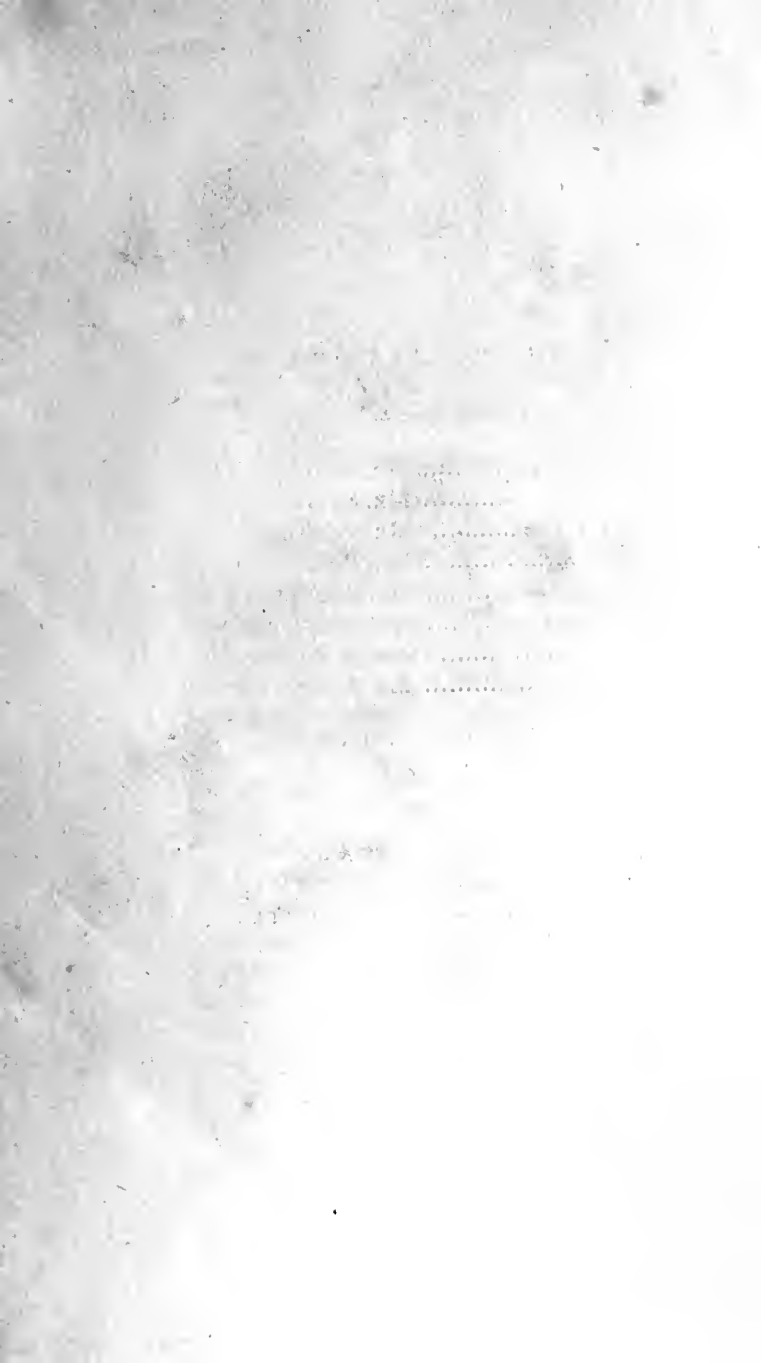
Will thus the Poet's mimic Heiress find
 The bridegroom critic to *her* failings blind,
 Who claims, alas! his nicer taste to hit,
 The Lady's portion paid in *sterling* wit ?
 On your decrees, to fix her future fate,
 Depends our Heiress for her whole estate :
 Rich in your smiles, she charms th' admiring town ;
 A very *bankrupt*, should you chance to frown :
 O may a verdict, giv'n in your applause,
 Pronounce the prosp'rous issue of her cause,
 Confirm the name an anxious parent gave her,
 And prove her Heiress of—the Public Favour!

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

Sir Clement Flint	MR. KING
Clifford	MR. SMITH
Lord Gayville	MR. PALMER
Alscrip	MR. PARSONS
Chignon	MR. BADDELEY
Mr. Blandish	MR. BANNISTER, jun.
Prompt	MR. R. PALMER
Mr. Rightly	MR. AICKIN.

Chairman, Servants, &c.

Lady Emily	MISS FARREN
Miss Alscrip	MISS POPE
Miss Alton	MRS. CROUCH
Mrs. Sagely	MRS. BOOTH
Tiffany	MISS TIDSWELL
Mrs. Blandish	MRS. WILSON.



THE
HEIRESS.

ACT I.

SCENE I. *A Lady's Apartment.*

Mr. BLANDISH and Mrs. LETITIA BLANDISH discovered writing: letters folded up, and message-cards scattered upon the table.—Mrs. BLANDISH leans upon her elbows as meditating; writes as pleased with her thought; lays down the pen.

Mrs. Blandish.

THERE it is, complete.—[*Reads conceitedly.*]
'Adieu, my charming friend, my amiable, my all
Accomplished sociate! conceive the ardour of
Your lovers united with your own sensibility—
Still will the compound be but faintly expressive
Of the truth and tenderness of your

'LETITIA BLANDISH.'

There's phrase—there's a period—match it if you
can.

Blandish. Not I indeed: I am working upon a quite different plan: but you are as welcome to my cast-off style, as you should be to my old embroidery. Pick out the gold, if it be of any use.

Mrs. Blandish. Cast-off style! Excellent assurance! And pray, sir, to whom are you indebted for the very elements of wheedling, and all that has attended its progress, from the plaything in your nursery, to the brilliant upon your finger?

Blandish. For the elements, my honour'd sister and partner, I confess the obligation; but for the proficiency, I have attain'd the sublime of the science, while you with more experience are still a novice; like a miss at her stuttering harpsichord, with a nimble finger, but no ear. You keep in tune, 'tis true, for that is the merit of the instrument, but you are continually out of time, and always thrumming the same key.

Mrs. Blandish. Which, in plain English, is as much as to say——

Blandish. That human vanity is an instrument of such ease and compass, the most unskilful can play something upon it; but to touch it to the true purpose——

Mrs. Blandish. Well, sir, and look round you, pray; these apartments were not furnished from the interest of two miserable thousand pounds in

the three per cents. any more than our table and equipage have been maintained by *your* patrimony—A land estate of three hundred a year, out of repair, and mortgaged for nearly its value. I believe I have stated our original family circumstances pretty accurately.

Blandish. They wanted improvement, it must be acknowledged. But before we bring our industry to a comparison, in the name of the old father of flattery, to whom is that perfect phrase address'd?

Mrs. Blandish. To one worth the pains, I can tell you—Miss Alscip!

Blandish. What, sensibility to Miss Alscip! My dear sister, this is too much, even in your own way: had you run changes upon her fortune, stocks, bonds, and mortgages; upon Lord Gayville's coronet at her feet, or forty other coronets, to make footballs of if she pleased—it would have been plausible; but the quality you have selected—

Mrs. Blandish. Is one she has no pretensions to, therefore the flattery is more persuasive—that's my maxim.

Blandish. And mine also, but I don't try it quite so high—Sensibility to Miss Alscip! you might as well have applied it to her uncle's pig-iron, from which she derives her first fifty thou-

sand; or the harder heart of the old usurer, her father, from whom she expects the second. But, come, [*rings*] to the business of the morning.

Enter PROMPT, the Valet de Chambre.

Here, Prompt—send out the chairmen with the billets and cards.—Have you any orders, madam?

Mrs. Blandish. [*Delivering her letter.*] This to Miss Alscip, with my impatient enquiries after her last night's rest, and that she shall have my personal salute in half an hour.—You take care to send to all the lying-in ladies?

Prompt. At their doors, madam, before the first load of straw.

Blandish. And to all great men that keep the house—whether for their own disorders, or those of the nation?

Prompt. To all, sir—their secretaries, and principal clerks.

Blandish. [*Aside to Prompt.*] How goes on the business you have undertaken for Lord Gayville?

Prompt. I have convey'd his letter, and expect this morning to get an answer.

Blandish. He does not think me in the secret?

Prompt. Mercy forbid you should be!

[*Archly.*

Blandish. I should never forgive your meddling—

Prompt. Oh! never, never!

Blandish. [*Aloud.*] Well, dispatch.

Mrs. Blandish. Hold!—apropos, to the lying-in list—at Mrs. Barbara Winterbloom's, to enquire after the Angola kittens, and the last hatch of Java sparrows.

Prompt. [*Reading his memorandum as he goes out.*] Ladies in the straw—ministers, &c.—Old maids, cats, and sparrows; never had a better list of how-d'ye's since I had the honour to collect for the Blandish family. [*Exit.*]

Mrs. Blandish. These are the attentions that establish valuable friendships in female life. By adapting myself to the whims of one, submitting to the jest of another, assisting the little plots of a third, and taking part against the husbands with all, I am become an absolute essential in the polite world; the very soul of every fashionable party in town or country.

Blandish. The country! Pshaw! Time thrown away.

Mrs. Blandish. Time thrown away! As if women of fashion left London, to turn freckled shepherdesses.—No, no; cards, cards and back-

gammon, are the delights of rural life; and slightly as you may think of my skill, at the year's end I am no inconsiderable sharer in the pin-money of my society.

Blandish. A paltry resource——Gambling is a damn'd trade, and I have done with it.

Mrs. Blandish. Indeed!

Blandish. Yes, 'twas high time.—The women don't pay; and as for the men, the age grows circumspect in proportion to its poverty: it's odds but one loses a character to establish a debt, and must fight a duel to obtain the payment. I have a thousand better plans, but two principal ones; and I am only at a loss which to choose.

Mrs. Blandish. Out with them, I beseech you.

Blandish. Whether I shall marry my friend's intended bride, or his sister.

Mrs. Blandish. Marry his intended bride!—What, pig-iron and usury?—Your opinion of her must advance your addresses admirably.

Blandish. My Lord's opinion of her will advance them; he can't bear the sight of her, and in defiance of his uncle, Sir Clement Flint's eagerness for the match, is running mad after an adventure, which I, who am his confidant, shall keep going till I determine.—There's news for you.

Mrs. Blandish. And his sister, Lady Emily, the alternative! The first match in England in beauty, wit, and accomplishment.

Blandish. Pooh! A fig for her personal charms, she will bring me connection that would soon supply fortune; the other would bring fortune enough to make connection unnecessary.

Mrs. Blandish. And as to the certainty of success with the one or the other——

Blandish. Success!—Are they not women? Why, even you can cajole them—what then must I do, who have advantage of sex, and am equally ready to adore every feature of the face, or to fall incorporeally in love with the mind? But no more of theory, I must away to practice: and, first, for Gayville, and his fellow student, Clifford, who is come home with a wise face, and a conceited confidence in his old ascendancy over his Lordship; but, thanks to the accident that keep him two months behind, Mr. Monitor will find himself mistaken.

Mrs. Blandish. Beware of the Monitor, notwithstanding, in another quarter. Lady Emily and he were acquainted at the age of first impressions.

Blandish. I dare say he always meant to be the complete friend of the family, though without

a single talent for the purpose. I question whether he ever made a compliment in his life.

Mrs. Blandish. Oh, the brute!

Blandish. His game, I find, has been to work upon Lord Gayville's understanding; he thinks he must finally establish himself in his esteem, by inexorably opposing all his follies—Poor simpleton! Now my touch of opposition goes only to enhance the value of my acquiescence. So adieu for the morning—You to Miss Alscip, with an unction of flattery fit for a house-painter's brush; I to Sir Clement, and his family, with a composition as delicate as ether, and to be applied with the point of a feather. [Going.

Mrs. Blandish. Hark you, Blandish, a good wish before you go.—To make your success complete, may you find but half your own vanity in those you have to work on!

Blandish. Thank you, my dear Letty; this is not the only *tap* you have hit me to-day, and you are right; for if you and I did not sometimes speak truth to each other, we should forget there was such a quality incident to the human mind.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE II. Lord GAYVILLE's Apartment.

Enter Lord GAYVILLE and Mr. CLIFFORD.

Lord Gayville. My dear Clifford, urge me no more. How can a man of your liberality of sentiment descend to be the advocate of my uncle's family avarice?

Clifford. My Lord, you do not live for yourself. You have an ancient name and title to support.

Lord Gayville. Preposterous policy! Whenever the father builds, games, or electioneers, the heir and title must go to market. Oh! the happy families Sir Clement Flint will enumerate, where this practice has prevail'd for centuries; and the estate been improved in every generation, though specifically spent by each individual!

Clifford. But you thought with him a month ago, and wrote with transport of the match—
'Whenever I think of Miss Alscip, visions of equipage and splendor, villas and hotels, the delights of independence and profuseness, dance in my imagination.'

Lord Gayville. It is true, I was that dissipated, fashionable wretch.

Clifford. Come, this reserve betrays a consciousness of having acted wrong. You would not hide what would give me pleasure : but I'll not be officious.

Lord Gayville. Hear me without severity, and I'll tell you all. Such a woman, such an assemblage of all that's lovely in the sex !

Clifford. Well, but—the who, the how, the where ?

Lord Gayville. I met her walking, and alone ; and indeed so humbly circumstanced as to carry a parcel in her own hand.

Clifford. I cannot but smile at this opening of your adventure—how many such charmers have we met in our former excursions from Cambridge ! I warrant she had a smart hat, and a drawn up petticoat, like a curtain in festoons, to discover a new buckle, and a neat ankle.

Lord Gayville. No, Clifford, her dress was such as a judicious painter would choose to characterize modesty. But natural grace and elegance stole upon the observation, and through the simplicity of a Quaker, shew'd all we could conceive of a goddess. I gazed, and turn'd idolater.

Clifford. [*Smiling.*] You may as well finish the description in poetry at once ; you are on the very verge of it.

Lord Gayville. She was under the persecution of one of those beings peculiar to this town, who assume the name of gentlemen, upon the sole credentials of a boot, a switch, and round hat—the *things* that escape from counters and writing-desks to disturb public places, insult foreigners, and put modest women out of countenance. I had no difficulty in the rescue.

Clifford. And having silenced the dragon, in the true spirit of chivalry, you conducted the damsel to her castle.

Lord Gayville. The utmost I could obtain was leave to put her into a hackney-coach, which I followed unperceived, and lodged her in the house of an obscure milliner in a by-street.

Clifford. The sweet Cyprian retreat! Such a priestess of your goddess, I dare say, did not refuse access to the shrine.

Lord Gayville. It is true, a few guineas made the milliner my own. I almost liv'd in the house; and often, when I was not suspected to be there, passed whole hours listening to a voice, that would have captivated my very soul, though it had been her only attraction. At last——

Clifford. What is to follow?

Lord Gayville. By the persuasions of the wo-

man, who laugh'd at my scruples with an unknown girl, a lodger upon a second floor, I hid myself in the closet of her apartment. And the practised trader assured me I had nothing to fear from the interruption of the family.

Clifford. Oh, for shame, my Lord! whatever may be the end of your adventure, such means were very much below you.

Lord Gayville. I confess it, and have been punish'd. Upon the discovery of me, fear, indignation, and resolution agitated the whole frame of the sweet girl by turns. I should as soon have committed sacrilege as have offered an affront to her person. Confused—overpower'd—I stammer'd out a few incoherent words—Interest in her fortune—respect—entreaty of forgiveness—and left her—to detest me.

Clifford. You need go no further. I meant to rally you, but your proceedings and emotion alarm me for your peace and honour. If this girl is an adventurer, which I suspect, you are making yourself ridiculous. If she is strictly innocent, upon what ground dare a man of your principle think further of her? You are on a double precipice; on one side impell'd by folly, on the other—

Lord Gayville. Hold, Clifford, I am not pre-

pared for so much admonition. Your tone is changed since our separation; you seem to drop the companion, and assume the governor.

Clifford. No, my Lord, I scorn the sycophant, and assert the friend.

Enter Servant, followed by BLANDISH.

Servant. My Lord, Mr. Blandish. [Exit.

Clifford. [Significantly.] I hope every man will do the same.

Blandish. Mr. Clifford, do not let me drive you away—I want to learn *your* power to gain and to preserve dear Lord Gayville's esteem.

Clifford. [With a seeming effort to withdraw his hand, which Blandish holds.] Sir, you are quite accomplish'd to be an example.

Blandish. I have been at your apartment to look for you—we have been talking of you with Sir Clement—Lady Emily threw in her word—

Clifford. [Disengaging his hand.] Oh, sir, you make me too proud.—[Aside.] Practised parasite! [Exit.

Blandish. [Aside.] Sneering puppy!—[To Lord Gayville.] My Lord, you seem disconcerted; has any thing new occur'd?

Lord Gayville. No, for there is nothing new in being disappointed in a friend.

Blandish. Have you told your story to Mr. Clifford?

Lord Gayville. I have, and I might as well have told it to the cynic, my uncle: he could not have discourag'd or condemn'd me more.

Blandish. They are both in the right. I see things exactly as they do; but I have less fortitude, or more attachment than others: the inclinations of the man I love are spells upon my opposition.

Lord Gayville. Kind Blandish! you are the confidant I want.

Blandish. What has happen'd since your discovery in the closet?

Lord Gayville. The lovely wanderer left her lodgings the next morning; but I have again found her. She is in a house of equal retirement, but of very different character, in the city, and inaccessible. I have wrote to her, and knowing her to be distress'd, I have enclos'd bank bills for two hundred pounds, the acceptance of which I have urged with all the delicacy I am master of, and, by heaven! without a purpose of corruption.

Blandish. Two hundred pounds, and Lord Gayville's name!—

Lord Gayville. She has never known me, but by the name of Mr. Heartly. Since my ambition

has been to be loved for my own sake, I have been jealous of my title.

Blandish. And, prithee, by what diligence or chance did Mr. Heartly trace his fugitive?

Lord Gayville. By the acuteness of Mr. Prompt, your valet de chambre. You must pardon me for pressing into my service, for this occasion, the fellow in the world fittest for it.

Blandish. You know I am incapable of being angry with you; but that dog to practise upon my weakness, and engage without my consent!

Lord Gayville. The blame is all mine. He is now waiting an answer to my letter—how my heart palpitates at the delay!

Enter PROMPT.

Prompt. Are you alone, my Lord?

[*Starts at seeing his master.*]

Lord Gayville. Don't be afraid, Prompt—your peace is made.

Prompt. Then there is my return for your Lordship's goodness. [*Giving the letter.*] This letter was just now brought to the place appointed, by a porter.

Lord Gayville. By a Cupid, honest Prompt, and these characters were engraved by the point of his arrow! [*Kissing the superscription.*]

‘To——Heartly, Esq.’ Blandish, did you ever see any thing like it?

Blandish. If her style be equal to her handwriting——

Lord Gayville. If it be equal!—Infidel! you shall have proof directly. [*Opens the letter precipitately.*] Hey-day! what the devil’s here? my bills again, and no line—not a word—Death and disappointment, what’s this?

Prompt. Gad it’s well if she is not off again—faith, I never ask’d where the letter came from.

Lord Gayville. Should you know the messenger again?

Prompt. I believe I should, my Lord. For a Cupid, he was somewhat in years, about six feet high, and a nose rather given to purple.

Lord Gayville. Spare your wit, sir, till you find him.

Prompt. I have a shorter way—my life upon it I start her myself.

Blandish. And what is your device, sirrah?

Prompt. Lord, sir, nothing so easy as to bring every living creature in this town to the window: a tame bear, or a mad ox; two men, or two dogs fighting; a balloon in the air—(or tied up to the ceiling ’tis the same thing) make but noise enough, and out they come; first and second childhood, and

every thing between—I am sure I shall know her by inspiration.

Lord Gayville. Shall I describe her to you?

Prompt. No, my Lord, time is too precious—I'll be at her last lodgings, and afterwards half the town over before your Lordship will travel from her forehead to her chin.

Lord Gayville. Away then, my good fellow. He cannot mistake her, for when she was form'd, Nature broke the mould. [*Exit Prompt.*]

Blandish. Now for the blood of me cannot I call that fellow back; it is absolute infatuation.—Ah! I see how this will end.

Lord Gayville. What are your apprehensions?

Blandish. That my ferret yonder will do his part completely; that I shall set all your uncle's doctrine at nought, and thus lend myself to this wild intrigue, till the girl is put into your arms.

Lord Gayville. Propitious be the thought, my best friend! My uncle's doctrine!—But advise me, how shall I keep my secret from him for the present? He is suspicion personified: the eye of Sir Clement is a very probe to the mind.

Blandish. [*Aside.*] Yes, and it sometimes gives one a cursed deal of pain before he is convinced of touching a sound part.—[*To Lord Gayville.*] Your best chance would be to double your assi-

duities to Miss Alscrip. But then dissimulation is so mean a vice——

Lord Gayville. It is so, indeed, and if I give into it for a moment, it is upon the determination of never being her husband. I may despise and offend a woman; but disgust would be no excuse for betraying her. Adieu, Blandish; if you see Prompt first, I trust to you for the quickest communication of intelligence.

Blandish. I am afraid you may——I cannot resist you. [*Exit Lord Gayville.*] Ah! wrong—wrong—wrong! I hope that exclamation is not lost. A blind compliance with a young man's passions is a poor plot upon his affections. [*Exit.*]

SCENE III. Mrs. SAGELY's House.

Enter Mrs. SAGELY and Miss ALTON.

Mrs. Sagely. Indeed, Miss Alton, (since you are resolved to continue that name) you may bless yourself for finding me out in this wilderness.—Wilderness! this town is ten times more dangerous to youth and innocence—every man you meet is a wolf.

Miss Alton. Dear madam, I see you dwell upon my indiscretion in flying to London; but remember the safeguard I expected to find here. How

cruel was the disappointment! how dangerous have been the consequences! I thought the chance happy that threw a retired lodging in my way: I was upon my guard against the other sex, but for my own to be treacherous to an unfortunate—could I expect it?

Mrs. Sagely. Suspect every body, if you would be safe—but most of all suspect yourself. Ah! my pretty truant—the heart that is so violent in its aversions, is in sad danger of being the same in its affections, depend upon it.

Miss Alton. Let them spring from a just esteem, and you will absolve me: my aversion was to the character of the wretch I was threaten'd with—can you reprove me?

Mrs. Sagely. And tell me truly now; do you feel the same detestation for this worse character you have made acquaintance with? This rake—this abominable Heartly?—Ah, child, your look is suspicious.

Miss Alton. Madam, I have not a thought that I will not sincerely lay open to you. Mr. Heartly is made to please, and to be avoided; I desire never to see him more—his discovery of me here, his letters, his offers, have greatly alarmed me. I conjure you lose not an hour in placing me under the sort of protection I solicited.

Mrs. Sagely. If you are resolved, I believe I can serve you. Miss Alscrip, the great Heiress, (you may have heard of the name in your family) has been enquiring among decay'd gentry for a companion. She is too fine a lady to bear to be alone, and perhaps does not look to a husband's company as a certain dependance. Your musical talent will be a great recommendation—She is already apprized, and a line from me will introduce you.

Miss Alton. I will avail myself of your kindness immediately.

Prompt. [*Without.*] I tell you I have business with Mrs. Sagely—I must come in.

Mrs. Sagely. As I live, here is an impudent fellow forcing himself into the passage.

Miss Alton. Oh heaven! if Mr. Heartly should be behind!

Mrs. Sagely. Get into the back parlour; be he who he will, I'll warrant I protect you.

[*Exit Miss Alton.*]

Enter PROMPT, looking about.

Mrs. Sagely. Who are you, sir? What are you looking for?

Prompt. Madam, I was looking—I was looking—for you.

Mrs. Sagely. Well, sir, and what do you want?

Prompt. [*Still prying about.*] Madam, I want—I want—I want——

Mrs. Sagely. To rob the house, perhaps.

Prompt. Just the contrary, madam—to see that all is safe within. You have a treasure in your possession that I would not have lost for the world—a young lady.

Mrs. Sagely. Indeed!—begone about your business, friend—there are no young ladies to be spoke with here.

Prompt. Lord, madam, I don't desire to speak with her; my attentions go to ladies of the elder sort—I come to make proposals to you alone.

Mrs. Sagely. You make proposals to me? Did you know my late husband, sir?

Prompt. Husband! my good Mrs. Sagely, be at ease; I have no more views upon you, that way, than upon my grandmother—My proposals are of a quite different nature.

Mrs. Sagely. Of a different nature! Why, you audacious varlet! Here, call a constable——

Prompt. Dear madam, how you continue to misunderstand me—I have a respect for you, that will set at nought all the personal temptations about you, depend upon it, powerful as they are—And as for the young lady, my purpose is only

that you shall guard her safe. I would offer you a pretty snug house in a pleasant quarter of the town, where you two would be much more commodiously lodg'd—the furniture new, and in the prettiest taste—a neat little sideboard of plate—a black boy, with a turban, to wait upon you——

Mrs. Sagely. And for what purpose am I to be bribed? I am above it, sirrah. I have but a pittance, 'tis true, and heavy out-goings——My husband's decayed book-keeper to maintain, and poor old Smiler, that so many years together drew our whole family in a chaise—heavy charges! but by cutting off my luxuries, and stopping up a few windows, I can jog on, and scorn to be beholden to you, or him that sent you. [*Prompt tries at the door, and peeps through the keyhole.*] What would the impertinent fellow be at now? Keep the door bolted, and don't stand in sight.

Prompt. [*Aside.*] Oh! oh! she is here I find, and that's enough——My good Mrs. Sagely—your humble servant—I would fain be better acquainted with you—in a modest way——but must wait, I see, a more happy hour.—[*Aside, going out.*] When honesty and poverty do happen to meet, they grow so fond of each other's company, it is labour lost to try to separate them.

[*Exit.*

Mrs. Sagely. Shut the street door after him, and never let him in again.

Enter Miss ALTON from the inner Room.

Miss Alton. For mercy, madam, let me be gone immediately. I am very uneasy—I am certain Mr. Heartly is at the bottom of this.

Mrs. Sagely. I believe it, my dear, and now see the necessity of your removal. I'll write your letter—and heaven protect you. Remember my warning, 'Suspect yourself.' [Exit.

Miss Alton. In truth I will. I'll forget the forbearance of this profligate, and remember only his intentions. And is gratitude then suspicious? Painful lesson! A woman must not think herself secure because she has no *bad* impulse to fear: she must be upon her guard, lest her very best should betray her. [Exit.

ACT II.

SCENE I. *An Apartment in Sir CLEMENT FLINT'S House.*

Lady EMILY, GAYVILLE, and CLIFFORD at Chess.—Sir Clement sitting at a distance, pretending to read a parchment, but slyly observing them.

Lady Emily.

CHECK—If you do not take care, you are gone the next move.

Clifford. I confess, Lady Emily, you are on the point of complete victory.

Lady Emily. Pooh, I would not give a farthing for victory without a more spirited defence.

Clifford. Then you must engage with those (if those there are) that do not find you irresistible.

Lady Emily. I could find a thousand such; but I'll engage with none whose triumph I could not submit to with pleasure.

Sir Clement. [*Apart.*] Pretty significant on both sides. I wonder how much farther it will go

Lady Emily. Uncle, did you speak?

Sir Clement. [*Reading to himself.*] ‘And the parties to this indenture do farther covenant and agree, that all and every the said lands, tenements, and hereditaments—um—um’——How useful sometimes is ambiguity!

[*Loud enough to be heard.*]

Clifford. A very natural observation of Sir Clement’s upon that long parchment.

[*Pauses again upon the chess-board.—Lady Emily looking pensively at his face.*]

Clifford. To what a dilemma have you reduc’d me, Lady Emily! If I advance, I perish by my temerity; and it is out of my power to retreat.

Sir Clement. [*Apart.*] Better and better!—To talk in cypher is a curious faculty.

Clifford. Sir?

Sir Clement. [*Still reading.*] ‘In witness whereof the said parties have hereunto interchangeably set their hands and seals this—um—um—day of—um—um’——

Lady Emily. [*Resuming an air of vivacity.*] Come, I trifle with you too long—there’s your coup de grace——Uncle, I have conquer’d.

[*Both rising from the table.*]

Sir Clement. Niece, I do not doubt it——and in the style of the great proficients, without look-

ing upon the board. Clifford, was not your mother's name Charlton?

[*Folding up the parchment, and rising.*

Clifford. It was, sir.

Sir Clement. In looking over the writings Alscrip has sent me, preparatory to his daughter's settlement, I find mention of a conveyance from a Sir William Charlton of Devonshire. Was he a relation?

Clifford. My grandfather, sir: the plunder of his fortune was one of the first materials for raising that of Mr. Alscrip, who was steward to Sir William's estate, then manager of his difficulties, and lastly his sole creditor.

Sir Clement. And no better monopoly than that of a man's distresses. Alscrip has had twenty such, or I should not have singled out his daughter to be Lord Gayville's wife.

Clifford. It is a compensation for my family losses, that, in the event, they will conduce to the interest of the man I most love.

Sir Clement. Hey-day, Clifford!—take care, don't trench upon the Blandish—*Your* cue, you know, is sincerity.

Clifford. You seem to think, sir, there is no such quality. I doubt whether you believe there is an honest man in the world.

Sir Clement. You do me great injustice—several—several—and upon the old principle, that ‘honesty is the best policy.’—Self-interest is the great end of life, says human nature—Honesty is a better agent than craft, says proverb.

Clifford. But as for ingenuous, or purely disinterested motives——

Sir Clement. Clifford, do you mean to laugh at me?

Clifford. What is your opinion, Lady Emily?

Lady Emily. [*Endeavouring again at vivacity.*] That there may be such: but it is odds they are troublesome or insipid. Pure ingenuousness, I take it, is a rugged sort of thing, which scarcely will bear the polish of common civility; and for disinterestedness—young people sometimes set out with it; but it is like travelling upon a broken spring—one is glad to get it mended at the next stage.

Sir Clement. Emily, I protest you seem to study after me; proceed, child, and we will read together every character that comes in our way.

Lady Emily. Read one’s acquaintance——delightful! What romances, novels, satires, and mock heroics present themselves to my imagination! Our young men are flimsy essays; old ones, political pamphlets; coquets, fugitive pieces; and

fashionable beauties, a compilation of advertised perfumery, essence of pearl, milk of roses, and Olympian dew——Lord, I should now and then though turn over an acquaintance with a sort of fear and trembling.

Clifford. How so?

Lady Emily. Lest one should pop unaware upon something one should *not*, like a naughty speech in an old comedy; but it is only skipping what would make one blush.

Sir Clement. Or, if you did not skip, when a woman reads *by* herself and *to* herself, there are wicked philosophers who doubt whether her blushes are very troublesome.

Lady Emily. [*To Sir Clement.*] Do you know now, that for that speech of yours—and for that saucy smile of yours, [*To Clifford.*] I am strongly tempted to read you both aloud!

Sir Clement. Come, try—I'll be the first to open the book.

Lady Emily. A treatise of the *Houyhnhnms*, after the manner of Swift, tending to make us odious to ourselves, and to extract morose mirth from our imperfections—[*Turning to Clifford.*] Contrasted with an exposition of ancient morality address'd to the moderns: a chimerical attempt upon an obsolete subject.

Sir Clement. Clifford! we must double down that page. And now we'll have a specimen of her Ladyship.

Lady Emily. I'll give it you myself, and with justice; which is more than either of you would.

Sir Clement. And without skipping. —

Lady Emily. Thus then; a light, airy, fantastic sketch of genteel manners, as they are— with a little endeavour at what they ought to be— rather entertaining than instructive, not without art, but sparing in the use of it——

Sir Clement. But the passions, Emily. Do not forget what should stand in the foreground of a female treatise.

Lady Emily. They abound: but mixed and blended cleverly enough to prevent any from predominating; like the colours of a shot lutestring, that change as you look at it sideways or full: they are sometimes brighten'd by vivacity, and now and then subject to a shade of caprice—but meaning no ill—not afraid of a critical review: and thus, gentlemen, I present myself to you fresh from the press, and I hope not inelegantly bound.

Sir Clement. Altogether making a perfectly desirable companion for the closet: I am sure, Clifford, you will agree with me. Gad we are got into such a pleasant freedom with each other, it is

a pity to separate while any curiosity remains in the company. Prithee, Clifford, satisfy me a little as to your history. Old Lord Hardacre, if I am rightly informed, disinherited your father, his second son.

Clifford. For the very marriage we have been speaking of. The little fortune my father could call his own was sunk before his death, as a provision for my mother; upon an idea that whatever resentment he might personally have incurred, it would not be extended to an innocent offspring.

Sir Clement. A very silly confidence! How readily now should you and I, Emily, have discover'd, in a sensible old man, the irreconcilable offence of a marriage of the passions—You understand me?

Lady Emily. Perfectly!—[*Aside.*] Old petrification, your hints always speak forcibly.

Sir Clement. But your uncle, the present Lord, made amends?

Clifford. Amply. He offer'd to send me from Cambridge to an academy in Germany, to fit me for foreign service.—Well judging that a cannon ball was a fair and quick provision for a poor relation.

Sir Clement. Upon my word, I have known uncles less considerate.

Clifford. When Lord Gayville's friendship, and your indulgence, made me the companion of his travels, Lord Hardacre's *undivided* cares devolved upon my sister; whose whole independent possession, at my mother's death, was five hundred pounds—all our education had permitted that unhappy parent to lay by.

Lady Emily. Oh, for an act of justice and benevolence to reconcile me to the odious man! Tell me this instant what did he do for Miss Clifford?

Clifford. He bestow'd upon her forty pounds a year, upon condition that she resided with a family of his dependants in a remote county, to save the family from disgrace; and that allowance, when I heard last from her, he had threaten'd to withdraw, upon her refusing a detestable match he had endeavour'd to force upon her.

Lady Emily. Poor girl!

Sir Clement. Upon my word, an interesting story, and told with pathetic effect!—Emily, you look grave, child.

Lady Emily. [*Aside.*] I shall not own it however.—[*To him.*] For once, my dear uncle, you want your spectacles. My thoughts are on a diverting subject—my first visit to Miss Alscip;

to take a near view of that collection of charms destined to my happy brother.

Sir Clement. You need not go out of the room for that purpose. The schedule of an Heiress's fortune is a compendium of her merits, and the true security for marriage happiness.

Lady Emily. I am sure I guess at your system—*That* union must be most wise which has wealth to support it, and no affections to disturb it.

Sir Clement. Right.

Lady Emily. That makes a divorce the first promise of wedlock; and widowhood, the best blessing of life; that separates the interest of husband, wife, and child——

Sir Clement. To establish the independent comfort of all——

Lady Emily. Upon the broad basis of family hatred. Excellent, my dear uncle, excellent indeed! and upon that principle, though the lady is likely to be your niece, and my sister, I am sure you will have no objection to my laughing at her a little.

Sir Clement. You'll be puzzled to make her more ridiculous than I think her. What is your plan?

Lady Emily. Why, though her pride is to be

Alma. thought a leader in fashions, she is sometimes a servile copyist. Blandish tells me I am her principal model; and, what is most provoking, she is intent upon catching my manner as well as my dress, which she exaggerates to an excess that vexes me. Now if she *will* take me in shade, I'll give her a new outline, I am resolved; and if I do not make her a caricature for a printshop——

Clifford. Will all this be strictly consistent with your good nature, Lady Emily?

Lady Emily. No, nor I don't know when I shall do any thing consistent with it again, except leaving you two critics to a better subject than your humble servant.

[*Curtseys, and exit with a lively air.*]

Sir Clement. Well, Clifford! What do you think of her?

Clifford. That when she professes ill temper, she is a very awkward counterfeit.

Sir Clement. But her beauty, her wit, her improvement since you went abroad? I expected, from a man of your age and taste, something more than a cold compliment upon her temper. Could not you, compatibly with the immaculate sincerity you profess, venture as far as admiration?

Clifford. I admire her, sir, as I do a bright star

in the firmament, and consider the distance of both as equally immeasurable.

Sir Clement. [*Aside.*] Specious rogue!—[*To him.*] Well, leave Emily then to be winked at through telescopes; and now to a matter of nearer observation——What is Gayville doing?

Clifford. Every thing you desire, sir, I trust; but you know I have been at home only three days, and have hardly seen him since I came.

Sir Clement. Nor I neither; but I find he has profited wonderfully by foreign experience. After rambling half the world over without harm, he is caught, like a travell'd woodcock, at his landing.

Clifford. If you suspect Lord Gayville of indiscretion, why do you not put him candidly to the test? I'll be bound for his ingenuousness not to withhold any confession you may require.

Sir Clement. You may be right, but he'll confess more to you in an hour than to me in a month, for all that; come, Clifford, look, as you ought to do, at your interest—sift him—watch him—You cannot guess how much you will make me your friend, and how grateful I may be if you will discover——

Clifford. Sir, you mistake the footing upon which Lord Gayville and I live——I am often the

partner of his thoughts, but never a spy upon his actions. [Bows and exit.

Sir Clement. Well play'd, Clifford! Good air and emphasis, and well suited to the trick of the scene. He would do, if the practical part of deceit were as easy at his age, as discernment of it is at mine. Gayville and Emily, if they had not a vigilant guard, would be his sure prey; for they are examples of the generous affections coming to maturity with their statue; while suspicion, art, and interest are still dormant in the seed. I must employ Blandish in this business—a rascal of a different cast—below Clifford in hypocrisy, but greatly above him in the scale of impudence. They shall both forward my ends, while they think they are pursuing their own. I shall ever be sure of a man's endeavours to serve me, while I hold out a lure to his knavery and interest. [Exit.

SCENE II. An Antichamber.

Alscrip. [Without.] Dinner not order'd till seven o'clock!—Bid the kitchen-maid get me some eggs and bacon. Plague, what with the time of dining and the French cookery, I am in the land of starvation, with half St James's-Market upon my weekly bills. [Enter while speaking the last sen-

tence. What a change have I made, to please my unpleaseable daughter! Instead of my regular meal at Furnival's Inn, here am I transported to Berkley Square, to fast at Alscrip House, till my fine company come from their morning ride two hours after dark—Nay, its worse, if I am carried among my great neighbours in Miss Alscrip's suite as she calls it. My lady *looks* over me; my Lord walks over me, and sets me in a little tottering cane chair, at the cold corner of the table—though I have a mortgage upon the house and furniture, and arrears due of the whole interest. Its a pleasure though to be well dressed. My daughter maintains all fashions are founded in sense—Icod! the tightness of my wig, and stiffness of my cape, give me the sense of the pillory—Plaguy scanty about the hips too—and the breast something of a merrythought reversed—But there is some sense in *that*, for if one sex pares away in proportion where the other swells, we shall take up no more room in the world than we did before.

Enter a Servant.

Servant. Sir, Miss Alscrip wishes to see you. She is at her toilet.

Alscrip. Who is with her?

Servant. Only Mrs. Blandish, sir.

Alscrip. She must content herself with that company 'till I have had my whet—order up the eggs and bacon. [Exit.

SCENE III. Miss ALSCRIP discovered at her Toilet. CHIGNON, her Valet de Chambre, dressing her head. Mrs. BLANDISH sitting by, and holding a box of diamond pins.

Miss Alscrip. And so, Blandish, you really think that the introduction of Otaheite feathers in my trimming succeeded?

Mrs. Blandish. Oh, with the mixture of those charming Italian flowers, and the knots of pearl that gather'd up the festoons, never any thing had so happy an effect—It put the whole ball-room out of humour, and that's the surest test of good taste—Monsieur Chignon, that pin a little more to the front.

Miss Alscrip. And what did they say?

Mrs. Blandish. You know it is the first solitude of my life to see the friend of my heart treated with justice. So when you stood up to dance, I got into the thick of the circle—Mon-

sieur, don't you think this large diamond would be well placed just in the middle?

Chignon. Eh! non, madame; ca ne releve pas—Dat give no relief to de weight of de curl——Full in de front un gros bouton von great nob of *diamond!* pardie ce seroit un accommodage à la Polypheme; de big eye of de geant in de centre of de forehead.

Miss Alscip. Chignon is right in point of taste, though not quite so happy in his allusions as he is sometimes.

Chignon. Ah! madame, you have done von grande injure to my contrée: You go for von monthie, and bring away all de good taste——At Paris—all von side——de diamond—de cap—de glance—de bon mot même—All von side, nothing direct à Paris.

Miss Alscip. [*Smiling at Chignon, and then turning to Mrs. Blandish.*] Well!—and so——

Mrs. Blandish. So it was all admiration! Elegant, says Lady Spite—it may do very well for Miss Alscip, who never looks at expence. The dress of a bridal princess! cries Mrs. Scanty, and for one night's wear too!

Miss Alscip. Delightful! the very language I wish'd for——Oh, how charmingly apropos was

my accident! Did you see when my trimming in the passe-pied of a cotillon came luckily in contact with Billy Skim's great shoe-buckle—how it ripp'd away?

Mrs. Blandish. Did I see it?

Miss Alscip. One of the great feathers stuck fast on the shoe, and looked for all the world like the heel wing of a Mercury in a pantomime.

Mrs. Blandish. Oh! you witty creature, how you describe!

Miss Alscip. It was a most becoming rent!

Mrs. Blandish. And what a display of indifference; what an example for a woman of fortune, did you exhibit in the bustle of picking up the scattered fragments!

Miss Alscip. When the pearls were trundling about, and I insisted upon the company being no longer disturbed, but would leave what remain'd for fairy favours to the maid who swept the room. He! he! he! Do you think Lady Emily would have done that better?

Mrs. Blandish. Lady Emily! poor girl!—How soon must she submit to be the humble second of the family.

Miss Alscip. He! he! he! Do you sincerely think so, Blandish? And yet it would be strange if

it were otherwise, for I could buy her ten times over.

Chignon. Madame, vat humeure vould you wear to-day?

Miss Alscip. Humour! Chignon? What am I dressed for now?

Chignon. The parfaite aimable, madame: but by bringing de point of de hair more down to de eyebrow, or adding a littel blowse to de sides, I can give you de look severe, capricieuse—vat you please.

Miss Alscip. We'll put it off for half an hour, I am not quite decided. I was in the capricieuse yesterday—I believe I shall keep on the perfect amiable. [*Exit Chignon.*] Tiffany, take off my powdering gowu—Ah! ho! how the wench tugs—do you think you are pulling off the coachman's great-coat?

Mrs. Blandish. My dear amiable!—do not let that sweet temper be ruffled—Why will you not employ me in these little offices. Delicacy like yours should be waited upon by the softness of a sylph.

[*During the speech, exit Tiffany peevishly.*]

Miss Alscip. I am promised a creature to be about me out of the common way.

Mrs. Blandish. A new woman?

Miss Alscip. No; something to be raised much higher, and at the same time fitted better to receive one's ill-humour. An humble companion, well born, well educated, and perfectly dependant, is a most useful appurtenance in the best families.

Mrs. Blandish. Well, do not raise her to the rank of a friend, lest I should be jealous.

Miss Alscip. You may be perfectly secure—I shall take particular care that friendship shall be out of the question on both sides. I had once thought of a restoration of pages to sit in scarlet and silver (as one reads in former times) upon the forepart of the coach, and to hold up one's train—but I have a new male attendant in a valet de chambre, who has possession of my bust—my two women will have the charge from the point of the shoulder to the toe—so my person being provided for—the Countess of Gayville shall have an attendant to wait upon her mind.

Mrs. Blandish. I vow a most elegant and uncommon thought.

Miss Alscip. One that can pen a note, in the familiar, the punctilious, or the witty—it's quite troublesome to be always writing wit for one's self. But, above all, she is to have a talent for music.

Mrs. Blandish. Aye, your very soul is framed for harmony.

Miss Alscrip. I have not quite determin'd what to call her—governante of the private chamber—keeper of the boudoir, with a silver key at her breast—

Enter CHIGNON.

Chignon. Madame, a young lady beg to know if you be visible.

Miss Alscrip. A young lady! It is not Lady Emily Gayville?

Chignon. Non, madame; but if you were absent, and I had the adjustment of her head, she would be the most chamante personne I did ever see.

Miss Alscrip. Introduce her. [*Exit Chignon.*] Who can this be?

Mrs. Blandish. Some woman of taste to enquire your correspondent at Paris—or—

Enter Miss ALTON.—Miss ALSCRIP curtseying respectfully, Miss ALTON retiring disconcerted.

Miss Alscrip. Of taste indeed by her appearance! Who's in the anti-chamber? Why did they

not open the folding doors?—Chignon, approach a fanteuil for the lady.

Miss Alton. Madam, I come——

Miss Alscrip. Madam, pray be seated——

Miss Alton. Excuse me, madam——

Miss Alscrip. Madam, I must beg——

Miss Alton. Madam, this letter will inform you how little pretensions I have to the honours you are offering.

Miss Alscrip. [*Reads.*] ‘Miss Alton, the bearer of this, is the person I recommended as worthy the honour of attending you as a companion. [*Eyes her scornfully.*] She is born a gentlewoman, I dare say her talents and good qualities will speak more in her favour, than any words I could use—I am, madam, your most obedient—um—um—.’ Blandish, was there ever such a mistake?

Blandish. Oh! you dear, giddy, *absent* creature, what could you be thinking of?

Miss Alscrip. Absent *indeed.* Chignon give me the fanteuil. [*Throws herself into it.*] Young woman, where were you educated?

Miss Alton. Chiefly, madam, with my parents.

Miss Alscrip. But finish’d, I take it for granted, at a country boarding-school; for we have, ‘young ladies,’ you know Blandish, ‘boarded and educated,’ upon blue boards in gold letters in every

village; with a strolling player for a dancing-master, and a deserter from Dunkirk to teach the French grammar.

Mrs. Blandish. How that genius of your's does paint! nothing escapes you—I dare say you have anticipated this young lady's story.

Miss Alton. It is very true, madam, my life can afford nothing to interest the curiosity of you two ladies; it has been too insignificant to merit your concern, and attended with no circumstances to excite your pleasantry.

Miss Alscrip. [*Yawning.*] I hope, child, it will be attended with such for the future as will add to your own—I cannot bear a mope about me.—I am told you have a talent for music—can you touch that harp? It stands here as a piece of furniture, but I have a notion it is kept in tune by the man who comes to wind up my clocks.

Miss Alton. Madam, I dare not disobey you. But I have been us'd to perform before a most partial audience; I am afraid strangers will think my talent too humble to be worthy attention.

For tenderness framed in life's earliest day,
A parent's soft sorrows to mine led the way;
The lesson of pity was caught from her eye,
And ere words were my own, I spoke in a sigh.

The nightingale plunder'd, the mate-widow'd
dove,
The warbled complaint of the suffering grove,
To youth as it ripen'd gave sentiment new,
The object still changing, the sympathy true.

Soft embers of passion, yet rest in the glow—
A warmth of more pain may this breast never
know!

Or if too indulgent the blessing I claim,
Let reason awaken and govern the flame.

Miss Alscip. I declare not amiss, Blandish; only a little too plaintive: but I dare say she can play a country-dance, when the enlivening is required.—So, Miss Alton, you are welcome to my protection; and indeed I wish you to stay from this hour. My toilette being nearly finish'd, I shall have a horrid vacation till dinner.

Miss Alton. Madam, you do me great honour, and I very readily obey you.

Mrs. Blandish. I wish you joy, Miss Alton, of the most enviable situation a young person of elegant talents could be raised to. You and I will vie with each other to prevent our dear Countess ever knowing a melancholy hour. She has but one

fault to correct—the giving way to the soft effusions of a too tender heart.

Enter Servant.

Servant. Madam, a letter——

Miss Alscip. It's big enough for a state packet—Oh! mercy, a petition—for heaven's sake, Miss Alton, look it over. [*Miss Alton reads.*] I should as soon read one of Lady Newchapel's methodist sermons.—What does it contain?

Miss Alton. Madam, an uncommon series of calamities, which prudence could neither see, nor prevent: the reverse of a whole family from affluence and content, to misery and imprisonment; and it adds that the parties have the honour, remotely, to be allied to you.

Miss Alscip. Remote relations! aye, they always think one's made of money.

Miss Alton. That some years ago—

Enter another Servant.

Second Servant. A messenger, madam, from the animal repository, with the only puppy of the Peruvians, and the refusal at twenty guineas.

Miss Alscip. As I live, the offspring of the beauteous Aza, who has so long been thought past hopes of continuing his family! Were he to ask fifty I must have him.

Mrs. Blandish. [*Offering to run out.*] I vow I'll give him the first kiss.

Miss Alscip. [*Stopping her.*] I'll swear you shan't.

Miss Alton. Madam, I was just finishing the petition.

Miss Alscip. It's throwing money away—but give him a crown.

[*Exit with Mrs. Blandish, striving which shall be first.*]

Miss Alton. 'The soft effusions of a too tender heart.' The proof is excellent. That the covetous should be deaf to the miserable I can conceive; but I should not have believed, if I had not seen, that a taste for profusion did not find its first indulgence in benevolence. [*Exit.*]

ACT III.

SCENE I. *Miss ALSCRIP'S Dressing-room
continued.*

Miss ALTON.

THANKS to Mrs. Blandish's inexhaustible talent for encomium, I shall be relieved from one part of a companion that my nature revolts at. But who comes here? It's well if I shall not be exposed to impertinences I was not aware of.

Enter CHIGNON.

Chignon. [*Aside.*] Ma foi, la voila—I will lose no time to pay my addresse—Now for de humble maniere, and de unperplex assurance of my contrée. [*Bowing with French shrug—Miss Alton turning over music books.*] Mademoiselle, est il permis? may I presume, to offer you my profounde homage? [*Miss Alton not taking notice.*] Mademoiselle, if you vill put your head into my

hands, I will give a distinction to your beauty, that shall make you and me de conversation of all de town.

Miss Alton. I request, Mr. Chignon, you will devote your ambition to your own part of the compliment.

Mr. Alscrip. [*Without.*] Where is my daughter?

Miss Alton. Is that Mr. Alscrip's voice, Mr. Chignon? It is awkward for me to meet him before I'm introduced.

Chignon. Keep a little behind, mademoiselle; he vill only passe de room—He vill not see through me.

Enter ALSCRIP.

Alscrip. Hah, my daughter gone already, but [*Sees Chignon.*] there's a new specimen of foreign vermin—a lady's valet de chambre—Taste for ever!—Now if *I* was to give the charge of my person to a waiting maid, they'd say I was indelicate. [*As he crosses the stage, Chignon keeps sideling to intercept his sight, and bowing as he looks towards him.*] What the devil is Mounseer at? I thought all his agility lay in his fingers: what antics is the monkey practising? He twists and

doubles himself as if he had a raree-show at his back.

Chignon. [*Aside.*] Be gar no raree-show for you, Monsieur Alscrip, if I can help.

Alscrip. [*Spying Miss Alton.*] Ah! ah! What have we got there? Monsieur, who is that?

Chignon. Sir, my lady wish to speak to you in her bondoir. She sent me to conduct you, sir.

Alscrip. [*Imitating.*] Yes, sir, but I will first conduct myself to this lady—Tell me this minute who she is?

Chignon. Sir, she come to live here, companion to my lady. Mademoiselle study some musique—she must not be disturb'd.

Alscrip. Get about your business, Monsieur, or I'll disturb every comb in your head—Go, tell my daughter to stay till I come to her. I shall give her companion some cautions against saucy Frenchmen, sirrah!

Chignon. [*Aside.*] Cautions! peste! your are subject a' cautions yourself—I suspecte you to be von old rake, but no ver dangerous rival. [*Exit.*

Alscrip. [*To himself, and looking at her with his glass.*] The devil is never tired of throwing baits in my way. [*She comes forward modestly.*] By all that's delicious I must be better acquainted with her. [*He bows; she curtsies, the music*

book still in her hand.] But how to begin—my usual way of attacking my daughter's maids will never do.

Miss Alton. [*Aside.*] My situation is very embarrassing.

Alscrip. Beauteous stranger, give me leave to add my welcome to my daughter's. Since Alscrip-House was established, she never brought any thing into it to please me before.

Miss Alton. [*A little confused.*] Sir, it is a great additional honour to that Miss Alscrip has done me, to be thought worthy so respectable a protection as your's.

Alscrip. I could furnish you with a better word than respectable. It sounds so distant, and my feelings have so little to do with cold respect—I never had such a desire—to make myself agreeable.

Miss Alton. [*Aside.*] A very strange old man.—[*To him, more confused.*] Sir, you'll pardon me, I believe Miss Alscrip is waiting.

Alscrip. Don't be afraid, my dear, enchanting diffident (zounds! what a flutter am I in) don't be afraid—my disposition, to be sure, is too susceptible; but then it is likewise so dove-like, so tender, and so innocent. Come, play me that tune, and enchant my ear, as you have done my eye,

Miss Alton. Sir, I wish to be excused, indeed it does not deserve your attention.

Alscrip. Not deserve it! I had rather hear you than all the Italians in the Haymarket, even when they sue the managers, and their purses chink the symphony in Westminster Hall.

[*Presenting the harp.*]

Miss Alton. Sir, it is to avoid the affectation of refusing what is so little worth asking for.

[*Takes the harp, and plays a few bars of a lively air. Alscrip kisses her fingers with rapture.*]

Alscrip. Oh! the sweet little twiddle-diddles!

Miss Alton. For shame, sir, what do you mean?

[*Alscrip gets hold of both her hands, and continues kissing her fingers.*]

Miss Alton. [*Struggling.*] Help!

Miss Alscrip. [*Entering.*] I wonder what my papa is doing all this time?

[*Starts—a short pause—Miss Alscrip surprised; Miss Alton confused; Alscrip puts his hand to his eye.*]

Alscrip. Oh, child! I have got something in my eye, that makes me almost mad.—A little midge—I believe.—Gad, I caught hold of this young lady's hand in one of my twitches, and her nerves were as much in a flutter as if I had bit her.

Miss Alscrip. [*Significantly.*] Yes, my dear papa, I perceive you *have* something in your eye, and I'll do my best to take it out immediately—Miss Alton, will you do me the favour to walk into the drawing-room?

Miss Alton. I hope, madam, you will permit me, at a proper opportunity, to give my explanation of what has passed. [*Retires.*]

Miss Alscrip. There's no occasion—Let it rest among the catalogue of wonders, like the Glastonbury-thorn, that blooms at Christmas.—To be serious, papa—though I carried off your behaviour as well as I could, I am really shock'd at it. A man of your years, and of a profession where the opinion of the world is of such consequence—

Alscrip. My dear Molly, have not I quitted the practice of attorney and turned fine gentleman, to laugh at the world's opinion; or, had I not, do you suppose the kiss of a pretty wench would hurt a lawyer? My dear Molly, if the fraternity had no other reflections to be afraid of!

Miss Alscrip. Oh, hideous! Molly indeed! you ought to have forgot I had a christen'd name long ago: am not I going to be a countess? If you did not stint my fortune, by squandering your's away upon dirty trulls, I might be call'd your grace.

Alscrip. Spare your lectures, and you shall be call'd your highness, if you please.

Enter Servant.

Servant. Madam, Lady Emily Gayville is in her carriage in the street, will your ladyship be at home?

Miss Alscrip. Yes, shew her into the drawing-room. [*Exit servant.*] I entreat, sir, you will keep a little more guard upon your passions; consider the dignity of your house, and if you must be cooing, buy a French figurante. [*Exit.*

Alscrip. Well said, my lady countess! well said, quality morals! What am I the better for burying a jealous wife? To be chicken-peck'd is a new persecution, more provoking than the old one.—Oh Molly! Molly!—Plague upon the example of an independent Heiress. [*Exit.*

SCENE II. The Drawing-room.

Miss Alton. [*Alone.*] What perplexing scenes I already meet with in this house! I ought, however, to be contented in the security it affords against the attempts of Heartly. I *am* contented

—But, oh Clifford! It was hard to be left alone to the choice of distresses.

Enter CHIGNON, *introducing* Lady EMILY.

Chignon. My Lady Emily Gayville—Madame no here! Mademoiselle, announce, if you please, my lady.

Lady Emily. [*Aside.*] Did my ears deceive me? Surely I heard the name of Clifford—and it escaped in an accent!—Pray, sir, who is that?

[*To Chignon.*

Chignon. Mademoiselle Alton, confidente of my lady, and next after me, in her suite.

[*Examines her head-dress impertinently; Miss Alton, with great modesty, rises and puts her work together.*

Lady Emily. There seems to be considerable difference in the decorum of her attendants. You need not stay, sir.

Chignon. [*As he goes out.*] Ma foi, sa tête est passable—her head may pass.

Lady Emily. [*Aside.*] How my heart beats with curiosity! [*Miss Alton having disposed her things in her work-bag, is retiring with a curtsey.*] Miss Alton, I am in no haste. On the contrary, I think the occasion fortunate that allows me

to begin an acquaintance with a person of so amiable an appearance. I don't know whether that pert foreigner has led me into an error—but without being too inquisitive, may I ask if you make any part of this family?

Miss Alton. Madam, I am under Miss Alscip's protection; I imagine I am represented as her dependant; I am not ashamed of humble circumstances, that are not the consequences of indiscretion.

Lady Emily. That with such claims to respect, you should be in any circumstances of humiliation, is a disgrace to the age we live in.

Miss Alton. Madam, my humiliation (if such it be) is just. Perhaps I have been too proud, and my heart required this self-correction. A life of retired industry might have been more pleasing to me; but an orphan—a stranger—ignorant and diffident, I preferr'd my present situation as one less exposed to misrepresentation. [*Bell rings.*] I can no longer detain Miss Alscip from the honour of receiving your ladyship.

[*A respectful curtsey and exit.*]

Lady Emily. There is something strangely mysterious and affecting in all this—what delicacy of sentiment—what softness of manners! and how well do these qualities accord with that sigh for

Clifford! She had been proud—proud of what?—of Clifford's love. It is too plain. But then to account for her present condition?—He has betrayed and abandoned her—too plain again, I fear.—She talk'd too of a self-corrected heart—take example, Emily, and recal thine from an object, which it ought more than ever to renounce. But here come the Alscrip and her friend: lud! lud! lud! how shall I recover my spirits! I must attempt it, and if I lose my present thoughts in a trial of extravagance, be it of theirs or my own, it will be a happy expedient.

*Enter Miss ALSCRIP and Mrs. BLANDISH.—
Miss ALSCRIP runs up to Lady EMILY, and
kisses her forehead.*

Lady Emily. I ask your pardon, madam, for being so awkward, but I confess I did not expect so elevated a salute.

Miss Alscrip. Dear Lady Emily, I had no notion of its not being universal. In France, the touch of the lips, just between the eyebrows, has been adopted for years.

Lady Emily. I perfectly acknowledge the propriety of the custom. It is almost the only spot of

the face where the touch would not risk a confusion of complexions.

Miss Alscrip. He! he! he! what a pretty thought!

Mrs. Blandish. How I have long'd for this day!—Come, let me put an end to ceremony, and join the hands of the sweetest pair that ever nature and fortune mark'd for conuection.

[*Joins their hands.*]

Miss Alscrip. Thank you, my good Blandish, though I was determin'd to break the ice, Lady Emily, in the first place I met you. But you were not at Lady Dovecourt's last night.

Lady Emily. [*Affectedly.*] No, I went home directly from the Opera: projected the revival of a cap; read a page in the trials of Temper; went to bed, and dream'd I was Belinda in the Rape of the Lock.

Mrs. Blandish. Elegant creature!

Miss Alscrip. [*Aside.*] I must have that air, if I die for it.—[*Imitating.*] I too came home early; supped with my old gentleman; made him explain my marriage articles, dower, and heirs entail; read a page in a trial of divorce, and dream'd of a rose-colour equipage, with emblems of Cupids issuing out of coronets.

Mrs. Blandish. Oh, you sweet twins of perfection—what equality in every thing! I have thought of a name for you—The Inseparable Inimitables.

Miss Alscip. I declare I shall like it exceedingly—one sees so few uncopied originals—the thing I cannot bear——

Lady Emily. Is vulgar imitation—I must catch the words from your mouth, to shew you how we agree.

Miss Alscip. Exactly. Not that one wishes to be without affectation.

Lady Emily. Oh! mercy forbid!

Miss Alscip. But to catch a manner, and weave it, as I may say, into one's own originality.

Mrs. Blandish. Pretty! pretty!

Lady Emily. That's the art—Lord, if one liv'd entirely upon one's own whims, who would not be run out in a twelvemonth?

Miss Alscip. Dear Lady Emily, don't you doat upon folly?

Lady Emily. To ecstasy. I only despair of seeing it well kept up.

Miss Alscip. I flatter myself there is no great danger of that.

Lady Emily. You are mistaken. We have, 'tis true, some examples of the extravaganza in high life that no other country can match; but, withal, many

a false sister, that starts, as one would think, in the very hey-day of the fantastic, yet comes to a stand-still in the midst of the course.

Mrs. Blandish. Poor spiritless creatures!

Lady Emily. Do you know there is more than one Dutchess who has been seen in the same carriage with her husband, like two doves in a basket, in the print of Conjugal Felicity? And another has been detected—I almost blush to name it!

Mrs. Blandish. Bless us, where? and how? and how?

Lady Emily. In nursing her own child!

Miss Alscrip. Oh! barbarism!—For heaven's sake let us change the subject. You were mentioning a reviv'd cap, Lady Emily; any thing of the Henry quatre?

Lady Emily. Quite different. An English mob under the chin, and artless ringlets in natural colour, that shall restore an admiration for Prior's Nut-Brown Maid.

Miss Alscrip. Horrid! shocking!

Lady Emily. Absolutely necessary. To be different from the rest of the world, we must now revert to nature. Make haste, or you have so much to undo, you will be left behind.

Miss Alscrip. I dare say so. But who can vulgarize all at once? What will the French say?

Lady Emily. We are to have an interchange of fashions and follies, upon a basis of unequivocal reciprocity.

Miss Alscrip. Fashions and follies—oh, what a promising manufacture!

Lady Emily. Yes, and one, thank heaven! that we may defy the edict of any potentate to prohibit.

Miss Alscrip. [*With an affected drop of her lip in her laugh.*] He! he! he! he! he! he!

Lady Emily. My dear Miss Alscrip, what are you doing? I must correct you as I love you. Sure you must have observed the drop of the under-lip is exploded since Lady Simpermede broke a tooth! [*Sets her mouth affectedly.*] I am preparing the cast of the lips for the ensuing winter—thus—it is to be called the Paphian mimp.

Miss Alscrip. [*Imitating.*] I swear I think it pretty—I must try to get it.

Lady Emily. Nothing so easy. It is done by one cabalistical word, like a metamorphosis in the fairy tales. You have only, when before your glass, to keep pronouncing to yourself mimini-primini—the lips cannot fail of taking their plie.

Miss Alscrip. Nimini-primini—imini, mimini—

oh, its delightfully enfantine! and so innocent, to be kissing one's own lips.

Lady Emily. You have it to a charm—does it not become her infinitely, Mrs. Blandish?

Mrs. Blandish. Our friend's features must succeed in every grace; but never so much as in a quick change of extremes.

Enter Servant.

Servant. Madam, Lord Gayville desires to know if you are at home?

Miss Alscip. A strange formality!

Lady Emily. [*Aside.*] No brother ever came more opportunely to a sister's relief; 'I have fool'd it to the top of my bent.'

Miss Alscip. Desire Miss Alton to come to me. [*Exit Servant.*] Lady Emily, you must not blame me; I am supporting the cause of our sex, and must punish a lover for some late inattentions—I shall not see him.

Lady Emily. Oh, cruel! [*Sees Miss Alton, who enters.*] Miss Alscip, you have certainly the most elegant companion in the world.

Miss Alscip. Dear, do you think so? an un-gain, dull sort of a body, in my mind; but we'll

try her in the present business. Miss Alton, you must do me a favour.—I want to plague my husband that is to be—you must take my part—you must *double me* like a second actress at Paris, when the first has the vapours.

Miss Alton. Madam!

Miss Alscip. Oh, never look alarmed—It is only to convey my refusal of his visit, and to set his alarms afloat a little—particularly with jealousy, that's the master-torment.

Miss Alton. Really, madam, the task you would impose upon me——

Miss Alscip. Will be a great improvement to you, and quite right for me. Tease—tease and tame, is a rule without exception, from the keeper of the lions to the teacher of a piping bulfinch.

Mrs. Blandish. But, you hard-hearted thing, will you name any object for his jealousy?

Miss Alscip. No, keep him there in the dark—always keep your creature in the dark—That's another secret of taming—Don't be grave, Lady Emily; [*whose attention is fixed on Miss Alton*] your brother's purgatory shall be short, and I'll take the reconciliation scene upon myself.

Lady Emily. [*Endeavouring to recover herself.*] I cannot but pity him; especially, as I am sure that, do what you will, he will always regard

you with the same eyes. And so, my sweet sister, I leave him to your mercy, and to that of your representative, whose disposition, if I have any judgment, is ill-suited to a task of severity.

Mrs. Blandish. Dear Lady Emily carry me away with you. When a lover is coming, it shall never be said I am in the way.

Lady Emily. I am at your orders. [*Looking at Miss Alton.*] What a suspense am I to suffer? a moment more and I shall betray myself. [*Aside.*]—Adieu, Miss Alscrip.

Miss Alscrip. Call Lady Emily's servants.

Lady Emily. You shan't stir—remember ni-mini-primini. [*Exit.*]

Mrs. Blandish. [*Coming back and squeezing Miss Alscrip's hand, in a half whisper.*] She'd give her eyes to be like you. [*Exit.*]

Miss Alscrip. Now for it, Miss Alton—Only remember that you are doubling *me*, the woman he adores.

Miss Alton. Indeed, madam, I am quite incapable of executing your orders to your satisfaction. The utmost I can undertake is a short message.

Miss Alscrip. Never fear. [*Knock at the door.*] There he comes—step aside, and I'll give you your very words. [*Exeunt.*]

Enter Lord GAYVILLE, conducted by a Servant.

Lord Gayville. So, now to get through this piece of drudgery. There's a meanness in my proceeding, and my compunction is just. Oh, the dear lost possessor of my heart! lost, irrecoverably lost!

Enter Miss ALTON from the bottom of the scene.

Miss Alton. A pretty employment I am sent upon.

Lord Gayville. [*To himself.*] Could she but know the sacrifice I am ready to make!

Miss Alton. [*To herself.*] The very picture of a lover, if absence of mind marks one. It is unpleasant for me to interrupt a man I never saw, but I shall deliver my message very concisely.—My Lord——

Lord Gayville. [*Turning.*] Madam——[*Both start and stand in surprise.*] Astonishment! Miss Alton! my charming fugitive!

Miss Alton. How! Mr. Heartly—Lord Gayville!

Lord Gayville. My joy and my surprise are alike unutterable. But I conjure you, madam,

tell me by what strange circumstance do I meet you here?

Miss Alton. [*Aside.*] Now assist me, honest pride; assist me, resentment.

Lord Gayville. You spoke to me—Did you know me?

Miss Alton. No otherwise, my Lord, than as Miss Alscip's lover. I had a message from her to your lordship.

Lord Gayville. For heaven's sake, madam, in what capacity?

Miss Alton. In one, my Lord, not very much above the class of a servant.

Lord Gayville. Impossible, sure! It is to place the brilliant below the foil—to make the inimitable work of nature secondary to art and defect.

Miss Alton. It is to take refuge in a situation that offers me security against suspicious obligation; against vile design; against the attempts of a seducer—It is to exercise the patience, that the will, and perhaps the favour of heaven, meant to try.

Lord Gayville. Cruel, cruel to yourself and me! Could I have had a happiness like that of assisting you against the injustice of fortune—and when to be thus degraded was the alternative—

Miss Alton. My Lord, it is fit I should be ex-

plicit. Reflect upon the language you have held to *me*; view the character in which you present yourself to this family; and then pronounce in whose breast we must look for a sense of degradation.

Lord Gayville. In mine, and mine alone. I confess it—Hear, nevertheless, my defence—My actions are all the result of love. And culpable as I may seem, my conscience does not reproach me with——

Miss Alton. Oh, my Lord, I readily believe you—You are above its reproaches—qualities that are infamous and fatal, in one class of life, create applause and conscientious satisfaction in another.

Lord Gayville. Infamous and fatal qualities! What means my lovely accuser?

Miss Alton. That to steal or stab is death in common life: but when one of your lordship's degree sets his hard heart upon the destruction of a woman, how glorious is his success! How consummate his triumph! When he can follow the theft of her affections by the murder of her honour.

Miss ALSCRIP enters softly behind.

Miss Alscrip. I wonder how it goes on.

Lord Gayville. Exalted! Adorable woman!

Miss Alscrip. Adorable! Aye, I thought how 'twould be!

Lord Gayville. Hear me! I conjure you——

Miss Alscrip. Not a word, if she knows her business.

Miss Alton. My Lord! I have heard too much.

Miss Alscrip. Brava! I could not have play'd it better myself.

Lord Gayville. Oh! still more charming than severe. [*Kneels.*]

Miss Alscrip. Humph! I hope he means me though.

Lord Gayville. The character in which you see me here makes me appear more odious to myself, if possible, than I am to you.

Miss Alscrip. [*Behind.*] By all that's treacherous I doubt it.

Miss Alton. Desist, my Lord—Miss Alscrip has a claim——

Miss Alscrip. Aye, now for it.

Lord Gayville. By heav'n, she is my aversion. It is my family, on whom I am dependant, that has betray'd me into these cursed addresses. Accept my contrition—pity a wretch struggling with the complicated torments of passion, shame, penitence, and despair.

Miss Alscrip. [*Comes forward—all stand con-*



*Miss Alton—Desist my Lord—Miss Alscrop has
a claim — Her. Rep. Act. 3. Scene 2.*



fused.] I never saw a part better doubled in my life!

Lord Gayville. Confusion! What a light do I appear in to them both! How shall I redeem myself, even in my own opinion?

Miss Alscrip. [*Looking at Lord Gayville.*] Expressive dignity!—[*Looking at Miss Alton.*] Sweet simplicity! Amiable diffidence!—‘She should execute my commands most awkwardly.’

Lord Gayville. [*Aside.*] There is but one way. [*To Miss Alscrip.*] Madam, your sudden entrance has effected a discovery which, with shame I confess, ought to have been made before—The lady who stands there is in possession of my heart. If it is a crime to adore her, I am the most guilty wretch on earth. Pardon me, if you can; my sincerity is painful to me; but in this crisis it is the only atonement I can offer. [*Bows, and exit.*]

Miss Alscrip. [*After a pause.*] Admirable!—Perfect! The most finish’d declaration, I am convinc’d, that ever was made from beggarly nobility to the woman who was to make his fortune—the lady who stands there—the lady—madam—I am in patient expectation for the sincerity of your ladyship’s atonement.

Miss Alton. I am confounded at the strange

occurrences that have happen'd; but be assured you see in me an innocent, and most *unwilling* rival.

Miss Alscrip. Rival! better and better!—You—you give me uneasiness! You moppet—you coquet of the side-table, to catch the gawkey heir of the family, when he comes from school at Christmas—You—you—you vile seducer of my good old honour'd father! [*Cries.—In a passion again.*] What, is my lady dumb? Hussy! Have you the insolence to hold your tongue?

Miss Alton. Madam, I just now offer'd to justify this scene; I thought it the part of duty to myself, and respect to you. But your behaviour has now left but one sentiment upon my mind.

Miss Alscrip. And what is that, madam?

Miss Alton. [*With pointed expression.*] Scorn.
[*Exit.*]

Miss Alscrip. Was there ever any thing like this before?—and to a woman of my fortune?—I to be robb'd of a lover—and that a poor lord too—I'll have the act reviv'd against witchcraft; I'll have the minx tried—I'll—I'll—I'll—verify the proverb of the tragedy——

Hell has no fury like a woman scorn'd.

[*Exit.*]

SCENE III. ALSCRIP'S Room of Business.

ALSCRIP and RIGHTLY.

Rightly. Upon all these matters, Mr. Alscrip, I am authorised by my client, Sir Clement Flint, to agree. There remains nothing but your favouring me with the inspection of the Charlton title-deeds, and your daughter's settlements may be engrossed.

Alscrip. I cannot conceive, my friend Rightly, any such inspection to be requisite. Have not I been in constant quiet possession?

Rightly. Sir Clement insists upon it.

Alscrip. A client insist! and you, an old practitioner, suffer such a demur to your infallibility!—Ah! in my practice I had the sure means of disappointing such dabblers and divers into their own cases.

Rightly. How, pray?

Alscrip. I read his writings to him myself—I was the best reader in Chancery-lane for setting the understanding at defiance—Drew breath but once in a quarter of an hour, always in the wrong place, and made a single sentence of six skins of parchment—Shall I give you a specimen?

Rightly. [*Smiling.*] I have no doubt of your talent.

Alscrip. Then return to Sir Clement, and follow my example.

Rightly. No, Mr. Alscrip, though I acknowledge your skill, I do not subscribe to your doctrine. The English law is the finest system of ethics, as well as government, that ever the world produced, and it cannot be too generally understood.

Alscrip. Law understood! Zounds! would you destroy the profession?

Rightly. No, I would raise it. Had every man of sense the knowledge of the *theory*, to which he is competent; the practice would revert to the purity of its institution, maintain the *rights*, and not promote the knavery of mankind.

Alscrip. [*Aside.*] Plaguy odd maxims!—Sure he means to try me.—[*To him.*] Brother Rightly, we know the world, and are alone—I have lock'd the door. [*In a half whisper.*]

Rightly. A very useless precaution. I have not a principle, nor a proceeding, that I would not proclaim at Charing-cross.

Alscrip. [*Aside.*] No! then I'll pronounce you the most silly, or the most impudent fellow of the fraternity.

Rightly. But where are these writings? You

can have no difficulty in laying your hand upon them, for I perceive you keep things in a distinguish'd regularity.

Alscrip. Yes, I have distinct repositories for all papers, and especially title-deeds—Some in drawers—Some in closets—[*Aside.*] and a few under ground.

Miss Alscrip. [*Rattling at the door.*] What makes you lock the door, sir? I must speak to you this instant.

Alscrip. One moment, child, and I'll be ready for you.

[*Turning again to Rightly, as to dissuade him.*]

Miss Alscrip. [*Still rattling at the door.*] Don't tell me of moments—let me in.

Alscrip. Wheugh! What impatient devil possesses the girl—Stay a moment, I tell you—

[*Turns again to Rightly.*]

Rightly. [*Coolly.*] If the thoughts of the wedding-day make any part of the young lady's impatience, you take a bad way, Mr. Alscrip, to satisfy it; for I tell you plainly our business cannot be completed till I see these writings.

Alscrip. [*Aside.*] Confound the old hound—how he sticks to his scent. [*Miss Alscrip still at the door.*] I am coming, I tell you. [*Opens a bu-*

reau in a confused hurry, shuffles papers about, puts one into Rightly's hand.] There, if this whim must be indulged, step into the next room—You, who know the material parts of a parchment lie in a nutshell, will look it over in ten minutes.

[Puts him into another room.]

Miss Alscrip. I won't wait another instant, whatever you are about—let me in—

Alscrip. *[Opening the door.]* Sex and vehemence! What is the matter now?

Enter Miss ALSCRIP, in the most violent emotion.

Miss Alscrip. So, sir; yes, sir; you have done finely by me indeed, you are a pattern for fathers—a precious match you had provided.

[Walking about.]

Alscrip. What the devil's the matter?

Miss Alscrip. *[Running on.]* I that with fifty thousand independent pounds left myself in a father's hands—a thing unheard of, and waited for a husband with unparalleled patience till I was of age—

Alscrip. What the devil's the matter?

Miss Alscrip. *[Following him about.]* I that

at fourteen might have married a French Marquis, my governess told me he was—for all he was her brother——

Alscrip. Gad a mercy, governess——

Miss Alscrip. And as for commoners, had not I the choice of the market? And the handsome Irish Colonel at Bath, that had carried off six heiresses before, for himself and friends, and would have found his way to Gretna-green blindfold!

Alscrip. [*Aside.*] Gad, I wish you were there now with all my heart—What the devil is at the bottom of all this?

Miss Alscrip. Why, Lord Gayville is at the bottom——And your hussy, that you were so sweet upon this morning, is at the bottom! a treacherous minx!—I sent her only for a little innocent diversion as my double——

Alscrip. Your what?

Miss Alscrip. Why, my double, to vex him.

Alscrip. Double! this is the most useless attendant you have had yet.—Gad, I'll start you single-handed in the art of vexation against any ten women in England.

Miss Alscrip. I caught them, just as I did you.

Alscrip. Is that all? Gad, I don't see much in that.

Miss Alscrip. Not much? what, a woman of

my fortune and accomplishments turn'd off—rejected—renounc'd——

Alscrip. How! renounc'd? has he broke the contract?—Will you prove he has broke the contract?

Miss Alscrip. Aye. Now, my dear papa, you take a tone that becomes you; now the blood of the Alscrips rises;—rises, as it ought; you mean to fight him directly, don't you?

Alscrip. Oh, yes, I'm his man—I'll shew you a lawyer's challenge, sticks and staves, guns, swords, daggers, poniards, knives, scissars, and bodkins. I'll put more weapons into a bit of paper, six inches square, than would stock the armoury of the Tower.

Miss Alscrip. Pistols!—Don't talk to me of any thing but pistols.—My dear papa, who shall be your second?

Alscrip. I'll have two, John Doe and Richard Roe—as pretty fellows as any in England to see fair play, and as us'd to the differences of good company; they shall greet him with their *fieri facias*.—So, don't be cast down, Molly, I'll answer for damages to indemnify our loss of temper and reputation—he shall have a *fi-fa* before to-morrow night.

Miss Alscrip. Fiery faces and damages—What

does your Westminster-hall gibberish mean?—Are a woman's feelings to be satisfied with a fie-fa?—you old insensible—you have no sense of family honour—no tender affections.

Alscrip. Gad, you have enough for us both, when you want your father to be shot through the head; but stand out of the way, here's a species of family honour more necessary to be taken care of——If we were to go to law, this would be a precious set-off against us. [*Takes up the deed, as if to lock it up.*] This—why, what the devil—I hope I don't see clear—Curse and confusion! I have given the wrong one—Here's fine work—Here's a blunder—Here's the effect of a woman's impetuosity.

Miss Alscrip. Lord, what a fuss you are in; what is in the old trumpery scroll?

Alscrip. Plague and parchment, old Rightly will find what's in it, if I don't interrupt him. Mr. Rightly—Mr. Rightly—Mr. Rightly——

[*Going to the door Rightly went out at.*

Enter Servant.

Servant. Sir, Mr. Rightly is gone.

Alscrip. Gone! whither?

Servant. Home, I believe, sir——He came out

at the door into the hall, and bade me tell your honour you might depend upon his reading over the deed with particular care.

Alscrip. Fire and fury! my hat and cane—
[*Exit servant.*] Here, my hat and cane.

[*Stamps about.*

Miss Alscrip. Sir, I expect, before you come home—

Alscrip. Death and devils, expect to be ruin'd
—this comes of listening to you—The sex
hold the power of mischief by prescription—
Zounds!—mischief—mischief—is the common-law
of womankind.

[*Exit in a rage.*

Miss Alscrip. Mercy on us—I never saw him
more provok'd, even when my mother was alive.

[*Exit.*

ACT IV.

SCENE I. ALSCRIP'S Room.

CHIGNON.

QUE diable vent dire tout ca—vat devil, all dis mean?—Monsieur Alscrip enrage—Mademoiselle Alscrip fly about like de dancing fury at de Opera—My littel musicienne shut up, and in de absence of madame, I keep de key of de littel Bastille—By gad, I vou'd rader have de custody of my pretty prisoniere than the whole college of cardinals—but vat have we here?

Enter Sir CLEMENT and CLIFFORD.

Sir Clement. [*Speaking to a servant.*] Mr. Alscrip not at home—no matter, we'll wait his return—The French valet de chambre; [*to Clifford*] it may be of use to make acquaintance with him.—Monsieur, how do you like this country?

Chignon. Ver good contrée, sire, by and by—when you grow a little more poor.

Sir Clement. Is that a Parisian rule for improvement?

Chignon. Yes, sir, and we help you to follow our example.—In good times you hang, and you drown; in bad time you vill be like us.—Always poor—always gay—forget your politics—laugh at your grievances—take your snuff, vive la dissipation—ver good country.

Sir Clement. Thanks for your kind advice, monsieur; you Frenchmen are so obliging, and so communicative to strangers. I hear there is a young lady come into this family; we don't exactly know in what capacity—could not you contrive that she should pass through this room—or—

Chignon. [*Aside.*] By gar here be one more old rake after de littel musicienne.

Sir Clement. Only for curiosity; we never saw her, and have particular reasons— [*Gives money.*

Chignon. Ma foi! your reasons be ver expressive—[*Aside.*] But vat devil shall I do—open de cage of my little Rosignol—my pretty nightingale?—No, Chignon, no. [*Looking out.*] Ah, hiah! La Tiffany—Now for de politique; begar I undertake your business, and make you de dupe of de performance. [*Exit with a sign to Sir Clement.*

Sir Clement. So, Clifford, there goes as disinterested a fellow now as any in Europe. But,

hark you, can you yet guess the purpose for which I brought you here?

Clifford. I profess, sir, I am in the dark. If it concerns Lord Gayville's secret——

Sir Clement. Namely, that I have discovered, without your assistance, that this Dulcinea has started up in the shape of Miss Alscrip's musical companion: her name is Alton.—[*Leering.*] I tell it you, because I am sure you did not know it; or, if you had, a friend's secret ought to be sacred; and to keep it from the only person, who by knowing it could save him from destruction, would be a new exercise of your virtue.

Clifford. Sir, you will not know me——

Sir Clement. Tut, tut, don't do me such injustice——Come, all delicacy being over by my having made the discovery, will you talk to this girl?

Clifford. For what end, sir?

Sir Clement. If you state yourself as Lord Gayville's friend, she will converse with you more readily than she would with me. Try her—find out what she is really at. If she proves an impostor of the refined artifice I suspect, that puts on humility to veil her purpose, and chastity to effect it, leave her to me. If she has no hold upon him but her person, I shall be easy.

Clifford. Sir, let my compliance convince you

how much I wish to oblige you. If I can get a sight of this wonder, I promise to give you my faithful opinion of my friend's danger.

Enter CHIGNON, *and makes a sign to* Sir CLEMENT, *that the person he enquired after is coming.*

Sir Clement. Leave her with this gentleman—Come, monsieur, you shall shew me the new room. [*Exit.*

Chignon. [*Aside.*] Vid dis gentleman—Vid all my heart—La Tiffany vill answer his purpose, and mine too.

[*Exit.*—*Clifford is looking at the furniture of the room.*

Enter TIFFANY.

Tiffany. What does the Frenchman mean by gentlemen wanting me, and his gibberish of making soft eyes? I hope I know the exercise of my eyes without his instruction—hah! I vow a clever-looking man.

Clifford. [*Seeing Tiffany.*] A good smart girl; but not altogether quaker-like in her apparel, nor does her air quite answer my conception of a goddess.

Tiffany. [*Aside.*] How he examines me! so much the better—I shall lose nothing by that, I believe.

Clifford. [*Aside.*] Faith, a pretty attracting countenance; but for that apprehensive and timid look—that awe-impressing modesty, my friend so forcibly describ'd—[*Tiffany adjusts herself, and pulls up.*] There is no judging of that wonderful sex by rational rules—Her silence marks diffidence; deuce take me, if I know how to begin for fear of offending her reserve.

Tiffany. [*Aside.*] I have been told pertness became me—I'll try, I'm resolved.—[*To him.*] I hear, sir, you had something to say to a young person in this house—that—that—[*Looking down at the same time archly.*] I could not but take the description to myself—I am ready to hear any thing a gentleman has to say.

Clifford. [*Aside.*] Thank my stars, my scruples are relieved!

Tiffany. Am I mistaken, sir? Pray, whom was you inquiring after?

Clifford. Oh! certainly you, my pretty stranger. A friend of mine has been robbed of his heart, and I see the felony in your looks.

Tiffany. [*Simpering and coquetting.*] Lord,

sir, if I had suspected you had come with a search-warrant for hearts, I would have been more upon my guard.

Clifford. [*Chucking her under the chin.*] Will you confess, or must I arrest you?

Tiffany. Innocent, sir, in fact, but not quite so in inclination—I hope your own is safe.

Clifford. And were it not, my smart unconscionable, would you run away with that also?

Tiffany. Oh, yes, and an hundred more; and melt them all down together, as the Jews do stolen goods to prevent their being reclaim'd—Gold, silver, and lead; pray, sir, of what metal may your's be?

Clifford. [*Aside.*] Astonishing! Have I hit upon the moment when her fancy outruns her art? or, has Gayville been in a dream?—And are you really the young lady that is the companion of Miss Alscip, that makes such conquests at first sight?

Tiffany. Sir, if you mean the young lady who has been named, however undeservedly, the flower of this family; who appears sometimes at these windows; and, to be sure, has been followed home by gentlemen against her inclinations—sir, you are not mistaken.

Clifford. [*Aside.*] It has been Gayville's madness or amusement then to describe her by contraries.

Tiffany. I hope, sir, you are not offended? I would not be impertinent, though I am not so tasteless as to be shy.

Clifford. Offended, my dear! I am quite charm'd, I assure you. You are just what I did not expect, but wished to find you. You had been represented to me so improperly——

Tiffany. [*With pertness.*] Represented improperly! Pray, sir, what do you mean?

Clifford. To rejoice in my mistake, I promise you—Nay, and to set my friend right in his opinion, and so without further shiness on either part, let us be free upon the subject I had to talk over with you. You surely are not looking to lasting connections?

Tiffany. [*With airs.*] Sir, I don't understand you—I am not what you suppose, I assure you—Connections indeed! I should never have thought of that—my character—my behaviour—connections! I don't know what the word signifies.

Sir Clement. [*Without.*] Clifford! are you ready?

Clifford. I am at your orders, sir.

Tiffany. [*Aside.*] Deuce take this interruption!

Sir Clement. [*Without.*] I shall not wait for Mr. Alscrip any longer.

Tiffany. [*Aside.*] Lud, lud! he gives me no time to come round again. [*Runs up to him confusedly.*] It's very true, sir, I would not do such a thing for the world, but you are a man of honour, and I am sure would not give bad advice to a poor girl who is but a novice—and so, sir, [*hears Sir Clement entering*] put your proposal in writing, and you may depend on having an answer. • [*Runs out.*]

Enter Sir CLEMENT.

Sir Clement. Well, Clifford, what do you think of her?

Clifford. Make yourself perfectly easy, sir; this girl, when known, can make no impression on Lord Gayville's mind; and I doubt not but a silk gown and a lottery ticket, had they been offer'd as an ultimatum, would have purchased her *person*.

Sir Clement. [*With a dry sneer.*] Don't you sometimes, Clifford, form erroneous opinions of people's pretensions? Interest and foolish passion inspire strange notions—as one or the other prevails, we are brought to look so low, or so high——

Clifford. [*With emotion.*] That we are compell'd to call reason and honour to our aid——

Sir Clement. And then——

Clifford. We lose the intemperance of our inclinations in the sense of what is right.

Sir Clement. [*Aside.*] Sententious impostor!—
[*To him.*] But to the point.

Clifford. Sir, I would please you, if I could; I am thinking of a scheme to restore Lord Gayville to his senses, without violence or injury to any one of the parties.

Sir Clement. Let me hear it.

Clifford. Why the wench, being cut short of marketing by word of mouth, (which she was doing in all due form when you came in) desired me to write proposals. I am inclined to do so. We will shew the answer to Lord Gayville, and, depend upon it, there will be character enough display'd to cure him of the sentimental part of his attachment.

Sir Clement. I like your idea; sit down and put it into execution immediately——[*Clifford writes.*] He is quick at invention—has a pretty turn at profession—a proud and peremptory shew of honour, that would overpower prejudices. Thank heaven! my opinions of knavery are convictions. [*Aside.*

Clifford. [*Writing.*] I am sorry to detain you, sir.

Sir Clement. [*Looking at the furniture.*] Oh! I am amusing myself better than you think—

Indulging and edifying contemplation among the tombs of departed estates. [*Looking round the furniture, viz. closets that shew old writings tied up, shelves with boxes, labelled mortgages, lease and release, &c.*] What mouldered skins, that will never see day-light again, and that with a good herald would vie with Westminster-abbey in holiday entertainment. For instance now, what have we here?—Hah! the last remains of Fatland priory, once of great monastic importance; a proverb of pride, sloth, and hypocrisy. After the Reformation, the seat of old English hospitality and benevolence; in the present century, altered, adorned, pull'd down, and the materials sold by auction.

Clifford. Edifying indeed, sir; your comments are not lost.

Sir Clement. Here lie undisturbed in dust, the relics of Court-baron castle, granted at the Conquest to the family of Loftimount. The last of this ancient race having won twenty-seven king's plates, and represented the county in six parliaments, after many struggles died of the pistol fever—a disconsolate annuitant inscribed this box to his memory.

Clifford. Ha! ha! ha! [*Rising.*] I am quite concern'd to interrupt you, sir, but you shall hear my letter. [*Reads.*] : You have captivated a young

man of rank and fortune, but you are discover'd, and his ruin and yours would be the consequence of pursuing any designs that could impede his proposed marriage with Miss Alscip—Throw yourself upon the generosity of his family, and your fortune's made—Send your answer (and let it be immediate) to me at Sir Clement Flint's house.

'Yours, &c. &c.

'HENRY CLIFFORD.'

Sir Clement. It will do very well, our French friend is the man to deliver it, and to bring the answer. I am going home, you'll overtake me.

[*Exit.*]

Enter CHIGNON.

Clifford. [*Sealing the letter.*] You come apropos, monsieur. [*Gives the letter with an air of mystery.*] Have the goodness to put this letter into Miss Alton's own hands.

Chignon. [*To himself.*] Mademoiselle Alton! Peste! My trick has not passed.

Clifford. To Miss Alton, by herself—I am in all the secret.

Chignon. [*To himself.*] Devil take Tiffany for making you so wise.

Clifford. And you serve your lady, when you

serve me with Miss Alton—Monsieur, an answer as quick as possible—You will find me at Sir Clement Flint's; it is only in the next street—and—you understand me—[*Shaking his purse.*] Alerte, monsieur. [*Exit.*]

Chignon. Understand you—Oui da! you talk de language universal. [*Imitating his shaking the purse.*] J'entre vois, I begin to see something—By gad I vill give de letter, and try de inclination of Mademoiselle la Musicienne—if dis be de duette she vill play, it take her out of the way of Alscrip, of Gayville, and of myself also—Voila le malheur—there—de misfortune—eh bien—when love and interest come across—alway prefer de interest for to-day, and take de chance of de love to-morrow—dat is de humour of France.

SCENE II. *Sir CLEMENT FLINT'S House.*

Enter Lord GAYVILLE and Sir CLEMENT.

Lord Gayville. I am resolved to see Miss Alscrip no more.

Sir Clement. And I hope you are prepared with arguments to justify the cause of this breach, to me, and to the world.

Lord Gayville. For my reconciliation with you

I hope your former partiality will return to my aid; and as for the world I despise it. The multitude look at happiness through the false glare of wealth and pomp: I have discovered it, though yet at a distance, through the only true medium—that of mutual affection.

Sir Clement. No common-place book, formed from a whole library of plays and novels, could furnish a better sentence. Your folly would shame a school-boy, even of the last age. In the present, he learns the world with his grammar, and gets a just notion of the worthlessness of the other sex before he is of an age to be duped by their attractions.

Lord Gayville. Sir, your prejudices——

Sir Clement. My prejudices!——will you appeal to Clifford? Here he comes—your friend—your other self.

Enter CLIFFORD:

Lord Gayville. And will Clifford condemn the choice of the heart?

Clifford. Never, my lord, when justly placed. In the case I perceive you are arguing, I am ready to blush for you—nay, don't look grave—I am acquainted with your enchantress.

Lord Gayville. You are acquainted with her?

Clifford. Yes, and if I don't deceive myself, shall make her break her own spell. I am in correspondence with her.

Lord Gayville. You in correspondence with Miss Alton?—when? where? What am I to think of this?

Clifford. My dear lord, that she is the most errant coquette, the most accomplished jilt, the most ready trafficer of her charms——

Lord Gayville. Phrensy and profanation! Such dignity of virtue, such chastity of sentiment——

Sir Clement. Ha! ha! ha!

Clifford. Phrensy indeed! You have formed a creature of imagination, and, like a true Quixote, think it real; you have talked to her of dignity, of virtue, and chastity of sentiment, till you have taught her a lure she never dreamt of. Had you treated her at first as I did, she would have put a card into your hand to inform you of her lodging.

Lord Gayville. Clifford, what has betray'd you into calumny so unwarrantable and despicable?

Sir Clement. Come, Gayville, I'll be plain with you, you have sillily let the girl raise her price upon you, but if nothing else will satisfy you, e'en pay it, and have done with her.

Lord Gayville. Sir, her price is an unadulterated heart: I am afraid we cannot pay it betwixt us.

*Enter CHIGNON; delivers a letter to CLIFFORD
apart.*

Chignon. Alerte, monsieur, I repete your word—Mademoiselle Alton be all your own.

Sir Clement. Come, Clifford, the contents: his lordship braves the trial.

Lord Gayville. What is this mighty scheme? and what is that paper to discover?

Clifford. [*Breaking open the letter.*] Your lordship shall be informed word for word. [*Upon first sight of the contents he shews the utmost emotion.*] Amazement! do I dream? can it be? who wrote this letter?

Sir Clement. Oh! Speak out, monsieur, we are all friends.

Chignon. De true Mademoiselle Alton to whom you charge me to give your letter—she open it—she turn pale—den red—den confuse—den kisse your name—den write, and bid me fly.

Lord Gayville. Confusion on confusion! what does all this mean? explain.

Clifford. You must pardon me, I am disconcerted—confounded—thunderstruck. This letter is indeed of a different nature from that I ex-

pected; I am more interested in Miss Alton's fate than your lordship—my perplexity is not to be endur'd; friend, come with me instantly.

[*Exeunt Clifford and Chignon.*]

Lord Gayville. Mystery and torture! what am I to collect from this? *He* interested in the fate of Miss Alton? he her former acquaintance?

Sir Clement. Why not—and her dupe also?

Enter a Servant.

Servant. Is Mr. Clifford gone, sir?

Lord Gayville. [*Impatiently.*] Who wants him?

Servant. A chairman with a letter; he will not deliver to a servant.

Sir Clement. Call the fellow in. [*Exit Servant.*] Who knows but he may help us in our difficulties.

[*Chairman brought in with a letter in his hand.*]

Lord Gayville. [*Sill impatiently.*] Whom did you bring that letter from?

Chairman. Please your honour, I don't know; passing through the square, a sash flew up, and down came this letter and half a crown upon my head. It could not have fallen better, there's not

a fellow in town more ready handed than I am at private business—So I resolved to deliver it safely—Is your honour's name Clifford?

Lord Gayville. No indeed, friend, I am not so happy a man.

Sir Clement. [*Aside.*] That letter must not be lost though. Here, my friend—I'll take charge of your letter.—[*Takes the letter.*] Something for your pains.

Chairman. God bless your honour, and if you want to send an answer, my number is forty-seven in Bond-street—your honour, I am known by the name of secret Tom. [*Exit.*]

Lord Gayville. What is the use of this deceit? strong as my suspicion is, a seal must be sacred.

Sir Clement. Our circumstances make an exception to your rule: when there is treason in the state, wax gives way. [*Takes the letter, opens and reads it.*] Faith, this is beyond my expectation; though the mystery is unfathomable, the aptness of it to my purpose is admirable—Gayville, I wish you joy.

Lord Gayville. Of what?

Sir Clement. Of conviction! If this is not plain, only hear. [*Reads.*] ' Since my confused lines of a few minutes past, my perplexities redouble upon my spirits—I am in momentary apprehension

of further insult from the Alscrip family; I am still more anxious to avoid Lord Gayville.' [*Pauses, and looks at Lord Gayville.*] 'Do not suspect my sincerity—I have not a thought of him that ought to disturb you.'—Here she is, Gayville, look at her, through the true medium of mutual affection—'I have not a thought of him that ought to disturb you—Fly to me, secure me, my dearest Henry.'

Lord Gayville. Dearest Henry!

Sir Clement. [*Reads on.*] 'Dearest Henry—in this call, the danger of your Harriet unites with the impatience of her affection.'

Lord Gayville. Hell and fury! this must be some trick, some forgery. [*Snatches the letter.*] No, by all that's perfidious, it is that exquisite hand that baffles imitation!

Sir Clement. All regular, strict undeviating modern morals—common property is the first principle of friendship; your horse, your house, your purse, your mistress—nay, your wife would be a better example still of the doctrine of this generous age. Bless fortune, Gayville, that has brought the fidelity of your friend and your girl to the test at the same time.

Lord Gayville. Sir, I am not in a humour for any spleen but my own. What can this mean? It

must have been a secret attachment for years— but then the avowal of a correspondence, and the confusion at receiving it—his coldness in traducing her; the passionate interest he express'd in her fate; the conviction of his second letter—It is all delirium. I'll search the matter to the bottom, though I go to Clifford's heart for it.

[*Exit in great anger.*]

Sir Clement. I'll after the precious fellow too— He is a rogue above my hopes, and the intricacy of his snares excite my curiosity. [Exit.]

SCENE III. *Lady EMILY's Apartment.*

Lady EMILY discovered reading.

Lady Emily. It will not do. My eyes may run over a thousand subjects, but my thoughts centre in one. Ah! that sigh! that sigh from the fair sufferer this morning—I have found it echo in my own heart ever since.

Enter Servant.

Servant. Madam, Mr. Blandish.

Lady Emily. Pooh! did you say I was at home?

Servant. Your ladyship gave no orders to the contrary.

Lady Emily. Shew him in. [*Exit Servant.*] I must take up my air of levity again; it is the only humour for a fellow who I sometimes allow to entertain me, but who never can get my esteem. I have more calls upon my affectation this unlucky day, than my real disposition would execute in a long life.

Enter BLANDISH.

Lady Emily. Blandish, I am horridly peevish; have you any thing diverting in news or flattery?

Blandish. In the latter, madam, nothing. My admiration has all the dulness of truth; but shew me what you think a flaw, and I'll try without flattery to convince you it is a beauty.

Lady Emily. Tolerably express'd! But the idea of a faultless woman is false in point of encomium; she would be respectable, awful, and unattracting. Odd as it may seem, a woman, to charm, requires a little dash of harmless imperfection. I know I have a thousand amiable faults that I would not part with for the world. So try again—something more new and refined.

Blandish. Examine my heart, Lady Emily, and

you will find both—the novelty of disinterested passion, and refinement acquired by the study of you.

Lady Emily. Rather better: but *that* does not please me much; the less, perhaps, as it is rather out of your way, and more in that of my friend your sister, who, I observe, always puts a compliment in full view. Yours generally come more forcibly, by affording us the pleasure of finding them out. It is the excellency of a brilliant to play in the dark.

Blandish. Allow yourself to be the brilliant, and attend to another allusion. With trembling ambition, I confess that, not content with admiring the jewel, I would wear it.

Lady Emily. Wear it!

Blandish. As an appendage to my heart—Conscious of its value, proud of its display, and devoted to its preservation.

Lady Emily. Riddles, Mr. Blandish; but so let them remain. I assure you, this hour is very inauspicious for explanation.

Blandish. I fear so. For in a hour, when Clifford proves treacherous, who can escape suspicion?

Lady Emily. Clifford! for what purpose is he introduced in this conversation?

Blandish. You ask'd me for intelligencè; the latest is, that Clifford has been detected in a clandestine intercourse with the object of Lord Gayville's secret passion; that he has betray'd the confidence of his friend and patron, and actually carried her off.—[*Aside.*] Which Gayville knows by this time with all its aggravations, or Prompt has not been as active as he us'd to be.

Lady Emily. [*With emotion.*] Blandish, this is a poor project. Clifford treacherous to his friend! You might as soon make me believe Gayville dispassionate, my uncle charitable, or you ingenuous.

Blandish. His conduct does not rest upon opinion, but proof; and when you know it, you must think of him with aversion.

Lady Emily. Must I? Then don't let me hear a word more—I have aversions enough already—
[*Peevishly.*]

Blandish. It is impossible you can apply that word to one whose only offence is to adore you.

[*Kisses her hand.*]

Enter CLIFFORD.

Clifford. [*Aside, surpris'd.*] Blandish so favour'd!

Lady Emily. [*Aside.*] Perverse accident! what mistakes now will he make!

Blandish. [*Aside.*] The enemy has surprised me; but the only remedy in such emergencies is to shew a good countenance.

Clifford. I fear I have been guilty of an unpardonable intrusion.

Blandish. Mr. Clifford never can intrude; but though you had not come so apropos yourself, Lady Emily will bear testimony, I have not spared my pains to remove any prejudices she might have entertained.

Lady Emily. Had you not better repeat, in your own words, Mr. Blandish, all the obliging things you have said of this gentleman?

Clifford. It is not necessary, madam. If, without robbing you of moments that I perceive are precious——

Lady Emily. Sir!

Clifford. I might obtain a short audience——

[*Looking at Blandish.*

Blandish. [*Aside.*] He's devilish impudent; but he cannot soon get over facts, and I'll take care the conference shall not be long.—[*To Lady Emily.*] Lady Emily, hear Mr. Clifford, and judge if I have misrepresented him.—[*To Clifford.*] When you want a friend, you know where to find him. [Exit.

Lady Emily. This is an interview, Mr. Clifford,

that I desire not to be understood to have authorised. It is not to *me* you are accountable for your actions; I have no personal interest in them.

Clifford. I know it too well.

Lady Emily. [*Peevishly.*] Do not run away with the notion neither, that I am therefore interested in any *other* person's. You have, among you, vex'd and disconcerted me; but there is not a grain of partiality in all my embarrassment. If you have any eyes, you may see there is not.

Clifford. Happy Blandish! your triumph is evident.

Lady Emily. Blandish! the odious creature—he is my abhorrence. You are hardly worse yourself in my bad opinion, though you have done so much more to deserve it.

Clifford. How cruel are the circumstances that compel me to leave you under these impressions! Nay—more—at such a time to urge a request, that during your most favourable thoughts of me would have appeared strange, if not presumptuous. This is the key of my apartment. It contains a secret that the exigency of the hour oblig'd me, against inclination or propriety, to lodge there. Should Sir Clement return before me, I implore you to prevent his discovery, and give to what you find within, your confidence and protec-

tion. Lord Gayville—but I shall go too far—the most anxious event of my life presses on me. I conjure you to comply, by all the compassion and tenderness nature has treasured in your heart—not for me—but for occasions worthy their display.

[Gives the key, which she receives with some reluctance, and exit.]

Lady Emily. Heigho!—It's well he's gone without insisting on my answer: I was in a sad flutter of indecision. What mysterious means he takes to engage me in a confidence which I could not directly accept!—I am to find a letter, I suppose—the story of his heart—Its errors and defence. My brother's name, also—to furnish me with a new interest in the secret, and one I might avow. One may dislike this art, but must be sensible of his delicacy. Ah, when those two qualities unite in a man, I am afraid he is an overmatch for the wisest of us—Hark! sure that is the sound of my uncle's coach.—*[Looks out of the window.]* 'Tis he—and now for the secret—Curiosity! Curiosity! innate irresistible principle in womankind, be my excuse, before I dare question my mind upon other motives. *[Exit.]*

SCENE IV. *Another Apartment.*

Enter Lady EMILY.

Oh lud! I could hardly tremble more at opening this man's apartment, were there a possibility of finding him within side. How do people find courage to do a wrong thing, when an innocent discovery cannot be prosecuted without such timidity?

[Approaches the door timidly, and unlocks it.

Enter Miss ALTON.

Lady Emily. Amazement! Miss Alton! what brought you here?

Miss Alton. Madam, I was brought here for an hour's concealment; who I really am, I would not, if possible to avoid it, divulge in this house. When you saw me last, you honour'd me with a favourable opinion—My story, not explained at full, might subject me to doubts that would shake your candour. The circumstances in which I am involved are strange, and have succeeded with the rapidity and confusion of a dream—Suffer me to recover for a moment my disorder'd spirits, and I will satisfy you further.

Lady Emily. What shall I do?—She is pale and ready to faint—I cannot let her be exposed in

such a situation—retire—you may rely upon me for present security. You know best your pretensions to my future opinion—[*hearing Sir Clement*] begone, or you are discover'd.

[*Shuts her in and locks Clifford's door.*]

Enter Sir CLEMENT.

Sir Clement. Oh the triumph of honour! Oh the sincerity of friendship! How my opinions are ratified—how my system is proved!

Lady Emily. Oh, spirits, spirits, forsake me not—oh, for a moment's dissimulation!

Sir Clement. There are some now who would feed moroseness and misanthropy with such events; to me they give delight as convictions and warnings to mankind.

Lady Emily. Of how superior a quality, my good uncle, must be the benevolence you possess! it rises with the progress of mischief; and is gratified (upon principles of general good) by finding confidence abused, and esteem misplaced. Am I not right in attributing your joy at present to that sort of refinement?

Sir Clement. Hah! and to what sensations, my good niece, shall be attributed the present state of your spirits? To the disgust you took to Clif-

ford almost at first sight? It will not be with indifference, but pleasure, you will hear of his turning out the veriest rascal, the most complete impostor, the most abandon'd—but hold! hold—I must not wrong him by superlatives——he is match'd too.

Lady Emily. Really!—I congratulate you upon such a check of charity.

Sir Clement. And I wish you joy, my pretty pert one, upon the credit your sex has acquired, in producing this other chef-d'œuvre—Such a composition of the highest vices and the lowest—

Lady Emily. I know it will be in vain to oppose the pleasure you take in colouring, by my want of taste to enjoy it; but you may spare your preparatory shading, and come to the points with which I am not acquainted.

Sir Clement. And pray, my incurious niece, with what points are you acquainted?

Lady Emily. That before Mr. Clifford went abroad, it is suspected his passions betray'd him into a fault that must be shocking to your morality, and that I'm sure it is not my intention to justify. He ought to have resisted. It's a shame we have not more examples of young men correcting the frailties of womankind—I dare say he neglected a fair opportunity of becoming a prodigy.

Sir Clement. I protest you have a pretty way

of dressing up an apology for the venial faults of youth—and it comes with a peculiar grace from a delicate lady of twenty.

Lady Emily. Come, sir; no more of your sarcasms, I can treat wrong actions with levity, and yet consider them with detestation. Prudes and pretenders condemn with austerity. To the collection of suspicions you are master of let me add one—In a young lady of the delicacy and age you have described, always suspect the virtue that does not wear a smile.

Sir Clement. And the sincerity that wears one awkwardly. If you would know the history of Clifford, ask but your brother; if of the precious adventurer he has carried off, inquire of Miss Alscrip—We shall come up with her yet—woe be to any one who harbours her.

Enter PROMPT hastily

Prompt. Joy to your honour, I see you have caught her.

Sir Clement. Her!—who?

Prompt. [*Lady Emily turning.*] I ask your ladyship's pardon—Having only the glimpse of a petticoat, and knowing the object of my chase was in this house, I confess I mistook you.

Sir Clement. In this house?

Prompt. As sure as we are—She came in through the garden, under Mr. Clifford's arm—up the other stairs, I suppose. If my lady had been hereabouts, she must have seen her.

Lady Emily. [*In confusion.*] Yes, but unluckily I was quite out of the way.

Sir Clement. Such audaciousness passes credibility—Emily, what do you think of him?

Lady Emily. That he is a monster.—[*Aside.*] How my dilemmas multiply!

Sir Clement. What, to my house! to his apartment here! I wonder he did not ask for protection in your's—What should you have said?

Lady Emily. I don't know; but, had I been so imposed upon as to receive her, I should scorn to betray even the criminal I had engaged to protect.

Sir Clement. [*Tries at the door, finds it locked.*] Emily, my dear, do ring the bell to know if the housekeeper has a second key to this lock.

Lady Emily. What shall I do?

Prompt. She is certainly there, sir, and cannot escape. Where can she better remain, till you can assemble all parties, confront them face to face, and bring every thing that has pass'd to a full explanation?

Sir Clement. With all my heart; send and collect every body concerned as fast as possible. How I long for so complicated an exhibition of the purity of the human heart. Come with me, Emily, and help to digest my plan. Friends and lovers, what a scene shall we show you!

[Takes Lady Emily under the arm and exeunt.]

ACT V.

SCENE I. *Enter CLIFFORD and RIGHTLY.*

Clifford.

YOUR knowledge in the profession, Mr. Rightly, is as unquestionless as your integrity; but there is something so surprising in the discovery of the Charlton estate.

Rightly. It is so strange, that I will not pronounce a positive opinion, till I have read again the collateral papers, and consider'd fully the descents in your family. Your grandfather, I think, was deceived in supposing he had a right to sell that part of the Charlton estate, which Alscrip proposes for his daughter's portion. The strength of this old settlement must have escaped my brother lawyer, or he was mad when he put it into my hands.

Clifford. If you knew too how the value of the acquisition is enhanced, by the opportune moment in which it presents itself—I am in too much emotion to thank you as I ought.

Rightly. Sir, I want neither compliment nor

acknowledgment, for revealing what I should be a party to dishonesty to conceal; but, that duty done, would it be an abuse of benevolence, unworthily as some of the parties may be, to preserve the peace of all concerned?

Clifford. In what manner?

Rightly. Sir Clement Flint will renounce the Alscrip alliance, at the first appearance of this defalcation, and if I am well informed, Lord Gayville will not lament the loss of his intended bride. The young lady is therefore free, and still possess'd of a great inheritance.

Clifford. I do not yet perceive what you aim at.

Rightly. She has the faults that wealth and a false education create, but they are not incurable. Marry her yourself. By sinking the claim in the union with his family, you command the father's approbation; and the daughter must be of a strange mould indeed, if the same obligation does not become a corrective of her pride, and an excitement to her gratitude.—[*Smiling*] I give some token of my friendship, when as a lawyer, I propose you a wife instead of a suit in chancery.

Clifford. I feel all the kindness of your suggestion; but if my claim is precarious, it is as repugnant to my delicacy as to my inclination, to

realize it upon such terms; if it is substantial, I have such a disposition to make—you have a right to all my thoughts: but I have an appointment to obey, that admits no time for explanation; favour me for a moment with your pencil, [*Rightly takes out a pencil and pocket-book*] and a blank page in that memorandum-book. [*Clifford writes.*

Rightly. My life on't, his head is turn'd upon some girl not worth a shilling. There is an amiable defect, but a very observable one, in the nature of some men. A good head and heart operate as effectually as vice or folly could do to make them improvident.

Clifford. Mr. Rightly, I confide to your hands a new secret relative to the Charlton estate; do not read it till you return home. [*Gives the book—aside and going.*] There, Gayville, is one reply to your challenge—and now for another.

Rightly. One moment, sir—I engage for no secrecy that my own judgment shall not warrant.

Clifford. And the benevolence of your heart approve—Those are my conditions.

[*Exeunt on opposite sides.*

SCENE II. *Hyde Park.*

Enter Lord GAYVILLE impetuously, looking at his watch.

Gayville. Not here! I am sure I mark'd the hour as well as the place, precisely in my note. [*Walks about.*] Had I been told three days ago, that I should have been the appellant in a premeditated duel, I should have thought it an insult upon my principles. That Clifford should be the cause of my transgressing the legal and sacred duties we have ever both maintained—oh! it would have seemed a visionary impossibility—But he comes, to cut reflections short——

Enter CLIFFORD.

Lord Gayville. I waited for you, sir. [*Clifford bows in silence.*] That ceremonial would grace an encounter of punctilio, but applies ill to the terms upon which I have call'd you here.

Clifford. What terms are those, my lord?

Lord Gayville. Vengeance! Ample, final vengeance! Draw, sir.

Clifford. No, my lord; my sword is reserved for more becoming purposes: it is not the instru-

ment of passion; and has yet been untried in a dispute with my friend.

Lord Gayville. But why is it not ready for a different trial, the vindication of perfidy, the blackest species of perfidy, that ever the malignant enemy of mankind infused into the human breast—perfidy to the friend who loved and trusted you, and in the nearest interests of his heart?

Clifford. Take care, my lord; should my blood boil like your's, and it is rising fast, you know not the punishment that awaits you. I came temperate, your gross provocation and thirst of blood make temperance appear disgrace—I am tempted to take a revenge—

Lord Gayville. [*Draws.*] The means are ready. Come, sir, you are to give an example of qualities generally held incompatible—bravery and dishonour.

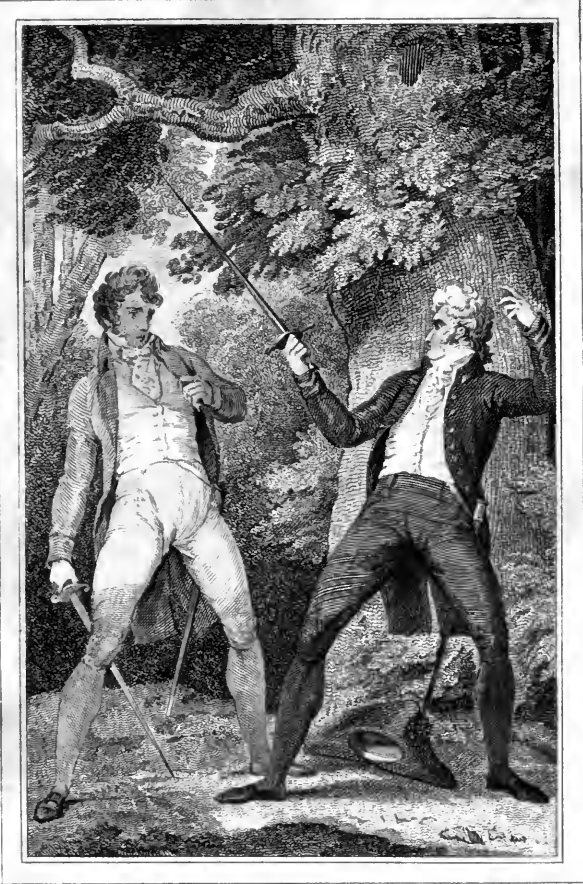
Clifford. Another such word, and by heaven!—How have I deserv'd this opinion?

Lord Gayville. Ask your conscience. Under the mask of friendship you have held a secret intercourse with the woman I adore; you have supplanted me in her affections, you have robb'd me of the very charm of my life—can you deny it?

Clifford. I avow it all.

Lord Gayville. Unparalleled insolence of guilt!





Clifford—You saw nothing but my—Life would satisfy
you, take it & remember me—*Harold's, Act 5, Scene 2.*

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Clifford. Are you sure there is nothing within the scope of possibility, that would excuse or atone——

Lord Gayville. Death—death only—no abject submission—no compromise for infamy—choose instantly—and save yourself from the only stretch of baseness left—the invention of a falsehood to palliate——

Clifford. [*In the utmost agitation, and drawing his sword.*] Falsehood!—You shall have no other explanation.

[After a struggle within himself, Clifford drops the point, and exposes his breast.

Lord Gayville. Stand upon your defence, sir—
What do you mean?

Clifford. You said nothing but my life would satisfy you; take it, and remember me.

Lord Gayville. I say so still—but upon an equal pledge—I am no assassin.

Clifford. [*With great emotion.*] If to strike at the heart of your friend more deeply than that poor instrument in your hand could do, makes an assassin, you have been one already.

Lord Gayville. That look, that tone, how like to innocence! Had he not avow'd such abominable practices——

Clifford. I avow them again: I have rival'd you

in the love of the woman you adore—her affections are rivetted to me. I have removed her from your sight; secured her from your recovery——

Lord Gayville. Damnation!

Clifford. I have done it to save unguarded beauty; to save unprotected innocence—to save a sister.

Lord Gayville. A sister!

Clifford. [*With exultation.*] Vengeance! Ample, final vengeance! [*A pause.*] It is accomplish'd—over him—and over myself—my victory is complete.

Lord Gayville. Where shall I hide my shame!

Clifford. We'll share it, and forget it here.

[*Embraces.*

Lord Gayville. Why did you keep the secret from me?

Clifford. I knew it not myself till the strange concurrence of circumstances, to which you were in part witness a few hours since, brought it to light. I meant to impart to you the discovery, when my temper took fire—Let us bury our mutual errors in the thought, that we now for life are friends.

Lord Gayville. Brothers, Clifford! Let us interchange that title, and doubly, doubly ratify it.

Unite me to your charming sister; accept the hand of Lady Emily in return—her heart I have discovered to be your's. We'll leave the world to the sordid and the tasteless; let an Alscip, or a Sir Clement Flint, wander after the phantom of happiness, we shall find her real retreat, and hold her by the bonds she covets, virtue, love, and friendship.

Clifford. Not a word more, my lord; the bars against your proposal are insuperable.

Lord Gayville. What bars?

Clifford. Honour, propriety, and pride.

Lord Gayville. Pride, Clifford?

Clifford. Yes, my lord; Harriet Clifford shall not *steal* the hand of a prince; nor will *I*, though doating on Lady Emily with a passion like your own, bear the idea of a clandestine union in a family, to whom I am bound by obligation and trust. Indeed, my lord, without Sir Clement's consent, you must think no more of my sister.

Lord Gayville. Stern Stoic, but I *will*, and *not* clandestinely; I'll instantly to Sir Clement.

Clifford. Do not be rash; Fortune, or some better agent, is working in wonders—Meet me presently at your uncle's, in the meanwhile promise not to stir in this business.

Lord Gayville. What hope from delay?

Clifford. Promise——

Lord Gayville. I am in a state to catch at shadows—I'll try to obey you.

Clifford. Farewell! [Exeunt.]

SCENE III. Sir CLEMENT'S House.

Enter Miss ALSCRIP in great spirits, followed by Mrs. BLANDISH.

Miss Alscrip. I am delighted at this summons from Sir Clement, Blandish; poor *old clear-sight*, I hope he has projected a reconciliation.

Mrs. Blandish. How I rejoice to see those smiles returned to the face that was made for them!

Miss Alscrip. Return'd, Blandish? I desire you will not insinuate it ever was without them—Why, sure you would not have the world imagine the temper of an Heiress of my class, was to be ruffled by the loss of a paltry earl—I have been highly diverted with what has passed from beginning to end.

Mrs. Blandish. Well, if good humour can be a fault, sure the excess you carry it to must be the example.

Miss Alscrip. I desire it may be made known

in all companies, that I have done nothing but laugh—nay, it is true too.

Mrs. Blandish. My dear creature, of what consequence is the truth, when you are charging me with the execution of your desires?

Miss Alscip. Could any thing be more diverting than my lord's intriguing with my *chambermaid* before marriage! that must be your cue.

Mrs. Blandish. Excellent!

Miss Alscip. The design was in rule, and founded upon the best precedents—only the time, in the newspaper phrase, was premature, he! he! he!

Mrs. Blandish. He! he! he!

Miss Alscip. And then the airs of the moppet—Could any thing be more ridiculous?

Mrs. Blandish. The rivalry you mean—Rival, Miss Alscip.—He! he! he!

[*Half laugh.*]

Miss Alscip. Yes, but when you take this tone in public, laugh a little louder.

Mrs. Blandish. Rival, Miss Alscip—ha! ha! ha!

Both. Ha! ha! ha! ha! ha! ha!

Mrs. Blandish. [*Wiping her eyes as not quite recovered from her laugh.*] For mirth's sake, what is become of the rival? Who will you choose she shall have run away with?

Miss Alscrip. Leave it in doubt as it is; fixing circumstances confines the curiosity to one story, which may be disproved; uncertainty leaves it open to an hundred, and makes them all probable. But I hear some of the company upon the stairs. Now, Blandish, you shall be witness to the temper and dignity with which a woman of my consequence can discard a quality courtship that offends her. Having sufficiently mortified the uncle and nephew, with a triumphant raillery all my own, I shall request Lady Emily to set the Paphian mimp upon the family disappointment, and leave them together to the exercise of the patience that usually attends the loss of a hundred thousand pounds.

Mrs. Blandish. Sweet-temper'd soul!

Enter Sir CLEMENT FLINT.

Sir Clement. Miss Alscrip, your——

[*As he is beginning to say your humble servant,*

Enter BLANDISH, out of breath.

Blandish. The duel's over, and the combatants in whole skins—Never ran so fast since I was born——

Sir Clement. To be too late by some minutes in your intelligence. I know you feel the disappointment from the sincere affection you bear all parties.

Miss Alscrip. Duel!—Pray let us hear the particulars—As there is no mischief, I shall not faint. [Ironically.]

Sir Clement. I guess it has been of the common-place kind.—Hats over the brows—glum silence—thrust—parry—and riposte—Exp!ain, and shake hands. Your man of honour never sets his friend right, till he has exchang'd a shot—or a thrust. Oh, a little essence of steel or gunpowder, is a morning whet to the temper: it carries off all qualms, and leaves the digestion free for any thing that is presented to it.

Miss Alscrip. Dear, how fortunate! Considering the pills some folks have to swallow.

Sir Clement. Blandish, see if the door of Clifford's room is yet unlocked, there is a person within you little expect to find, and whom it may be proper for this lady and me to interrogate together.—I don't know what to call her—Inexplicability in petticoats. [The door opens, and

Enter Lady EMILY.

Blandish. Lady Emily!

Sir Clement. Inexplicable, with a vengeance.

Miss Alscip. [*Aside.*] Lady Emily shut up in Clifford's apartment! Beyond my expectation, indeed.

[*With a malicious air.*—*Lady Emily seems pleased.*

Sir Clement. [*Drily.*] Lady Emily, I know you were always cautious whom you visited, and never gave a better proof of your discernment.

Lady Emily. Never. Oh! my poor dear uncle, you little think what is going to befall you.

Sir Clement. Not a disappointment in love, I hope.

Lady Emily. No, but in something much nearer your heart—your system is threaten'd with a blow that, I think, and from my soul I hope, it never will recover: would you guess that the sagacious observations of your whole life are upon the point of being confounded by the production——

Sir Clement. Of what?

Lady Emily. A woman of ingenuous discretion and a man of unaffected integrity.

Sir Clement. Hah!

Mrs. Blandish. What can she mean?

Miss Alscip. Nothing good—she looks so pleasant.

Lady Emily. Come forth, my injur'd friend.
[*Miss Clifford enters.*] Our personal acquaintance has been short, but our hearts were intimate from the first sight. [*Presenting her.*] Your prisoner, sir, is Miss Harriet Clifford.

Sir Clement. Clifford's sister!

Miss Alscip. What, the runaway Alton turned into a sprig of quality!

Lady Emily. [*Disdainfully to Miss Alscip.*] The humble dependant of Alscip house—the wanton—the paragon of fraud—the only female that can equal Clifford. [*Tauntingly to Sir Clement.*]—She is indeed!

[*With emphasis and affection.*]

Blandish. [*Aside.*] Oh, rot the source of the family fondness—I see I have no card left in my favour—but the Heiress.

[*Goes to her, and pays court—During this conversation, aside, Lady Emily seems encouraging Miss Clifford—Sir Clement musing, and by turns examining her.*]

Sir Clement. [*To himself.*] ‘Ingenuous discretion.’

Enter CLIFFORD, and runs to his Sister.

Clifford. My dearest Harriet! the joy I purposed in presenting you here is anticipated; but,

my blameless fugitive! relate the tale of your distresses, and my pride in you will not be a wonder.

Miss Clifford. They have been short—and are overpaid by your indulgence. Insulted by the family I liv'd with; made more wretched by a detested pursuit which my uncle's violence enforc'd, and confident of your being return'd, I fled to London for an asylum.

Sir Clement. Which has been admirably chosen in my house.

Clifford. Sir, I really think so. Lady Emily's generosity, your justice, and my sister's honour make it sacred. *[While Clifford is speaking,*

Enter Lord GAYVILLE, who starts at seeing
Miss CLIFFORD.

Sir Clement. *[Perceiving Lord Gayville.]* And peculiarly secure against the visits of *this detested* pursuer.

Lord Gayville. *[With rapture.]* Her persecutor and her convert. Her virtues, which no humility could conceal, and every trial made more resplendent, discovered, disgraced, and reclaimed a libertine.

Miss Clifford. How am I distress'd—what ought I to answer?

Lord Gayville. Impressed sentiment upon de-

sire, gave honour to passion, and drew from my soul a vow, which heaven chastise me when I violate, to obtain her by a legal, sacred claim, or renounce fortune, family, and friends, and become a self-devoted outcast of the world.

Miss Clifford. Oh! brother, interpose.

Sir Clement. My lord, your fortune, family, and friends are much oblig'd to you. Your part is perfect—Mr. Clifford you are call'd upon. Miss, in strict propriety, throws the business upon her relations—Come, finish the comedy; join one of her hands to the gallant's, while, with the other she covers her blushes—and he in rapture delivers the moral, 'All for Love, or the World well Lost.'

[*Miss Clifford still appears agitated.*]

Clifford. Be patient, my Harriet, this is the school for prejudice, and the lesson of its shame is near.

Miss Alscrip. I vow these singular circumstances give me quite a confusion of pleasure. The astonishing good fortune of my late protégée, in finding so impassion'd a friendship in her brother's bedchamber; the captivating eloquence of Lord Gayville, in winding up an eclaircissement which I admire—not for the first time—to-day—and the superlative joy Sir Clement must feel at an union, founded upon the purity of the passions, are

subjects of such different congratulation, that I hardly know where to begin.

Lady Emily. [*Aside.*] Charming! her insolence will justify what so seldom occurs to one—a severe retort without a possible sense of compunction.

Miss Alscrip. But in point of fortune—don't imagine, Sir Clement, I would insinuate that the lady is destitute—oh Lord! far from it. Her musical talents are a portion—I can't say I have yet seen a countess open a concert for her own benefit; but there can be no reason why a woman of the first quality should not be Directress of the Opera—Indeed, after all that has happen'd, it is the best chance I see for a good administration there.

ALSCRIP and RIGHTLY [*without.*]

Alscrip. Why, stop a moment, Mr. Rightly: Death! after chasing you all over the town, don't be so impatient the instant I overtake you.

Sir Clement. What have we here—the lawyers in dispute?

Alscrip. [*Entering.*] You have not heard my last word yet.

Rightly. [*Entering.*] You have heard mine, sir.

Alscrip. [*Whispering.*] I'll make the five thousand I offered, ten.

Rightly. Millions would not bribe me. [*Coming forward.*] When I detect wrong, and vindicate the sufferer, I feel the spirit of the Law of England, and the pride of a practitioner.

Alscrip. Lucifer confound such practices!

[*In this part of the scene, Sir Clement, Lord Gayville, Lady Emily, Clifford, and Miss Clifford, form one groupe.—Rightly opens a deed, and points out a part of it to Sir Clement.—Mr. and Miss Alscrip carry on the following speeches on the side at which Alscrip has entered; and Mr. and Mrs. Blandish are further back, observing.*

Alscrip. That cursed, cursed flaw!—

Miss Alscrip. Flaw! who has dared to talk of one? not in my reputation, sir?

Alscrip. No, but in my estate; which is a damn'd deal worse.

Miss Alscrip. How? what? when? where?—
The estate that was to be settled upon me?

Alscrip. Yes, but that *me* turn'd topsy-turvey—when *me* broke int my room this morning, and the devil followed to fly away with all my

faculties at once. I am ruin'd—let us see what you will settle upon your poor father.

Miss Alscip. I settle upon *you*?

Mrs. Blandish. This is an embarrassing accident.

Miss Alscip. Yes, and a pretty help you are, with a drop chin, like a frontispiece to the lamentations.

Rightly. [*Coming forward with Sir Clement.*] I stated this with some doubt this morning, but now my credit as a lawyer upon the issue.—The Heiress falls short of the terms in your treaty by two thousand pounds a year—which this deed, lately and providentially discover'd, entails upon the heirs of Sir William Charlton, and consequently, in right of his mother, upon this gentleman.

Lady Emily. How!

Lord Gayville. Happy disappointment!

Sir Clement. [*Aside.*] Two thousand a year to Clifford! It's a pity, for the parade of disinterestedness, that he open'd his designs upon Emily before he knew his pretensions.

Lady Emily. [*Aside.*] Now, if there were twenty ceilings, and as many floors, could not I find a spot to settle my silly looks upon.

[*Sir Clement observes her with his usual shiness.*

Sir Clement. [*Turning towards Alscrip.*] Palm a false title upon *me!* I should have thought the attempt beyond the collective assurance of Westminster-hall—and he takes the loss as much to heart as if he bought the estate with his own money.

Alscrip. [*With hesitation.*] Sir Clement—what think you—of an amicable adjustment of all these businesses?

Sir Clement. [*Ironically.*] Nothing can be more reasonable. The value of Miss Alscrip's amiable disposition placed against the abatement of her fortune, is a matter of the most easy computation; and to decide the portion Mr. Clifford ought to relinquish of his acquisition—Lady Emily—will you be a referee?

Lady Emily. [*Aside.*] Yes, the lynx has me—I thought I should not escape.—[*To him.*] No, sir; my poor abilities only extend to an amicable endeavour here.—[*To Miss Alscrip.*] And really, Miss Alscrip, I see no reason for your being dispirited, there may be many ready-made titles at market, within the reach of your purse. Or, why should not a woman of your consequence originate her own splendour? There's an old admirer of mine, he would make a very pretty lord; and, indeed, would contribute something, on his own

part, to ease the purchase—The Blandish family is well with all administrations, and a new coronet is always as big again as an old one. I don't see how you could lay out part of your independency to more advantage.

Blandish. [*Aside.*] Yes, but since flaws are in fashion, I shall look a little into things before I agree to the bargain.

Lady Emily. And if you replace this part of your family, [*pointing to Miss Clifford*] by making an humble companion of your old gentleman, I protest I do not see any great alteration in your affairs.

Miss Alscip. [*Aside.*] I'll die before I'll discover my vexation: and yet, [*half crying*] no title—no place!

Lady Emily. Depend upon it, Miss Alscip, your place will be found exactly where it ought to be. The public eye in this country is never long deceived—Believe me—and cherish obscurity—Title may bring forward merits, but it also places our defects in horrid relief.

Miss Clifford. You seem to expect something from me, Miss Alscip—Be in no pain for any thing that has pass'd between us—My pity has entirely overpower'd my resentment.

Alscip. Molly, the sooner we get out of court

the better; we have damnably the worst of this cause, so come along, Molly; [*taking her under the arm*] and farewell to Berkley Square. Whoever wants Alscrip-house, will find it in the neighbourhood of Furnival's Inn, with the noble title of Scrivener, in capitals—Blank bonds at the windows, and a brass knocker at the door.—[*Pulling her.*] Come along, Molly.

Miss Alscrip. [*Half crying, aside.*] Oh! the barbarous metamorphosis—but his *flusterums*, for a week, will serve my temper as a regimen. I will then take the management of my affairs into my own hands, and break from my cloud anew: and you shall find [*to the company*] there are those without a coronet, that can be as saucy, and as loud, and stop the way in all public places as well as the best of you. [*Lady Emily laughs.*] Yes, madam, and without borrowing your ladyship's airs.

Alscrip. [*Pulling her.*] Come along, Molly.

Miss Alscrip. Oh, you have been a jewel of a father.

[*The company laugh.—Exeunt Mr. and Miss Alscrip.—Mr. and Mrs. Blandish stay behind.*]

Blandish. [*Aside.*] What a cursed turn things have taken! My schemes evaporate like inflammable air, and down drops poor adventurer.

Lady Emily. Mrs. Blandish, sure you do not leave your friend, Miss Alscip, in distress?

Mrs. Blandish. We'll not disturb the ashes of the dead—my sweet Lady Emily——

Blandish. None of your flourishes, my dear sister—In the present moment, even mine would not do. Sentiment and sincerity have the ascendancy. But give them a little time; all parties will come round.—[*Addressing the company.*] Flattery is the diet of good humour; not one of you can live without it; and when you quarrel with the family of Blandish, you leave refined cookery to be fed upon scraps, by a poor cousin or a led captain. [Taking his sister under his arm.

Mrs. Blandish. [With a look of courtship to the company.] Oh! the two charming pair!

Blandish. [Pulling her away.] Oh! thou walking dedication! [Exeunt.

Lord Gayville. Precious groupe, fare ye well.— [To Sir Clement.] And now, sir, whatever may be your determination towards me——here are pretensions you may patronise without breach of discretion. The estate which devolves to my friend——

Rightly. To prevent errors, is not his to bestow.

Sir Clement. What now—more flaws?

Rightly. The estate was his beyond the reach of controversy: but before he was truly sure of it, on his way to Hyde Park did this spendthrift, by a stroke of his pen, divest himself of every shilling. Here is the covenant by which he binds himself to execute proper conveyances as soon as the necessary forms can be gone through.

Lord Gayville. And in favour of whom is this desperate act?

Rightly. Of a most dangerous seducer—a little mercenary, that, when she gets hold of the heart, does not leave an atom of it our own.

All. How!

Rightly. [*With feeling.*] And there she stands; [*pointing to Miss Clifford*] with a look and an emotion that would condemn her before any court in the universe.

Lady Emily. Glorious—matchless Clifford!

Miss Clifford. Brother, this must not be.

Clifford. Your pardon, my dear Harriet. It is done, Sir Clement; my sister's fortune is still far short of what you expected with Miss Alscip; for that deficiency, I have only to offer the virtues Lord Gayville has proved, and the affection she found it easier to control than to conceal. If you will receive her, thus circumstanced, into your family, mine has been an acquisition indeed.

Lady Emily. [*Coming up to Sir Clement.*] Now, sir, where's the suspicion? Where is now the ruling principle that governs mankind? Through what perspective, by what trial, will you find self-interest here? What, not one pithy word to mock my credulity!—Alas! poor Yorick—quite chap-fallen! Forgive me sir, I own I am agitated to extravagance; you thought me disconcerted at the first discovery, I am delighted at the last; there's a problem in my disposition worthy your solving.

Sir Clement. [*Who has been profoundly thoughtful.*] Mr. Rightly, favour me with that paper in your hand.

Rightly. Mr. Clifford's engagement, sir. [*Gives the paper, Sir Clement looks it over and tears it.*] What do you mean, sir?

Sir Clement. To cancel the obligation, and pay the equivalent to Gayville; or, if Clifford will have his own way, and become a beggar by renewing it, to make an heiress of my own for his reparation—and there *she* stands—[*pointing to Lady Emily*] with sensibility and vivacity so uncommonly blended, that they extract benevolence wherever it exists, and create it where it never was before.—Your point is carried; you may both fall upon your knees, for the consent of the ladies.

Lord Gayville. [*To Miss Clifford.*] In this

happy moment, let my errors be forgot, and my love alone remember'd.

Miss Clifford. With these sanctions for my avowal—I will not deny that I saw and felt the sincerity of your attachment, from the time it was capable of being restrained by respect.

Clifford. Words are wanting, Lady Emily—

Lady Emily. I wish they may, with all my heart; but it is generally remarked, that wanting words is the beginning of a florid set speech.—To be serious, Clifford—we want but little explanation on either side. Sir Clement will tell you how long we have conversed by our actions. [*Gives her hand.*] My dear uncle, how a smile becomes you in its natural meaning!

Sir Clement. If you think me a convert, you are mistaken: I have ever believ'd *self* to be the predominant principle of the human mind. My heart at this instant confirms the doctrine. There's my problem for yours, my dear Emily, and may all who hear me agree in this solution—to reward the deserving, and make those we love happy, is self-interest in the extreme.

[*Exeunt omnes.*]

EPILOGUE.

SPOKEN BY MISS FARREN.

THE Comic Muse, who here erects her shrine,
To court your offerings, and accept of mine,
Sends me to state an anxious author's plea,
And wait with humble hope this Court's decree.
By no prerogative will she decide,
She vows, an English Jury is her pride.
Then for our Heiress—forc'd from finer air,
That lately fan'd her plumes in Berkeley-Square;
Will she be *helpless* in her *new* resort,
And find no friends—about the inns of court?
Sages be candid—though you hate a knave,
Sure, for *example*, you'll a Rightly save.
Be kind for once, ye *clerks*—ye sportive sirs,
Who haunt our Theatres in boots and spurs,
So may you safely press your nightly hobby,
Run the whole ring—and *end* it in the lobby.
Lovers of *truth*, be kind; and own that *here*
That love is strain'd as far as it will bear.
Poets may write—*Philosophers* may dream—
But would the *world* bear truth in the extreme?
What, not one Blandish left behind! not one!
Poets are mute, and Painters all undone:
Where are those charms that Nature's term survive,
The maiden bloom that glows at *forty-five*?
Truth takes the pencil—*wrinkles*—*freckles*—*squint*,
The whole's transform'd—the very devil's in't;

Dimples turn scars, the smile becomes a scowl!
 The hair the ivy-bush, the face the owl.

But shall an *author* mock the flatt'rer's pow'r?
 Oh, might you all be *Blandishes* this hour!
 Then would the candid jurors of the Pit
 Grant their mild passport to the realms of Wit;
 Then would I mount the car * where oft I ride,
 And place the favour'd culprit by my side.

To aid our flight—one fashionable hint—
 See my authority—a Morning Print—
 ' We learn'—observe it Ladies—' France's Queen
 Loves, like our own, a heart-directed scene;
 And while each thought she weighs, each beauty scans,
 Breaks, in one night's applause, a score of fans.'

[*Beating her fan against her hand.*]

Adopt the mode, ye Belles—so end my prattle,
 And shew how you'll outdo a Bourbon rattle.

* Alluding to the car of the Comic Muse in the entertainment of the Jubilee.



RICHARD CŒUR DE LION;

AN

HISTORICAL ROMANCE,

FROM THE FRENCH OF

MONS. SEDAINE.



DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

Richard	MR. KELLY
Blondel	MR. BARRYMORE
Florestan	MR. CAULFIELD
Sir Owen	MR. DIGNUM
The Seneschal	MR. COOKE
Antonio	MRS. BLAND
Guillot	MR. SUETT
Old Mathew	MR. MADDOCKS
William	MR. FISHER
A Pilgrim	MR. WEBB
Peasant	MR. GIBBON.

Soldiers, Peasants, &c.

Matilda	MRS. MOUNTAIN
Lauretta	
Dorcas	MRS. MADDOCKS
Julie	MISS BRISTOW
Collette	MISS WENTWORTH.



RICHARD CŒUR DE LION.

ACT I.

SCENE I. A View of a strong Castle, situated in a wild mountainous Country; on one Side a rustic Mansion-house, on the other a Stone Seat.—During the Overture, Old MATHEW, DORCAS, and several Peasants pass over the Stage, with their working Tools, as returning from their Labour.

Chorus of Peasants.

COME sing, come dance,
To-morrow's the day;
Come sing, come dance,
Old Mathew's wedding-day.
Yes, to-morrow, you know,
To his house we shall go,

To drink and be gay,
To dance, sing, and play ;
Away with all sorrow,
For joy comes to-morrow.

Old MATHEW.

I am happy, I swear,
My Dorcas, my dear,
To think that to-morrow is our wedding-day.

Duet—DORCAS and Old MATHEW.

Though we're sixty years old,
Let the young ones behold,
Our age, like our youth, is contented and gay.

Chorus.

Come sing, come dance,
To-morrow's the day ;
Come sing, come dance,
Old Mathew's wedding-day.
Yes, to-morrow, you know,
To his house we shall go,
To drink and be gay,
To dance, sing, and play ;
Away with all sorrow,
For joy comes to-morrow.

[*Exeunt.*

MATILDA *after the last Chorus enters, led in by*
ANTONIO.

Matilda. Antonio, what sounds were those?
surely they were singing.

Antonio. It is only the villagers, who are returning from the fields: the sun is setting, and they have done their work.

Matilda. Where are we now, my gentle guide?

Antonio. You are not far from a great old castle, with towers and battlements. And there now, if you had your sight, you might see two soldiers on the walls with their cross-bows.

Matilda. I am sadly tired.

Antonio. Stay—this way—Here is a stone, it is made into a seat. [*Matilda sits.*] What a pity you cannot see the prospect! though so wild, it is said to be as fine as any in all Germany. Now just opposite to us is a very well-looking house, 'tis a farm, but as good as any gentleman's.

Matilda. Then go, my little friend, and find out whether we can lodge there to-night.

Antonio. I will, and no doubt you may. The owner is a foreigner, from England, as they say; and though he is very passionate, all the village say he is very good-natured. [*Going, re-*

turns.] But shall I find you here when I come back?

Matilda. Yes, truly, you may be pretty sure of that; those that can't see are not over fond of wandering. But you will not fail to return.

Antonio. No, that I won't. [*Going, stops.*] But, sir, there is something I have been wanting all day to tell you.

Matilda. Well, Antonio—what is it?

Antonio. Why it is—it is—oh! I am so sorry——

Matilda. Speak, child! tell me, what is it?

Antonio. Why it is—and it vexes me sadly, that it will not be in my power to be your guide to-morrow.

Matilda. How so, my little friend?

Antonio. I must go to a wedding.—My grandfather and grandmother keep their wedding-day to-morrow, and my grandson, who is their brother——

Matilda. Your grandson—Have you a grandson, Antonio?

Antonio. No—*their* grandson, who is my brother, that's it—is to be married at the same time, to a sweet pretty little girl of the village.

Matilda. But what will become of me without a guide?

Antonio. Oh! I'll engage some one for you, I'll warrant; and you may contrive to come to the wedding and join in the music, while we dance. We'll manage, never fear.

Matilda. You love dancing, Antonio?

Song, ANTONIO.

The merry dance I dearly love,
For then Collette thy hand I seize,
And press it too whene'er I please,
And none can see, and none reprove;
Then on thy cheek quick blushes glow,
And then we whisper soft and low,
Oh! how I grieve! you ne'er her charms can
know.

She's sweet fifteen, I'm one year more,
Yet still we are too young, they say,
But we know better, sure, than they,
Youth should not listen to threescore;
And I'm resolv'd I'll tell her so,
When next we whisper soft and low,
Oh! how I grieve! you ne'er her charms can
know. [Exit.

Matilda. Antonio!—he is gone—now then I may safely use my sight. [Takes the bandage from

her eyes.] A fortress indeed—there are towers, and moats, and battlements. They say it is strongly guarded, and almost inaccessible. Its appearance at least justifies the report that was made to me; for in this wild, and sequestered spot, such a pile could only be employed to hide some mighty captive.—Oh, Richard! my hero! my beloved! what hardships may you not be enduring: nor have you even the sad consolation to know that your faithful Matilda, exiled for her love to you, has abandoned every hope and duty, and in this poor and base disguise pursues your name, and wanders through the world; but here my cares and search shall end. If my foreboding soul misleads me, and this spot affords no tidings of its lord, then, if my heart breaks not, in the near convent's cell I'll hide my woes and shame for ever.

Oh, Richard! oh, my love!

By the faithless world forgot;

I alone in exile rove,

To lament thy hapless lot.

I alone of all remain

To unbind thy cruel chain,

By the faithless world forgot;

I, whose bosom sunk in grief,

Least have strength to yield relief.

Delusive glory! faithless pow'r!
Thus the valiant you repay,
In disaster's heavy hour,
Faithless friendship's far away.
Yet, royal youth,
One faithful heart,
From tenderest truth,
Though hopeless, never shall depart.

Oh, Richard! oh, my love!
By the faithless world forgot;
I alone in exile rove,
To lament thy hapless lot.

But I hear a noise; I must resume my disguise.

Enter Sir OWEN and GUILLOT.

Sir Owen. I'll teach you to bring letters to my daughter.

Guillot. Sir, 'twas the Governor sent me.

Sir Owen. The Governor!—what is the Governor to me?

Quartetto—MATILDA, GUILLOT, Sir OWEN,
and LAURETTA.

Sir Owen. What care I for the Governor?

Matilda. Oh! should it be this Governor. [*Aside.*

Guillot. He sent me, I knew no better,
————— with the letter.

Sir Owen. My daughter listen to his art!

What, my Laurette

So far forget

The modest virgin's duteous part!

———And thou—I pray, [*To Guillot.*]

Good knave, shall I the postage pay?

Guillot. No, sir, indeed,

There is no need,

I'm gone with speed.

Enter LAURETTA.

Sir Owen. Pray tell your Governor,

His hopes are vain

Laurette to gain.

His Lordship is by far too good,

And I wou'd thank him if I cou'd.

Matilda. If of this castle he should be

The Governor—what joy for me.

[*Aside.*

Act I. RICHARD, GŒUR DE LION. 167

Guillot. Yet he's my Lord the Governor.

Sir Owen. What's he to me, your Governor?

Begone, I say,

You'd best not stay;

And you, if ever I discover—

[*To Laretta, who comes forward.*

You lend an ear

To this designing lover,

Then, then, you shall have cause
to fear.

Matilda. Ah! should it be, what joy for me.

[*Aside.*

Come, come, my friends, no quarrel,

pray, [To them.

Your anger cease,

Keep, keep the peace.

Laretta. What can this be?

I never see

The Governor.

Matilda. Ah! should it be this Governor,

Ah! should it be, what joy for me.

[*Aside.*

Come, come, my friends, no quarrel,

pray,

Your anger cease,

Keep, keep the peace, &c.

[*Exit Guillot.*

Sir Owen. Get into the house—in I say. [*Exit Laretta.*] She tells me she never sees him—that she never speaks to him, and yet he writes to her. The Governor is a very civil gentleman, only he wants to run away with my daughter—and she is very obedient to her father—only she'll do nothing I bid her—I should like to know what all this is now. [*Looking at the letter.*] The Governor writes a military hand—his letters edge out a *chevaux-de-frise* fashion—all zig-zag—like his own fortification—I can't make any way through it—I wish I had somebody to decipher it.—Oh! here's a sort of an outlandish lad—I may trust him. Youngster, can you read?

Matilda. Oh! yes, sir.

Sir Owen. Well, then, read me this.

[*Offers the letter.*]

Matilda. Oh, indeed, sir! I could once, but the cruel Saracens——

Sir Owen. The Saracens—what did the Saracens do to you?

Matilda. The cruel monsters put out my eyes, having taken me prisoner in a great battle, where I was page to a Captain in King Richard's army! But have you not seen a little boy?

Sir Owen. Yes.

Matilda. 'Tis he who guides me—He can read, and will do whatever you bid him.

Sir Owen. Oh! here he comes, I believe.

Entër ANTONIO.

Matilda. Antonio, is that you?

Antonio. Yes, 'tis I.

Matilda. Take the letter which the gentleman here will give you, and read it aloud to him.

Antonio. [*Reading.*] 'Beautiful Lauretta.'

Sir Owen. Pshaw!

Antonio. 'Beautiful Lauretta, my heart overflows with ecstasy and gratitude, for the kind assurances you give me of eternal affection.'

Sir Owen. Eternal affection—and that puts him into an ecstasy—very well.

Antonio. 'If my attendance on the prisoner, whom I must not quit.'—

Matilda. The prisoner! [*Aside.*

Antonio. 'If my attendance on the prisoner, whom I must not quit, would suffer me to go out during the day—I would hasten to throw myself'—

Sir Owen. Into the ditch of your castle, I hope.

Matilda. Whom I must not quit. [*Aside.*]—
Read on quickly. [*To Antonio.*

Antonio. 'I would hasten to throw myself at your feet.—But if this night'—Here are some words blotted out.

Matilda. Well, what follows?

Antonio. 'Contrive some means to inform me, at what hour I may speak to you. Your tender, faithful, and eternally constant,

' FLORESTAN.'

Sir Owen. Here's a d——d Governor for you—Oh! if I had him in England on the top of Penmanmawr.

Matilda. What! Are you a Briton then?

Sir Owen. Yes, I am, sir, and an enemy to slaves of course; in love, or out.

Matilda. Glorious nation! But how comes it, sir, that you are settled so far from your native country?

Sir Owen. Oh! that's too long a story to tell you, but it would not have happen'd if I hadn't gone to the Crusades at Palestine.

Matilda. What, under the brave Richard?

Sir Owen. Brave! aye! I would follow him to the world's end—my ruin was no fault of his. Well, you must know, that when I returned from Palestine, I found my father was dead——

Matilda. He was very old perhaps.

Sir Owen. No; but he was slain by a neighbour

of his in single combat; on my return, I revenged his death.

Matilda. Of course—you fled——

Sir Owen. Yes, with my daughter and wife, who is since dead—my castle and my lands were forfeited—and after fighting her battles, I was sentenced by my ungrateful country——

Matilda. A hard and ill return, indeed——

Sir Owen. No such thing, sir. 'Twas justice, though severe; a Briton suffers no man to abuse his country, but himself.

Matilda. Heaven forbid I should traduce it.—
But, sir, one request.

Sir Owen. [*Looking out.*] It must be they——stay, good youth—I see some friends whom I expect. If you wish refreshment—the poor and friendless are never driven from my door.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II. *A Gothic Chamber.*

*Enter LAURETTA, MATILDA, and ANTONIO,
from the House.*

Lauretta. Pray, good youth, tell me what my father has been saying to you.

Matilda. Are you the pretty Lauretta?

Lauretta. Yes, sir.

Matilda. Your father is very angry—he knows the contents of that letter from the Chevalier Florestan.

Lauretta. Yes—Florestan is his name—and did you read the letter to my father?

Matilda. No, not I—I am blind, alas!—it was my little guide.

Antonio. Yes, but didn't you bid me read it?

[*Retires.*]

Lauretta. Oh! I wish you had not done so.

Matilda. Some other person would.

Lauretta. That's true—and what did the letter say?

Matilda. It says, that on account of the prisoner in that castle—and who *is* that prisoner?

Lauretta. Oh!—no one knows who it is.

Matilda. The Chevalier cannot come to throw himself at your feet.

Lauretta. Poor Florestan!

Matilda. But that this night——

Lauretta. This night!

Oh! would the night my blushes hide,
The truth to thee I would confide.

Yes, yes, I own 'tis true,
Whene'er his eyes I meet,
I feel my heart begins to beat,
It beats, and trembles too.

But when my hand he gently presses,
A struggling sigh I fear confesses,
Ah! more than blushes could impart,
And more than words betrays my heart.

Oh! would the night my blushes hide,
The truth to thee I would confide.

Yes, yes, I own 'tis true,
Whene'er his eyes I meet,
I feel my heart begins to beat,
It beats, and trembles too.

Matilda. You love him then, Laretta?

Laretta. Oh most dearly, that I do, day and night, truly and sincerely.

Matilda. And do you not fear to own it?

Laretta. No, not to you. You seem kind and tender-hearted, and you speak gently to me; and then you cannot see me whether I blush or not, and so I am not afraid.

Matilda. Pretty Laretta!

Laretta. But who told you I was pretty?

Matilda. Alas, being blind, I guess only by the voice; the softness and sweetness of that is beauty to me. But let me counsel you, my innocent. These knights, these men of high descent, beware of them; when they seem most devoted to your beauty, they are least forgetful of their own rank, and the nobleness of your soul is overlooked by the pride of their own high birth.

Lauretta. But my birth is not inferior to his, though my father is now in banishment.

Matilda. No!—and does he know it?

Lauretta. Yes; and never talks to me but in words of goodness and honour; and if it wasn't that my father is so passionate, I should have told him every thing long ago.

Matilda. And would you, before you have informed your father, meet this man whom you love so, and converse with him, and in the night too?—Listen to me.

Air—MATILDA and LAURETTA.

Matilda. The God of Love a bandeau wears,
Would you know what it declares,
And why his eyes are clouded?
'Tis to shew us that his pow'r
Is ne'er so fatal, ne'er so sure,
As when in darkness shrowded.

Lauretta. Good sir, repeat that pretty strain,
Pray again, again.
A lesson kind it does impart,
To guard against a lover's art.

Matilda..... With all my heart.

The God of Love a bandeau wears,
Would you know what it declares,
And why his eyes are clouded?
'Tis to shew you that his pow'r
Is ne'er so fatal, ne'er so sure,
As when in darkness shrowded.

Lauretta. Look, there are two pilgrims meeting
my father——see—he embraces one of them—
sure, those cannot be the visitors he expected—I
must go——

Matilda. A moment, Lauretta—I have some-
thing to say to you.

Lauretta. About Florestan?

Matilda. No.

Lauretta. Oh! then I can't stay.

[*Exit into the house.*]

Matilda. They are coming this way. I can't
retire till my guide comes.

Enter Sir OWEN, BLONDEL, and Pilgrims.

Sir Owen. My brave friend, how rejoiced I am to see you—You are well disguised, indeed; I myself should never have guessed it was Blondel.

Matilda. Blondel! what do I hear? [*Aside.*

Blondel. Caution, my friend. My search would be fruitless indeed, should I be discovered.—And see—— [*Pointing to Matilda.*

Sir Owen. It is a poor blind youth, a wandering minstrel, who diverts the peasants.

Matilda. Shall I play, worthy gentlemen? I have a ditty made by a royal lover, on the lady whom he loved. [*Plays.*

Sir Owen. Why are you so much astonished?

Blondel. That was made by my gallant master—prithee go on. [*She plays again.*] Oh! how it reminds me of happy days!—Tell me, boy, where could you learn that tune?

Matilda. I was taught it by a servant of King Richard's camp, who said he had heard the King himself sing to it.

Blondel. Even so!—he made it for the lovely and unfortunate Matilda; unfortunate indeed!—for

passing through Artois, I learned that she had left her father's court, and fled almost alone, upon the rumour that the royal Richard had been treacherously seized, as he returned from Palestine.—Oh ! if her gallant Monarch yet lives, sure heaven will guide some of those who seek him to the prison that immures him.

Sir Owen. Perhaps the fair Matilda alone has had intelligence.

Blondel. O ! no—But yesterday I passed the Seneschal's, her father's trusty friend, who with a chosen band of troops was searching to reclaim her; and he had learned, that, stript of her companions by perfidy, or death—deprived she had sought the sadder prison of a monastery.

Matilda. The Seneschal so near ! [*Aside.*] Gracious sir, if my music has pleased you, will you entreat your kind host to lodge this night a harmless minstrel, who has lost his precious sight in Palestine, and I will play all night to sooth you ?

Blondel. Poor youth ! He will, no doubt.

[*Makes signs to Antonio, who leads Matilda off.*]

Sir Owen. I had refused him only from the caution I thought due to you.—But come, you

must forget the Pilgrim awhile, we'll in to supper soon; in the mean time, I'll sing you a song, and these, my rustic neighbours, shall join the chorus.

Enter Peasants.

Song—Sir OWEN.

Let the Sultan Saladin
Play the rake in Palestine,
While he claims his subjects' duty,
He's himself a slave to beauty,
Wearing baser chains than they.
Well! well!

Every man must have his way;
But to my poor way of thinking,
There's no joy like drinking.

Chorus.

But to my poor way of thinking,
There's no joy like drinking.

Cœur de Lion loves the wars,
Richard's joy is blows and scars;
Conquer'd Pagans fly before him,
Christian warriors all adore him,

Watching, marching night and day.

Well! well!

Every man must have his way ;
But to my poor way of thinking,
There's no joy like drinking.

Chorus.

But to my poor way of thinking,
There's no joy like drinking.

You too, pilgrims, love your trade,
You recruit the bold crusade,
Making zealots cross the ocean,
In a fit of fierce devotion ;
Pilgrims love to fast and pray.

Well! well!

Every man must have his way ;
But to my poor way of thinking,
There's no joy like drinking.

Chorus.

But to my poor way of thinking,
There's no joy like drinking. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III. A Chamber in the Castle.

Enter RICHARD and FLORESTAN.

Richard. Florestan!

Florestan. Sire!

Richard. Your fortune is in your power.

Florestan. Sire!—my honour is.

Richard. Honour! to a traitor!—a base, perfidious——

Florestan. Did I believe him so, I would not serve him; and not believing, I must not listen where I dare not answer.

Richard. But Florestan——

[*Florestan bows, and exit.*

Oh God! oh misery!—Is this to be my lot for ever?—Am I doomed by a vile traitor's craft to wear my life away in ignominious bondage? But Richard is forgot—deserted by his people—by the world!—[*He looks on a picture.*] Image of her I love!—come—Oh! calm, console my heart—no—thou dost redouble all my griefs—thou art my despair—Oh death! I call on thee—thy dart alone can break my chains—my freedom is my grave!

Lost to the world, forgot, forlorn,
In vain to me returns the morn

 That brings no more my glorious toils,
Yet bless the beams that give to sight
This image of my soul's delight,

 This heaven of soothing smiles.
Vain is the thought of former power
To sooth the present mournful hour :
O Death! be thou my friend ;
Hopeless I live, my sorrows end.

[*Exit.*

ACT II.

SCENE I. Represents the inner Works of an old Fortification. Towards the Front is a Terrace inclosed by Rails and a Fossè; and so situated that when RICHARD appears upon it, he cannot see MATILDA, who is upon the outer Parapet. Soldiers lower a Drawbridge, and leave a Centinel on each side.

Enter RICHARD and FLORESTAN.

Florestan.

THE morning breaks—the fresh air is lightened by the dawn—profit of it, sir, for your health's sake. Within an hour your guards must do their duty, and you will be again secluded from the day.

[*Exit.—Richard walks to the farther end of the terrace, and remains in a posture of deep despair.*]

Enter MATILDA and ANTONIO on the other side of the Fossè and Parapet.

Matilda. Antonio, stay awhile; here on this rising ground we'll rest—I love to feel the pure fresh air—it is the balmy breath of morn, whispering the sun's approach. Where are we now?

Antonio. Close to the parapet of the castle which you bid me bring you to. [*Matilda offering to get upon the parapet.*] Ah! don't attempt to get upon it—you'll fall.

Matilda. Indeed! Well, here, kind boy—take this money, and go buy something for us that we may breakfast.

Antonio. You have given me a great deal—

Matilda. Keep for yourself what is too much.

Antonio. Oh, thank you! And pray take care not to go too near the moat. [*Exit.*

Matilda. When you return we will walk to some shade—shall we?—You don't answer me—he is gone—Now then. [*Lifts up the bandeau, and raises herself on the parapet.*] Ah! no one to be seen!

Richard. A year—a year is passed! hope is exhausted!

Matilda. How still! how silent!—Sure if these walls enclose him, my voice may reach their deep-

est recesses O! if he is here, he will remember the strain—'twas the offering of his earliest love in happy days—of love for her, who now, uncertain of his fate, yet shares his misery.

Richard. No cheering thought! no glimmering ray of consolation.—O memory! O Matilda! [*Matilda plays.*] What sounds!—heavens!—the very strain I once—O let me hear——

MATILDA *sings.*

One night in sickness lying,
A prey to grief and pain——

Richard. Heavens, that voice!

MATILDA *sings.*

When aid of man was vain,
And hope and life were flying,
Then came my mistress to my bed,
And death and pain and sorrow fled.

[*She stops and raises herself to listen.—*

Richard, while she sings, having expressed the extremes of surprise, hope, and joy, seems to endeavour to recal to his memory the rest of the ditty, and recollecting it, answers.

RICHARD *sings.*

The gentle tears soft falling
 Of her whom I adore,
 My tender hopes recalling,
 Did life and love restore.
 Could I but view Matilda's eyes,
 Fortune, thy frowns I should despise.

Together.

RICHARD.
 The gentle tears soft falling
 Of her so long ador'd,
 My tender hopes recalling,
 Have love and life re-
 stor'd.

MATILDA.
 My gentle tears fast falling
 For him so long ador'd,
 His tender hopes recalling,
 Have love and life re-
 stor'd.

[After Matilda has repeated the strain, shewing great joy, Florestan and Soldiers appear.—Florestan requests the King to retire into the castle—he does so; while another party seize Matilda, and passing a drawbridge, bring her into the front of the works.]

Duo and Chorus—MATILDA, Guards, &c.

Chorus, Soldiers.

Speak quickly, quickly, who art thou?
Who sent thee here? whence come, and how?

MATILDA.

Are you strangers passing near,
Pleas'd perhaps my song to hear?

Chorus of Soldiers.

To prison straight, to prison straight,
There he may sing early and late.

MATILDA.

Ah, good sir, no anger, pray,
With pity hear what I've to say—
The Saracens, so fierce in fight,
Have deprived me of my sight.

Chorus of Soldiers.

'Tis well for thee,
For could'st thou see,
Thou should'st die by our decree.

MATILDA.

I know not what this anger's for,
I've business with the Governor ;
'Tis of moment you will see,
And he should know it instantly.

Chorus of Soldiers.

You know not what our anger's for,
And would speak with the Governor ?

MATILDA.

'Tis of moment, you will see,
And he should know it instantly.

Chorus of Soldiers.

Well, you shall see the Governor,
He'll tell you what our anger's for!
But since your business is of weight,
We'll suspend awhile your fate.
Hark! he comes, the Governor;
And now take heed, take heed, pert youth,
 To tell the truth;
 For if you lie,
If you lie to the Governor,
Your fate is fixed, you surely die.

Enter FLORESTAN.

Matilda. Where is the Governor?

Florestan. Here!

Matilda. On which side?

Florestan. Here!

Matilda. I have something of importance to communicate to him.

Florestan. Attempt no trifling, or you perish that instant.

Matilda. Ah, sir! those who have lost their sight, are half deprived of life already!—Is it for a poor blind minstrel like me to attempt to deceive you?

Florestan. Speak then.

Matilda. Are we alone?—Now I think my device can't fail. [*Aside.*

Florestan. [*Signs to the Soldiers who retire.*]
We are alone.

Matilda. Then, sir, the lovely Lauretta.

Florestan. Speak lower.

Matilda. The beauteous Lauretta, sir, has read to me the letter you sent her yesterday; in which you express your joy at her confessing her love for you, and press so much for an opportunity to speak with her.

Florestan. Well, my good friend, and what says she?

Matilda. She says you may safely call at her father's house this evening, at any hour you please.

Florestan. At her father's house!

Matilda. Yes; she says her father has some friends with him, to whom he means to give a fête, and takes the opportunity of a wedding in the neighbourhood to invite all the village to his house, where there will be nothing but feasting, dancing, and merriment; during which, Lauretta says, she will find means to speak with you; and you may easily make a pretence for the visit.

Florestan. Tell her I will not fail—but how came she to employ you in this business? you are blind.

Matilda. The less likely to be suspected—she loves to hear me play and sing—and she has been so generous to me, I would risk any thing to serve her—besides, I brought a little guide with me.

Florestan. You have managed extremely well—and the noise you made, I suppose, was on purpose to be brought before me.

Matilda. For what could it be else?—But with your guards, forsooth, I was a spy, a lurking emissary, trying to discover who was imprisoned here—ha! ha!

Florestan. Ha! ha! ha! ridiculous enough!—
But you have really done it very well—Here is a
purse for—— *[Offers money.]*

Matilda. Pardon, good Governor—should any
one be near, and observe that you reward me,
they will suspect something.

Florestan. 'Tis very true. *[He crosses by her.]*

Matilda. But, Mr. Governor, lest they should—

Florestan. Well!

Matilda. O, you are on that side—I say, lest
they should guess at my errand, hadn't you better
seem angry, and so reprimand me, and send me
back?

Florestan. *[Signs to the Soldiers to come down.]*
You are right—upon my life this is a very clever
lad, though he is blind.

Dialogue and Chorus.

MATILDA.

Sir, to blame me is most hard;
For the noise, pray blame the guard.

FLORESTAN.

They should not send such foolish boys,
For such a message—such a noise.

Chorus of Soldiers.

Silence, fellow, and begone,
'Twas you alarm'd the garrison.

Enter ANTONIO, frightened and crying.

ANTONIO.

Ah! good sir, forgive him, pray,
Ah! hear with pity what I say;
The Saracens, so fierce in fight,
Have deprived him of his sight,
And shut him from the blessed light.

Chorus of Soldiers. [To Matilda.]

'Tis well for thee,
For could'st thou see,
Thou hadst died by our decree.
So haste away,
Begone! I say,
And if again we catch you here,
Be assured 'twill cost you dear.

MATILDA.

Sirs, I believe ye,
Nor will deceive ye,

Never more will I appear,
Never more offend you here.

ANTONIO.

In truth, if here
He does appear,
It shall be
Without me.

[*Exeunt.*

ACT III.

SCENE I. A great Hall in Sir OWEN's House

BLONDEL *and* FRIEND *with* Sir OWEN.

Blondel.

MY friend, I would without profession trespass on your hospitality, but, in truth, we must away—our search I do perceive is fruitless here—and till I learn some tidings of my royal master's state, I cannot tarry for mirth's sake—therefore we leave you to your rural guests, and may gay content be with you.

Sir Owen. I cannot blame your haste, though I lament it—yet one night methinks—you will see gay pastimes, and simple jollity, but such as will divert you, believe me; and see, here is my little prattler Julie will join in my request.

Enter JULIE.

[*She is going to speak, but seeing the Strangers, she runs to Sir OWEN, and whispers him.*]

Sir Owen. Surely, my child—She tells me she is to dance to-night, if I approve it.

Julie. Oh, sir—but it was to be a secret—you were not to have said a word about it yet.

Sir Owen. No!—well, they will not betray you—they are going to leave us, Julie—can't you persuade them to stay?

Julie. They look so grave, I am afraid of them.

Sir Owen. Oh! go, try.

Julie. [*Goes to Blondel, and takes his hand.*] Pray, sir, don't leave us; how can you think of going away when we are all going to be so merry?

Blondel. We are very sorry, my pretty hostess, that it must be so.

Julie. But indeed you shall not go—for if you go away, my father will have no one to talk to while we are all dancing and running about.

Sir Owen. You little rogue, how do you know but I intend to dance myself?

Julie. Lord, sir, that would be pleasant—ha! ha! I should like to see *you* dance!

Sir Owen. Well, you are very good however, Julie, to wish me to be someway amused—it is very considerate in you.

Julie. Yes, sir, because then you would have something else to do than to mind us——

Sir Owen. So!—very well, innocent!

Julie. Then pray, gentlemen, don't go—let me intreat you to stay for our festival.

Enter Servant.

Servant. Sir, the Seneschal is come, leaving his troops above the wood; with a few followers, he waits impatiently to speak to you——

Sir Owen. I come. [*Exit Servant.*] My friends, it shall not be farewell yet; I will return.

[*Exit, leaving Julie, who looks back, and makes signs to Blondel not to leave them.*]

Friend. You still avoid being known to the Seneschal.

Blondel. Perhaps I may safely disclose myself; but wherefore, if Richard——

Enter Servant.

Servant. There is a youth without, who says he must be admitted to you.

Blondel. To me!

Servant. He that you heard play and sing yesterday.

Blondel. Pray let him come—[*Exit Servant.*] And after we will pursue our journey.

Enter MATILDA.

Matilda. How, sir! Did you doubt to see me?

—I have spent the day requesting it. You should not have paused upon it, but hear me, and alone.

[*Exit Pilgrim.*]

Blondel. I knew not your desire sooner—but how is this, good youth—you were blind yesterday?

Matilda. True; and ought I not to bless heaven, that the first object which presents itself to my restored sight is—Blondel!

Blondel. Ha!—you know me then?

Matilda. Yes;—and can it be that you prepare to fly from hence? O! has no powerful impulse worked upon your heart?—has no instinctive warning checked the ill-guided purpose, stirred in your alarmed bosom, and chid the rash desertion of your valour's duty? Then perish, royal Richard! waste on, proud soul, in base captivity—thy careless friends pass by thy prison gates, and man and heaven desert thee!

Blondel. What can this mean?—my royal master—

Matilda. Blondel—your king—your leader—your friend—pass but these gates, and you behold his prison—but hold—

Enter Sir OWEN, speaking to the SENESCHAL and two Knights.

Sir Owen. Nay, but the youth you speak of is——

Seneschal. Matilda, my noble mistress! [*Kneels.*] thus let me excuse the abrupt intrusion of my duty——

Blondel. Matilda!

Matilda. Rise, Seneschal!—Yes, Matilda—a fugitive from all she owed, her station and a father's love—but tell them peerless Richard was the cause—and tell them too, that heaven at length has sanctioned what resistless love resolved.—Seneschal, I know your zeal, and firm attachment to your master's friend—Sir Owen, your monarch is in chains—and you are a Briton——

Sir Owen. We will deliver him, or die!

[While the symphony plays, some of the Seneschal's party go out and return with more of their friends, to whom they seem to relate what has passed, as they range themselves behind Matilda.]

Dialogue and Chorus.

MATILDA.

Ye Cavaliers, yon castle drear,
Great Richard is a pris'ner there.

Cavaliers.

Strange the tidings that you bring,
Great Richard—England's mighty King!

MATILDA.

Ye Cavaliers, yon castle drear,
Great Richard is a pris'ner there.

Cavaliers.

Can it be what you relate?
Who explored the monarch's fate?

MATILDA.

'Twas I, with song and veiled eyes,
Approach'd the walls in safe disguise.
His voice I heard—Ah! doubt ye yet?
And could my heart that voice forget?
No, Cavaliers, yon castle drear,
King Richard is a pris'ner there.
But long a pris'ner shall he be,
Whom love and valour join to free?

Cavaliers.

Not long a pris'ner shall he be.

Let us arm!

Here we swear to set him free.

Give th' alarm!

BLONDEL.

Haste is vain,

'Tis prudence must his freedom gain;

Prudence must your rage restrain.

Cavaliers.

Let us arm!

MATILDA.

Blondel, check the rash alarm.

What should be done, oh, quickly tell;

Cavaliers, oh listen to Blondel.

Cavaliers.

Blonde!! Blondel! is it Blondel?

MATILDA.

Yes, Cavaliers, it is Blondel,

The friend of Richard—mark him well.

BLONDEL.

Let our deeds our friendship tell
In the battle—mark Blondel.

Cavaliers.

Let us arm, &c. &c.

Matilda. And you, my gallant friends—But thanks would wrong you—the cause is your's. You, Sir Owen, know this Governor. Is he a man whom gold—

Sir Owen. I must be just. He's one whom neither fear nor interest will sway.

Blondel. Then force alone's our hope.

Matilda. Attend a moment—Sir Owen, Florestan is apprized, that you intend this night a rural feast; he means to be partaker of your mirth, in hopes of speaking with Laretta.

Sir Owen. How!

Matilda. I cannot now explain this; but be assured he will be here. Some chosen guards may then surround him, and demand the king's deliverance. If he refuses—

Blondel. Then to arms!—Here indeed is hope. Seneschal direct your men to pass the wood, and

near the morass attend our signal. Let us prepare and arm.

[Exeunt Blondel, Seneschal, and Cavaliers.]

Enter LAURETTA and Servants.

Lauretta. My father, your village friends will be here straight, and the music is not yet come—then how shall we dance?

Sir Owen. They will be here, my child—fear not, my dear Lauretta.

[Sir Owen seems to give directions to the servants.]

Lauretta. My dear Lauretta, so!—he's not angry with me now—my dear father [*to Sir Owen*] now I am happy! only I wish Florestan could be here to-night.

Matilda. [*Aside.*] Charming Lauretta! but I dare not trust her yet—'tis happy, however, that the course we have determined on is free from any peril to Florestan—in the midst of my own anxieties I am interested for her happiness.

[Matilda goes to Lauretta and talks to her.]

Lauretta expresses surprise at seeing her no longer blind.

Sir Owen. And mark me, you William, set my old buckler and great sword in my closet.

William. Sir, they'll be cumbersome to dance in.

Sir Owen. Fellow, do as I bid you. [*Pushes him out.*] Oh, more lights here in the hall—and, d'ye hear—be ready to welcome all comers—so—
[*Exit Servants.*] I must not, however, appear in their secrets yet.

[*Observing Lauretta and Matilda.*]

Trio.—MATILDA, LAURETTA, and *Sir OWEN.*

MATILDA.—[*Aside to Lauretta.*]

Yes, yes, Florestan will be here,
After the dance he will appear.

LAURETTA.

Oh! what delight, what joy 'twill be!
Sure he'll find means to speak to me.

MATILDA.—[*To Sir Owen, seeing him approach.*]

We no secrets have, good Knight,
I am saying that my sight
Is again restor'd to light.

LAURETTA.—[*Very demurely.*]

Yes, my father, very true,
We no secrets have from you,
The youth's well bred and honest too.

Sir OWEN.

I'm sure you have no mystery,
Pray talk on, and don't mind me.

LAURETTA.—[*To Matilda, aside.*]

But does he know how well I love,
And does he swear he'll constant prove?

MATILDA.

Had you but seen the gen'rous youth,
He knelt and vow'd eternal truth.

LAURETTA.

Kneel and vow,
Ah! he'll be true, I'm happy now!

Sir OWEN.

What, he tells thee that his sight
Is again restor'd to light?

LAURETTA.

Yes, my father, very true,
We no secrets have from you;
He is saying that his sight
Is again restor'd to light.

MATILDA.

We no secrets have, good Knight,
I am saying that my sight
Is again restor'd to light.

Sir OWEN.

What he tells thee, &c. &c. &c.

LAURETTA.

Yes, my father, &c. &c.

[Tabors and pipes heard behind the scenes.]

Sir Owen. So, our guests are at hand. My
Lauretta, give them welcome.

Enter JULIE, running.

Julie. They are all coming, and all so gay, and so neatly dressed—indeed, sir, they are—and I saw the little bride myself, blushing and looking so pretty.—Dear, it must be a charming thing to be married!

Lauretta. Yes, they are coming indeed, sir.

Sir Owen. And are you ready, my little Julie, with the dance you——

Julie. Yes, that I am. But pray what are all

those fine knights gathering about the house for? They don't look as if they came to be merry. Indeed, sister, they look so fierce, you'd be frightened.

Sir Owen. Oh no, my child, they will not hurt us.

Julie. No!—then I vow they shall dance, swords, and hemlets and all.

[*She runs to meet the Peasants, who appear.*

Chorus of Peasants.

Join hearts—join hands,
In loving bands,
None are happy till they're pair'd,
Nothing's joy that is not shar'd.

Peasant.

When alone the maid sits pining,
Nature's beauties seem declining,
Nothing can afford delight;
But the favour'd youth appearing,
With his presence all things cheering,
Flowers how sweet—the sun how bright.

Chorus.

Join hearts—join hands,
In loving bands,

None are happy till they're pair'd,
Nothing's joy that is not shar'd.

ANTONIO.

O'er the sultry mountain ranging,
Shade and pasture ever changing,
 Soon I tire my flock to tend;
But if chance Collette address me,
Toil and heat no more oppress me,
 Soon, too soon my labours end.

Chorus.

Join hearts—join hands,
In loving bands,
None are happy, &c. &c.

[*Dance of Peasants.*]

[*Florestan having entered, and requested
Lauretta to be his partner, is preparing
to dance.—Drums beat to arms.*]

Florestan. Ha! what do I hear?

[*Sir Owen and Matilda's Knights approach
him.*]

Sir Owen. Sir—you are my prisoner.

Florestan. Sir!

Sir Owen. You.

Florestan. What treason is this?

Chorus of Cavaliers.

Vain defiance, strive no more,
Yield our King—our chief restore;
Vain resistance—fate's decree
Sets imprison'd Richard free.

FLORESTAN.

Threats he fears not, who is just
To his honour, to his trust.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE II. The Castle, assaulted by MATILDA's troops—BLONDEL puts himself at the head of the Pioneers, and the assault continues—RICHARD appears on the fortress without arms, endeavouring to free himself from three armed Soldiers—BLONDEL mounts the breach—runs to the KING, wounds one of the Guards, and snatches his sword—the KING seizes it—they put the rest of the Soldiers to flight—BLONDEL then throws himself at RICHARD's feet, who embraces him—at this moment is heard the grand Chorus of Long live the King!

—*The besiegers then display the colours of MATILDA, who appears—She sees RICHARD at liberty—flies towards him, and sinks in his arms—FLORESTAN is then conducted to the KING by the SENESCHAL and Sir OWEN—RICHARD returns him his sword.*

Richard. Oh love! oh gratitude! oh Matilda!
—what can I say to thee, my soul's beloved! my deliverance! my reward! [*Embraces her.—To Sir Owen, &c.*] I have more thanks to pay.—My heart feels all it owes; and when to my native England I return, so may I prosper in my subjects' love, as I cherish in the memory of my sufferings here—a lesson to improve my reign. Compassion should be a monarch's nature; I have learned what 'tis to need it; the poorest peasant in my land, when misery presses, in his *King* shall find a friend.

FINALE.

Oh! blest event!—oh! glorious hour!

Liberty and love we sing;

Oh! may they with resistless power,

Protect the blessings which they bring.

Chorus.

Faithful lovers, banish fear,
Our delight, our triumph share.

Trio—MATILDA, LAURETTA, and BLONDEL.

No more shall doubt or sorrow
Disturb my anxious breast,
The sun that gilds to-morrow,
At length beholds me blest.

Chorus.

Oh! blest event—oh! glorious hour!
Liberty and love we sing;
Oh! may they with resistless power,
Protect the blessings which they bring!
[*Exeunt omnes.*



POEMS.

IRREGULAR ODE FOR MUSIC,

BY THE

REV. DR. P*****.

THE NOTES (EXCEPT THOSE WHEREIN LATIN IS CONCERNED) BY JOHN ROBINSON, ESQ.

Recitative by Double Voices.

HAIL to the Lyar*! whose all persuasive strain,
Wak'd by the master-touch of art,

* *Hail to the Lyar !*] It was suggested to me, that my friend the Doctor had here followed the example of Voltaire, in deviating from common orthography.—*Lyar* instead of lyre, he conceives to be a reading of peculiar elegance in the present instance, as it puts the reader in suspense between an inanimate and a living instrument. However, for my own part, I am rather of opinion, that this seeming mis-spelling arose from the Doctor's following the same well-known circumspection which he exercised in the case of Mr. Wedgwood, and declining to give his Ode *under his hand*; preferring to repeat it to Mr. Delpini's amanuensis, who very probably may have committed that, and similar errors in orthography.

And prompted by th' inventive brain,
 Winds its sly way into the easy heart*.

Solo.

Hark! do I hear the golden tone †?—
 Responsive now! and now alone!
 Or does my fancy rove?
 Reason-born Conviction, hence!
 And phrenzy-rapt be every sense ‡,
 With the *Untruth* I love.
 Propitious Fiction aid the song,
 Poet and Priest to thee belong.

* *Winds its sly way, &c.*] A line taken in great part from Milton. The whole passage (which it may not be unpleasant to recal to the recollection of the reader) has been closely imitated by my friend P*****, in a former work.

“ I under fair pretence of friendly ends,
 “ And well-placed words of glozing courtesy,
 “ Baited with reasons not unplausible,
 “ *Hind me into the easy hearted man,*
 “ And hug him into snares.”

COMUS.

† *Golden tone, &c.*] The epithet may seem at first more proper for the instrument, but it applies here with great propriety to the sound. In the strictest sense, what is golden sound but the sound of gold? and what could arise more naturally in the writer's mind upon the present occasion?

‡ *Phrenzy-rapt, &c.*] *Auditus? An me ludit amabilis Insania?*

Semi-Chorus.

By thee inspir'd *, ere yet the tongue was glib,
 The cradled infant lisp'd the nurs'ry fib,
 Thy vot'ry in maturer youth,
 Pleas'd he renounced the name of truth,
 And often dar'd the specious to defy,
 Proud of th' expansive, bold, uncovered lie.

Air.

Propitious Fiction, hear!
 And smile, as erst thy father smil'd
 Upon his first-born child,
 Thy sister dear;
 When the nether shades among,
 Sin from his forehead sprung †.

Full Chorus.

Grand deluder! arch impostor!
 Countervailing Orde and Foster!

* *By thee inspir'd, &c.*] In the first manuscript:
 " While yet a cradled child, he conquer'd shame,
 " And lisp'd in fables, for the fables came."

See POPE.

† *Sin from his forehead sprung.*]

————— " A goddess armed
 " Out of thy head I sprung."

See MILTON'S *Birth of Sin.*

Renown'd Divine!
 The palm is thine:
 Be thy name or sung or *hist*
 Alone it stands—Conspicuous Fabulist!

*Recitative for the celebrated Female Singer
 from Manchester.*

SYMPHONY OF FLUTES—PIANISSIMO.

Now in cotton robe arrayed,
 Poor Manufacture, tax-lamenting Maid,
 Thy story heard by her devoted wheel,
 Each busy-sounding spindle hush'd—

Fugue.

Now, dreading Irish rape
 Quick shifting voice and shape—

Deep Bass, from Birmingham.

With visage hard, and furnace-flush'd,
 And black-hair'd chest, and nerve of steel,
 The sex-chang'd list'ner stood
 In surly pensive mood.

Air, accompanied with double Bassoons, &c.

While the promise-maker spoke
 The anvil miss'd the wonted stroke;

In air suspended hammers hung,
While Pitt's own frauds came mended from that
tongue.

Part of Chorus repeated.

Renown'd Divine, &c.

Air.

Sooth'd with the sound, the Priest grew vain,
And all his tales told o'er again,
And added hundreds more;
By turns to this, or that, or both,
He gave the sanction of an oath,
And then the whole forswore.
"Truth," he sung, "was toil and trouble,
"Honour but an empty bubble"—
Glo'ster's aged—London dying—
Poor, too poor is simple lying!
If the lawn be worth thy wearing,
Win, oh! win it, by thy swearing!

Full Chorus repeated.

Grand deluder, arch impostor, &c*.

* The quick transition of persons must have struck the reader in the first part of this Ode, and it will be observable throughout: now Poet, now Muse, now Chorus; then spinner, blacksmith, &c. &c. The Doctor skips from

PART II.

Recitative accompanied.

ENOUGH the parent's praise—see of Deceit
 The fairer progeny ascends!
 Evasion, nymph of agile feet,
 With half-veiled face;
 Profession, whispering accents sweet,
 And many a kindred Fraud attends;
 Mutely dealing courtly wiles,
 Fav'ring nods, and hope-fraught smiles,
 A fond, amusive, tutelary race,
 That guard the home-pledg'd faith of Kings—
 Or flitting light, on paper wings,
 Speed Eastern guile across this earthly ball,
 And waft it back from Windsor to Bengal.

point to point over Parnassus, with a nimbleness that no modern imitator of Pindar ever equalled. Catch him, even under a momentary shape, who can. I was always an admirer of tergiversation, and (as my flatterers might say) no bad practitioner; but it remained for my friend to shew the sublimity to which the figure I am alluding to (I do not know the learned name of it) might be carried.

But chiefly thee I woo, of changeful eye,
In courts 'yclep'd Duplicity!

Thy fond looks on mine imprinting,

Vulgar mortals call it squinting—

Baby, of Art and Int'rest bred,

Whom stealing to the back-stairs head

In fondling arms with cautious tread,

Wrinkle-twinkle Jenky bore *,

To the baize-lined closet door.

* *Wrinkle-twinkle, &c.*] It must have been already observed by the sagacious reader, that our author can coin an epithet as well as a fable. Wrinkles are as frequently produced by the motion of the part, as by the advance of age. The head of the distinguished personage here described, though in the prime of its faculties, has had more exercise in every sense than any head in the world. Whether he means any allusion to the worship of the rising sun, and imitates the Persian priests, whose grand act of devotion is to turn round; or whether he merely thinks that the working of the head in circles will give analogous effect to the species of argument in which he excels, we must remain in the dark; but certain it is, that whenever he reasons in public, the *capital* and wonderful part of the frame I am alluding to, is continually revolving upon its axis: and his eyes, as if dazzled with rays that dart on him exclusively, twinkle in their orbs at the rate of sixty twinkles to one revolution. I trust I have given a rational account, and not far-fetched, both of the wrinkle and twinkle in this ingenious compound.

Air.

Sweetest nymph, that liv'st unseen
 Within that lov'd recess—
 Save when the closet councils press,
 And juntos speak the thing they mean;
 Tell me, ever busy power,
 Where shall I trace thee in that vacant hour?
 Art thou content in the sequester'd grove,
 To play with hearts and vows of love?
 Or, emulous of prouder sway,
 Dost thou to listening Senates take thy way?
 Thy presence let me still enjoy
 With *Rose*, and the lie-loving boy.

Air.

No rogue that goes*
 Is like that *Rose*,
 Or scatters such deceit:
 Come to my breast—
 There ever rest
 Associate counterfeit!

* *No rogue that goes, &c.*] The candid reader will put no improper interpretation on the word rogue. Pretty rogue, dear rogue, &c. are terms of endearment to one sex; pleasant rogue, witty rogue, apply as familiar compliments to the other: Indeed *facelious rogue* is the common table appellation of this gentleman in Downing-street.

PART III.

Loud Symphony.

BUT, lo! what throngs of rival bards!
More lofty themes! more bright rewards!
See Sal'sbury, a new Apollo sit!
Pattern and arbiter of wit!
The laureate wreath hangs graceful from his wand:
Begin! he cries, and waves his whiter hand.
'Tis George's natal day—
Parnassian Pegasus away—
Grant me the more glorious steed
Of Royal Brunswick breed*.
I kneel, I kneel;
And at his snowy heel,

* It will be observed by the attentive reader, that the thought of mounting the Hanoverian horse, as a Pegasus, has been employed by Mr. Dundas, in his Ode preserved in this collection. It is true, the Doctor has taken the reins out of his hands, as it was time somebody should do. But I hereby forewarn the vulgar critic, from the poor joke of making the Doctor a horse-stealer.

Pindaric homage vow;—
 He neighs, he bounds; I mount, I fly,
 The air-drawn crosier in my eye,
 The visionary mitre on my brow—
 Spirit of hierarchy exalt thy rhyme,
 And dedicate to George the lie sublime.

Air, for a Bishop *.

Hither, brethren, incense bring,
 To the mitre-giving king;
 Praise him for his first donations;
 Praise him for his blest translations,
 Benefices, dispensations. }
 By the powers of a crown;
 By the many made for one;
 By a monarch's awful distance,
 Rights divine, and non-resistance,
 Honour, triumph, glory give—
 Praise him in his might!
 Praise him in his height!
 The mighty, mighty height of his prerogative!

* When this Ode is performed in Westminster Abbey (as doubtless it will be) this air is designed for the Reverend, or rather the Right Reverend Author. The numerous bench (for there will hardly be more than three absentees) who will begin to chant the subsequent chorus from their box at the right hand of his most sacred Majesty, will have a fine effect both on the ear and eye.

Recitative, by an Archbishop.

Orchestras, of thousands strong,
With Zadoc's zeal each note prolong—

Prepare!

Prepare!

Bates gives the animating nod—
Sudden they strike—unnumber'd strings

Vibrate to the best of kings—

Eunuchs, Stentors, double basses,

Lab'ring lungs, inflated faces,

Bellows working,

Elbows jerking,

Scraping, beating,

Roaring, sweating.

Through the old Gothic roofs be the chorus re-
bounded,

Till Echo is deafen'd, and thunder dumb-founded.

And now another pause—and now another nod,

All proclaim a present god.

Bishops and Lords of the Bedchamber.*

George, submissive Britain sways;

Heavy Hanover obeys,

* *Lords of the Bedchamber, &c.*] Candour obliges us to confess, that this designation of the performers, and in truth the following stanza, did not stand in the original copy,

Proud Ierne's volunteers,
 Abject Commons, prostrate Peers—

delivered into the Lord Chamberlain's office. Indeed, Signor Delpini had his doubts as to the legality of admitting it, notwithstanding Mr. Rose's testimony, that it was actually and *bona fide* composed with the rest of the Ode, and had only accidentally fallen into the same drawer of Mr. Pitt's bureau in which he had lately mislaid Mr. Gibbin's note. Mr. Banks's testimony was also solicited to the same effect; but he had left off vouching for the present session. Mr. Pepper Arden, indeed, with the most intrepid liberality, engaged to find authority for it in the statutes at large; on which Signor Delpini, with his usual terseness of repartee, instantly exclaimed, ha! ha! ha! However, the difficulty was at length obviated by an observation of the noble Lord who presided, that in the case of the King *versus* Atkinson, the House of Lords had established the right of judges to amend a record, as Mr. Quarme had informed his Lordship immediately after his having voted for that decision.

(*Here end Mr. Robinson's Notes.*)

“ *A present God,*
 “ *Heavy Hanover,*
 “ *Abject Commons, &c.*”]

The imitation will be obvious to the classical reader,

———— Præsens divus habebitur
 Augustus, *abjectis* Britannis
 Imperio, gravibusque Persis.

HOR.

All the editors of Horace have hitherto read *abjectis* Britannis. Our author, as sound a critic as a divine, *suo periculo*, makes the alteration of a single letter, and thereby gives a

All proclaim a present god—
(On the necks of all he trod)

A present god!

A present god!

Hallelujah!

new and peculiar force to the application of the passage.—
N. B. *Abject*, in the author's understanding of the word, means that precise degree of submission due from a free people to monarchy. It is further worthy remark, that Horace wrote the Ode alluded to, before Britain was subjected to absolute sway; and consequently the passage was meant as a prophetic compliment to Augustus. Those who do not think that Britain is yet sufficiently *abject*, will regard the imitation in the same light. We shall close this subject by observing, how much better Gravibus applies in the imitation, than in the original; and how well the untruth of Ierne's volunteers joining in the deification, exemplifies the dedicatory address of the lie sublime.

THE
WESTMINSTER GUIDE.

PART I.

ADDRESSED TO MR. ANSTY.

POST to town, my friend Ansty, or if you refuse
A visit in person, yet spare us your Muse:
Give her wing, ere too late for this city's election,
Where much waits her comment, and more her
correction.

What novels to laugh at! what follies to chide!
Oh! how we all long for a Westminster Guide!
First, in judgment decisive, as Ottoman califf,
Aloft on the hustings, behold the High Bailiff!
But we miss from the seat, where law rests on a
word,
The old symbols of justice—the scales and the
sword—

As a symbol too martial the sword he discards,
So 'tis lodged where it suits—in the hands of the
guards;

And doubting the poise of weak hands like his own,
He suspended the scales at the foot of the throne.

Turn next to the candidates—at such a crisis—
We've a right to observe on their virtues and vices.
Hood founds (and with justice to most apprehensions)

On years of fair services, manly pretensions;
But his party to change, and his friend to betray,
By some are held better pretensions in Wray.

For the third, if at court we his character scan,
A demon incarnate is poor Carlo Khan;
Catch his name when afloat on convivial bumpers,
Or sent up to the skies by processions of plumpers:
He is Freedom's defender, the champion of Right,
The Man of the people, the nation's delight.

To party or passion we scorn to appeal,
Nor want we the help of intemperate zeal;
Let Time from Detraction have rescued his cause,
And our verse shall but echo a nation's applause.

But, hark! proclamation and silence intreated;
The inspectors arrang'd—the polling clerks seated—
With bibles in hand, to purge willing and loth,
With the catholic test, and the bribery oath.
In clamour and tumult mobs thicken around,
And for one voice to vote there are ten to con-
found:

St. Giles's with Wapping unites garreteers,
Hood and Wray and Prerogative, Pitt and three
cheers!

'Tis the day for the court—the grand treasury push!
And the pack of that kennel well train'd to the
brush,

Dash noisy and fearless through thick and through
thin,

The huntsman unsecn, but his friends whippers-in.

Now follow fresh tribes, scarce a man worth a
louse,

Till put into plight at Northumberland House ;
Ten poll for one mansion, each proving he keeps it,
And one for each chimney—he'll prove that he
sweeps it—

With these mix the great, on rights equally fables,
Great peers from poor lodgings, great lawyers
from stables ;

Ev'n the soldier, whose household's a centinel box,
Claims a questionless franchise 'gainst Freedom and
Fox.

What troops too of females 'mongst Charles's
opposers!

Old tabbies and gossips, scolds, gigglers, and prozers !
And Lady Lackpension, and Dowager Thrifty,
And many a maiden the wrong side of fifty ;

And Fubzy, with flesh and with flabbiness laden,
 (And in all things indeed the reverse of a maiden)
 And hags after hags join the barbarous din,
 More hateful than serpents, more ugly than Sin.

Thus the bacchanal tribes* when they Orpheus
 assailed,
 Drowned his notes with their yells ere their ven-
 geance prevailed,
 Well knowing the sound of his voice, or his lyre
 Had charms to allay diabolical ire.
 Our bacchanals find a more difficult foe,
 For what strains can inchant, though from Orpheus
 they flow,
 Like the orator's spell o'er the patriot mind,
 When pleading to reason the cause of mankind?
 Now for councils more secret that govern the plan—
A califf is nothing without a divan.
 With invisible step let us steal on the quorum,
 Where Mainwaring sits in the chair of decorum,
 And Wilmot harangues to the brethren elect,
 On his master's commands †—"Carry law to effect."

* *Thus the bacchanal tribes, &c.*]

Cunctaque tela forent cantu mollita: sed ingens
 Clamor et inflata Berecynthia tibia cornu,
 Tympanaque, plaususque, et Bacchei ululates
 Obstrepere sono Cithæræ. Tum denique Saxa
 Non exauditi rubuerunt Sanguine Vatis.—OVID.

† See the letter of the Lord Lieutenant of M——x, May 8.

- “ The true reading, my friends, in the *jus bacculinum*,
 “ When the Foxites are drubbed, then imprison or
 “ fine ’em ;
 “ And let him who could construe th’ effective still
 “ further,
 “ Knock out a friend’s brains to accuse them of
 “ murder.
 “ I have ready some hundreds of resolute knaves,
 “ With bludgeons well-shaped into constables’
 “ staves,
 “ In Westminster strangers — true creatures of
 “ power,
 “ Like the lions ferociously nurs’d at the Tower*.
 “ Do we want more support?—Mark that band
 “ of red coats!
 “ Whose first service over, of giving their votes,
 “ Why not try for a second—the cutting of
 “ throats!
 “ From the Savoy they march—their mercy all
 “ lie at
 “ When the Bench gives the call, and St. J——s’s
 “ the *fiat*.”

Thus the law of effect the wise justice expounds,
 This is Wilmot’s abridgment compris’d in twelve
 rounds ;

* These strange constables were avowedly brought from
 the Tower Hamlets.

The new Middlesex code—which treats subjects
like partridge,

While the statutes at large are cut up into cartridge.

Enough of these horrors—a milder design,
Though not a more lawful one, Corbet, is thine!
The polling to close, but decision adjourn,
And in scrutiny endless to sink the return.
Thy employers who ranged on the Treasury bench,
For prerogative fight, or behind it intrench,
Shall boldly stand forth in support of the act,
Which they mean to restrain by law after the fact;
With quibble and puzzle that reason disgrace,
Or with impudent paradox put in its place,
They shall hold, *that an indigent party's defence,*
When at war with the Treasury, lies in expence;
** That the part of the vexed is to cherish vexation,*
And strain it through dripstones of procrastination—

These positions you'll say are indeed hypothetical—
At court they'll be gospel—the Muse is prophetic.

* See the speech of a young orator in a late debate.

PART II.

ADDRESSED TO MR. HAYLEY.

To thy candour now, Hayley, I offer the line,
Which after thy model I fain would refine.
Thy skill, in each trial of melody sweeter,
Can to elegant themes adapt frolicsome metre;
And at will, with a comic or tender control,
Now speak to the humour, and now to the soul.
We'll turn from the objects of satire and spleen,
That late, uncontrasted, disfigured the scene;
To Wray leave the rage the defeated attends,
And the conqueror hail in the arms of his friends;
Count with emulous zeal the selected and true,
Enroll in the list, and the triumph pursue.
These are friendships that bloomed in the morning
 of life,
Those were grafted on thorns midst political strife;
Alike they matured from the stem, or the flower,
Unblighted by interest, unshaken by power.
Bright band! to whose feelings, in constancy tried,
Disfavour is glory, oppression is pride;
Attached to his fortunes, and fond of his fame,
Vicissitudes pass but to shew you the same.

But whence this fidelity, new to the age?
Can parts, though sublime, such attachments en-
gage?

No: the dazzle of parts may the passions allure,
'Tis the heart of the friend makes affections endure.
The heart that, intent on all worth but its own,
Assists every talent, that arrogates none;
The feeble protects, as it honours the brave,
Expands to the just, and hates only the knave.

These are honours, my Fox, that are due to thy
deeds;

But, lo! yet a brighter alliance succeeds;
The alliance of beauty in lustre of youth,
That shines on thy cause with the radiance of truth.
The conviction they feel the fair zealots impart,
And the eloquent eye sends it home to the heart;
Each glance has the touch of Ithuriel's spear,
That no art can withstand, no delusion can bear,
And the effort of malice and lie of the day,
Detected and scorned, break like vapour away.

Avaunt, ye profane! the fair pageantry moves:
An entry of Venus, led on by the Loves!
Behold how the urchins round Devonshire press!
For order, submissive, her eyes they address:
She assumes her command with a diffident smile,
And leads, thus attended, the pride of the Isle.

Oh! now for the pencil of Guido! to trace,
 Of Keppel the features, of Waldegraves the grace;
 Of Fitzroy the bloom the May morning to vie,
 Of Sefton the air, of Duncannon the eye;
 Of Loftus the smiles (though with preference proud,
 She gives ten to her husband, for one to the crowd;)
 Of Portland the manner, that steals on the breast,
 But is too much her own to be caught or express'd;
 The charms that with sentiment Bouverie blends,
 The fairest of forms and the truest of friends;
 The look that in Warburton, humble and chaste,
 Speaks candour and truth, and discretion and taste;
 Or with equal expression in Horton combined,
 Vivacity's dimples with reason refined.

Reynolds, haste to my aid, for a figure divine,
 Where the pencil of Guido has yielded to thine;
 Bear witness the canvass where Sheridan *lives*,
 And with angels, the lovely competitor, strives—
 While Earth claims her beauty and Heaven her
 strain,

Be it mine to adore ev'ry link of the chain!

But new claimants appear ere the lyre is un-
 strung,

Can Payne be passed by? Shall not Milner be sung?
 See Delme and Howard, a favourite pair,
 For grace of both classes, the zealous and fair—

A verse for Morant, like her wit may it please,
Another for Braddyll of elegant ease,
For Bamfylde a simile worthy her fame—
Quick, quick—I have yet half a hundred to name—
Not Parnassus in concert could answer the call,
Nor multiplied Muses do justice to all.

Then follow the throng where with festal delight,
More pleasing than Hebe, Crewe opens the night.
Not the goblet nectareous of welcome and joy,
That Dido prepared for the hero of Troy;
Not Fiction, describing the banquets above,
Where goddesses mix at the table of Jove;
Could afford to the soul more ambrosial cheer
Than attends on the fairer associates here.
But Crewe, with a mortal's distinction content,
Bounds her claim to the rites of this happy event;
For the hero to twine civic garlands of fame,
With the laurel and rose interweaving his name,
And while Io Pæans his merits avow,
As the Queen of the feast, place the wreath on his
brow.

TO

MRS. ROBINSON.

LAURA, when from thy beauteous eyes
The tear of tender anguish flows,
Such magic in thy sorrow lies,
That every bosom shares thy woes.

When on thy lovely perfect face
The sportive dimpled smile we see,
With eager hope the cause we trace,
And wish to share each bliss with thee.

For in thy highly-polished mind
Superior charms so sweetly blend,
In each such gentle grace we find,
E'en Envy must thy worth commend.

For who can gaze upon thy lip,
That coral lip of brightest hue,
Nor wish its honied balm to sip,
More fresh, more sweet than morning dew?

But when the sweet poetic lays
Pierce to the heart's remotest cell,
We feel the conscious innate praise
Which feeble language fails to tell.

So melting is thy lute's soft tone,
Each breast unus'd to feel desire,
Confesses bliss before unknown,
And kindles at the sacred fire.

So pure, so eloquent thy song,
So true each lesson it conveys,
That e'en the SAGE shall teach the YOUNG
To take their lessons from thy lays.

And, when thy pen's delightful art
Paints with soft touch LOVE's tender flame,
Thy verse so melts and mends the heart,
That, taught by thee, we prize his name.

Oh! mistress of each yielding heart,
Accept the verse to genius due;
No flattery can that bard impart
Who dares address his vows to you.

Feb. 1, 1791.

PROLOGUE

TO

ZARA,

SPOKEN BY LORD RAWDON, AT BOSTON.

IN Britain once (it stains th' historic page)
Freedom was vital-struck by party rage :
Cromwell the fever watch'd, the knife supplied,
She madden'd, and by suicide she died.
Amidst the groans sunk every liberal art
That polish'd life, or humaniz'd the heart ;
Then fell the stage, quell'd by the bigots' roar,
Truth fell with sense, and Shakspeare charm'd no
more.

To sooth the times too much resembling those,
And lull the care-tir'd thought, this stage arose ;
Proud if you hear, rewarded if you're pleased,
We come to minister to minds diseased.
To you, who, guardians of a nation's cause,
Unsheath the sword to vindicate her laws,
The tragic scene holds glory up to view,
And bids heroic virtue live in you :

Unite the patriot's with the warrior's care,
And, while you burn to conquer, wish to spare.
The comic scene presides o'er social life,
And forms the husband, father, friend, and wife;
To paint from nature, and with colours nice
Shew us ourselves, and laugh us out of vice.
Now say, ye Boston prudes, (if prudes there are)
Is this a task unworthy of the fair?
Will fame, decorum, piety refuse
A call on beauty to conduct the Muse?
Perish the narrow thought, the sland'rous tongue!
When the heart's right, the action can't be wrong.
Behold the test, mark at the curtain's rise
How Malice shrinks abash'd at Zara's eyes.

EPILOGUE

TO THE

TEMPEST.

(*As altered for representation by J. P. Kemble, Esq.*)

SPOKEN BY MISS FARREN.

STAY!—let the magic scene remain awhile;
We have not done with the Enchanted Isle—
Enchantment rests on *your* benignant smile. }
Ladies, I come, by Prospero's command,
And vested with this fragment of his wand,
To help *your* searches for that two-legg'd creature,
Which late Miranda felt the *search* of nature.

With all her peeping *two* alone were found, }
And even those were on forbidden ground;
Here, where we range at large, do they abound? }

Arm'd with this pow'r we'll scrutinize the kind;
It is not form which makes the man, but mind.
Then even here perhaps the dearth prevails;—
We may lack men, though overrun with males.

First, for the middle class, where 'tis confest,
Of manly life we're apt to find the best.

Yet John sometimes his shape and sex degrades,
 And stoops to rob his sisters of their trades.
 Six feet in height, with sinews of an ox,
 Shoulders to carry coals, and fists to box,—
 Behold—O shame!—a thing of whip and hem—
 A *He-Miss Milliner*—“Your orders, Me'm?—
 “Rouge, lipsalve, chicken gloves, perfumery,
 “Hair cushions, gauzes, *bustles*?—He! he! he!”—

Turn we from him to breed of higher bearing,
 Still Falstaff's men, all radish and cheese-paring!—
 Oh! could he sketch some figures that one sees—
 Tied up with strings at shoes and strings at knees!—
 So thick the neck-cloth, and the neck so thin!
 He'd swear they bore a poultice for the chin:—
 And lest the cold the adjacent ears should harm,
 See half a foot of cape to keep 'em warm;
 While the stiff edge, for better purpose made,
 Rubs off the whiskers it was form'd to shade.
 With eyes of fire that vie with snuffs in sockets,
 And hands distress'd for want of waistcoat pockets:
 The crutch of levity directs their gait;
 And wanghee bends beneath their wangling weight.

But now to shift the scene from men bewitch'd
 To one with Britain's genuine sons enrich'd;
 In laws, in arms, their country's strength and pride,
 And chosen patterns for the world beside.

High o'er the crowd, inform'd with patriot fire,
Pure as the virtues that endear his sire!
See one who leads—as mutual trials prove—
A band of brothers to a people's love:
One, who on station scorns to found control,
But gains pre-eminence by worth of soul.
These are the honours that, on reason's plan,
Adorn the Prince, and vindicate the man.
While gayer passions, warm'd at nature's breast,
Play o'er his youth—the feathers of his crest.

EPILOGUE

TO

FALSE APPEARANCES.

SPOKEN BY MISS FARREN.

(A looking-glass hanging from her wrist.)

SOLDIERS turn'd Poets!—that's no mighty wonder;
But, 'stead of tragic battle, death, and thunder,
Our Bard takes *False Appearances* in hand,
A subject he could never understand.
Peace, then, to efforts in these scenes display'd,
I come to try the world in masquerade;
From every borrow'd dress to strip the mind,
And, 'midst distortions, Nature's image find.
This wondrous mirror—look at it with awe—
Is that which Addison in vision saw,
When, beaming o'er each sex in age and youth,
'The hand of Justice held the glass of Truth.
Where it has lain, none knows—by interest hid,
In cities dreaded, and in courts forbid;
But with this wreath of fadeless laurel round it,
Dropt in the Muse's walk, our poet found it.
Ye party tribes, blest with so many faces,
Ye know not which to choose in certain cases;

Or ye with *one*, one ever-pregnant smile,
 Proof to all changes of this changeful isle;
 Maids, wives, and widows, all are in my power,—
 This is no dreaming visionary hour;
 For by this light of conscious lamps I swear,
 This dear, sweet gift, shall shew me what you are.
 Hats off,—down fans,—no hoodwinks while you're
 try'd;

And, sir, you're head not quite so much aside.

[*Offering to lift up the glass.*

Come, don't be frighten'd, harshness I disclaim;
 Soft as the modified electric flame,
 This subtle influence, though 'twould pierce a rock,
 Shall play, not injure—I'll keep back the shock.
 Now for it. [*Waving the glass over all the house.*]

Culprits you are all detected!

[*A long pause.*

Upon my word, better than I expected!

Save one fond pair, caught in a tender oath,
 Sigh'd, look'd, return'd, and felt—a fib in both.
 Save wedded sweetlings, mutually sincere,
 Who mean, “My devil!” when they lisp, “My
 “dear!”

Save certain smirks to cover peccadillos,
 And keep all quiet on domestic pillows,
 From high to low, from periwig to feather,
 More honest folks were never met together.

Yet, hold—methought I saw—I vow I've got 'em—
 O Lord! how near my eye the glass has brought 'em;
 Two critics, with whole pocket-books of hints
 For *False Appearance* in to-morrow's prints;
 For bard, and actors, comments false and true,
 To mix with ministers, and buff and blue.
 Well, for the stage there's candour, though there's
 jest;

But will your private satire stand the test?
 Look to *that* hint, ere with concentrated rays
 This burning glass sets columns in a blaze.
 Wit, whose clear essence never stains the paper,
 Shall separate and mount in pleasing vapour:
 But the black line drawn against real merit,
 The coarse thick virulence of party spirit;
 The pen envenom'd, and the hand unknown:
 Oh, what a smoke from sulphur, all their own!
 This touches few; the general point I yield;
 For False Appearance Britain is no field:
 Witness this audience, so well off to-night;
 Witness new audiences whom I invite.
 Come for the proof of being what we seem,
 And take my *fiat* for the world's esteem.
 Come crowds, and after-crowds, nor dare denial,
 On pain of being deem'd afraid of trial:
 Come with true pride, with open boldness come,
 You'll find me almost every night at home.

EPILOGUE

TO THE

WAY TO KEEP HIM.

SPOKEN AT RICHMOND HOUSE,

BY THE HON. MRS. DAMER.

“THE Way to Keep Him!”—is the task so hard,
When life’s best lot is the assured reward?
Does man, unthinking man, his share despise?
Or does weak woman throw away the prize?
’Tis in ourselves our empire to maintain: }
I’ve traced the happy image in my brain; }
Smiling she sits, and weaves a rosy chain. }
Oh! could my humble skill, which often strove
In mimic stone to copy forms I love,
By soft gradation reach a higher art,
And bring to view a sculpture of the heart!—
I’ll try; and cull materials as they’re scatter’d—
Not from one object, lest ’twere said I flatter’d;
First temper—gentle, uniform, obedient—
Yes, mighty sirs—we know your grand ingredient:
I have it in that face—(*writes*) th’ examples down—
That seldom wears, and never meets a frown.

Vivacity and wit (*looks round*) I'll take from you—
 And sentiment from Lady, I know who.
 Truth and discretion—there—how they adorn her,
 And delicacy peeping from that corner.
 For sensibility, where smiles and sighs
 In pain or joy with blended softness rise,
 I see it breaking through yon lovely bloom—
 For a desire to please—I'll look at home.
 Hypocrisy—don't start—she wants one grain,
 One little atom, just to cover pain,
 When not content with blessings in her power,
 Her truant robs her av'rice of an hour.
 My compound's right, ere next we meet, I'll
 mould it;
 And find among you a fit case to hold it.
 Ye sons of taste, who would such charms obey, }
 Could ye but find them wrapt in mortal clay, }
 Complete Pygmalion's part—adore and pray!
 For the most worthy Venus shall decide,
 Awake the statue, and present the bride.

*On the night of performance before the King and
 Queen, the seven last lines of the above were
 omitted, in order to introduce the following :*

Such are the gifts th' attentive loves should bring,
 A hoop of gems to guard the bridal ring.

Need I, *here*, point to virtues more sublime!
Unchanged by fashion, unimpaired by time,
To higher duties of connubial ties!
The mutual blessings that from duties rise!
Your looks—your hearts—the bright assemblage
 OWN
Which Heaven to emulative life has shown,
And placed in double lustre on a throne.

FINIS.





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