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PLAYS

BY

ANNA CORA MOWATT,

AUTHOR OF "AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF AN ACTRESS,"

&C., &C.

NEW AND REVISED EDITION.

BOSTON:
TICKNOR AND FIELDS.

M DCCC LV.

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ARMAND;

OR,

THE PEER AND THE PEASANT.

A Play,

IN FIVE ACTS.

“ Ancient Heaven
Extends its arch o'er all, and mocks the span
Of palaces and dungeons ; where the heart,
In its free beatings 'neath the coarsest vest,
Claims kindred with diviner things than power
Of kings can raise or stifle.”

TALFOURD.

TO
MRS. JOHN H. WILKINS,
BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS.

MY DEAR MRS. WILKINS,

Allow me to dedicate "*Armand*" to you—one of the first and dearest amongst those absent friends, of whose love I have had such abundant proofs. I would say to you, as to them, that, highly as I prize the success with which "*Armand*" has been favored before a British public—that success can never diminish the value of the enthusiastic greeting the Play received in my own beloved land. And I beg my countrymen to believe that the ample record of home-kindnesses dwells ever freshly in my memory.

I am,

My dear Madam,

Respectfully and most affectionately

Yours,

ANNA CORA MOWATT.

London, Feb. 22nd, 1849.

PREFACE TO THE LONDON EDITION.

THE play of *Armand; or, the Peer and the Peasant*, was produced at the Park Theatre, New York, September 27th, 1847, and subsequently in Boston, Massachusetts. It was represented before a London audience, at the Theatre Royal, Marylebone, January 18th, 1849, and was acted twenty-one successive nights.

In England, as in America, the indulgence of the audience towards the production of a woman, and the exertions of the actors, rendered its success unequivocal and even brilliant.

Some slight liberty has been taken in portraying the character of Louis XV., who is not rendered so totally and revoltingly destitute of virtues as he is described by historians; but I trust the license is a pardonable one.

That Richelieu had a daughter, by a secret marriage, who was brought up in privacy, there is some little authority for believing, and the fact (if it be one) has already been made the subject of novels, &c.

The character of Armand has been objected to, as not

belonging to the reign of Louis XV., but I think historical records will bear me out in the conclusion, that it was during his reign that the seeds of the revolution were sown, and already began to shoot forth in the breasts of the lower orders. Armand's sentiments are but the foreshadowing of that revolution.

My acknowledgments are due and cheerfully paid to the Manager of the Marylebone Theatre, for the liberality evinced in putting the play upon the stage, and in all his other arrangements—to Mr. DAVENPORT, for his impressive and spirited impersonation of the character of Armand—to the Ladies and Gentlemen of the company, for the heartiness with which they, one and all, contributed their exertions, and to the scenic Artist, for the admirable manner in which his labours were executed. I acknowledge with pleasure that to the united efforts of these parties the play was largely indebted for its success.

A. C. M.

London, February 22nd, 1849.

PERSONS OF THE DRAMA.

LOUIS THE FIFTEENTH, *King of France.*
 DUKE DE RICHELIEU.
 DUKE D'ANTIN, *an old Noble.*
 ARMAND, *an Artizan.*
 LE SAGE, *Attendant of the Duke D'Antin.*
 VICTOR, *the King's favorite Page.*
 JACOT, }
 ETIENNE, } *Peasants.*

Male and Female Peasants.

BLANCHE.
 DAME BABETTE.
 JAQUELINE, *daughter of Dame Babette.*

CAST OF CHARACTERS.

	NEW YORK. <i>Park, 1847.</i>	LONDON. <i>Marylebone, 1849.</i>
LOUIS THE FIFTEENTH	Mr. Hield.	Mr. H. T. Craven.
DUKE DE RICHELIEU	— Barry.	— James Johnstone.
DUKE D'ANTIN	— Dougherty.	— J. W. Ray.
ARMAND	— Davenport.	— Davenport.
LE SAGE.	— McDougal.	— G. Cooke.
VICTOR	Miss Denin.	Miss S. Villars.
JACOT	Mr. Rae.	Mr. Green.
ETIENNE	— Gallot.	— Bowen.
BLANCHE	Mrs. Mowatt.	Mrs. Mowatt.
BABETTE	— Vernon.	— Johnstone.
JAQUELINE	Miss Kate Horn.	Miss M. Oliver.

NOTE.

Passages marked with inverted commas are omitted in representation.

EXITS AND ENTRANCES.

R. means *Right*; L., *Left*; R. 1 E., *Right First Entrance*; 2 E., *Second Entrance*; D. F., *Door in the Flat.*

RELATIVE POSITIONS.

R. means *Right*; L., *Left*; C., *Centre*; R. C., *Right of Centre*; L. C., *Left of Centre.*

* * * The reader is supposed to be on the Stage facing the Audience.

COSTUMES.

KING LOUIS.—First dress: Light blue velvet coat, and white satin long vest richly trimmed with silver, large cuffs, full shirt sleeves and frills, white satin breeches, long stockings, gartered below the knee, three-cornered hat, trimmed with lace and white feathers, white neckcloth and frills, crimson bow and diamond brooch, steel-hilted sword, broad white ribbon, with star over right shoulder, star on left breast, cane with rich tassels and cord, black shoes and buckles, on crimson ribbon, red heels, full powdered ringlet wig.—Second dress: Rich disguise, cloak and hat.—Third dress: Crimson velvet coat, trimmed with gold, blue ribbon over right shoulder, rest as before.

RICHELIEU.—First dress: Dark blue velvet coat and silver, white breeches and frills, sleeves, shoes, hat, sword, wig, &c., all of same style as King's; white broad ribbon over right shoulder, blue ribbon and diamond pin.—Second dress: Darker velvet, and gold, rest as before.

D'ANTIN.—First dress: Moroon velvet and silver, black satin breeches, white stockings, frills, sleeves, shoes, hat trimmed with black feather, mourning sword, &c., all same style as King's; purple ribbon over right shoulder, full powdered ringlet wig, bald front, black ribbon and pin.—Second dress: Black and gold, same style, rest as before.

ARMAND.—First dress: Salmon and blue short coat and full breeches, large cuffs, full shirt and sleeves, collar turned over, black ribbon, blue and white striped stockings, black shoes and buckles, white hat, trimmed with blue, and pink wreath, nosegay, in left button hole, ringlet wig.—Second dress: Blue military coat, trimmed with gold, high military boots and spurs, broad sword, shoulder belt, sword to break, white neckcloth and frills, red bow and brooch, powdered wig and ribbon.

VICTOR.—First dress: Salmon and silver, vest, breeches, stockings, garters, hat, shoes, sword, &c., &c., all same style as King's, powdered wig.—Second dress: Garnet velvet and gold, rest as before.

LE SAGE.—First dress: Brown coat, plain breeches, stockings over knee, shoes and buckles, long salmon vest, same style as the rest, hat without trimming, powdered wig and bag.—Second dress: Black velvet, trimmed with dark blue ribbon, rest as before.

MALE PEASANTS.—Various colors, same style as Armand.

OFFICER AND GUARDS.—White military coats, three-cornered hats, powder, white cravats, &c.

PAGES.—Court dresses, same style as King's, powder, &c.

BLANCHE.—First dress: White muslin cottage dress, with rows of white satin ribbon around the skirt, on the head a wreath of white may-flowers, shaped like coronet, a garland of white flowers, hung from the left shoulder.—Second dress: Plain white muslin slip, same wreath.—Third dress: A sober colored merino, made in the style of Louis XV., the boddice, trimmed with a ruche of pink silk and pempadour rosettes down the front, open skirt looped all around with same rosettes, under skirt of embroidered muslin, a band of pearls on the head.—Fourth dress: Silver brocade, embroidered in blue, closed in front, and looped all around with bunches of blue and silver leaves, the boddice, trimmed with ruches of white tulle and blue ribbon, under skirt of salmon colored satin, linings of brocade the same, powdered hair, with a small wreath of blue and silver leaves on one side, diamond ornaments.

BABETTE.—First dress: Orange colored skirt, blue merino boddice, black velvet jacket, white apron, high peasant cap, high-heeled shoes, colored stockings.—Second dress: Red petticoat, black jacket, cap, &c., as before.

JAQUELINE.—First dress: Striped under skirt, over dress of gay colored chintz, tucked up, laced boddice, cottage cap, small white apron, striped stockings. Second dress: Indian silk dress, made in same style as the first.

Peasant dresses, in same style as Jaqueline, but none in white.

A R M A N D.

ACT I.

SCENE I.

A beautiful part of the Garden of Versailles. Fountain of Neptune with statues. LE SAGE walking about as though musing.

Le Sage. Solve me this problem, Le Sage, if thou canst. Why should the Duke d'Antin occupy his thoughts with a young peasant? Why so earnestly desire that his majesty should behold her? *Unquestionably* there is a mystery; *indubitably* a mystery! But thou shalt solve it, Le Sage! Thou hast a head,—*incontestibly* a head,—*unqualifiedly* a wise head,—

[*Enter DUKE D'ANTIN, L. I E.*

Undoubtedly a head that sees—

D'Ant. Better than your eyes, I trust, Le Sage.

Le Sage. Pardon, your Grace. *Indisputably* I did not observe you.

D'Ant. I am all impatience to learn what took place last evening.

Le Sage. Your Grace shall hear. *Preparatively* I need not inform your Grace that, obeying your orders, I made myself acquainted with Dame Babette, down at the village, St. Denis, yonder. *Instantaneously* I discovered that your Grace had been rightly informed, and that the Duke de Richelieu frequently visits the dame's cottage in the garb of a citizen. *Unsuspectingly* the dame calls him Monsieur Antoine.

D'Ant. All this I know; proceed.

Le Sage. *Voluntarily!*

D'Ant. You talked to the dame and her young charge of these charming gardens, as I ordered?

Le Sage. I painted the beauties of Versailles with the hand of an artist and the tongue of a poet! Mam'selle Blanche was enchanted. *Courteously* I promised to obtain her and the dame an admission; *accordingly*, yesterday evening at dusk, when the garden was wholly deserted, I conducted them to this very spot. *Secretly* I then dispatched Victor to the King. *Insinuatingly* he suggested to his Majesty, that a *miraculously* lovely young peasant girl had, with a very talkative old woman, *inexplicably* obtained admission to his private gardens, and was wandering about in *ecstatically* rustic delight.

D'Ant. Go on, go on.

Le Sage. *Immediately!*

D'Ant. Did he come? Did he see her?

Le Sage. *Certainly.* His Majesty was *unsuspectedly* dying of ennui. *Involuntarily* he revived at the thought of an adventure, *prudentially* wrapped himself in a cloak, and *unreflectingly* hastened to the garden.

D'Ant. And then,—then he joined the peasants?

Le Sage. *Indubitably.*

D'Ant. They did not suspect that he was the king?

Le Sage. *Incontestibly* not.

D'Ant. He was fascinated with Blanche?

Le Sage. *Indescribably!*

D'Ant. He became joyous—elated—excited?

Le Sage. *Extraordinarily!*

D'Ant. Blanche was gay—artless—piquante?

Le Sage. *Superlatively!*

D'Ant. Hush! Victor comes this way. (*crossing R.*) Question him closely. This evening you shall have further directions. Be cautious. [*Exit R. 1 E.*]

Le Sage. *Invariably!*

Enter VICTOR, L. 1 E.

Victor. Ah! Monsieur Le Sage, we are charmed to encounter you.

Le Sage. *Delightedly* I salute his Majesty in miniature.

Victor. If you reflect on *our* size, Monsieur Le Sage, we would inform you—

Le Sage. That it is *immeasurably* beneath my notice.—A *particularly* correct and *pungently* philosophical conclusion. But, Monsieur Victor, a word concerning the young peasant, who yesterevening,—

Victor. Ah! you touch *us* nearly when you talk of her! Our love for the "illusive sex"—for such we deem them—is *our* Achilles' heel—*our* vulnerable point! His Majesty, like *ourselves*, has been cold for a season; but once more the intoxicating effect of the tender passion has overpowered *us*.

Enter KING and RICHELIEU, L. 3 E.

In a word, his Majesty is pleased with this young piece of incarnate loveliness,—we may say charmed.

King. Boy, thou art overbold to speak of this To other than ourselves. Away, and be The answer to our wish when next you seek Our presence. Go! You comprehend us, sir?

[VICTOR and LE SAGE make a low obeisance.

[*Exeunt* VICTOR and LE SAGE, I. U. E.

Here, Richelieu, is the consecrated spot
Where I beheld her first. Here would I raise
An altar, sacred,—not to love, (no rood
Within our kingdom but were meet for that.)
Be this to first impressions dedicated!

Rich. My liege! I'm all impatience to behold
The wondrous beauty—

King. The wondrous beauty—nay!

I said not beauty—it was not what men
Call beauty, that has thus enthralled my soul;
It was the spirit's loftier loveliness,
Unseen,—ethereal, and ineffable!
Which breathed from her pure lips—gave to her step
Its springing bound—her every movement lent
Its airy grace—pervaded her whole being—
Impregnated the air that kissed her robe,
And with an atmosphere of purity
Encircled her!

It was her voice whose music
No sorrow yet had touched—her childlike prattle,
By very artlessness made arch—her form,
Untortured to its light fragility
By court accessories of beauty's toilet—
Her affluent tresses, flowing unprofaned
By touch of mocking powder, which had lain
Upon their golden light, like fleecy clouds
Upon the sun!

Rich. Now, heaven be thanked, my liege!

No rhapsody so warm hath passed your lips
 A twelvemonth! Dulness ends her weary reign.
 'Tis plain this young enchantress will dethrone her.

King. In sooth, she shall! Richelieu, my friend, be prompt!

With speed let this new constellation shine
 Upon our court.—Some noble dame select,
 Beneath her high protection place this maid.
 Nor rank, nor title shall she lack, to gild
 Her lowly origin—

Enter VICTOR, L. U. E.
 and for the rest—

Vic. Your pardon, sire; the old woman—

King. What! is she come? Conduct her hither.

[*Exit* VICTOR, L. U. E.]

Now, Richelieu, use but your wonted skill, and we are once more your debtor.

Rich. Sire, you have but to speak—to wish, and though she were some chaste inhabitant of the moon,

Enter VICTOR, ushering DAME BABETTE, L. U. E.

[*Exit* VICTOR, L. U. E.]

the vestal dweller of some star, she should exchange its light for— (*Sees the Dame and starts back greatly moved.*)
 Heavens! Babette!

King. Why do you stare so? You don't mistake this curious relic of antiquity for the fair one who holds me in thralldom?

Rich. Not exactly—that is, precisely—I thought so!—that is, I never thought so. If it were but my own fancy that had conjured up this spectre! [*half aside.*]

King. Spectre? You are dreaming. The old lady appears to us in a remarkably substantial condition.

Bab. (*glancing nervously at the King and away again while she talks*) I'm all over in a flutter. I suppose it's my place to speak first, though I never talk. I see they feel just as frightened as I do. Dear me! how they stare, to be sure. If Blanche was only here, she'd wonder at the observation that some people sometimes attract. (*After an effort*), Gentlemen, I hope I do not confuse you. I'm really quite alarmed myself, before such well-dressed cavaliers. I was sent for here, but I say nothing, I never talk, as everybody knows. I was sent for, that's all—I

do't know why, so shall not say. (*King retires up, she crosses to Richelieu.*) If you could inform me, Sir, for I'm but a poor woman—I live down at the vil-lage yon--der—
[as she is speaking the last words she looks very intently at Richelieu and gradually recognizes him.]

Blessed Mother! it is Monsieur Antoine!

Rich. (*aside to her*) Silence, fool!

Bab. Silence, forsooth! as if I ever talk! Ah, Monsieur Antoine, to think of finding you here and dressed so grand.

Rich. Hush!

King. (*who has come forward attracted by Babette's exclamation*) Why, Richelieu, the old dragon seems to have recognized a friend!

Bab. Richelieu? Hey, what? Richelieu! (*Richelieu silences her by an action.*) Oh! I say nothing!

Rich. (*crosses c.*) Quite a ridiculous affair—ha, ha! (*trying to laugh.*) The old gentlewoman—ha, ha!—she actually fancies she has traced a likeness between me, and some relation who died in the last century, sire!

Bab. Sire! sire? His Majesty? Oh blessed Mary? Holy St. Dennis! And last night I talked in such a way—that is, I said nothing—I never talk—what will become of me? (*falling on her knees.*) Pardon—your Majesty—pardon! I did not know you—I never suspected you! And was it you last evening that—Oh, pardon! pardon!

King. Nonsense, my good woman; your breach of decorum will not put your head in jeopardy.

Bab. Oh! I hope not, your Majesty. (*rising*). Holy St. Anthony! My neck has grown quite stiff at the thought!

King. We leave you with the duke who will communicate our commands. [*Exit. R. 2 E.*]

Bab. Duke? Oh! Monsieur Antoine, are you a duke! and such a familiar way as I've treated you this many a year. If you will only condescend to pardon me! (*falling upon her knees again.*)

Rich. A truce to this folly. Rise and listen to me, Dame, for on your implicit obedience hangs your future welfare—perhaps your life.

Bab. Life! life! Oh! Surely you won't kill me? Monsieur Antoine—I mean your Grace, consider my years

—Mercy! mercy! Oh! my poor neck will be stiff for a year.

Rich. Be silent, and listen. You were walking last evening in these gardens with Blanche,—by what unlucky chance you came here—by what strange means obtained admission, I have not time to learn. The King saw Blanche—is enamoured of her—desires that she shall be presented at court.

Bab. Blessed Mary! what an honor! and I—his Majesty saw me too—of course his most gracious Majesty expects me to be presented also? Oh! I'm in such a flutter—how shall I live through it?

Rich. Are you determined to distract me? Blanche—

Bab. I understand—I understand—she is to be presented at court.

Rich. She shall die first?

Bab. Hey? what? die!

Rich. Yes, die!

Bab. Well, your Highness, I say nothing.—But little Blanche! To see her in her grave! And after all the fine learning you have given her! And to have her miss being presented at court too!—Why she always walked and talked—yes, when she was but two years old she walked like a queen—and since the King, his gracious Majesty, has so graciously looked upon her—

Rich. Ay!—he has looked on her! And that one look has like a flash of scathing lightning blasted her whole existence! (*crosses to R. H.*)

Bab. Well now I can't understand where's the harm.

Rich. Listen, Babette. The King has commissioned me to conduct Blanche to the palace—to-morrow evening is the latest moment to which I can postpone his orders—she must be saved from the profanation even of his suit, and the energy of my will alone can save her. You, and you only, can aid me—you *must*, you *shall* aid me! To-morrow morning at your cottage I will communicate my project, and I warn you that I shall exact the most implicit obedience.

Bab. And Blanche won't be presented at court? Nor I neither? My lord Duke, I to refuse such an honor! An honor that would make half the village die, with envy!

Enter R. 2 E. KING and DUKE D'ANTIN.

Rich. (seizing her by the arm) Fool!

I tell you that Blanche never—never—(sees the KING—suddenly releases Babette, and changes his tone and manner) never should refuse such a—such a distinguishing mark of his Majesty's favor.

Bab. There now, that's just what I said, your highness, and you would not listen to me. Just what I was telling him, your Majesty! Such an honor for us both.—I am ready to expire at the very thought! When Dame Barbara knows it—but I say nothing—nobody shall hear it from me.

King. Why, Duke, this is a novel mode of proceeding. It seems you were executing our orders by *force of arms!*

Rich. Your Majesty is facetious. This droll old woman—ha, ha, ha! I can't help laughing at her tenacity—having conscientious scruples, she refused—

Bab. I? I refused? Refuse such an honor? Oh! your Majesty—

Rich. (aside to her) Another word and it shall cost you dear!

Bab. Oh! dear! how fierce Monsieur Antoine has grown since he became a Duke!

King. There is some enigma here!

D'Antin. Which your Majesty may find diversion in solving. (aside to him.)

Rich. Dame Babette, you will remember the directions you have received, and to-morrow—

Bab. Then your mind is changed?—you consent?—and to-morrow we shall have the honor—such an honor—Oh! your Grace, when you forbade me just now, I felt—

King. Forbade you? Why, Richelieu, is the old woman mad?

Rich. I believe so, sire.—I really believe so!—There, you are at liberty to go. That way—that way. [*trying to lead her towards the entrance, she takes a step or two and persists in turning back.*]

Bab. Oh! I have not saluted his gracious Majesty!

[*breaks away from Richelieu, and curtsies low to the King.*]

I wouldn't have your Majesty think me wanting in manners—when I am to be presented at court too. Such an honor! You see, Monsieur Antoine—that is, his highness—I can't help calling him Monsieur Antoine, on account—

Rich. On account of the likeness. His Majesty knows—you tire his Majesty. Go! go! [*trying to force her away.*]

Bab. The likeness? What likeness? I beg pardon for fatiguing your Majesty. I was only going to say—

Rich. (*still forcing her*) His Majesty does not desire to hear. Go, go.

Bab. I am gone, soon as I have made my salute.

[*breaking from him, she curtsies again to the King, crosses, and going, returns.*]

The other grand-looking old gentleman—I have not made my reverence to him yet. Oh! I'll shew them breeding now that I am to be presented at court! [*approaches Duk d'Antin and curtsies low.*]

Rich. Dame—

King. Nay, Richelieu, we are amused at her vagaries.

Rich. Oh, Sire! I see you are much annoyed.

Are you coming?

[*to Babette.*]

Bab. But his Majesty says he is amused, and—

Rich. Come, come I say!

[*Forcing her.*]

D'Ant. } But Richelieu—

King. }

Bab. His Majesty says he is amused!

Rich. Come! come!

[*KING and D'ANTIN, R. RICHELIEU forcing out BABETTE, L. who endeavours to return.*]

All spoken together.

ACT II.

SCENE I.

Room in the Cottage of DAME BABETTE, R. H. F. open door, L. H. F. large open window, shewing a country scene. Chamber door right and left. DAME BABETTE with a letter in her hand. JAQUELINE, seated on a low stool at window, making garlands of small green branches. Chair and table, jug and tin cup on table.

Bab. Well, well, the Duke must be obeyed—and I must say nothing of his being a Duke;—but no fear of that—I never talk. He will be here presently, and I must send for Blanche. Poor little Blanche, she will lose her May-day sport; but then the honor of receiving a Duke! Here, Jaqueline, child, throw down those garlands, run to the green, and tell Blanche she must hasten home directly.

Jaq. Not I, indeed, mother! Bid Blanche hasten home on May-day? I shan't think of such a thing. Besides, Blanche begged me to weave more garlands for the may-pole.

Bab. Never mind the garlands, chatterbox; go and tell Blanche she cannot dance upon the green to-day. I need her home.

Jaq. (still working at the garland) Just as if the villagers would let her go, mother! They can do nothing without Blanche! They would come and carry her away by force.

Bab. Stop talking, nimble-tongue! What a fondness these young ones have for chattering. Ah! they'll be as silent as I am when they grow old! There! *(snatching away the garland,)* leave the green things and go!

Jaq. Blanche won't come—I would'nt if I were she. Oh! I'll go; but Blanche shall have her garlands, if I make them on the road. *(gathers up the garlands.)* Who do you suppose would disappoint our Blanche? *[runs out door, off L.*

Bab. How fast the child talks! Where she got her fondness for chattering, I can't tell; her poor father was as silent as a post, and I'm sure its not from me.

Enter JAQUELINE, running, R. D. F.

Jaq. Didn't I tell you, mother, they would never let

Blanche come? She insisted, and the villagers insisted on coming along with her, and they intend to carry her away again. (*rustic music without.*) Hark! there is the music, they will be here in a moment.

Bab. The villagers coming here! Oh dear, Oh dear, I shall be ruined if the Duke finds them. Run, tell Blanche that I want her alone, and they must not enter. Tell her my poor neck—no, no,—tell her they must not come in.

Jaq. I'll tell her, but she wont mind; I would'nt if I were she. [*Exit. C. off L. R. D. F.*]

Bab. (*music*) There they come sure enough! Oh, dear, what shall I do to get rid of them! If the Duke finds them and gets angry, I shall die of fright! Oh! my poor neck—I shall never again be sure that I have it on my shoulders. Blanche! Blanche! Is Blanche coming?

[*Music, piano, through speech—stop at end of it.*]

Enter BLANCHE, R. D. F.

Blan. Yes, Dame, here is Blanche.

Bab. Good child! good child!

Blan. Nay, Dame, pay homage to our Majesty! I'm chosen Queen, dear Dame, the Queen of May! You do not smile—prithce, what serious thought Has cast its grave reflection on thy face?

Bab. I was thinking how beautiful a crown—a real crown—a crown of gold and jewels—would look upon your head.

Blan. A crown? Why you are dreaming, Dame, at mid-day!

Bab. And if I am, there's *something, sometimes*, in *some* dreams—but I say nothing—only wouldn't you like to dream of wearing such a crown.

Blan. No, in good sooth, not I! This woven band Of dewy wild flowers lightlier girds my head, And circles in its ring but happy thoughts! Then for my King—whom think you I have chosen!

Bab. Wait 'till you see the King himself.

Blan. Has he a nobler mien—a loftier look— A braver, truer, purer heart than Armand?

Bab. Have you forgotten the cavalier who walked with us in the Gardens of Versailles?

Blan. No, I remember him,—'twas but last night.

Bab. Then listen, what would you say if he were the

King! the true King! Louis XV., the King of France!
Oh dear! what would you say to that?

- *Blan.* Why if he were the King—in truth the King—
I could but say that wayward nature played
On fortune's favorite a most idle trick!
While to the humble artizan she gave
The aspect, soul, and bearing of a king!

Bab. Oh dear, Oh dear! what a young traitor! Its
very fine talk—yet for all that there's a great difference
between your Armand and the King—I mean the cavalier.

Blan. I grant you that, dear Dame, difference indeed!
How different seemed in each like attributes;
The lightness of the cavalier to me
Seemed senseless levity, while Armand's mirth
Is the o'erflowing gladness of a heart
At ease. Each had his separate pride—one pride,
The scorn that narrow minds from narrower minds
Inherit. But our Armand's pride looks down
In scorn upon mean acts alone—disdains
But falsehood—spurns but vice—rebels against
Injustice only—while he arrogates
No merit to his virtues! Men may bow
The knee to royalty, but there's a more
Enduring, and more sacred homage all
Must feel for what is *better than themselves!*

Bab. How these young ones talk to be sure! You'll
sing a new burden to your song before long. You must
think no more of Armand.

Blan. What—think no more of Armand? is he not
The very centre of my thoughts, round which
All feelings and all hopes alike revolve,
As planets circle round their sun? But, Dame,
Thou dear, mysterious and oracular Dame—
What boding dreams have mocked you through the night?
Or what portentous omens have you seen?
Nay, speak; prithee, what has befallen thee?

Bab. Oh, don't ask me.—I say nothing.—You know
I never talk.

(*Villagers without*) Where is our Queen? our Queen!
Bring us our Queen! [ARMAND and Villagers appear
at window.

Arm. (without) Patience, my friends, your patience while I seek her,
And for an instant tarry where you are!

Enter ARMAND lightly and quickly, R. D. F.

Arm. Blanche! Blanche! Queen Blanche! where are you dallying?

Your subjects grow rebellious to behold you!
Ah! who can wonder that they cannot live
From thy sweet sight! And I, the least of all.
Good-morrow Dame, they've sent me here to claim
Our faithless sovereign. Come, thou truant queen.

Bab. No such thing, *Monsieur Armand*; *Mam'selle* Blanche remains where she is.

Arm. Hey day! what next? *Monsieur Armand*, forsooth,
And *Mam'selle* Blanche! how courteous we have grown!
You're almost *too* polite *Madame* Babette!

Bab. *Mam'selle* Blanche cannot dance upon the green to-day.

Blan. Not dance, dear Dame, when I am chosen queen?
And I, in turn, have chosen Armand king!
Good Dame! dear Dame! indeed, but I must dance!

Arm. Are you possessed, my good *Madame* Babette?
The villagers would tear your cottage down.
Nonsense! Come, little queen, they wait for us.
The Dame is but our subject after all!
Obedience is her duty, and not curs.

Good-day, good Dame—good-day, *Madame* Babette!

[*Puts his arm around the waist of Blanche and is running with her to the door. Babette intercepts them, and leads Blanche away.*

Bab. (with great dignity) Stay where you are, Blanche, I order you! You are to receive a visitor. The Duke will be here presently.

Arm. }
Blan. } The Duke!

Bab. Who said anything about a Duke? I'm sure I did'nt! My foolish tongue. But it's just like me—that is, it's not at all like me—I never talk. I mean *Monsieur Antoine* will be here, and desires to see Blanche upon particular business. *Monsieur Armand*, I must request you to retire.

Arm. No; I remain to bid Monsieur Antoine
Make haste, and tell him we await our queen.

- *Bab.* (*angrily*) Monsieur Armand, I tell you—

Blan. (*crosses c.*) Go, dear Armand, the Dame desire
it—go!

Come for me in an hour. May he, good Dame?
Say yes—now *do* say yes—you smile the *yes*—
You will not speak—and a consent is twice
Consent that with a smile is given. And now
Armand, for one short hour, we say farewell.

Arm. Sweet sovereign, I can scarcely disregard
Your first command, although this banishment
Is tyranny. “Farewell, I shall return
“Before our garlands wither, though to me
“Their freshness and their beauty vanish with
“The hands that wove them”—fare thee well, my Blanche!
Madame *Babette* and dignity, good day! [*Exit. R. D. F.*]

Bab. Such wonders as I have to tell you!—such won-
ders!—but I shan’t say anything about it. Only suppose
it was the King we saw at Versailles! I say suppose—and
suppose that Monsieur Antoine was a great Lord! Only
suppose—for I say nothing—I know how to hold my peace.
Hark! I hear the wheels of a carriage. Go to your room,
child, for I must speak with him alone. Go! Go!—

Blan. But, Dame, I’m only queen for one short day,
My crown may fade, my sceptre wither up
Before I use them—so I pray thee haste
To free me. You’ll remember? will you, Dame?

[*Exit into chamber, R. 2 E.*]

Enter DUKE DE RICHELIEU, R. D. F.—comes down L. H.

Bab. Oh! dear, if she only knew that the King him-
self—a real King—Oh! your Highness, (*brings chair down*
c.) the walls of my poor habitation are so honored by your
presence that they—

Rich. Where is Blanche?

Bab. In her chamber, your Highness, waiting your
gracious pleasure. They were just going to dance upon
the green when I sent for her. Shall I summon her?

Rich. I first must speak to you—mark well my words!
Blanche must be saved—the King must never more
Behold her—to remove her secretly,
Would be impossible—yet at the risk

Of life, be it her's or mine—or both—she shall
Not breathe the court's contaminating air.

Bab. But the honor, your Grace, the honor!

Rich. Be silent, woman! at your peril make
Ready to do my bidding.

Bab. Oh! How terrible these grand people are! Mon-
sieur—I mean, my Lord, on my knees I swear to obey you!

Rich. That's well—since flight then is impossible,
Death only can protect her from the King—

Bab. Death! commit murder! Monsieur Antoine,
murder poor little Blanche? Oh! how terrible! But I
say nothing—what a Duke commands of course is right—
but death—Oh! my poor Blanche!

Rich. A seeming death may serve—so that the King
Shall think it real. There are drugs which produce
A sleep that seems the very twin of death,
Yet do not harm the sleeper. Take this phial,
Its contents have played servants to my wish
Before to-day: Blanche too must prove their power.
The liquid, look, is colorless: 'tis tasteless,
And not immediate in its influence.

Your part is to administer the draught.

Bab. Oh! no Monsieur Antoine, I dare not touch it,—
I shall never have courage.

Rich. You have already sworn, you shall abide
Your oath. Take it, I say: act cautiously,
And in your act be speedy.

Bab. This is to deal with great persons! What shall
I do? What shall I do?

Rich. Do as I command you—be quick and silent!

Bab. Silent, indeed! your Grace, as if I ever said
anything!

Blan. (*music*) [*opening the door.*]
May I come in? Dear Dame, the stirring sound
Of the glad music through my casement steals—
My feet dance to it of their own accord,
And threaten shortly to dance *after* it!
I give you warning, Dame!

Rich. Come hither, Blanche.

Blan. (*crosses to c.*) Monsieur Antoine—but is it you
indeed?

Your face and voice I know, or this rich garb

Had well disguised you—I could half believe
It was no jest, when Dame Babette declared
That Monsieur Antoine was a lord!

Bab. Ah! your Highness, excuse her—she will talk—
she won't learn to say nothing as I do. Blanche, control
that little tongue of yours, lest it give offence to his Grace,
the Duke—the Duke of Richelieu!

Blan. Richelieu! Oh! no—Richelieu that bold, bad man,
Monsieur Antoine whom I have known so long—
Have loved so well—the Duke de Richelieu—no—
That cannot be!— [sinks into chair.

Rich. Who taught the child this folly?

Bab. Oh! indeed, your Grace, I didn't—I never said
a word about it I'm sure.

Rich. Blanche—ha! she faints! Bring water and take this.
Fortune, I thank thee! Take it.

[hands her the phial unperceived by Blanche.

Bab. I dare not! I dare not!

Rich. Take it! Fool! *(imperatively).*

Bab. Oh! dear, I must! *[takes the phial, goes to table,
pours out water and mixes the liquid with it.*

Rich. Child, you are ill—

Blan. No, no, I am not ill—I was confused—
Stunned at the thought—don't heed me. I am well!

[Babette hands her the glass, turning away her head.
I do not need it, Dame.

Rich. *(taking the glass)* Drink, drink! your lips
Are quivering—you are fainting—drink! you must—
Must drink!

Blan. *(looks with surprise in his face, and calmly takes
the glass)* If you desire it, certainly— *[drinks.*

Rich. *[aside as she is drinking.*

(laughing) Richelieu, when did thy star abandon thee!

Blan. I do not understand—

Rich. Ay, but you shall!

Go, dance, they wait you on the green—

[crosses to Babette who stands motionless.

Why stand

You there as you were petrified? Come, rouse
Yourself. Bid her go dance—Fool! rouse yourself!
Sweet Blanche—go dance—light foot, and joyous heart!

The wise man cogs the dice and laughs at fate. (*aside*)
 [R. D. F. *exit hastily, off R.*]

Blan. Why, Dame—why do you stand so motionless?
 Why gaze upon me thus with that fixed look
 Of wondering terror? Dame,—dear Dame Babette,
 Will you not speak? pray you—do speak to me!

Bab. (*recovering, throws herself weeping upon Blanche's neck*) My poor, poor Blanche!

Blan. Poor Blanche? nay Dame, I needs must laugh at that.

Bab. You seemed so happy!

Blan. Then did I—do I *seem* the thing I *am*!
 Seem happy—how could I seem otherwise?

'Tis happiness to me to live—to be!

My very instincts—nay, the very use

Of every separate sense by which we hold

Communion visible with external being

Is happiness! To gaze upon the sky

Arched in blue glory o'er my upturned head—

The forms of beauty, called by loving spring

Out of the affluent bosom of the earth;

The sun, beneath whose warm, resplendent light

All nature teems: these simplest, daily things,

Which custom cannot strip of loveliness,

To look on these is to be happy!—is

To feel my bosom swell with gratitude

To him who made them, to make us more blest!

Bab. Oh! Blanche! Blanche!

[*music heard at a distance.*]

Blan. Hark! 'tis the villagers; they come for me,
 And Armand, too, expects his queen. Good Dame,
 My subjects must not wait. Adieu! Adieu! [*going.*]

Bab. Blanche! Blanche! My child! my kind, light-
 hearted child, embrace me. Do not go until you've said
 that you forgive me.

Blan. (*embracing her*)

Forgive you, Dame! What crime have I to pardon,
 Except, indeed, too doting love for me.

What ails you? You are weeping? What's the matter?

Bab. No, no, I'm not—I'm not weeping. Oh, my
 darling Blanche!

[*bursts into tears.*]

Blan. Can I have wounded you, dear Dame?

Bab. Wound me? Did you ever wound a fly? I've seen you brush away with careful hand the very insect that had stung you. (*Music without.*) They are coming for you. Go to the green. Go, go.

Blan. First, with a kiss, let me seal up the fountains
Of those dear eyes, where tear and smile contend,
Like April sun and rain, they know not why.
Now for my crown and sceptre. Dame, adieu!

[*As BLANCHE is running off ARMAND appears at the door.* [*Exeunt R. D. F.*

Bab. Blessed mother, guard her! That dreadful drug!
If harm comes to her, I shall never know a happy hour!
Oh, this it is to deal with grand people. Yet for all that,
he is a duke; and to be sure, what a *duke* says must be
right. How could a *duke* do anything wrong?

[*Exit into chamber, R.*

SCENE II.

Village green. A maypole in the centre dressed with long garlands hanging to the ground. JAQUELINE, ETIENNE, JACOT, and Villagers busied about it. Music playing. Several Villagers as musicians, with pipes and tabors.

Jac. Give another look towards old Babette's cottage, Etienne, and tell us if you see our queen.

Etien. I see two figures yonder, through the trees. They turn this way. Yes, 'tis Blanche, and Armand is with her.

Jac. Then hurrah for the dance, hurrah for the king and the queen! Finish with your garlands, and let us dance.

Enter ARMAND and BLANCHE R. U. E.

Arm. Ay, for a dance, make ready, lads and lasses,
And be your hearts as light as are your feet,
In honor of the May. [*Blanche puts her hand to her head and appears to be ill.*

Blanche, you are ill!

Your eyes are heavy, and your cheek how pale!

Blan. Oh! no, no, Armand; I am well—quite well.
And yet I think my very happiness
Oppresses me; a faintness steals upon

My yielding sense, as if it were the languor
Of a content so perfect, it could wish
For nothing on this earth it hath not now,
But on the far-off future shuts its eyes.

Arm. Our future, Blanche! It must indeed be bright
To vie in promise with the present joy!
We live in that which *is*, and so defy
What *may* be. Let the unknown future bring
Us years—long years of unimagin'd woe.—
It cannot steal the lustre from these hours,
“Whose very memory would irradiate
“The darkest, time and fate can hold in store!”

Blan. “How should the placid current of our lives
“Bear aught but flowers upon its laughing tide?
“And yet, I sometimes think to see it ruffled.
“Thou and thy state, Armand, are not akin;
“And thy ambition wakes my fear—Yet why!—
“Why should he feel ambition to be *great*,
“Whose nobler struggle, in a nobler strife,
“Has made him *good*.”

Arm. “My nature is not cast,
“Sweet Blanche! in mould so true and pure as thine
“Ambition winds itself about the root
“Of every vigorous mind. Ambition gives
“The startling impulse to its higher action!
“Ambition spurs it on—sustains—inspires!
“And, rear the better beacon which shall guide
“Ambition's course aright, it is no more
“A vice!”

Blan. “Ah! when I listen to thee, Armand,
“I tremble lest the artizan's poor garb
“Should hide the warrior's danger-loving heart.”

Arm. “Nay, Blanche, to love my country with my soul
“Is nor to love the warrior's perils—nor
“His triumphs.—All men, be they high or humble,
“Owe to the land that gives them birth a tribute!
“And with his talents man may pay the debt,
“Or with his industry, or with his blood!”

Blan. “Oh, never with the last! I could not live
“And see thee pay it! How is this? we both
“Are grave, though this bright morn would bid us think
“Of gladness only. Come, my king, be sure

“ That I shall chide thee, if I trace a shadow
 “ Upon thy brow.”

Arm.

“ And shall I not chide thee

“ For that white lip and cheek, on which the rose
 “ So lately bloomed?” Come, let us dance, my queen!
 To quicken in thy veins the timid blood,
 And stain these lilies with a healthier red.
 Jacot, Etienne, are you not ready yet?

Jac. Most excellent and worthy sovereigns! we but
 wait your pleasure.

Arm. Now, Blanche, for thy light foot. Come, lads, a
 dance! [*Maypole dance with garlands. Towards
 the close, BLANCHE appears to grow
 fatigued, and falls suddenly in AR-
 MAND'S arms, as if fainting.*]

Blan. Armand, I cannot—I am weary—stay—

Arm. Thou weary, Blanche; whose airy foot were match
 For the blithe humming bird's untiring wing?

Great Heaven! How pale thou art! thou tremblest, too!

Blan. 'Tis only weariness—so—let me rest.—(*falls, c.*)

My head is strangely heavy, and before
 My eyes a floating vapour spreads itself.

Armand, I scarce can see thee.—Art thou there?

Arm. Blanche! Blanche! my own, my only love!

Oh, Heaven! she grows more ghastly white. Etienne!

Quick, fly for help,—and Jaqueline bring Babette!

[*Exeunt JAQUELINE and ETIENNE, R. U. E.*]

How cold thou art! Speak to me, Blanche! thou hearest me?
 Tell me thou hearest me!

Blan. Yes, Armand, yes,

I hear thee, my beloved, yet I feel—

That we are parting—death—

Arm.

We cannot part!

This is not death! no, no, we will not part!

Blan. Nay, Armand, war not thou with heaven's high will!
 Death cannot break the bond that knits our souls!

Shall I not be thy bride—there—where I go

To wait thee? For awhile we needs must part!—

Death's icy finger chills and clogs my blood,

Like frost it falls upon my heavy eyes—

And yet I seem to see! A luminous mist

Envelopes all things round me—through its veil

A threshold paved with light appears—beyond,
 A land of flowers—and *now* bright forms in robes
 Of radiant white are flitting round me—ah!
 They bear me from thee. Armand! Oh! Armand!
 I cannot see thee—though I feel thine arms
 Girdle my frozen limbs!

Arm. Thou wilt not leave me,
 Distract me not—but once more speak—let me
 Once more drink in the music of thy voice!
 Speak to me! Give me one last proof of love.

Blan. Armand—I do—this— [*raises herself with an effort, feebly kisses him and sinks back apparently dead.*]

Arm. 'Twas her first kiss!
 Thou pitying heaven,—let it not be her last!
 She is not dead! dost thou not hear me, Blanche?
 No, no, she is not dead! It were to lose
 The sun that warms with life—to lose the light
 That tells the presence of that sun,—it were
 To lose the air we breathe, to lose thee, Blanche!
 I stifle at the thought! My life's sole light
 Is endless darkness now—Oh! Blanche, my Blanche!
 My earth and heaven! all peace—all joys—all dreams—
 All blessings, and all hopes, are gone with thee!

[*Flings himself upon the ground beside BLANCHE. Peasants group around them. Tableau. Slow Curtain.*]

END OF ACT II.

ACT III.

SCENE I.

An Antechamber in the Palace of Versailles.

Enter LE SAGE L. and VICTOR R.

Vic. Monsieur Le Sage! *our* dear Monsieur Le Sage! We are overwhelmed by the sight of his Majesty's affliction. One moment he is like an angry child disappointed of its plaything, the next a very woman deluged in tears. But we can sympathize with him; we know the pangs which a passion for th' illusive sex too surely inflicts. We have suffered ourselves.

Le Sage. Possibly.

Vic. His Majesty's new despondency will once more shed a gloom over the whole court.

Le Sage. *Inevitably!*

Enter DUKE D'ANTIN, R. 1 E.

D'Ant. Le Sage!

Le Sage. *Instantaneously,* your Highness.

D'Ant. My words are for your ear alone.

Vic. We shall withdraw, my Lord. [*Exit R.*]

D'Ant. The young peasant is dead.

Le Sage. *Definitively!*

D'Ant. A death so sudden, so improbable, so unaccountable, excites mistrust. If the report be false,—I have my doubts, vague and unconfirmed, still I doubt her death. The King must be persuaded to visit old Babette's cottage, and himself behold the corse, if corse there be. This boyish page can at all times gain the ear of Louis. Often when the voices of our most powerful courtiers were unheeded, his suggestions have received attention. You comprehend me?

Le Sage. Distinctly!

D'Ant. His Majesty must cross this antechamber when he leaves his apartment. You will remain here and see that the opportunity is not lost?

Le Sage. Decidedly!

D'Ant. I shall be in the gardens an hour hence (*crosses L.*) You will join me there. [*Exit L. 1 E.*]

Le Sage. Punctually!

Re-enter R.

Vic. We consider his Grace the Duke d'Antin the most sombre person of *our* acquaintance.

Le Sage. *Incontestably* and *indubitably!*

Vic. Henceforth his Majesty may prove as sombre. Alas! unhappy King!

Le Sage. *Appropriately*—has his Majesty taken a last farewell of the poor little peasant?

Vic. We believe not.

Le Sage. *Undeniably* his Majesty listens to your voice, when he is *deafly* disposed to all others?

Vic. You flatter *us*.

Le Sage. Had I been you I should *urgently* have persuaded him to behold her once more.

Vic. It never occurred to *us*; and you think *we* should do so?

Le Sage. *Seriously*; but the Duke de Richelieu would *inevitably* object.

Vic. Monsieur Le Sage, learn that *we* can overrule the Duke.

Le Sage. *Profoundly* credulous as are my inclinations, I must consider that assertion *incredibly* dubious.

Vic. (*roused*) We will give you proof, Monsieur Le Sage,—*incontestably*—*incontrovertibly*—*indisputably*—*indubitably* multiplied proof. The King shall visit the Dame's cottage this very day, and Richelieu shall be kept in ignorance of his movements.

Le Sage. *Unavoidably* I shall believe when *unexpectedly* I see. But look how opportunely his Majesty approaches. I leave you *experimentally* to disprove or confirm your asseverations. [*crosses L.*

Vic. Do you mean to doubt, Monsieur Le Sage, that we shall do the latter?

Le Sage. *Indubitably*, and I trust *inoffensively*. [*Exit L. H.*

Vic. We deem that a malicious aspersion upon our character.

Enter King R. 1 E., and is pensively crossing the stage.
Your Majesty,—

King. Victor, is it you? I scarcely know a face, save yours, boy, I could to-day endure about me.

Vic. *We* are com— Your Majesty compliments me.

Alas! Sire, your grief has fallen heavily upon *our*—upon my heart.

King. One by one have all life's joys been snatched away from me, and now to *lose* her too,—never to see her more.

Vic. Might not your Majesty find your sorrow assuaged by the sight of her still unchanged loveliness? Will your Majesty deign to listen to the humblest of your subjects? If you could but be persuaded to visit the Dame's cottage,—*We* have a—*I* have a presentiment that you will find a sad consolation in the effort.

King. What matters it whither I go? The very wind that blows upon me can urge me on or draw me back. I have lost all impulses of my own.

Vic. Your Majesty then will grant my petition?

King. I care not to refuse it.

Vic. And your Majesty will permit *us*—that is *me*, to be your sole attendant? Your sorrow would be desecrated by the presence of those that did not share it.

King. Even so. The very thought of beholding her once again—beholding her even in the frosty arms of death, reanimates me. Yes, we will go,—and instantly.

[*Exit R. H.*

Vic. (aside) Monsieur Le Sage, we shall convict you of being *philosophically* and *adverbially* incorrect. We attend your Majesty.

[*Exit R. H.*

SCENE II.

A chamber in DAME BABETTE'S Cottage. Set doors, R. & L.

1st E. *In the centre a Couch upon which BLANCHE is extended apparently dead. White flowers upon her brow and in her hands. A white wreath hung at the foot and at the head of the bed. At the head, a table covered with white, holding twelve candles in the form of a cross, eleven lighted and one extinguished. Around the couch, a group of Village Maidens. JAQUELINE, kneeling at the foot. ARMAND, standing at the head. White flowers strewn on the ground.*

Arm. Jaqueline,—my friends,—grant what I ask.—Leave me awhile alone with her. You loved her well,—But I—I—

[*bursts into tears.*

Jaq. Our Blanche never denied a request of yours, Armand, nor will we who loved her so dearly do so.

[Exit slowly and sorrowfully, followed by all the maidens.]

Arm. (after gazing awhile on BLANCHE.)

Oh! Blanche! my own—though lost—still, still my own!

A little while I yet may gaze on thee,

And in the treasury of my soul may store

The memory of each stiff'ning lineament

Where beauty lingers still! "It cannot be!

" Shall those soft eyes no more look into mine,

" Nor veil themselves when with too bold a joy

" I gazed within their azure depths? shall love,

" With its aurora, tint thy cheek no more?

" The low, glad music of thy voice, no more

" Sunder those gentle lips, with words that fell

" Like blessings on the ears that took them in?

" My Blanche! my other and my better self!

" How weary seems the path I thought to climb

" Thy hand in mine,—thy smile to light me on,

" Thy sunny presence to make glad each step!

" Alone life's burden must be borne—alone

" The struggling heart crush underneath its weight!"

A holy smile yet hovers on thy face,

As though the angels, when they summoned thee,

One golden glimpse of Paradise revealed,

And left that happy print upon thy lip.

No, no! thou art not lost—we are not parted!

For Heavenward as my tearful eyes I turn,

A radiant vision meets them there, and bids

Me guard my soul, unsullied by a deed

That could divide us in that land of joy!

My heart hath but one wish—my life one hope—

All time one joy—that of rejoining thee!

[Sinks at the head of the couch, and buries his head in his hands.]

Enter VICTOR, ushering in the KING, L. D. I E.

[Exit VICTOR, L. D.]

King. A secret awe has paralyzed my limbs—

I scarcely dare—(approaching the couch, perceives ARMAND)

Ha! what is this! a youth

O'erwhelmed with grief, kneeling beside her corse?

They said she had no kin. Young man, rise up:
What sorrow bows thee thus?

Arm. It lies before you!

King. This maiden, surely was no kin of thine?

Arm. No kin; yet more, far more, than kin could be!
Alike, we never knew those tender ties
Of kinship, which link man to man—yet all—
A father's, mother's, sister's, brother's place,
Each in the other's soul had trebly filled!

King. You loved her then?

Arm. Loved her? the earliest page
In memory's record held but that young love.
From boyhood up to youth—from youth to manhood—
Each tenderer thought—sublimier aspiration—
And purer hope was woven with that love.
Our very natures blended as we grew,
My spirit, gentleness from her's imbibed,
And her's its strength and vigor caught from mine!
Our childish tears upon each other's breast
Were ever shed. Our childish laughter rang
The changes of its mingling mirth together,
And in each other's joy all childhood's blessings
Were mirrored—magnified—and multiplied!

King. Tell me thy name?

Arm. Armand! I have no other!

King. Thy parentage?

Arm. I know it not; a foundling
By strangers reared, I am the people's child!
From them I know not that I spring, yet would
Believe so; for I ask no name save that
Myself shall win. I bless the generous fate
That gave no noble blood to swell my veins,
For had I from the hands of accident
Nobility received, I could not prove
My juster title to that high noblesse
No revolutions level and destroy:
The true noblesse of genius and of worth.

King. Would'st thou not serve thy country?

Arm. With my sword

Or with my life.—She gave it—should she need it,
'Tis hers!

King. “Well answered.—Dost thou love thy King?”

Arm. "At least I love all virtues of all men!

"Upon the loftier height the man is placed,
 "His virtues more resplendent shine—his vices
 "More hideous seem—the virtues of my King
 "Above the virtues of more common men—
 "I prize for they have wider sphere of good.

King. "Thy speech is something less than frank.

Arm. "I meant

"It frankly; I have never yet had cause
 "To blush for my free thoughts, why should I hide them?"

King. Thy boldness pleases me; Armand, to day
 Thy King saddles for Fontenoye.—Join thou
 His battle line, and in the warrior ranks,
 Where sure distinction must on valour wait,
 Upon the beaten foeman's banner write
 The name thy worth shall win.

Arm. My heart leaps up
 Even at the thought.—My choice had asked no more—
 To die in battle for my country!—What
 Is left me on this earth to live for now?

King. Nay, live, that I may cancel valour's claim
 With noble meed.

Arm. Who then art thou?

King. Thy King!

Arm. (*kneeling*) My liege!

King. Aha! thy words are free, and yet
 Thy knee *can* bend, it seems.

Arm. When Duty bids
 My liege, it is as proud to bend, as when
 To all compulsion it disdains to bow. [Pause.]

King. Arise, Armand; the King but seldom sees
 His subjects' hearts unveiled. I value thine
 Because I trust it. Hence, without delay;
 At noon the Captain of my Guard will know
 My wishes—seek him at that hour thou;
 When next we meet, be it at Fontenoye!

Arm. My liege, not with my lips, but with my sword
 My gratitude shall thank thee! [going, returns.]

Must I leave

Thee, Blanche? But no, I will return to take
 One last farewell. My liege, at Fontenoye
 My arm shall prove my words. At Fontenoye! [Exit L. 1 E.]

King. (*approaching the couch, and gazing at Blanche*)
 How potent is the sight of thee, O death!
 In quelling ruder passions: Had she lived
 I should have crushed this man, her lover, like
 A worm beneath my foot! Bereft of Blanche,
 His woe, is mine—and sympathy would seem
 To level me half-way to him, or raise
 Him to half-fellowship with me! [*goes to couch.*]
 How passing fair! The hand of death itself
 Hath only robed her in new loveliness!

Enter RICHELIEU, L. 1 E.

[*after advancing a step in the room,
 he starts at beholding the King.*]

Rich. (*aside*) His Majesty! great heaven, how came
 he hither?

The hour of her reviving must be near.

Nay, at this very moment animation

May to her dormant form return.—All's lost

Unless—Your Majesty—

[*approaching him.*]

King. Ah! Richelieu, look!

Rich. This vain indulgence of your sorrow, sire,
 Is to yourself injurious.

King. Richelieu—no—

Look—death itself hath lost its wonted terrors,

Touching her beauty but to borrow it!

Death, did I say? It doth not seem like death!

Rich. (*much agitated*) Not seem like death? I pray
 your Majesty,

Permit me, sire—let me conduct you hence.

King. Not yet—not yet.

Rich. I do implore you, sire—

King. How came the scythe to mow this lily down

So soon—so suddenly—so timelessly!

How know I, but the same unholy means

That robbed me of the beauteous Chateauroux,

Again have snatched away the thing I loved?

If 'twere so, my rage—

Rich. Nay, good my liege,

Poison had left its blackening trace.

King. True, true,

It could not be. Oh, holy Powers! what's this?

Her lifeless hand—is it the warmth of mine

That lends it thus a heat unnatural?

No death-like ice is here—'tis scarcely cold!

Rich. Confusion! she revives! (*aside*) My liege, my liege,
These cheating phantasies—Your fevered brain—
Pardon—but you must hence!

King. Surely a tinge
Of faintest rose is spreading o'er her cheek!

Rich. Sire, for the love of Heaven—

King. Saw you not that?
Her spotless drapery stirs—her bosom heaves—

Rich. [*passing between the KING and BLANCHE so
as to prevent his seeing her.*]

There is no warmth—no tint of red—no breath—
It was the air that dallied with her robe!
She's dead! Your reason, sire—pardon this force
Which love emboldens me to use.—I fear
To see your reason by these phantasies
Unsettled!

King. Ay, it is, or will be soon!
I cannot think her dead.—I saw her move—
Look! look! she breathes!

Rich. Nay, sire, your reason wanders.

[*hurries him to the door.*]

King. I cannot leave her thus.—But one last look!

[*turning back.*]

Rich. My liege, not for the universe—not one!

[*Exit, forcing out the KING, L. 1 E.*]

Blan. (*gradually reviving*)

They part—they leave me—further, further still
They softly float,—dimmer and dimmer grow
The bright celestial forms.—Sing on, sing on.—
Close not my ears to those seraphic strains!
They cease—the angel visions fade—all's hushed!

[*gazing round her surprised.*]

'Tis our own cottage! all the rest has vanished!
The tuneful voices—and the flitting shapes,
Where are they? Flowers upon my brow—spring flowers
Within my hand? Ah! I remember now,
'Twas May-day—I was chosen queen—we danced,
And then—Armand—in Armand's arms I swooned!
Where is he? (*rising.*) I am weary—and how feeble!
Could I but see Armand! where lingers he?

Enter RICHELIEU, L. I E.

Monsieur Antoine—Monsieur—but no—what was't
They told me! all my thoughts are so confused—
These flowers recall—'Tis May-day, is it not?

Rich. It was so yesterday. May-day is past!

Blan. 'Tis strange! how could the hours so swiftly fly?
Did they not tell me you were now a Duke?

Rich. The Duke of Richelieu, and 'tis even so!

Blan. Ah! were it any other Duke—

Rich. Enough!

Your lips should be the last to breathe my name
In other tone than that of reverent love!

With calmness hear me—four and twenty hours,

Nay more, you've lain upon that couch in sleep

So silent and profound that all but I

And Dame Babette believe you dead!

Blan. [*turning and gazing in astonishment at the
couch, &c.*]

Dead! dead!

Rich. Aye, dead! and dead to all but us

You must remain, for reasons that demand

And justify the harmless cheat!

Blan. No cheat

Is harmless, and—

Rich. Of that not thou, but I

Am judge. All is prepared for flight—this hour

You will be borne to a far-distant home.

Blan. My lord, I own I have been used to bow

With reverence to your words.—I knew you then

But as an humble citizen, the friend

And guardian of a child, who had, alas!

No guardian else but heaven! I loved you—

I obeyed you—for, my lord, you never asked

What in obeying I obeyed not heaven!

I know you now as—Richelieu! And your first

Request should make me shrink from you! My lord,

You bid me stoop to falsehood—I refuse!

Rich. No more—thy words as little move my will

As winds the rocks. Prepare thou to obey!

Blan. Not that command which in my conscience finds

No quick response. I know your power, my lord,

I also know the strength of a resolve

Which mine own heart approves. Nay—spare your threats—
They fright me not—I never learnt to fear!

Rich. Learn then my right to claim and to enforce
Compliance to my wish—it is the right
Of a determined *father* o'er a child!

Blan. A father?

Rich. This very day completes the weary round
Of twenty years, since from her friends and kin
Thy mother fled.—In secret we were wed.
Two years she lived unknown,—and died the hour
Thy infant head was pillowed on her breast!
My child! the sins of Richelieu are not few,
“And every eye is quick to magnify,
“And every voice is loud to trumpet them.”
Yet one—one ray of virtue, like a beam
Of sunshine stealing in a lazar-house,
Amongst them dwells; it is his love for *thee*!

Blan. (*throwing herself in his arms*) My father!

Rich. Ah, though Richelieu claims that title,—
Richelieu from whom so late you trembling shrank,
My child, thou wilt not banish from thy lips
That tender name.

Blan. No, *father!* it is not
For me, even were I not thy child, to judge thee.
But Armand, dear Armand, knows he not this?

Rich. Armand is henceforth nought to Richelieu's
daughter.

Blan. My father, oh! my father, leave me still
My poverty—leave me my humble state—
Take back a father's name—a father's *love*,
For lack of which, the first warm tears that scorched
My infant eyes were shed;—but rob me not
Of Armand. Hark! it is his step. He comes.

[*as she is springing to meet him* RICHELIEU
siezes her.

Rich. Hush! not a word. This folly must end here.

Arm. (*without*) Babette! Babette! 'tis I.

Blan. Armand! Armand!

Rich. Obey my will,—this way with me—no cry!

[*hurrying her to her chamber, R.*

Resistance would be useless.—Girl, bethink thee,

It is thy *father that commands.*

[*at the last words*

he releases her arm, BLANCHE bows her head and passes before him. Exeunt R. 2 E.

Enter ARMAND, L.

Arm. One more
Farewell,—the last, and all is over! Gone!—
Why have they borne her hence? It was the sole
Sad pleasure which I craved, but once again
To look upon her.—It is better thus.
I would not be unmanned anew!

Blan. (in a faint voice within) Armand!

Arm. It was her voice! Oh, Heaven! the voice of
Blanche!

Angelic spirit, didst thou breathe my name?
Or is it thou—vain torturer, Fancy—thou—
Her voice! henceforth each wind that sweeps the earth
Will waft it to my ear—rock, wood, and glen
Repeat the sound, and all melodious tones
Those well-known accents imitate! “Her form
“Will paint itself upon the empty air,
“The fleecy clouds will take no other shape,
“And all things beauteous in that mould divine
“Seem cast.” My thoughts will madden me! and yet
I cannot tear myself away. Each dear
Familiar object, by her touch so hallowed—
The casement where she watched till I should come—
Yon couch where last she lay in dreamless slumber—
And these— *(gathering up the flowers which
BLANCHE has dropped.*

these flowers that in unconscious sweetness
Bloomed in her death-cold hand, and that shall now
Wither upon my breast as she has withered,
But dwell there as she dwells in spite of death.
All, all, with blended voices, strangely real,
Would seem to bid me stay! would chain me here,
As though—with cords invisible they bound
Me still to hope and her! Away! away!
My nature grows too soft. Farewell for aye
My early dreams—farewell my ideal world,
Peopled by joy and hope—farewell for ever! [*Exit L. 1 E.*
*(as he rushes out, the door of BLANCHE'S cham-
ber opens, and she breaks from RICHELIEU,
who is endeavouring to withhold her.*

Blan. Armand, come back. 'Tis Blanche. She lives!

Rich. My child!

Hold, I command thee!

Blan. Call me not thy child!

Oh! what to me are nature's chance-knit ties
To those that with rude hand thou sunderest now?

It is the *spirit's* purer, stronger bonds
Through life—through death—to all eternity
Unchanging, holy, indestructible,—
That join my soul to Armand! Part us not!
My father—Oh, my father, part us not.

[*falls at the feet of RICHELIEU.*
Quick curtain.

END OF ACT III.

ACT IV.

SCENE I.

Room in an Hotel in Paris. BABETTE and JAQUELINE.

Bab. Well, here we are in Paris again. Out of that old gloomy convent at last!

Jaq. Only to think of Mam'selle Blanche managing to get us all free, though she did take five years about it. Now how did she contrive to do that?

Bab. By *talking*, child; it was all done by talking. Ah! she has a tongue could wheedle an angel out of its wings; though, for my part, I think it best to be silent.

Jaq. Why would she come to Paris? I'm sure I wouldn't have.

Bab. That's her affair. You know she will have her own way, and does with us all just what she pleases. She heard that the King was holding his court in Paris, and thought that her father, the Duke de Richelieu—Oh, dear, to think that the father of our little Blanche should be a Duke! what an honor, though he did shut her up in a convent, and made all the villagers believe that she was dead—well, she thought the *Duke, her father*, must be in Paris too, so she chose to come here. And do you know that Blanche has written twice to the Duke and told him where we are.

Jaq. Perhaps the letters won't reach him! I hope they won't.

Bab. Won't they though? One of them will reach him sure enough, for whom do you think I gave it to this very morning?—But no matter, I shan't say anything about it.

Jaq. Well don't, mother, for its all one, if the letter is sure to reach him. That's the very way to make her tell all about it [*aside.*

Bab. Reach him? Why, Monsieur Le Sage said he'd put it in the Duke's own hands. I came upon our old friend, Le Sage, all of a sudden, just in front of this very house. And how glad the good man was to see me! so I told him all our adventures.

Jaq. What! You told him everything?

Bab. That is, I told him nothing. He asked me an hundred questions—but I never talk, so I said nothing.

Jaq. Hark! There is a knock.

Bab. Oh, dear! oh, dear! it is the Duke himself. What shall I do? My neck grows so stiff again, just as it always does when I think of him.

Jaq. Nonsense, mother—don't be afraid of him—I wouldn't. And I'm sure he can't alarm Mam'selle Blanche very easily.

Bab. That's true, send her here, for I shall never have courage to face him.

Jaq. But I would! so would Mam'selle Blanche; you'll see how quietly she'll look at him. I'll warrant he'll be glad enough to look away—just wait till she comes!

[*Exit JAQUELINE, R. I E.*

Enter DUKE of RICHELIEU, L. I E., BABETTE curtsies very low and looks much frightened.

Rich. So! it is indeed you, and you are here in Paris, in spite of all my precautions.

Bab. Well I believe it is I, your eminence—and I believe I am here—but it was all Mam'selle Blanche; you see, your highness, she can do what she pleases with everybody. I hope you won't blame me, for indeed—

Rich. Enough of this—how does Blanche?

Bab. Ah, very badly indeed—she pines for Armand night and day—but I forget, your highness does not know who Armand is.

Rich. Know him? I would to heaven I knew him not!
The peasant-colonel! Villiers' aid de camp!
The king's new favorite! fortune's chosen minion!
No battle but Distinction and Success,
Like unseen genii, wait upon his steps;
Upon the field he saved his monarch's life,
And when the king, too weakly generous,
Would have ennobled him, the nameless peasant
Refused in scorn all title save the one
His sword had won him.—Let him rise awhile;
The higher pinnacle, the greater fall!

Bab. O dear, O dear! what will Mam'selle Blanche say to all this?

Rich. Blanche say? Dare thou to breathe a single word

Of that my thoughtless folly has revealed,
 And in a dungeon's, not a convent's, walls,
 Shall your next tale be told. (*crosses R.*) She's here, retire!

[*Exit BABETTE, L. 1 E.; enter JAQUE-
 LINE, who exits with BABETTE.*

Enter BLANCHE, R.

Blan. My lord Duke! [*Pauses and looks at him.*

Nay, my father! can I choose

But call thee by that name? though in thy face
 Too little of a father's fondness greets me!

Rich. Yield thou the meet obedience of a child,
 And all a father's fondness will requite it!

Blan. Command thou what a child's pure heart must leap
 To execute, and I will yield a child's
 Obedience, with the meekness of a child.

Rich. What I have done was for thy surest good.
 Ay! for thy *soul's* best good!

Blan. My *soul's* best good!

Was't for my *soul's* best good my tongue should mock
 The consecrated altar with a lie?

Was't for my *soul's* best good my lips should breath
 A vow my heart refused? the holy oath
 Which gave the thought, the hope, the love to heaven,
 Which were no longer mine to give!

Rich. Daughter!

Thy opposed to mine is powerless!

Blan. My father, tempt me not to evil—think
 Before you act! young blood is warm—young heads
 Are rash—young hearts, convulsed like mine, are stubborn!
 When love—the *soul's* first love and last—the love
 No absence changes, and which time and sorrow
 Chastise to strengthen—is too fiercely curbed,
 Its passion breaks all other ties—defies
 All chances and all perils—leaps all barriers,
 That hold or part it from its idol—or
 Dragged by a chain too mighty to the earth,
 The iron eats its slow and silent way
 Into the *soul*—and then—we *die*—my father!

Rich. I know thy sex too well, girl, at its tears
 Or wrath to change my purpose,—woman's grief
 Is wind and rain one summer hour will end.

Blan. And canst thou thus the name of woman scorn,

Her holy mission lightly look upon ;
 Nor think that thy first sighs were soothed by her?
 Thy first tears kissed away by woman's lips—
 Thy first prayer taught thee at a woman's knee—
 Thy childhood's blessings shower'd from woman's hand—
 Thy manhood brightened by her watching smile—
Thy age must in her tenderness find prop—
 And life's last murmurs may perchance burst forth
 Where they began—upon a woman's breast?

Rich. I nor deny her virtues, nor her power
 To gild them with her tongue. But one word more
 Of Armand. Woman *may* be constant—when
 Was man? what wouldst thou think? how wouldst thou act
 If Armand's troth were plighted to another?

Blan. Another? Armand love and Armand wed
 Another? No! the present could not thus .
 Belie the past! Yet is it true he thought—
 Still thinks me dead ; but death could only *part*,
 Not *disunite* us! Armand love another—
 Oh wretch! to wrong his memory with the thought!
 Armand has not forgotten me—'tis false!
 Tell me 'tis false! and for the life you give
 Me back, I'll bless thee more than for the life
 I had at first from thee!

Rich. In calmer tone
 One question I would have thee answer—listen.
 If I could give thee proof unquestionable,
 Would'st thou the cloister seek of thy free will?

Blan. I would.

Rich. Swear that thou wilt!

Blan. There needs no oath.

I know not falsehood, father.

Rich. I believe thee.

To night I will return—remember thou
 Thy words—to night!

Exit L. 1. E.

Blan. Armand! was it for this
 For five long years I hoped—for this I bore
 With patient trust the ill's fate heaped upon me!
 For this I would not wrong thee by a doubt!
 All—all—for this—this hour of agony!

*[Sinks weeping upon a couch, and
 after a pause rises calmly.]*

Let me not murmur at thy high decrees,
 All-wise, all-watching, and all-guarding Heaven!
 I know no withered leaflet falls to earth—
 Nō blade of grass bursts from its sheath of green;—
 No grain of sand is swallowed by the wave—
 Unnoted by that ruling Providence
 That guides the universe, yet stoops to clothe
 The flower with beauty! And from seeming ills
 Works out our truest, most enduring good!
 “Oh! then while grass, and sand, and leaf are cared for,
 “How shall a mortal doubt thy guardianship!”
 Then break not heart! the will of Heaven be thine!

Enter JAQUELINE, L. 1 E.

Jaq. Oh! Mademoiselle Blanche! there's such a handsome young man waiting to speak to you—he has a letter to deliver, and he says, he will only give it into your own hands—I hope you'll see him—I'm sure I would!

Blan. A letter, and for me, yes, let him enter?

Jaq. Oh! I'm so glad you will see him—that's just what I would have done—and he's such a charming little creature. [*Exit* L. 1 E.

Blan. Whenceshould he come? I have no friends in Paris.

Enter JAQUELINE with VICTOR, L. 1 E.

Jaq. Oh! the beautiful little fellow! I hope she'll listen to him! I know I would! [*Exit* L. 1 E.

Vic. Most lovely recluse, pardon *our* intrusion, and pardon *us*, that we rejoice in this opportunity of performing *our* mission with becoming privacy.

Blan. I think you have a letter for me, Sir?

Vic. *We* have a letter to deliver and a reply to learn.

Blan. Will't please you, Sir, to let me see the letter?

Vic. *We* intend to do so forthwith—but haste is most *uncourtierlike*—and you perceive that *we* are of the *Court*!

Blan. I should like much to see the letter, Sir.

Vic. It never yet has been *our* study to gainsay the wishes of the “illusive sex,” of which *our* judgment now pronounces you the fairest, and your impatience thus *we* gratify. [*very pompously presents letter.*

Blan. (*reading aside.*)

*One who would serve you—one who learnt by chance
 Your history, writes these lines—perils unseen
 Are threat'ning you—the King alone can save you!*

*Consent to meet the page who brings you this—
At sunset at the Tuilleries eastern gate.*

*It is the custom of his Majesty
To walk within his garden at that hour,
The page will bring you to his presence—all
The rest lies with yourself.—A Friend.* The King
Yes, he alone can save me from the cloister,
Can give me back to Armand—Armand—whom
I still think, true! young Sir, I pray you thank
The writer of these lines—I'll do his bidding.

Vic. We congratulate you on this wise decision, and
with regret must now take *our* hasty leave. [*Exit bowing
very low, L. 1 E.*]

Blan. All thanks to thee, kind Heaven! for once again
My path is clear! the King, the King, shall guard me!
[*Exit L. H. 1 E.*]

SCENE II.

*Garden of the Tuilleries, at sunset. Enter KING followed
by VICTOR, R. U. E.*

King. Well, boy, what would'st thou from our bounty
now?

Vic. My Liege, the boon I crave— [*trumpet without.*]

King. What trumpet's that?

Vic. News from the seat of war, methinks; the bearer—

King. Armand himself!

*Enter ARMAND hastily, L. U. E., kneels to the KING, and
presents dispatches.*

Arm. Pardon, my gracious Liege,
That I appear thus hastily before thee!
Good tidings should have wings, to race the wind.
Another victory!

King. Which could not wait
For *form* thou think'st? Armand, our favor gives thee
A license few would dare to use!

(*to VICTOR*) Retire! [*Exit VICTOR, L. U. E.*]
(*reading despatches*) Brave news—most glorious news! my
gallant soldier!

The victory was thine—the Marshal, says so—
It earns thee once again the rank and title
Thou hast refused before!

Arm. My Liege, my sword

Hath won me all I covet or deserve!
I would not that *your favor*—but *my deeds*
Should of my fortunes be the artizan!

King. But wherefore, Armand, wilt thou coldly spurn
What others as their dearest birth-right prize?

Arm. “And why, the trappings and the adjuncts vain
“With which the great enshroud themselves, to awe
“A gaping multitude, should I not scorn?
“Free thought—free will—the birth-right true of all—
“Manhood, the universal heritage—
“For them, nor for a million times their worth,
“I would not barter!”

King. “Must thou scorn for this,”
The rank and name which proud posterity
Might carve upon some lofty monument?

Arm. I ask no monument, save that which lives
Within the bosoms of my fellow men!
No epitaph, save that which love inscribes
Upon their memories; no chronicle,
Save that the annals of my country show;
Which, if I serve it, will enroll my name
Upon the page of honored history, where,
Alone, I could be proud to see it blazoned!

King. Well, be it so; and yet one wish I have
Thou need'st must grant, De Rohan's daughter loves thee;
She's fair and rich, and virtuous. Seek her hand.
Nor be a courtier since thou likest it not,
Yet hold an honored station in our court.

Arm. My liege, I cannot wed—once hath my heart
In all the glow of its first warmth been given!
Years have rolled by since Blanche hath pass'd away—
In life's arena I have stood alone—
And wrestled on—and welcomed each new day
That led me closer to the grave—that porch
Which opens on the palace of my joy!

King. Beware! our patience is not made of stuff
Too lasting—try it not beyond its strength—
Marry De Rohan's daughter! 'Tis thy King
Commands!

Arm. My gracious liege, no King can tear
The land-marks from the honest path of Truth.
Marry! call'st thou that marriage which but joins

Two hands with iron bonds? that *yokes*, but not
Unites, two hearts whose pulses never beat
 In unison? The legal crime that mocks
 The very name of marriage—that invades—
 Profanes—destroys its inner holiness?
 No! 'tis the spirit that alone can wed,
 When with spontaneous joy it seeks and finds,
 And with its kindred spirit *blends* itself!
 My liege, there is no other marriage tie!

[Enter VICTOR with BLANCHE veiled,
 and JAQUELINE following, R. U. E.]

King. This daring is beyond endurance—nay,
 Beyond belief. Since you reject our grace
 Beware our wrath! retire.

[ARMAND exits L. 1 E.]

This stubborn boy no more shall thwart our wishes!

[VICTOR advances with BLANCHE, R. H.]

Vic. Sire, we should not—I should not have dared thus
 to intrude upon your privacy, but for the *fair excuse* I
 bring. Your Majesty has but to behold it, and we are—
 that is, I am secure of pardon.

King. Excuse, that takes so soft a shape brings with it
 The pardon that it asks. Leave us.

[VICTOR pompously presents his arm to
 JAQUELINE, exeunt L. 2. E.]

Now lady,

We pray thee speak—what wouldst thou have of Louis?

Blan. Perchance too much, my liege, for you to grant.
 Too little, it may be, for my great wants!

King. Speak freely then—what wouldst thou ask?

Blan. Protection!

Protection against one of rank so high
 No hand but thine could reach him—could save me!

King. His name?

Blan. Richelieu, thy favorite, and my father!

King. Thy father! can it be! has Richelieu then
 A child! I pray thee, let my hand remove
 The jealous veil that clouds thy brow.

[Blanche raises her veil.]

Great heaven!

What sorcery is this? I know that face,
 Or it hath visited my dreams,—or else

It is—must be—how like, how changed!—and yet
How like! What spell hath conjured up the dead?

Blan. Chance words, that strangely suit this stranger
chance!

For she who with these warm and living lips
Pleads to thee here, is dead to all who loved
Her best. Within a village churchyard lies
An humble stone that bears her name—and yet
She stands before you!

King. And that name was—

Blan. Blanche.

King. Oh! cheat me not enraptured eyes! deceive
Me not too happy ears! 'tis Blanche herself!
Blanche whom I saw—Blanche whom I mourned as dead!
Ah! Richelieu hath wrought this, and bitterly
Shall Richelieu rue it! Blanche is mine, and mine
In spite of fate! (*aside.*) Lady, this is no time,
No place to hear or to redress thy wrongs.
The Duke de Rohan's chateau yonder stands,
There will I place thee underneath the care
Of his most gentle duchess—let us haste.

[*As the KING advances impetuously to seize
the hand of BLANCHE, she draws back.*

Blan. My liege, I follow thee.

[*KING recovers himself, crosses and bows.*

Exeunt R. I. E.

Enter JAQUELINE, BABETTE, and RICHELIEU, hastily,

L. U. E.

Rich. Where is she?

Jaq. This is the very place, but I don't see her at all!

ARMAND rushes in.

Arm. She lives! she lives! she walks the earth! I may
Behold her—once more clasp her to my heart!

Alive! Oh! let me not grow mad with joy! [*crosses R.*

Rich. Thy frenzy may have bitterer cause ere long!
Where is she? Woman, speak. Where is my child?

Bab. Oh, your eminence! I knew nothing about it. It
was all Jaqueline.

Arm. Jaqueline, good girl, speak thou—where is my
Blanche?

Jaq. Oh! I'll speak, Monsieur Armand; I'll tell you
everything, for Blanche never loved any body as she loves
you, and so I love you too. A beautiful little page brought

her here, and she made me come with her; then she was talking with a splendidly-dressed cavalier, and the page said, it was the King!

Rich. The King! Ah then indeed, all's lost!

Arm. All's gained!

She lives! and let Fate hide her where it will,

The ample earth is all too small to part us!

[Crosses R. and up C.]

Bab. Ah! my lord Duke, it's all right, his Majesty—

Rich. Woman, away.

Bab. Oh, my poor neck!

[Exit hastily with JAQUELINE, L. 2 F.]

Rich. (after pausing and looking at ARMAND,)

Armand, I hated thee—had planned thy ruin—

But yet I loved my child, and would have sold

Myself to slavery to have shielded her

From Louis. Now, all feelings merge in one,

That one the last! She lives—may live for thee.

Find her, and she is thine! or if, when found,

Thou canst not from the royal libertine

Defend her, save her as a Roman would.

Arm. Fear not—the King is but a man! A man

With no more rights than I, when on my rights

He dares to trench! And by that righteous heaven,

Which frowns upon this deed of infamy,

I swear to snatch her taintless from his arms!

Rich. Find her, she's thine.

Arm. I will, or lose myself!

[Exeunt hastily, RICHELIEU L., ARMAND R.]

END OF ACT IV.

ACT V.

SCENE I.

An antechamber in the Palace of the Tuilleries.

Enter RICHELIEU and LE SAGE, R. H.

Rich. How learnt you this? the truth—the truth—concealment now were vain—I overheard thee talking with the page—you spoke of Blanche, last night, again to-day, the King refused me audience—tell me, is Blanche then in his power?

Le Sage. Assuredly!

Rich. The Duke d'Antin—did I not hear you say, his hand had dealt this blow?

Le Sage. Unfortunately!

Rich. Where? Where is Blanche? Answer! dost thou not see my agony?

Le Sage. Perceptibly!

Rich. Dotard! I would not do thee violence! ha! the Duke himself approaches—begone!

Le Sage. Voluntarily! (*bows*) and speedily! (*aside.*)

[*Exit R. H.*]

Enter DUKE D'ANTIN, L. H.

Rich. I would have sought thee, Duke—pardon this haste, A father injured cannot wait on form.

Where is my Blanche?

D'Ant. What should I know of Blanche?

Rich. Answer, old man, I charge thee! Where's my child?

D'Ant. Oh! rather, Duke de Richelieu, answer thou! Where is MY CHILD?

Rich. Speak not of her—'tis more Than twenty years, since thou hast called her daughter!

D'Ant. And if it be, think'st thou that twenty years Are lethé for a father's memory?

Be witness these white locks, whose every hair Have been the record of a separate woe!

Thou thought'st my child's destroyer was unknown, I *knew* the subtle Richelieu's arts too well

To doubt what name the heartless villain bore.
 I did not brand thee as a libertine,
 The Court, who knew thee, had but smiled.—Redress
 I sought not—to proclaim thy treachery
 Had only been to publish D'Antin's shame!
 But on my knees, I swore to dedicate,
 All that remained of life to my revenge.
 I swore that thou shouldst taste the self-same cup
 Which thou hadst poisoned for my lip.—Richelieu,
 It is fulfilled—my hour of triumph's come!

Rich. Oh! wretched man, hadst thou but known—

D'Ant. I knew

Enough! as thou shalt learn too late! the ruin
 That waits *thy* child is sure as that of *mine*—
 I watched her from her earliest hour—through *me*
 The King beheld her first—her seeming death
 I never credited—I tracked thy steps,
 And through a venal priest, *I set her free!*
 I brought her to the King, and wove the snare
That makes her his!—Now writhe as I have writhed!
 Now tear thine hair as I tore mine!—Now cast
 Thyself in maniac fury on the earth—
 Feel all a father's agony! and pray
 As I have prayed, the living earth might yawn
 To yield a grave for a dishonored child!

Rich. Madman! what hast thou done? thy Adelaide
 Ne'er knew the blush of shame! Her weal and mine
 Forbade the court should know Richelieu had wed;
 And yet she was my wife!—*Blanche was her child!*

D'Ant. (*much moved*) Her child! the child of Adelaide?

Just Heaven!

I snatched the vengeance which is thine alone,
 Its gathered fury bursts upon my head!

Rich. Lose not the moments thus in bootless anguish,
 Where is she now?

D'Ant. Alas, I know not!

Rich. Hasten and learn, thy spies,
 For spies thou must have used, can surely tell!

D'Ant. Oh! Adelaide! my Adelaide! is Blanche
 Indeed thy child?

Rich. No more,—thou wilt have time
 Enough for tears when there is none for action.

(*crosses R.*) Let us but find her! should we then have cause
To weep—be each fierce tear of blood alone!

[*Exeunt R. H. 1 E.*

SCENE II.

A sumptuous apartment in the Chateau of the Duke de Rohan.

*Enter BLANCHE, splendidly attired, through centre doors,
followed by JAQUELINE.*

Jaq. Dear Mam'selle Blanche, to think that I should
have found you at last! and through that beautiful little
page!

Blan. But, Armand! Oh! my best Jaqueline, my friend,
Thou hast seen Armand—and he knows I live—
He spoke of me as in our early days—

Jaq. Ay, that he did, Mam'selle, and I am sure he
loves you as much as ever.

Blan. Bless thee, Jaqueline! (*embracing her fervently*)
Oh! how one hour of joy
Can brighten a whole age of agony!

The weary years that Sundered us so long
Have vanished—every pang that wrung my soul
Is blotted out from memory!—The past,
Is one of sunbeam only—and the future
Seems something brighter still—I am too blest!

Jaq. So will Monsieur Armand be—but you will scarcely
know him, he looks so altered, for he is a great soldier
now—and I think he will hardly know you in this grand
dress.

Blan. They said the king would visit me to-day,
And to receive him decked me in these robes.

Jaq. Would you not like me to seek Monsieur Armand,
Mam'selle Blanche?

Blan. Do! if thou cans't, my kind Jaqueline.

Jaq. Oh! I'll find him if he's within the walls of Paris,
be sure of that! I do so like to bring lovers together.

[*Exit R. 1 E.*

Blan What thronging thoughts in quick succession chase
Each other through my brain! I pace these halls
As one who walks them in a dream—and Fear
By turns, convulses every trembling limb,
By turns, thine azure eyes, immortal Hope!

In visioned beauty smile upon my doubts!
While in thy cheating glass, whose magic brings
The wished for object near, my spell-bound sight
Sees Armand only!—Thus—

Enter VICTOR, C. D.

Vic. His Majesty!

Enter KING, C. D.

[Exit VICTOR, C. D.]

King. My Blanche! (*pauses and looks at her.*)

Why, this is well—this rich attire
Befits thy beauty royally—the emblem
Of greater change that waits thee!

Blan. 'Twas the Duchess

That willed it, and not I, my liege.—

King. Thy tone,

Fair Blanche, is grave, yet should no sadness mar
Its music! Now thy life shall be one pageant
Of long delight! Thine every hour a joy
Newer and gladder, and thine every wish
Fulfilment.

Blan. Sire, I have but one—restore
Me to my childhood's home, to him, without
Whose presence even that home were joyless!

King. A fate more bright awaits thee; hast thou not
Divined it? Knowest thou not thou art beloved?

Blan. I do, my liege.

King. And by thy King!

Blan. Oh, heaven!

King. Fair Blanche, look not so like the startled fawn
By friendly echoes frightened. Listen, love,
A splendid fate its golden page unrolls
Before thee. In our court the proudest place
Is thine. The queen shall yield thee her protection—
All men shall bow to her whom Louis loves.

Blan. Just heaven! can such things be! or doth some
demon

Whisper these horrors in my dreaming ear!

King. Sweet Blanche, the splendors that I proffer—

Blan. Peace!

Thou King—by passions vile unkinged! Thy words
Have scorched my brain, and should have seared thy lips
In passing them. My liege, my liege, was it

A kingly deed to snare a being helpless—
 And friendless—young as I—thus to profane
 Her ears, and seek by virtue of thy crown
 To rob her of the brightest diadem
 That can encircle woman's brow!

King. Nay, Blanche,
 Mar not thy beauty with this frigid bearing,
 Frowns do not suit those gentle eyes, nor fierceness
 Thy timid nature—weak thou art—

Blan. Not weak,
 My liege, when roused by insult and by wrong!
 I tell thee, haughty king—presumptuous man!
 That like the unshorn locks the Nazarene
 Vowed to his God—the purity of woman
 Becomes at once her glory and her might!

King. Ah, Blanche! and is there no excuse for love?

Blan. Thy love is but *self-love!* that first and worst
 Of passions—poisoned spring of every crime—
 Which hath no attribute of perfect *love!*

King. This to thy King?

Blan. Art kingly in thy deeds?
 The star that shines so brightly on thy breast
 Is worthless if it shed no light within!
 The throne that lifts thee o'er thy fellow men
 Should teach the virtues which alone can raise
 Thee 'bove them!

King. At thy feet let me implore—

Blan. Stand off! approach me not!

King. Thou fearest me then?

Blan. Fear thee? Danger should be where fear is—I
 See none!

King. Woman! thou shalt not brave me thus!
 (*seizes her*) No human power can save thee—thou art mine!
 What are thy feeble struggles in my grasp?

Blan. (*sinking on her knees*) Spare me, my liege, spare
 me!

King. It is thy turn
 To sue, and all in vain! thou hast forgot
 That I am King, and thou hast no protector!

Blan. (*starting up*) I have! I have! One who for
 sakes me not!
 One whom thou dardest not brave! unloose thy hold

Or dread his fury! Heaven protects me still!

[*The King releases her, awed by her manner.*

Thou art my sovereign—I a friendless subject—

I woman, and thou man!—my helplessness

Was of itself a claim to thy protection—

A claim thou hast rejected! Answer, King!

Hast thou done right? Man, was it well to use

Thy strength against my weakness? Thou art dumb!

Thou canst not answer! King of France, I scorn thee!

[*Exit L. 1 L.*

King. Why should I shrink from one so powerless?

And can it be that Virtue's presence awes

Me thus? *That* Virtue which no weapon needs

Except its own resistless dignity!

She speaks, I'm hushed—she spurns me, and I cower—

She leaves me, and I dare not follow her!

Enter ARMAND hastily, R. 1 E.

You here?

Arm. My lips, my liege, might echo back

The question!

King. Sir, it is thy monarch's right

To tarry where he will.

Arm. It is my right

To seek what I am robbed of where I may!

King. Darest thou?

Arm. Hadst thou not dared to wrong me—I

Had never dared to stand before thee thus.

King. "A monarch's state may sometimes sanction
what—

Arm. "A monarch's state that sanctions what would
shame

"A subject, doubly shames itself! when Wrong

"And Crime usurp the garments of that state,

"They grow more hideous in those glittering robes

"Than when they wear the branded felon's garb."

King. Armand! I thought thee loyal—

Arm. So I was,

When loyalty was virtue—Oh! my liege,

Because my heart 'neath ruder vesture once

Hath beat, than e'er thine own hath throbb'd against,

Think'st thou its feeling is less keen? Its sense

Of injury less delicate? thinkest thou

It will not leap as readily to kindness?
 Will not revolt as quickly at oppression?
 How then shall I be loyal, when my King
 Would do me the worst injury that man
 Can do to man?

King. What injury, rash youth?

Arm. Of my affianced bride would'st thou not rob me?
 Would'st thou not rob her of—how shall I keep
 My senses at the thought!—Is Blanche not here?

King. This passes bearing.

Arm. Hear me, my gracious liege, I am too bold.
 Wrong has rough words, and anguish maddened me!
 Bethink thee,—on the battle field I saved
 Thy life. Remembering that, oh, Sire! forget
 Thy passion for this maid—my promised bride.
 Let it be as a cloud which dimmed the sun
 But for a moment, that its after light
 Might show more glorious. Do a royal act,
 And do it royally, that men may see
 Thy soul is royal too. She does not love
 Thee, give her back to me!

King. I'll hear no more!

Arm. Ha!

King. Not another word!

Arm. Pause yet a moment.

King. Enough!

Arm. I am no more the suppliant!

My private injury grows public wrong.
The saviour or the avenger stands before thee.
 Choose thou.

King. Is this the faithful soldier—

Arm. No,

It is the injured *lover* thou hast wronged.
 The *man* his monarch's crimes exasperate.
 Restore my Blanche, and I am what I was!
 Withhold her, and I know not what I may be!
 "Each sigh of hers shall to a whirlwind swell,
 "And, in its fury, dash thee on the rocks
 "Of Public Hate.—Each prayer she breathes shall turn
 "To thunderbolts placed in thy people's hands!
 "Woe—woe to him on whom a nation's rage
 "With Perseus-weapons, such as these, shall burst!"

Arm. Oh, my King!

Hast thou, indeed, relented?

King. See who comes.

Enter RICHELIEU, L. 1 E., leading BLANCHE, her eyes are bent upon the ground, she does not perceive ARMAND.

Arm. Blanche!

Blan. Armand, is it thou? [*with an exclamation of joy she rushes into his arms.*]

Arm. My own, my Blanche!

Is it no phantom dupes as it hath duped
So oft my willing sense? Is it thyself?
If joy could kill, this hour so richly blest
That ecstasy seems pain, would be our last.

Blan. Ah! if it were we would not murmur. Life
Hath not another moment such as this.

Rich. My child! remember thou art not thine own
To give.

Blan. My dearest father,—

Rich. Nay, I know

What thou wouldst say. First bow thy knee to one
Who claims thy reverence and love. Behold
Thy mother's sire.

[*BLANCHE kneels to D'ANTIN, he raises and embraces her.*]

D'Ant. My child! [*BLANCHE returns to C.*]

King. Blanche, (*crossing to her*) shrink no more.

I was thy lover—I am now thy King!
We claim the right to wed thee as we will.
Nay, traitress—no rebellion, for thy sire
Sanctions our choice. Armand, more chary hold
Our second gift than thou hast done the first.

[*points to the sword.*]

No more of that.—We pardon,—Blanche is thine.

[*joins their hands and crosses to R. H.*]

Arm. My cup is brimming over,—speak thou my
Blanche,

My long lost bride,—tell me thy happiness
Hath reached the blessed zenith of mine own?

Blan. My happiness? [*to the audience.*]

Its bounds are fixed by these,
Who've made so light our earnest task to please,
By lenient eyes, that only beauties seek,

And lenient lips, that mildest judgment speak !
Who, if some passing good they chance to find,
Seem to all else so kindly, gently blind !
Our faces are of yours the mirrors true,
Cloud 'neath your frown—grow bright at smiles from you.
What fiat then to-night may we expect ?
Shall we your censure, or your smiles reflect ?

DISPOSITION OF CHARACTERS AT THE FALL OF CURTAIN.

R. *King. Armand. Blanche. Richelieu. D'Antin.* L.
Guards and pages in the back ground.

THE END.

FASHION ;
OR,
LIFE IN NEW YORK.

A Comedy,

IN FIVE ACTS.

“ Howe’er it be — it seems to me
’Tis only noble to be good ;
Kind hearts are more than coronets,
And simple faith than Norman blood.”
TENNYSON.



P R E F A C E

TO THE LONDON EDITION.

THE Comedy of *Fashion* was intended as a good-natured satire upon some of the follies incident to a new country, where foreign dress sometimes passes for gold, where the vanities rather than the virtues of other lands are too often imitated, and where the stamp of *fashion* gives currency even to the coinage of vice.

The reception with which the Comedy was favoured proves that the picture represented was not a highly exaggerated one.

It was first produced at the Park Theatre, New York, in March, 1845.

The splendid manner in which the play was put upon the stage, and the combined efforts of an extremely talented company, ensured it a long continued success. It was afterwards received with the same indulgence in all the principal cities of the United States, for which the authoress is doubtless indebted to the proverbial gallantry of Americans to a countrywoman.

A. C. M.

London, January, 1850.



COSTUMES.

- ADAM TRUEMAN.**—First Dress: A farmer's rough overcoat, coarse blue trousers, heavy boots, broad-brimmed hat, dark coloured neckerchief, stout walking stick, large bandanna tied loosely around his neck.—Second dress: Dark grey old-fashioned coat, black and yellow waistcoat, trousers as before.—Third dress: Black old-fashioned dress coat, black trousers, white vest, white cravat.
- COUNT JOLIMAITRE.**—First dress: Dark frock coat, light blue trousers, patent leather boots, gay coloured vest and scarf, profusion of jewellery, light overcoat.—Second dress: Full evening dress; last scene, travelling cap and cloak.
- MR. TIFFANY.**—First dress: Dark coat, vest, and trousers.—Second dress: Full evening dress.
- MR. TWINKLE.**—First dress: Green frock coat, white vest and trousers, green and white scarf.—Second dress: Full evening dress.
- MR. FOGG.**—First dress: Entire black suit.—Second dress: Full evening dress, same colour.
- SNOBSON.**—First dress: Blue Albert coat with brass buttons, yellow vest, red and black cravat, broad plaid trousers.—Second dress: Evening dress.
- COL. HOWARD.**—First dress: Blue undress frock coat and cap, white trousers.—Second dress: Full military uniform.
- ZEKE.**—Red and blue livery, cocked hat, &c.
- MRS. TIFFANY.**—First dress: Extravagant modern dress.—Second dress: Hat, feathers, and mantle, with the above.—Third dress: Morning dress.—Fourth dress: Rich ball dress.
- SERAPHINA.**—First dress: Rich modern dress, lady's tarpaulin on one side of head.—Second dress: Morning dress.—Third dress: Handsome ball dress, profusion of ornaments and flowers.—Fourth dress: Bonnet and mantle.
- GERTRUDE.**—First dress: White muslin.—Second dress: Ball dress, very simple.
- MILLINETTE.**—Lady's Maid's dress, very gay.
- PRUDENCE.**—Black satin, very narrow in the skirt, tight sleeves, white muslin apron, neckerchief of the same, folded over bosom, old-fashioned cap, high top and broad frill, and red ribbons.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

As produced at the Royal Olympic Theatre, January 9, 1850, under the direction of Mr. George Ellis, Stage Manager.

ADAM TRUEMAN, a Farmer from Catteraugus. - 7 m ♡ Gertr

COUNT JOLIMAITRE, a fashionable European Importation.

COLONEL HOWARD, an Officer in the U. S. Army.

MR. TIFFANY, a New York Merchant.

T. TENNYSON TWINKLE, a Modern Poet.

AUGUSTUS FOGG, a Drawing Room Appendage.

SNOBSON, a rare species of Confidential Clerk.

ZEKE, a colored Servant.

MRS. TIFFANY, a Lady who imagines herself fashionable.

PRUDENCE, a Maiden Lady of a certain age.

MILLINETTE, a French Lady's Maid.

GERTRUDE, a Governess.

SERAPHINA TIFFANY, a Belle.

Ladies and Gentlemen of the Ball Room.

CAST OF CHARACTERS.

ADAM TRUEMAN.....	Mr. Davenport.
COUNT JOLIMAITRE.....	— A. Wigan.
COLONEL HOWARD	— Belton.
MR. TIFFANY.....	— J. Johnstone.
TWINKLE	— Kinloch.
FOGG	— J. Howard.
SNOBSON.....	— H. Scharf.
ZEKE	— J. Herbert.
MRS. TIFFANY.....	Mrs. H. Marston.
PRUDENCE	— Parker.
MILLINETTE.....	— A. Wigan.
GERTRUDE	Miss F. Vining.
SERAPHINA	— Gougenheim.

EXITS AND ENTRANCES.

R. means *Right*; L., *Left*; R. 1 E., *Right First Entrance*; 2 E., *Second Entrance*; D. F., *Door in the Flat*.

RELATIVE POSITIONS.

R. means *Right*; L., *Left*; C., *Centre*; R. C., *Right of Centre*; L. C., *Left of Centre*.

. The reader is supposed to be on the Stage facing the Audience.

FASHION.

ACT I.

SCENE I.

A splendid Drawing Room in the House of Mrs. TIFFANY. Open folding doors c. f., discovering a Conservatory. On either side glass windows down to the ground. Doors on r. and l. u. e. Mirror, couches, ottomans, a table with albums, &c., beside it an arm chair. MILLINETTE r. dusting furniture, &c. ZEKE l. in a dashing livery, scarlet coat, &c.

Zeke. Dere's a coat to take de eyes ob all Broadway! Ah! Missy, it am de fixins dat make de natural *born* gemman. A libery for ever! Dere's a pair ob insuppressibles to 'stonish de colored population.

Millinette. Oh, *oui*, Monsieur Zeke (*very politely*). I not *comprend* one word he say! (*aside*.)

Zeke. I tell 'ee what, Missy, I'm 'stordinary glad to find dis a bery 'spectabul like situation! Now as you've made de acquaintance ob dis here family, and dere you've had a supernumerary advantage ob me—seeing dat I only received my appointment dis morning. What I wants to know is your publicated opinion, privately expressed, ob de domestic circle.

Mil. You mean vat *espèce*, vat kind of personnes are Monsieur and Madame Tiffany? Ah! Monsieur is not de same ting as Madame,—not at all.

Zeke. Well, I s'pose he aint altogether.

Mil. Monsieur is man of business,—Madame is lady of fashion. Monsieur make de money,—Madame spend it. Monsieur nobody at all,—Madame everybody altogether. Ah! Monsieur Zeke, de money is all dat is *necessaire* in

dis country to make one lady of fashion. Oh! it is quite anoder ting in *la belle France!*

Zeke. A bery lucifer explanation. Well, now we've disposed ob de heads ob de family, who come next?

Mil. First, dere is Mademoiselle Seraphina Tiffany. Mademoiselle is not at all one proper *personne*. Mademoiselle Seraphina is one coquette. Dat is not de mode in *la belle France*; de ladies, dere, never learn *la coquetrie* until dey do get one husband.

Zeke. I tell 'ee what, Missy, I disreprobate dat proceeding altogeder!

Mil. Vait! I have not tell you all *la famille* yet. Dere is Ma'mselle Prudence—Madame's sister, one very *bizarre* *personne*. Den dere is Ma'mselle Gertrude, but she not anybody at all; she only teach Mademoiselle Seraphina *la musique*.

Zeke. Well now, Missy, what's your own special de-functions?

Mil. I not understand, Monsieur Zeke.

Zeke. Den I'll amplify. What's de nature ob your exclusive services?

Mil. *Ah, oui! je comprend.* I am Madame's *femme de chambre*—her lady's maid, Mousieur Zeke. I teach Madame *les modes de Paris*, and Madame set de fashion for all New York. You see, Monsieur Zeke, dat it is me, *moi-même*, dat do lead de fashion for all de American *beau monde!*

Zeke. Yah! yah! yah! I hab de idea by de heel. Well now, p'raps you can 'lustrify my officials?

Mil. Vat you will have to do? Oh! much tings, much tings. You vait on de table,—you tend de door,—you clean de boots,—you run de errands,—you drive de carriage,—you rub de horses,—you take care of de flowers,—you carry de water,—you help cook de dinner,—you wash de dishes,—and den you always remember to do everyting I tell you to!

Zeke. Wheugh, am dat *all?*

Mil. All I can tink of now. To-day is Madame's day of reception, and all her grand friends do make her one *petite* visit. You mind run fast ven de bell do ring.

Zeke. Run? If it was'nt for dese superfluminous trimmings, I tell 'ee what, Missy, I'd run—

Mrs. Tiffany. (outside) Millinette!

Mil. Here comes Madame! You better go, Monsieur Zeke.

Zeke. Look ahea, Massa Zeke, does'nt dis open rich!
(*aside*). [*Exit ZEKE, L.*

Enter MRS. TIFFANY R. 3 E. *dressed in the most extravagant height of fashion.*

Mrs. Tif. Is everything in order, Millinette? Ah! very elegant, very elegant indeed! There is a *jenny-says-quoi* look about this furniture,—an air of fashion and gentility perfectly bewitching. Is there not, Millinette?

Mil. Oh, oui, Madame!

Mrs. Tif. But where is Miss Seraphina? It is twelve o'clock; our visitors will be pouring in, and she has not made her appearance. But I hear that nothing is more fashionable than to keep people waiting.—None but vulgar persons pay any attention to punctuality. Is it not so, Millinette?

Mil. Quite *comme il faut*.—Great personnes always do make little personnes wait, Madame.

Mrs. Tif. This mode of receiving visitors only upon one specified day of the week is a most convenient custom! It saves the trouble of keeping the house continually in order and of being always dressed. I flatter myself that I was the first to introduce it amongst the New York *ee-light*. You are quite sure that it is strictly a Parisian mode, Millinette?

Mil. Oh, oui, Madame; entirely *mode de Paris*.

Mrs. Tif. This girl is worth her weight in gold (*aside*). Millinette, how do you say *arm-chair* in French?

Mil. *Fauteuil*, Madame.

Mrs. Fo-tool! That has a foreign—an out-of-the-wayish sound that is perfectly charming—and so genteel! There is something about our American words decidedly vulgar. *Fowtool!* how refined. *Fowtool!* *Arm-chair!* what a difference!

Mil. Madame have one charmante pronunciation. *Fowtool!* (*mimicking aside*) charmante, Madame!

Mrs. Tif. Do you think so, Millinette? Well, I believe I have. But a woman of refinement and of fashion can always accommodate herself to everything foreign! And a week's study of that invaluable work—"French without

a *Master*," has made me quite at home in the court language of Europe! But where is the new valet? I'm rather sorry that he is black, but to obtain a white American for a domestic is almost impossible; and they call this a free country! What did you say was the name of this new servant, Millinette?

Mil. He do say his name is Monsieur Zeke.

Mrs. Tif. Ezekiel, I suppose. Zeke! Dear me, such a vulgar name will compromise the dignity of the whole family. Can you not suggest something more aristocratic, Millinette? Something *French*!

Mil. Oh, *oui*, Madame; *Adolph* is one very fine name.

Mrs. Tif. A-dolph! Charming! Ring the bell, Millinette! (*MILLINETTE rings the bell*). I will change his name immediately, besides giving him a few directions.

Enter ZEKE, L. U. H. *Mrs. TIFFANY addresses him with great dignity.*

Your name, I hear, is *Ezekiel*.—I consider it too plebeian an appellation to be uttered in my presence. In future you are called A-dolph. Don't reply,—never interrupt me when I am speaking. A-dolph, as my guests arrive, I desire that you will inquire the name of every person, and then announce it in a loud, clear tone. *That is the fashion in Paris.*

[*MILLINETTE retires up the stage.*

Zeke. Consider de office discharged, Missus.

[*speaking very loudly.*

Mrs. Tif. Silence! Your business is to obey and not to talk.

Zeke. I'm dumb, Missus!

Mrs. Tif. (*pointing up stage*) A-dolph, place that *fow-tool* behind me.

Zeke. (*looking about him*) I hab'nt got dat far in de dictionary yet. No matter, a genus gets his learning by nature.

[*takes up the table and places it behind Mrs.*

TIFFANY, then expresses in dumb show great satisfaction. Mrs. TIFFANY, as she goes to sit, discovers the mistake.

Mrs. Tif. You dolt! Where have you lived not to know that *fow-tool* is the French for *arm-chair*? What ignorance! Leave the room this instant.

[*Mrs. TIFFANY draws forward an arm-chair and*

sits. MILLINETTE comes forward suppressing her merriment at ZEKE'S mistake and removes the table.

Zeke. Dem's de defects ob not having a libery education.
[Exit L. 3. E.

PRUDENCE peeps in, R. U. E.

Pru. I wonder if any of the fine folks have come yet. Not a soul,—I knew they hadn't. There's Betsy all alone (*walks in*). Sister Betsy!

Mrs. Tif. c. Prudence! how many times have I desired you to call me *Elizabeth*? *Betsy* is the height of vulgarity.

Pru. L. Oh! I forgot. Dear me, how spruce we do look here, to be sure,—everything in first rate style now, Betsy.
[Mrs. T. looks at her angrily.

Elizabeth I mean. Who would have thought, when you and I were sitting behind that little mahogany-colored counter, in Canal Street, making up flashy hats and caps—

Mrs. Tif. Prudence, what *do* you mean? Millinette, leave the room.

Mil. R. Oui, Madame.

[MILLINETTE pretends to arrange the books upon a side table, but lingers to listen.

Pru. But I always predicted it,—I always told you so, Betsy,—I always said you were destined to rise above your station!

Mrs. Tif. Prudence! Prudence! have I not told you that—

Pru. No, Betsy, it was *I* that told *you*, when we used to buy our silks and ribbons of Mr. Antony Tiffany—"talking Tony," you know we used to call him, and when you always put on the finest bonnet in our shop to go to his,—and when you staid so long smiling and chattering with him, I always told you that *something* would grow out of it—and didn't it?

Mrs. Tif. Millinette, send Seraphina here instantly. Leave the room.

Mil. Oui, Madame. So dis Americaine ladi of fashion vas one *milliner*? Oh, vat a fine country for *les merchandes des modes*! I shall send for all my relation by de next packet! (*aside*). [Exit MILLINETTE R. W. U. E.

Mrs. Tif. Prudence! never let me hear you mention

this subject again. Forget what we *have* been, it is enough to remember that we *are* of the *upper ten thousand*!

[PRUDENCE goes up L. C. and sits down.

Enter SERAPHINA R. U. E., *very extravagantly dressed.*

Mrs. Tif. How bewitchingly you look, my dear! Does Millinette say that that head dress is strictly Parisian?

Seraphina R. Oh yes, Mamma, all the rage! They call it a *lady's tarpaulin*, and it is the exact pattern of one worn by the Princess Clementina at the last court ball.

Mrs. Tif. L. Now, Seraphina my dear, don't be too particular in your attentions to gentlemen not eligible. There is Count Jolimaitre, decidedly the most fashionable foreigner in town,—and so refined,—so much accustomed to associate with the first nobility in his own country that he can hardly tolerate the vulgarity of Americans in general. You may devote yourself to him. Mrs. Proudacre is dying to become acquainted with him. By the by, if she or her daughters should happen to drop in, be sure you don't introduce them to the Count. It is not the fashion in Paris to introduce—Millinette told me so.

Enter ZEKE, L. U. E.

Zeke. (*in a very loud voice*) Mister T. Tennyson Twinkle!

Mrs. Tif. Show him up.

[*Exit* ZEKE L.

Pru. I must be running away! [*going.*

Mrs. Tif. Mr. T. Tennyson Twinkle—a very literary young man and a sweet poet! It is all the rage to patronize poets! Quick, Seraphina, hand me that magazine.—Mr. Twinkle writes for it.

[SERAPHINA *hands the magazine*, Mrs. T. *seats herself in an arm-chair and opens the book.*

Pru. (*returning* L.) There's Betsy trying to make out that reading without her spectacles.

[*takes a pair of spectacles out of her pocket and hands them to* Mrs. TIFFANY.

There, Betsy, I knew you were going to ask for them. Ah! they're a blessing when one is growing old!

Mrs. Tif. What do you mean, Prudence? A woman of fashion *never* grows old! Age is always out of fashion.

Pru. Oh, dear! what a delightful thing it is to be

fashionable. [Exit PRUDENCE, R. U. E. Mrs. TIFFANY resumes her seat.

Enter TWINKLE, L. U. E. (salutes SERAPHINA.)

Twin. Fair Seraphina! the sun itself grows dim,
Unless you aid his light and shine on him!

Sera. Ah! Mr. Twinkle, there is no such thing as answering you.

Twin. (looks around and perceives Mrs. TIFFANY) The "New Monthly Vernal Galaxy." Reading my verses by all that's charming! Sensible woman! I wo'nt interrupt her. (aside).

Mrs. Tif. (rising and coming forward) Ah! Mr. Twinkle, is that you? I was perfectly *abimé* at the perusal of your very *distingué* verses.

Twin. I am overwhelmed, Madam. Permit me (taking the magazine). Yes, they do read tolerably. And you must take into consideration, ladies, the rapidity with which they were written. Four minutes and a half by the stop watch! The true test of a poet is the *velocity* with which he composes. Really they do look very prettily, and they read tolerably—*quite* tolerably—*very* tolerably,—especially the first verse. (reads) "To Seraphina T——."

Sera. Oh! Mr. Twinkle!

Twin. (reads) "Around my heart"—

Mrs. Tif. How touching! Really, Mr. Twinkle, quite tender!

Twin. (recommencing) "Around my heart"—

Mrs. Tif. Oh, I must tell you, Mr. Twinkle! I heard the other day that poets were the aristocrats of literature. That's one reason I like them, for I do dote on all aristocracy!

Twin. Oh, Madam, how flattering! Now pray lend me your ears! (reads)

"Around my heart thou weavest"—

Sera. r. That is such a *sweet* commencement, Mr. Twinkle!

Twin. L. I wish she wouldn't interrupt me! (aside) (reads) "Around my heart thou weavest a spell"—

Mrs. Tif. c. Beautiful! But excuse me one moment, while I say a word to Seraphina! Don't be too affable, my dear! Poets are very ornamental appendages to the

drawing room, but they are always as poor as their own verses. They don't make eligible husbands!

(*aside to SERAPHINA*).

Twin. Confound their interruptions! (*aside*) My dear Madam, unless you pay the utmost attention you cannot catch the ideas. Are you ready? Well, now you shall hear it to the end! (*reads*)—

“Around my heart thou weavest a spell

“Whose”—

Enter ZEKE, L.

Zeke. Mister Augustus Fogg! A bery misty lookin young gemman? (*aside*).

Mrs. Tif. Show him up, Adolph!

[*Exit ZEKE L.*

Twin. This is too much!

Sera. Exquisite verses, Mr. Twinkle,—exquisite!

Twin. Ah, lovely Seraphina! your smile of approval transports me to the summit of Olympus.

Sera. Then I must frown, for I would not send you so far away.

Twin. Enchantress! Its all over with her. (*aside*)

[*Retire up R. and converse.*

Mrs. Tif. Mr. Fogg belongs to one of our oldest families,—to be sure he is the most difficult person in the world to entertain, for he never takes the trouble to talk, and never notices anything or anybody,—but then I hear that nothing is considered so vulgar as to betray any emotion, or to attempt to render oneself agreeable!

Enter Mr. FOGG, L., fashionably attired but in very dark clothes.

Fogg. (*bowing stiffly*) Mrs. Tiffany, your most obedient. Miss Seraphina, yours. How d'ye do Twinkle?

Mrs. Tif. Mr. Fogg, how do you do? Fine weather,—delightful, isn't it?

Fogg. I am indifferent to weather, Madam.

Mrs. Tif. Been to the opera, Mr. Fogg? I hear that the *bow monde* make their *debutt* there every evening.

Fogg. I consider operas a bore, Madam.

Sera. (*advancing*) You must hear Mr. Twinkle's verses, Mr. Fogg!

Fogg. I am indifferent to verses, Miss Seraphina.

Sera. But Mr. Twinkle's verses are addressed to me!

Twin. Now pay attention, Fogg! (*reads*)—
 “Around my heart thou weavest a spell
 “Whose magic I”—

Enter ZEKE L. U. E.

Zeke. Mister—No, he say he aint no Mister—

Twin. “Around my heart thou weavest a spell
 “Whose magic I can never tell!”

Mrs. Tif. Speak in a loud, clear tone, A-dolph!

Twin. This is terrible!

Zeke. Mister Count Jolly-made-her!

Mrs. Tif. Count Jolimaitre! Good gracious! Zeke, Zeke—A-dolph I mean.—Dear me, what a mistake! (*aside*) Set that chair out of the way,—put that table back. Seraphina, my dear, are you all in order? Dear me! dear me! Your dress is so tumbled! (*arranges her dress*) What are you grinning at? (*to ZEKE*) Beg the Count to honor us by walking up! [*Exit ZEKE, L.*

Seraphina, my dear (*aside to her*), remember now what I told you about the Count. He is a man of the highest,—good gracious! I am so flurried; and nothing is so ungentle as agitation! what will the Count think! Mr. Twinkle, pray stand out of the way! Seraphina, my dear, place yourself on my right! Mr. Fogg, the conservatory—beautiful flowers,—pray amuse yourself in the conservatory.

Fogg. I am indifferent to flowers, Madam.

Mrs. Tif. Dear me! the man stands right in the way,—just where the Count must make his *entray*! [*aside.*

Mr. Fogg,—pray—

Enter Count JOLIMAITRE, L.U.E. very dashingly dressed, wears a moustache.

Mrs. Tif. Oh, Count, this unexpected honor—

Sera. Count, this inexpressible pleasure—

Count. Beg you won't mention it, Madam! Miss Seraphina, your most devoted! (*crosses to c.*)

Mrs. Tif. What condescension! (*aside*) Count, may I take the liberty to introduce—Good gracious! I forgot. (*aside*) Count, I was about to remark that we never introduce in America. All our fashions are foreign, Count.

[*TWINKLE, who has stepped forward to be introduced, shows great indignation.*

Count, c. Excuse me, Madam, our fashions have grown

antideluvian before you Americans discover their existence. You are lamentably behind the age—lamentably! 'Pon my honor, a foreigner of refinement finds great difficulty in existing in this provincial atmosphere.

Mrs. Tif. How dreadful, Count! I am very much concerned. If there is anything which I can do, Count—

Sera. R. Or I, Count, to render your situation less deplorable—

Count. Ah! I find but one redeeming charm in America—the superlative loveliness of the feminine portion of creation,—and the wealth of their obliging papas. (*aside*)

Mrs. Tif. How flattering! Ah! Count, I am afraid you will turn the head of my simple girl here. She is a perfect child of nature, Count.

Count. Very possibly, for though you American women are quite charming, yet, demme, there's a deal of native rust to rub off!

Mrs. Tif. *Rust?* Good gracious, Count! where do you find any rust? [*looking about the room.*]

Count. How very unsophisticated!

Mrs. Tif. Count, I am so much ashamed,—pray excuse me! Although a lady of large fortune, and one, Count, who can boast of the highest connections, I blush to confess that I have never travelled,—while you, Count, I presume are at home in all the courts of Europe.

Count. *Courts?* Eh? Oh, yes, Madam, very true. I believe I am pretty well known in some of the courts of Europe—*police courts.* (*aside, crossing, L.*) In a word, Madam, I had seen enough of civilized life—wanted to refresh myself by a sight of barbarous countries and customs—had my choice between the Sandwich Islands and New York—chose New York!

Mrs. Tif. How complimentary to our country! And, Count, I have no doubt you speak every conceivable language? You talk English like a native.

Count. Eh, what? Like a native? Oh, ah, demme, yes, I am something of an Englishman. Passed one year and eight months with the Duke of Wellington, six months with Lord Brougham, two and a half with Count d'Orsay—knew them all more intimately than their best friends—no heroes to me—hadn't a secret from me, I assure you,—*especially of the toilet.* (*aside*).

Mrs. Tif. Think of that, my dear! Lord Wellington and Duke Broom! [aside to SERAPHINA.

Sera. And only think of Count d'Orsay, Mamma! (aside to Mrs. TIFFANY) I am so wild to see Count d'Orsay!

Count L. Oh! a mere man milliner. Very little refinement out of Paris? Why at the very last dinner given at Lord—Lord Knowswho, would you believe it, Madam, there was an individual present who wore a *black cravat* and took *soup twice*!

Mrs. Tif. c. How shocking! the sight of him would have spoilt my appetite! Think what a great man he must be, my dear, to despise lords and counts in that way. (aside to SERAPHINA.) I must leave them together. (aside.) Mr. Twinkle, your arm. I have some really very *foreign exotics* to show you.

Twin. I fly at your command. I wish all her exotics were blooming in their native soil!

[aside, and glancing at the Count.

Mrs. Tif. Mr. Fogg, will you accompany us? My conservatory is well worthy a visit. It cost an immense sum of money.

Fogg. I am indifferent to conservatories, Madam; flowers are such a bore!

Mrs. Tif. I shall take no refusal. Conservatories are all the rage,—I could not exist without mine! Let me show you,—let me show you.

[places her arm through Mr. FOGG's, without his consent. Exeunt Mrs. TIFFANY, FOGG, and TWINKLE into the conservatory, where they are seen walking about.

Sera. America, then, has no charms for you, Count?

Count. Excuse me,—some exceptions. I find you, for instance, particularly charming! Can't say I admire your country. Ah! if you had ever breathed the exhilarating air of Paris, ate creams at Tortoni's, dined at the Café Royale, or if you had lived in London—felt at home at St. James's, and every afternoon driven a couple of Lords and a Duchess through Hyde Park, you would find America—where you have no kings, queens, lords, nor ladies—in-supportable!

Sera. Not while there was a Count in it?

Enter ZEKE, L. U. E. very indignant.

Zeke. Where's de Missus?

Enter Mrs. TIFFANY, FOGG, and TWINKLE, from the conservatory.

Mrs. Tif. Whom do you come to announce, A-dolph?

Zeke. He said he wouldn't trust me—no, not eben wid so much as his name; so I wouldn't trust him up stairs, den he ups wid *his stick* and I *cuts mine*.

Mrs. Tif. Some of Mr. Tiffany's vulgar acquaintances. I shall die with shame. (*aside*) A-dolph, inform him that I am *not at home*.

[*Exit ZEKE, L. U. E.*

My nerves are so shattered, I am ready to sink. Mr. Twinkle, that *fow tool*, if you please!

Twin. What? What do you wish, Madam?

Mrs. Tif. The ignorance of these Americans! (*aside*) Count, may I trouble you? That *fow tool*, if you please!

Count. She's not talking English, nor French, but I suppose it's American. (*aside*.)

True. (*outside*.) Not at home!

Zeke. No, Sar—Missus say she's not at home.

True. Out of the way you grinning nigger!

Enter ADAM TRUEMAN, L. U. E., dressed as a farmer, a stout cane in his hand, his boots covered with dust. ZEKE jumps out of his way as he enters.

[*Exit ZEKE, L.*

True. Where's this woman that's not *at home* in her own house? May I be shot! if I wonder at it! I should'n't think she'd ever feel *at home* in such a show-box as this!

(*looking round*.)

Mrs. Tif. What a plebeian looking old farmer! I wonder who he is? (*aside*.) Sir—(*advancing very agitatedly*) what do you mean, Sir, by this *owdacious* conduct? How dare you intrude yourself into my parlor? Do you know who I am, Sir? (*with great dignity*) You are in the presence of Mrs. Tiffany, Sir!

True. Antony's wife, eh? Well now, I might have guessed that—ha! ha! ha! for I see you make it a point to carry half your husband's shop upon your back! No matter; that's being a good helpmate—for he carried the whole of it once in a pack on his own shoulders—now you bear a share!

Mrs. Tif. How dare you, you impertinent, *owdacious*, ignorant old man! Its all an invention. You're talking of somebody else. What will the Count think! (*aside*)

True. Why, I thought folks had better manners in the city! This is a civil welcome for your husband's old friend, and after my coming all the way from Catterangus to see you and yours! First a grinning nigger tricked out in scarlet regimentals—

Mrs. Tif. Let me tell you, Sir, that liveries are all the fashion!

True. The fashion, are they? To make men wear the *badge of servitude* in a free land,—that's the fashion, is it? Hurrah, for republican simplicity! I will venture to say now, that you have your coat of arms too!

Mrs. Tif. Certainly, Sir; you can see it on the panels of my *voyture*.

True. Oh! no need of that. I know what your *escutcheon* must be! A *bandbox rampant* with a *bonnet couchant*, and a *pedlar's pack passant*! Ha, ha, ha! that shows both houses united!

Mrs. Tif. Sir! you are most profoundly ignorant,—what do you mean by this insolence, Sir? How shall I get rid of him? (*aside*)

True. (*looking at SERAPHINA*) I hope that is not Gertrude! (*aside*)

Mrs. Tif. Sir, I'd have you know that—Seraphina, my child, walk with the gentlemen into the conservatory.

[*Exeunt SERAPHINA, TWINKLE, FOGG into conservatory.*]

Count Jolimaitre, pray make due allowances for the errors of this rustic! I do assure you, Count— (*whispers to him*)

True. Count! She calls that critter with a shoe brush over his mouth, Count! To look at him, I should have thought he was a tailor's walking advertisement! (*aside*)

Count. (*addressing TRUEMAN whom he has been inspecting through his eye-glass*) Where did you say you belonged, my friend? Dug out of the ruins of Pompeii, eh?

True. I belong to a land in which I rejoice to find that you are a foreigner.

Count. What a barbarian! He doesn't see the honor I'm doing his country! Pray, Madam, is it one of the

aboriginal inhabitants of the soil? To what tribe of Indians does he belong—the Pawnee or Choctaw? Does he carry a tomahawk?

True. Something quite as useful,—do you see that?

[*Shaking his stick. Count runs to R. H. behind Mrs. TIFFANY.*]

Mrs. Tif. Oh, dear! I shall faint! Millinette! (*approaching R. D.*) Millinette!

Enter MILLINETTE, R. D., without advancing into the room.

Milli. Oui, Madame.

Mrs. Tif. A glass of water! [*Exit MILLINETTE, R. Sir, (crossing L. to TRUEMAN)* I am shocked at your plebeian conduct! This is a gentleman of the highest standing, Sir! He is a *Count*, Sir!

Enter MILLINETTE, R., bearing a salver with a glass of water. In advancing towards Mrs. TIFFANY, she passes in front of the Count, starts and screams. The Count, after a start of surprise, regains his composure, plays with his eye glass, and looks perfectly unconcerned.

Mrs. Tif. What is the matter? What is the matter?

Milli. Noting, noting,—only— (*looks at Count and turns away her eyes again*) only—noting at all!

True. Don't be afraid, girl! Why, did you never see a live Count before? He's tame,—I dare say your mistress there leads him about by the ears.

Mrs. Tif. This is too much! Millinette, send for Mr. Tiffany instantly!

[*crosses to MILLINETTE, who is going, 3 E. L.*]

Milli. He just come in, Madame!

True. My old friend! Where is he? Take me to him,—I long to have one more hearty shake of the hand!

Mrs. Tif. (*crosses to him.*) Count, honor me by joining my daughter in the conservatory, I will return immediately.

[*Count bows and walks towards conservatory.*]

Mrs. TIFFANY following part of the way and then returning to TRUEMAN.

True. What a Jezebel! These women always play the very devil with a man, and yet I don't believe such a

damaged bale of goods as *that* (looking at Mrs. TIFFANY) has smothered the heart of little Antony!

Mrs. Tif. This way, Sir, *sal vous plait*.

[*Exit L. with great dignity.*

True. *Sal vous plait.* Ha, ha, ha! We'll see what Fashion has done for him.

[*Exit L.*

END OF ACT I.

ACT II.

SCENE I.

Inner apartment of Mr. TIFFANY'S Counting House. Mr. TIFFANY, R. C., seated at a desk looking over papers. Mr. SNOBSON, L. C., on a high stool at another desk, with a pen behind his ear.

Snobson. (rising L., advances L. to the front of the stage, regards TIFFANY and shrugs his shoulders) How the old boy frets and fumes over those papers, to be sure! He's working himself into a perfect fever—ex-actly,—therefore *bleeding's* the prescription! So here goes! (*aside*) Mr. Tiffany, a word with you, if you please, Sir?

Tif. (sitting still) Speak on, Mr. Snobson, I attend.

Snob. What I have to say, Sir, is a matter of the first importance to the credit of the concern—the *credit* of the concern, Mr. Tiffany!

Tif. Proceed, Mr. Snobson.

Snob. Sir you've a handsome house—fine carriage—nigger in livery—feed on the fat of the land—everything first rate—

Tif. Well, Sir?

Snob. My salary, Mr. Tiffany!

Tif. It has been raised three times within the last year.

Snob. Still it is insufficient for the necessities of an honest man,—mark me, an *honest* man, Mr. Tiffany.

Tif. (crossing L.) What a weapon he has made of that word! (*aside*) Enough—another hundred shall be added. Does that content you?

Snob. There is one other subject which I have before mentioned, Mr. Tiffany,—your daughter,—what's the reason you can't let the folks at home know at once that I'm to be *the man*?

Tif. Villain! And must the only seal upon this scoundrel's lips be placed there by the hand of my daughter? (*aside*) Well, Sir, it shall be as you desire.

Snob. And Mrs. Tiffany shall be informed of your resolution?

Tif. Yes.

Snob. Enough said! That's the ticket! The CREDIT of the concern's safe, Sir!

[returns to his seat.

Tif. How low have I bowed to this insolent rascal! To rise himself he mounts upon my shoulders, and unless I can shake him off he must crush me! (*aside*)

Enter TRUEMAN, C., down on L. H.

True. Here I am, Antony, man! I told you I'd pay you a visit in your money-making quarters. (*looks around*) But it looks as dismal here as a cell in the States' prison!

Tif. (*forcing a laugh*) Ha, ha, ha! States' prison! You are so facetious! Ha, ha, ha!

True. Well, for the life of me I can't see anything so amusing in that! I should think the States' prison plaguy uncomfortable lodgings. And you laugh, man, as though you fancied yourself there already.

Tif. Ha, ha, ha!

True. (*imitating him*) Ha, ha, ha! What on earth do you mean by that ill-sounding laugh, that has nothing of a laugh about it! This *fashion*-worship has made heathens and hypocrites of you all! *Deception* is your household God! A man laughs as if he were crying, and cries as if he were laughing in his sleeve. Everything is something else from what it seems to be. I have lived in your house only three days, and I've heard more lies than were ever invented during a Presidential election! First your fine lady of a wife sends me word that she's not at home—I walk up stairs, and she takes good care that *I* shall not be *at home*—wants to turn me out of doors. Then *you* come in—take your old friend by the hand—whisper, the deuce knows what, in your wife's ear, and the tables are turned in a tangent! Madam curtsies—says she's enchanted to see me—and orders her grinning nigger to show me a room.

Tif. We were exceedingly happy to welcome you as our guest!

True. Happy? *You* happy? Ah! Antony! Antony! that hatchet face of your's, and those criss-cross furrows tell quite another story! It's many a long day since you were *happy* at anything! You look as if you'd melted down your flesh into dollars, and mortgaged your soul in the bargain! Your warm heart has grown cold over your

ledger—your light spirits heavy with calculation! You have traded away your youth—your hopes—your tastes for wealth! and now you *have* the wealth you coveted, what does it profit you? Pleasure it cannot buy; for you have lost your *capacity* for enjoyment—Ease it will not bring; for the love of gain is never satisfied! It has made your counting-house a penitentiary, and your home a fashionable *museum* where there is no niche for you! You have spent so much time *ciphering* in the one, that you find yourself at last a very *cipher* in the other! See me, man! seventy-two last August!—strong as a hickory and every whit as sound!

Tif. I take the greatest pleasure in remarking your superiority, Sir.

True. Bah! no man takes pleasure in remarking the superiority of another? Why the deuce, can't you speak the truth, man? But it's not the *fashion* I suppose! I have not seen one frank, open face since—no, no, I can't say that either, though lying *is* catching! There's that girl, Gertrude, who is trying to teach your daughter music—but Gertrude was bred in the country!

Tif. A good girl; my wife and daughter find her very useful.

True. Useful? Well I must say you have queer notions of *use*!—But come, cheer up, man! I'd rather see one of your old smiles, than know you'd realized another thousand! I hear you are making money on the true, American, high pressure system—better go slow and sure—the more steam, the greater danger of the boiler's bursting! All sound, I hope? Nothing rotten at the core?

Tif. Oh, sound—quite sound!

True. Well that's pleasant—though I must say you do'n't look very pleasant about it!

Tif. My good friend, although I am solvent, I may say, perfectly solvent—yet you—the fact is, you can be of some assistance to me!

True. That's the *fact* is it? I'm glad we've hit upon one *fact* at last! Well—

[SNOBSON, who during this conversation has been employed in writing, but stops occasionally to listen, now gives vent to a dry chuckling laugh.]

True. Hey? What's that? Another of those deuced ill-sounding, city laughs! (*sees Snobson*) Who's that perched up on the stool of repentance—ch, Antony?

Snob. The old boy has missed his text there—*that's* the stool of repentance!

[*aside and looking at TIFFANY'S seat.*

Tif. One of my clerks—my confidential clerk!

True. Confidential? Why he looks for all the world like a spy—the most inquisitorial, hang-dog face—ugh! the sight of it makes my blood run cold! Come, (*crosses R.*) let us talk over matters where this critter can't give us the benefit of his opinion! Antony, the next time you choose a confidential clerk, take one that carries his credentials in his face—those in his pocket are not worth much without!

[*Exeunt TRUEMAN and TIFFANY, R. I E.*

Snob. (*jumping from his stool and advancing C.*) The old prig has got the tin, or Tiff would never be so civil! All right—Tiff will work every shiner into the concern—all the better for me! Now I'll go and make love to Seraphina. The old woman needn't try to knock me down with any of her French lingo! Six months from to-day if aint driving my two footmen tandem, down Broadway—and as fashionable as Mrs. Tiffany herself, then I aint the trump I thought I was! that's all. (*looks at his watch*) Bless me! eleven o'clock and I haven't had my julep yet? Snobson, I'm ashamed of you!

[*Exit, L.*

SCENE II.

The interior of a beautiful conservatory; walk through the centre; stands of flower pots in bloom; a couple of rustic seats. GERTRUDE, R. C., attired in white, with a white rose in her hair; watering the flowers. Colonel HOWARD, L., regarding her.

How., L. C. I am afraid you lead a sad life here, Miss Gertrude?

Ger., R. C. (*turning round gaily*) What! amongst the flowers? (*continues her occupation*)

How. No, amongst the thistles, with which Mrs. Tiffany surrounds you; the tempests, which her temper raises!

Ger. They never harm me. Flowers and herbs are

excellent tutors. I learn prudence from the reed, and bend until the storm has swept over me!

How. Admirable philosophy! But still this frigid atmosphere of fashion must be uncongenial to you? Accustomed to the pleasant companionship of your kind friends in Geneva, surely you must regret this cold exchange?

Ger. Do you think so? Can you suppose that I could possibly prefer a ramble in the woods to a promenade in Broadway? A wreath of scented wild flowers to a bouquet of these sickly exotics? The odour of new-mown hay to the heated air of this crowded conservatory? Or can you imagine that I could enjoy the quiet conversation of my Geneva friends, more than the edifying chit-chat of a fashionable drawing room? But I see you think me totally destitute of taste?

How. You have a merry spirit to jest thus at your grievances!

Ger. I have my *mania*,—as some wise person declares that all mankind have,—and mine is a love of independence! In Geneva, my wants were supplied by two kind old maiden ladies, upon whom I know not that I have any claim. I had abilities, and desired to use them. I came here at my own request; for here I am no longer *dependent*! *Voilà tout*, as Mrs. Tiffany would say.

How. Believe me, I appreciate the confidence you repose in me!

Ger. Confidence! Truly, Colonel Howard, the *confidence* is entirely on your part, in supposing that I confide that which I have no reason to conceal! I think I informed you that Mrs. Tiffany only received visitors on her reception day—she is therefore not prepared to see you. Zeke—Oh! I beg his pardon—Adolph, made some mistake in admitting you.

How. Nay, Gertrude, it was not Mrs. Tiffany, nor Miss Tiffany, whom I came to see; it—it was—

Ger. The conservatory perhaps? I will leave you to examine the flowers at leisure! (*crosses L.*)

How. Gertrude—listen to me. If I only dared to give utterance to what is hovering upon my lips! (*aside*) Gertrude!

Ger. Colonel Howard!

How. Gertrude, I must—must—

Ger. Yes, indeed you *must*, must leave me! I think I hear somebody coming—Mrs. Tiffany would not be well pleased to find you here—pray, pray leave me—that door will lead you into the street.

[*Hurries him out through door, C. F.; takes up her watering pot, and commences watering flowers, tying up branches, &c.*

What a strange being is man! Why should he hesitate to say—nay, why should I prevent his saying, what I would most delight to hear? Truly man *is* strange—but woman is quite as incomprehensible!

(*walks about gathering flowers*)

Enter Count JOLIMAITRE, L. U. E.

Count. There she is—the bewitching little creature! Mrs. Tiffany and her daughter are out of ear-shot. I caught a glimpse of their feathers floating down Broadway, not ten minutes ago. Just the opportunity I have been looking for! Now for an engagement with this captivating little piece of prudery! 'Pon honor, I am almost afraid she will not resist a *Count* long enough to give value to the conquest. (*approaches her*) *Ma belle petite*, were you gathering roses for me?

Ger. (*starts on first perceiving him, but instantly regains her self-possession*) The roses here, Sir, are carefully guarded with thorns—if you have the right to gather, pluck for yourself!

Count. Sharp as ever, little Gertrude! But now that we are alone, throw off this frigidity, and be at your ease.

Ger. Permit me to *be alone*, Sir, that I *may* be at my ease!

Count. Very good, *ma belle*, well said! (*applauding her with his hands*) Never yield too soon, even to a *title*! But, as the old girl may find her way back before long, we may as well come to particulars at once. I love you; but that you know already. (*rubbing his eye-glass unconcernedly with his handkerchief*) Before long I shall make Mademoiselle Seraphina my wife, and, of course, you shall remain in the family!

Ger. (*indignantly*) Sir—

Count. 'Pon my honor you shall! In France we arrange these little matters without difficulty!

Ger. But I am an *American!* Your conduct proves that you are not one! [*going, crosses, R. H.*]

Count. (*preventing her*) Don't run away, my immaculate *petite Americaine!* Demme, you've quite overlooked my condescension—the difference of our stations—you a species of upper servant—an orphan—no friends.

Enter TRUEMAN unperceived, R. U. E.

Ger. And therefore more entitled to the respect and protection of every *true gentleman!* Had you been one, you would not have insulted me!

Count. My charming little orator, patriotism and declamation become you particularly! (*approaches her*) I feel quite tempted to taste—

True. (*thrusting him aside*) An American hickory switch! (*strikes him*) Well, how do you like it?

Count. Old matter-of-fact! (*aside*) Sir, how dare you?

True. My stick has answered that question!

Ger. Oh! now I am quite safe!

True. Safe! not a bit safer than before! All women would be safe, if they knew how virtue became them! As for you, Mr. Count, what have you to say for yourself? Come, speak out!

Count. Sir,—aw—aw—you don't understand these matters!

True. That's a fact! Not having had *your* experience, I don't believe I *do* understand them!

Count. A piece of pleasantry—a mere joke—

True. A joke was it? I'll show you a joke worth two of that! I'll teach you the way we natives joke with a puppy who don't respect an honest woman! (*seizing him*)

Count. Oh! oh! demme—you old ruffian! let me go. What do you mean?

True. Oh! a piece of pleasantry—a mere joke—very pleasant isn't it?

[*Attempts to strike him again; COUNT struggles with him. Enter Mrs. TIFFANY hastily, L 2 E., in her bonnet and shawl.*]

Mrs. Tif. What is the matter? I am perfectly *abimé* with terror. Mr. Trueman, what has happened?

True. Oh! we have been *joking!*

Mrs. Tif. (*to COUNT, who is re-arranging his dress*)

My dear Count, I did not expect to find you here—how kind of you!

True. Your dear Count, has been showing his *kindness* in a very *foreign* manner. Too *foreign* I think, he found it to be relished by an *unfashionable native!* What do you think of a puppy, who insults an innocent girl all in the way of *kindness?* This Count of your's—this importation of—

Count. My dear Madam, demme, permit me to explain. It would be unbecoming—demme—particularly unbecoming of you—aw—aw—to pay any attention to this ignorant person. (*crosses to TRUEMAN.*) Anything that he says concerning a man of my standing—aw—the truth is, Madam—

True. Let us have the truth by all means,—if it is only for the novelty's sake!

Count. (*turning his back to TRUEMAN*) You see, madam, hoping to obtain a few moments' private conversation with Miss Seraphina—with *Miss Seraphina* I say—and—aw—and knowing her passion for flowers, I found my way to your very tasteful and *recherché* conservatory. (*looks about him approvingly*) *Very* beautifully arranged—does you great credit, madam! Here I encountered this young person. She was inclined to be talkative; and I indulged her with—with a—aw—demme—a few *common places!* What passed between us was mere *harmless badinage*—on my part. You, madam, you—so conversant with our European manners—you are aware that when a man of fashion—that is, when a woman—a man is bound—amongst noblemen, you know—

Mrs. Tif. I comprehend you perfectly—*parfittement*, my dear Count.

Count. 'Pon my honor, that's very obliging of her. (*aside*)

Mrs Tif. I am shocked at the plebeian forwardness of this conceited girl!

True. (*walking up to COUNT*) Did you ever keep a reckoning of the lies you tell in an hour?

Mrs Tif. Mr. Trueman, I blush for you!

(*crosses c., to TRUEMAN*)

True. Don't do that—you have no blushes to spare!

Mrs. Tif. It is a man of rank whom you are addressing, Sir!

True. A rank villain, Mrs. Antony Tiffany! A *rich one* he would be, had he as much *gold* as *brass*!

Mrs. Tif. Pray pardon him, Count; he knows nothing of *how ton*!

Count. Demme, he's beneath my notice. I tell you what, old fellow—(TRUEMAN *raises his stick* as COUNT *approaches, the latter starts back*) the sight of him discomposes me—aw—I feel quite uncomfortable—aw—let us join your charming daughter? I can't do you the honor to shoot you, Sir—(to TRUEMAN) you are beneath me—a nobleman can't fight a commoner! Good bye, old Truepenny! I—aw—I'm insensible to your insolence!

[*Exeunt* COUNT and MRS. TIFFANY, R. H. U. E.]

True. You won't be insensible to a cow hide in spite of your nobility! The next time he practises any of his foreign fashions on you, Gertrude, you'll see how I'll wake up his sensibilities!

Ger. I do not know what I should have done without you, sir.

True. Yes, you do—you know that you would have done well enough! Never tell a lie, girl! not even for the sake of pleasing an old man! When you open your lips let your heart speak. Never tell a lie! Let your face be the looking-glass of your soul—your heart its clock—while your tongue rings the hours! But the glass must be clear, the clock true, and then there's no fear but the tongue will do its duty in a woman's head!

Ger. You are very good, Sir!

True. That's as it may be!—How my heart warms towards her! (*aside*) Gertrude, I hear that you have no mother?

Ger. Ah! no, Sir; I wish I had.

True. So do I! Heaven knows, so do I! (*aside, and with emotion*) And you have no father, Gertrude?

Ger. No, Sir—I often wish I had!

True. (*hurriedly*) Don't do that, girl! don't do that! Wish you had a mother—but never wish that you had a father again! Perhaps the one you had did not deserve such a child!

[*Enter* PRUDENCE, R. U. E., *down* L. H.]

Pru. Seraphina is looking for you, Gertrude.

Ger. I will go to her. (*crosses to* R. H.) Mr. Trueman,

you will not permit me to thank you, but you cannot prevent my gratitude! [Exit, R. U. E.

True. (looking after her) If falsehood harbours there, I'll give up searching after truth!

[crosses R., retires up the stage musingly, and commences examining the flowers.

Pru. What a nice old man he is to be sure! I wish he would say something! (aside)

[crosses R., walks after him, turning when he turns—after a pause,

Don't mind me, Mr. Trueman!

True. Mind you? Oh! no, don't be afraid (crosses L.)—I was'nt minding you. Nobody seems to mind you much!

[continues walking and examining the flowers—
PRUDENCE follows.

Pru. Very pretty flowers, aint they? Gertrude takes care of them.

True. Gertrude? So I hear—(advancing L. c.) I suppose you can tell me now who this Gertrude—

Pru. Who she's in love with? I *knew* you were going to say that! I'll tell you all about it! Gertrude, she's in love with—Mr. Twinkle! and he's in love with her. And Seraphina she's in love with Count Jolly—what-d'ye-call-it: but Count Jolly don't take to her at all—but Colonel Howard—he's the man—he's desperate about her!

True. Why you feminine newspaper! Howard in love with that quintessence of affectation! Howard—the only, frank, straightforward fellow that I've met since—I'll tell him my mind on the subject! And Gertrude hunting for happiness in a rhyming dictionary! The girl's a greater fool than I took her for? [crosses R.

Pru. So she is—you see I know all about them!

True. I see you do! You've a wonderful knowledge—wonderful—of *other people's concerns!* It may do here, but take my word for it, in the county of Catteraugus you'd get the name of a great *busy-body.* But perhaps you know that too?

Pru. Oh! I always know what's coming. I feel it beforehand all over me. I knew something was going to happen the day you came here—and what's more I can always tell a married man from a single—I felt right off that you were a bachelor?

True. Felt right off I was a bachelor did you? you were sure of it—sure?—quite sure? (*Prudence assents delightedly*) Then you felt wrong!—a bachelor and a widower are not the same thing!

Pru. Oh! but it all comes to the same thing—a widower's as good as a bachelor any day! And besides I knew that you were a farmer *right off*.

True. On the spot, eh? I suppose you saw cabbages and green peas growing out of my hat?

Pru. No, I did'nt—but I knew all about you. And I knew—(*looking down and fidgetting with her apron*) I knew you were for getting married soon! For last night I dream't I saw your funeral going along the streets, and the mourners all dressed in white. And a funeral is a sure sign of a wedding you know! (*nudging him with her elbow*)

True. (*imitating her voice*). Well I can't say that I know any such thing! you know! (*nudging her back*)

Pru. Oh! it does, and there's no getting over it! For my part, I like farmers—and I know all about setting hens and turkeys, and feeding chickens, and laying eggs, and all that sort of thing!

True. May I be shot! if mistress newspaper is not putting in an advertisement for herself! This is your city mode of courting I suppose, ha, ha, ha! (*aside*)

Pru. I've been west, a little; but I never was in the county of Catteraugus, myself.

True. Oh! you were not? And you have taken a particular fancy to go there, eh?

Pru. Perhaps I should'nt object—

True. Oh!—ah!—so I suppose. Now pay attention to what I am going to say, for it is a matter of great importance to yourself.

Pru. Now it's coming—I know what he's going to say! (*aside*).

True. The next time you want to tie a man for life to your apron-strings, pick out one that don't come from the county of Catteraugus—for green horns are scarce in those parts, and modest women plenty!

[*Exit, R.*

Pru. Now who'd have thought he was going to say that! But I won't give him up yet—I won't give him up.

[*Exit, R.*

ACT III.

SCENE I.

Mrs. TIFFANY'S *Parlor*. Enter Mrs. TIFFANY, R. 1 E., followed by Mr. TIFFANY.

Tif. "Your extravagance will ruin me, Mrs. Tiffany!"

Mrs. Tif. "And your stinginess will ruin me, Mr. Tiffany! It is totally and *toot a fate* impossible to convince you of the necessity of *keeping up appearances*. There is a certain display which every woman of fashion is forced to make!"

Tif. "And pray who made *you* a woman of fashion?"

Mrs. Tif. "What a vulgar question! All women of fashion, Mr. Tiffany—"

Tif. "In this land are *self-constituted*, like you, Madam—and *fashion* is the cloak for more sins than charity ever covered! It was for *fashion's* sake that you insisted upon my purchasing this expensive house—it was for *fashion's* sake that you ran me in debt at every exorbitant upholsterer's and extravagant furniture warehouse in the city—it was for *fashion's* sake that you built that ruinous conservatory—hired more servants than they have persons to wait upon—and dressed your footman like a harlequin!"

Mrs. Tif. "Mr. Tiffany, you are thoroughly plebeian, and insufferably *American*, in your grovelling ideas! And, pray, what was the occasion of these very *mal-ap-pro-pos* remarks? Merely because I requested a paltry fifty dollars to purchase a new style of head-dress—a *bijou* of an article just introduced in France."

Tif. "Time was, Mrs. Tiffany, when you manufactured your own French head-dresses—took off their first gloss at the public balls, and then sold them to your shortest-sighted customers. And all you knew about France, or French either, was what you spelt out at the bottom of your fashion plates—but now you have grown so fashionable, forsooth, that you have forgotten how to speak your mother tongue!"

Mrs. Tif. "Mr. Tiffany, Mr. Tiffany! Nothing is more

“positively vulgarian—more *unaristocratic* than any allusion to the past!”

Tif. “Why I thought, my dear, that *aristocrats* lived principally upon the past—and traded in the market of fashion with the bones of their ancestors for capital?”

Mrs. Tif. Mr. Tiffany, such vulgar remarks are only suitable to the counting house, in my drawing room you should—

Tif. Vary my sentiments with my locality, as you change your *manners* with your *dress*!

Mrs. Tif. Mr. Tiffany, I desire that you will purchase Count d’Orsay’s “Science of Etiquette,” and learn how to conduct yourself—especially before you appear at the grand ball, which I shall give on Friday!

Tif. Confound your balls, Madam; they make *footballs* of my money, while you dance away all that I am worth! A pretty time to give a ball when you know that I am on the very brink of bankruptcy!

Mrs. Tif. So much the greater reason that nobody should suspect your circumstances, or you would lose your credit at once. Just at this crisis a ball is absolutely *necessary* to save your reputation! There is Mrs. Adolphus Dashaway—she gave the most splendid *fête* of the season—and I hear on very good authority that her husband has not paid his baker’s bill in three months. Then there was Mrs. Honeywood—

Tif. Gave a ball the night before her husband shot himself—perhaps you wish to drive me to follow his example? [crosses R. L. H.]

Mrs. Tif. Good gracious! Mr. Tiffany, how you talk! I beg you won’t mention anything of the kind. I consider black the most unbecoming color. I’m sure I’ve done all that I could to gratify you. There is that vulgar old torment, Trueman, who gives one the lie fifty times a day—have’nt I been very civil to him?

Tif. Civil to his *wealth*, Mrs. Tiffany! I told you that he was a rich, old farmer—the early friend of my father—my own benefactor—and that I had reason to think he might assist me in my present embarrassments. Your civility was *bought*—and like most of your *own* purchases has yet to be *paid* for. [crosses to R. H.]

Mrs. Tif. And will be, no doubt! The condescension

of a woman of fashion should command any price. Mr. Trueman is insupportably indecorous—he has insulted Count Jolimaitre in the most outrageous manner. If the Count was not so deeply interested—so *abimé* with Seraphina, I am sure he would never honor us by his visits again!

Tif. So much the better—he shall never marry my daughter!—I am resolved on that. Why, Madam, I am told there is in Paris a regular matrimonial stock company, who fit out indigent dandies for this market. How do I know but this fellow is one of its creatures, and that he has come here to increase its dividends by marrying a fortune?

Mrs. Tif. Nonsense, Mr. Tiffany. The Count, the most fashionable young man in all New York—the intimate friend of all the dukes and lords in Europe—not marry my daughter? Not permit Seraphina to become a Countess? Mr. Tiffany, you are out of your senses!

Tif. That would not be very wonderful, considering how many years I have been united to you, my dear. Modern physicians pronounce lunacy infectious!

Mrs. Tif. Mr. Tiffany, he is a man of fashion—

- *Tif.* Fashion makes fools, but cannot *feed* them. By the bye, I have a request,—since you are bent upon ruining me by this ball, and there is no help for it,—I desire that you will send an invitation to my confidential clerk, Mr. Snobson.

Mrs. Tif. Mr. Snobson! Was there ever such an *you-nick* demand! Mr. Snobson would cut a pretty figure amongst my fashionable friends! I shall do no such thing, Mr. Tiffany.

Tif. Then, Madam, the ball shall not take place. Have I not told you that I am in the power of this man? That there are circumstances which it is happy for you that you do not know—which you cannot comprehend,—but which render it essential that you should be civil to Mr. Snobson? Not you merely, but Seraphina also? He is a more appropriate match for her than your foreign favorite.

Mrs. Tif. A match for Seraphina, indeed! (*crosses*) Mr. Tiffany, you are determined to make a *low pas*.

Tif. Mr. Snobson intends calling this morning.

[*crosses to L. H.*

Mrs Tif. But, Mr. Tiffany, this is not reception day—my drawing-rooms are in the most terrible disorder—

Tif. Mr. Snobson is not particular—he must be admitted.

Enter ZEKE, L.

Zeke. Mr. Snobson.

Enter SNOBSON, L.; exit ZEKE, L.

Snob. How dyc do, Marm? (*crosses to c.*) How are you? Mr. Tiffany, your most!—

Mrs. Tif. (*formally*) *Bung jure.* Comment vow portè vow, Monsur Snobson?

Snob. Oh, to be sure—very good of you—fine day.

Mrs. Tif. (*pointing to a chair with great dignity*) *Sas-soyez vow,* Monsur Snobson.

Snob. I wonder what she's driving at? I aint up to the fashionable lingo yet! (*aside*) Eh? what? Speak a little louder, Marm?

Mrs. Tif. What ignorance! (*aside*)

Tif. I presume Mrs. Tiffany means that you are to take a seat.

Snob. Ex-actly—very obliging of her—so I will. (*sits*) No ceremony amonst friends, you know—and likely to be nearer—you understand? *O. K.*, all correct. How is Seraphina?

Mrs. Tif. Miss Tiffany is not visible this morning. *[retires up.*

Snob. Not visible? (*jumping up, crosses, R.*) I suppose that's the English for can't see her? Mr. Tiffany, Sir—(*walking up to him*) what am I to understand by this *de-fal-ca-tion*, Sir? I expected your word to be as good as your bond—beg pardon, Sir—I mean *better*—considerably better—no humbug about it, Sir.

Tif. Have patience, Mr. Snobson. (*rings bell*)

Enter ZEKE, L.

Zeke, desire my daughter to come here.

Mrs. Tif. (*coming down, c.*) Adolph—I say, Adolph—
[*ZEKE straightens himself and assumes foppish airs, as he turns to Mrs. TIFFANY.*

Tif. Zeke.

Zeke. Don't know any such nigga, Boss.

Tif. Do as I bid you instantly, or off with your livery and quit the house!

Zeke. Wheugh! I'se all dismissal! [*exit, R.*

Mrs. Tif. A-dolph, A-dolph! (*calling after him*)

Snob. I brought the old boy to his bearings, didn't I though! Pull that string, and he is sure to work right. (*aside*) Don't make any stranger of me, Marm—I'm quite at home. If you've got any odd jobs about the house to do up, I sha'nt miss you. I'll amuse myself with Seraphina when she comes—we'll get along very cosily by ourselves.

Mrs. Tif. Permit me to inform you, Mr. Snobson, that a French mother never leaves her daughter alone with a young man—she knows your sex too well for that!

Snob. Very *dis-obliging* of her—but as we're none French—

Mrs. Tif. You have yet to learn, Mr. Snobson, that the American *ee-light*—the aristocracy—the *how-ton*—as a matter of conscience, scrupulously follow the foreign fashions.

Snob. Not when they are foreign to their interests, Marm—for instance—(*enter SERAPHINA, R.*) There you are at last, eh, Miss? How dye do? Ma said you weren't visible. Managed to get a peep at her, eh, Mr. Tiffany?

Sera. I heard you were here, Mr. Snobson, and came without even arranging my toilette; you will excuse my negligence?

Snob. Of everything but *me*, Miss.

Sera. I shall never have to ask your pardon for *that*, Mr. Snobson.

Mrs. Tif. Seraphina—child—really—

[*as she is approaching SERAPHINA, Mr. TIF-FANY plants himself in front of his wife.*

Tif. Walk this way, Madam, if you please. To see that she fancies the surly fellow takes a weight from my heart. (*aside*)

Mrs. Tif. Mr. Tiffany, it is highly improper and not at all *distingué* to leave a young girl—

Enter ZEKE, L.

Zeke. Mr. Count Jolly-made-her!

Mrs. Tif. Good gracious! The Count—Oh, dear!—Seraphina, run and change your dress,—no there's not time! A-dolph, admit him. [*Exit ZEKE, L.*

Mr. Snobson, get out of the way, will you? Mr. Tiffany, what are you doing at home at this hour?

Enter Count JOLIMAITRE, L., *ushered by* ZEKE.

Zeke. Dat's de genuine article ob a gemman. (*aside*)

[*Exit, L.*

Mrs. Tif. My dear Count, I am overjoyed at the very sight of you.

Count. Flattered myself you'd be glad to see me, Madam—knew it was not your *jour de reception*.

Mrs. Tif. But for you, Count, all days—

Count. I thought so. Ah, Miss Tiffany, on my honor you're looking beautiful. [*crosses R.*

Sera. Count, flattery from you—

Snob. What? Eh? What's that you say?

Sera. Nothing but what etiquette requires.

[*aside to him.*

Count. (*regarding Mr. TIFFANY through his eye glass*) Your worthy Papa, I believe? Sir, your most obedient.

[*Mr. TIFFANY bows coldly; Count regards SNOBSON through his glass, shrugs his shoulders and turns away.*

Snob. (*to Mrs. TIFFANY*) Introduce me, will you? I never knew a Count in all my life—what a strange-looking animal!

Mrs. Tif. Mr. Snobson, it is not the fashion to introduce in France!

Snob. But, Marm, we're in America. (*Mrs. T. crosses to Count, R.*) The woman thinks she's somewhere else than where she is—she wants to make an *alibi*? (*aside*)

Mrs. Tif. I hope that we shall have the pleasure of seeing you on Friday evening, Count?

Count. Really, madam, my invitations—my engagements—so numerous—I can hardly answer for myself: and you Americans take offence so easily—

Mrs. Tif. But, Count, everybody expects you at our ball—you are the principal attraction—

Sera. Count, you *must* come!

Count. Since you insist—aw—aw—there's no resisting you, Miss Tiffany.

Mrs. Tif. I am so thankful. How can I repay your condescension! (*Count and SERAPHINA converse*) Mr. Snobson, will you walk this way?—I have *such* a cactus in full bloom—remarkable flower! Mr. Tiffany, pray come here—I have something particular to say.

Tif. Then speak out, my dear—I thought it was highly improper just now to leave a girl with a young man?

[*aside to her.*

Mrs. Tif. Oh, but the Count—that is different!

Tif. I suppose you mean to say there's nothing of *the man* about him?

Enter MILLINETTE, L., with a scarf in her hand.

Mil. Adolph tell me he was here. (*aside*) Pardon, Madame, I bring dis scarf for Mademoiselle.

Mrs. Tif. Very well, Millinette; you know best what is proper for her to wear.

[*Mr. and Mrs. TIFFANY and SNOBSON retire up; she engages the attention of both gentlemen.*

[*MILLINETTE crosses, L., towards SERAPHINA, gives the Count a threatening look, and commences arranging the scarf over SERAPHINA'S shoulders.*

Mil. Mademoiselle, *permettez-moi*. Perfide! (*aside to Count*) If Mademoiselle vil stand *tranquille* one *petit moment*. (*turns SERAPHINA'S back to the COUNT, and pretends to arrange the scarf*) I must speak vid you to-day, or I tell all—you find me at de foot of de stair ven you go. Prend garde! (*aside to Count*)

Sera. What is that you say, Millinette?

Mil. Dis scarf make you so very beautiful, Mademoiselle—*Je vous salue, mes dames.* (*curtsies*) [*exit L.*

Count. Not a moment to lose! (*aside*) Miss Tiffany, I have an unpleasant—a particularly unpleasant piece of intelligence—you see, I have just received a letter from my friend—the—aw—the Earl of Airshire; the truth is, the Earl's daughter—beg you won't mention it—has distinguished me by a tender *penchant*.

Sera. I understand—and they wish you to return and marry the young lady; but surely you will not leave us, Count?

Count. If you bid me stay—I shouldn't have the conscience—I couldn't *afford* to tear myself away. I'm sure that's honest (*aside*)

Sera. Oh, Count!

Count. Say but one word—say that you shouldn't mind

being made a Countess—and I'll break with the Earl tomorrow.

Sera. Count, this surprise—but don't think of leaving the country, Count—we could not pass the time without you! I—yes—yes, Count—I do consent!

Count. I thought she would! (*aside, while he embraces her*) Enchanted, rapture, bliss, ecstasy, and all that sort of thing—words can't express it, but you understand. But it must be kept a secret—positively it *must*! If the rumour of our engagement were whispered abroad—the Earl's daughter—the delicacy of my situation, aw—you comprehend? It is even possible that our nuptials, my charming Miss Tiffany, *our nuptials* must take place in private!

Sera. Oh, that is quite impossible!

Count. It's the latest fashion abroad—the very latest! Ah, I knew that would determine you. Can I depend on your secrecy?

Sera. Oh, yes! Believe me.

Snob. (*coming forward in spite of Mrs. TIFFANY's efforts to detain him*) Why Seraphina, haven't you a word to throw to a dog?

Tif. I shouldn't think she had after wasting so many upon a puppy. (*aside*)

Enter ZEKE, L., wearing a three-cornered hat.

Zeke. Missus, de bran new carriage am below.

Mrs. Tif. Show it up,—I mean, Very well, A-dolph.

[*Exit ZEKE, L.*

Count, my daughter and I are about to take an airing in our new *voiture*,—will you honor us with your company?

Count. Madam, I—I have a most *pressing* engagement. A letter to write to the *Earl of Airshire*—who is at present residing in the *Isle of Skye*. I must bid you good morning.

Mrs. Tif. Good morning, Count.

[*Exit Count, L.*

Snob. I'm quite at leisure, (*crosses to Mrs. T.*) Marm. Books balanced—ledger closed—nothing to do all the afternoon,—I'm for you

Mrs. Tif. (*without noticing him*) Come, Seraphina, come! [*as they are going SNOBSON follows them.*

Snob. But Marm—I was saying, Marm, I am quite at leisure—not a thing to do; have I, Mr. Tiffany?

Mrs. Tif. Seraphina, child—your red shawl—remember—Mr. Snobson, *bon swear!*

[*Exit, L., leading SERAPHINA.*

Snob. Swear! Mr. Tiffany, Sir, am I to be fobbed off with a *bon swear*? D—n it, I will swear!

Tif. Have patience, Mr. Snobson, if you will accompany me to the counting house—

Snob. Don't count too much on me, Sir. I'll make up no more accounts until these are settled! I'll run down and jump into the carriage in spite of her *bon swear*.

[*Exit, L.*

Tif. You'll jump into a hornet's nest, if you do! Mr. Snobson, Mr. Snobson! [*Exit after him.*

SCENE II.

Housekeeper's Room. Enter MILLINETTE, R.

Mil. I have set dat bête, Adolph, to vatch for him. He say he would come back so soon as Madame's voiture drive from de door. If he not come—but he vill—he vill—he *bien etourdi*, but he have *bon cœur*.

Enter Count, L.

Count. Ah! Millinette, my dear, you see what a good-natured dog I am to fly at your bidding—

Mil. Fly? Ah! *trompeur!* Vat for you fly from Paris? Vat for you leave me—and I love you so much? Ven you sick—you almost die—did I not stay by you—take care of you—and you have no else friend? Vat for you leave Paris?

Count. Never allude to disagreeable subjects, *mon enfant!* I was forced by uncontrollable circumstances to fly to the land of liberty—

Mil. Vat you do vid all de money I give you? The last sou I had—did I not give you?

Count. I dare say you did, ma petite—wish you'd been better supplied! (*aside*) Don't ask any questions here—can't explain now—the next time we meet—

Mil. But, ah! ven shall ve meet—ven? You not deceive me, not any more.

Count. Deceive you! I'd rather deceive myself—I wish I could! I'd persuade myself you were once more washing linen in the Seine! (*aside*)

Mil. I vil tell you ven ve shall meet—On Friday night Madame give one grand ball—you come *sans doute*—den ven de supper is served—de Americans tink of noting else ven de supper come—den you steal out of de room, and you find me here—and you give me one grand *explanation*!

Enter GERTRUDE, R., unperceived.

Count. Friday night—while supper is serving—*parole d'honneur* I will be here—I will explain every thing—my sudden departure from Paris—my—demme, my countship—every thing! Now let me go—if any of the family should discover us—

Ger. (*who during the last speech has gradually advanced, L.*) They might discover more than you think it advisable for them to know!

Count. The devil!

Mil. *Mon Dieu!* Mademoiselle Gertrude!

Count. (*recovering himself*) My dear Miss Gertrude, let me explain—aw—aw—nothing is more natural than the situation in which you find me—

Ger. I am inclined to believe that, Sir.

Count. Now—'pon my honor, that's not fair. Here is Millinette will bear witness to what I am about to say—

Ger. Oh, I have not the slightest doubt of that, Sir.

Count. You see, Millinette happened to be lady's-maid in the family of—of—the Duchess Chateau D'Espagne—and I chanced to be a particular friend of the Duchess—*very particular* I assure you! Of course I saw Millinette, and she, demme, she saw me! Didn't you, Millinette?

Mil. Oh! oui—Mademoiselle I knew him ver vell.

Count. Well, it is a remarkable fact that—being in correspondence with this very Duchess—at this very time—

Ger. That is sufficient, Sir—I am already so well acquainted with your extraordinary talents for improvisation, that I will not further tax your invention—

Mil. Ah! Mademoiselle Gertrude do not betray us—have pity!

Count. (*assuming an air of dignity*) Silence, Millinette! My word has been doubted—the word of a nobleman! I will inform my friend, Mrs. Tiffany, of this young person's audacity. (*going*)

Ger. His own weapons alone can foil this villain! (*aside*)

Sir—Sir—Count! (*at the last word the Count turns*) Perhaps, Sir, the least said about this matter the better!

Count. (*delightedly*) The least said? We won't say anything at all. She's coming round—couldn't resist me!

(*aside*) Charming Gertrude—

Mil. Quoi? Vat that you say?

Count. My sweet, adorable Millinette, hold your tongue, will you? (*aside to her*)

Mil. (*aloud*) No, I vill not! If you do look so from out your eyes at her again, I vill tell all!

Count. Oh, I never could manage two women at once,—jealousy makes the dear creatures so spiteful. The only valor is in flight! (*aside*) Miss Gertrude, I wish you good morning. Millinette, *mon enfant*, adieu.

[*Exit, L.*

Mil. But I have one word more to say. Stop, Stop!

[*exit after him.*

Ger. (*musingly*) Friday night, while supper is serving, he is to meet Millinette here and explain—what? This man is an impostor! His insulting me—his familiarity with Millinette—his whole conduct—prove it. If I tell Mrs. Tiffany this she will disbelieve me, and one word may place this so-called Count on his guard. To convince Seraphina would be equally difficult, and her rashness and infatuation may render her miserable for life. No—she shall be saved! I must devise some plan for opening their eyes. Truly, if I *cannot* invent one, I shall be the first woman who was ever at a loss for a stratagem—especially to punish a villain or to shield a friend.

[*Exit, R.*

ACT IV.

SCENE I.

Ball Room splendidly illuminated. A curtain hung at the further end. Mr. and Mrs. TIFFANY, SERAPHINA, GERTRUDE, FOGG, TWINKLE, COUNT, SNOBSON, Colonel HOWARD, a number of guests—some seated, some standing. As the curtain rises, a cotillion is danced; GERTRUDE dancing with HOWARD, SERAPHINA with Count.

Count. (advancing with SERAPHINA to the front of the stage) To-morrow then—to-morrow—I may salute you as my bride—demme, my Countess!

Enter ZEKE, L., with refreshments.

Sera. Yes, to morrow.

[as the Count is about to reply, SNOBSON thrusts himself in front of SERAPHINA.

Snob. You said you'd dance with me, Miss—now take my fin, and we'll walk about and see what's going on.

[Count raises his eye-glass, regards SNOBSON, and leads SERAPHINA away; SNOBSON follows, endeavoring to attract her attention, but encounters, on L.H., ZEKE, bearing a waiter of refreshments; stops, helps himself, and puts some in his pockets.

Here's the treat! get my to-morrow's luncheon out of Tiff.

Enter TRUEMAN, R, yawning and rubbing his eyes.

True. What a nap I've had, to be sure! (looks at his watch) Eleven o'clock, as I'm alive! Just the time when country folks are comfortably turned in, and here your grand turn-out has hardly begun yet!

[to TIFFANY, who approaches.

Ger. (advancing R.) I was just coming to look for you, Mr. Trueman. I began to fancy that you were paying a visit to dream-land.

True. So I was child—so I was—and I saw a face—like your's—but brighter!—even brighter. (to TIFFANY) There's a smile for you, man! It makes one feel that the world has something worth living for in it yet! Do you re-

member a smile like that, Anthony? Ah! I see you don't—but I do—I do! (*much moved*)

How. (*advancing c.*) Good evening, Mr. Trueman.

[*offers his hand.*

True. That's right man; give me your whole hand! When a man offers me the tips of his fingers, I know at once there's nothing in him worth seeking beyond his fingers ends.

[*TRUEMAN and HOWARD, GERTRUDE and TIFFANY converse.*

Mrs. Tif. (*advancing c.*) I'm in such a fidget lest that vulgar old fellow should disgrace us by some of his plebeian remarks! What it is to give a ball, when one is forced to invite vulgar people!

[*Mrs. TIFFANY advances towards TRUEMAN; SERAPHINA stands conversing flippantly with the gentlemen who surround her; amongst them is TWINKLE, who having taken a magazine from his pocket, is reading to her, much to the undisguised annoyance of SNOBSON.*

Dear me, Mr. Trueman, you are very late—quite in the fashion I declare!

True. Fashion! And pray what is *fashion*, madam? An agreement between certain persons to live without using their souls! to substitute etiquette for virtue—decorum for purity—manners for morals! to affect a shame for the works of their Creator! and expend all their rapture upon the works of their tailors and dressmakers!

Mrs. Tif. You have the most *ow-tray* ideas, Mr. Trueman—quite rustic, and deplorably *American!* But pray walk this way. [*Mrs. TIFFANY and TRUEMAN go up.*

Count. (*advancing L., to GERTRUDE, who stands c., HOWARD R., a short distance behind her*) Miss Gertrude—no opportunity of speaking to you before—in demand you know!

Ger. I have no choice, I must be civil to him. (*aside.*) What were you remarking, Sir?

Count. Miss Gertrude—charming Ger—aw—aw—I never found it so difficult to speak to a woman before. (*aside*)

Ger. Yes, a very charming ball—many beautiful faces here.

Coant. Only one!—aw—aw—one—the fact is—

[*talks to her in dumb show, up c.*

How. What could old Trueman have meant by saying she fancied that puppy of a Count—that paste jewel thrust upon the little finger of society.

Coant. Miss Gertrude—aw—'pon my honor—you don't understand—really—aw—aw—will you dance the polka with me?

[*GERTRUDE bows and gives him her hand; he leads her to the set forming; HOWARD remains looking after them.*

How. Going to dance with him too! A few days ago she would hardly bow to him civilly—could old Trueman have had reasons for what he said? [retires up.

[*Dance, the polka; SERAPHINA, after having distributed her bouquet, vinaigrette and fan amongst the gentlemen, dances with SNOBSON.*

Pru. (*peeping in L., as dance concludes*) I don't like dancing on Friday; something strange is always sure to happen! I'll be on the look out.

[*remains peeping and concealing herself when any of the company approach.*

Ger. (*advancing hastily c.*) They are preparing the supper—now if I can only dispose of Millinette while I unmask this insolent pretender! [Exit R.

Pru. (*peeping*) What's that she said? Its coming!

Re-enter GERTRUDE, R., bearing a small basket filled with bouquets; approaches Mrs. TIFFANY; they walk to the front of the stage.

Ger. Excuse me, Madam—I believe this is just the hour at which you ordered supper?

Mrs. Tif. Well, what's that to you! So you've been dancing with the Count—how dare you dance with a nobleman—you?

Ger. I will answer that question half an hour hence. At present I have something to propose, which I think will gratify you and please your guests. I have heard that at the most elegant balls in Paris, it is customary—

Mrs. Tif. What? what?

Ger. To station a servant at the door with a basket of

flowers. A bouquet is then presented to every lady as she passes in—I prepared this basket a short time ago. As the company walk in to supper, might not the flowers be distributed to advantage?

Mrs. Tif. How *distingué!* You are a good creature, Gertrude—there, run and hand the *bokettes* to them yourself! You shall have the whole credit of the thing.

Ger. Caught in my own net! (*aside*) But, madam, I know so little of fashions—Millinette, being French, herself will do it with so much more grace. I am sure Millinette—

Mrs. Tif. So am I. She will do it a thousand times better than you—there go call her.

Ger. (*giving basket*) But madam, pray order Millinette not to leave her station till supper is ended—as the company pass out of the supper room she may find that some of the ladies have been overlooked.

Mrs. Tif. That is true—very thoughtful of you, Gertrude.

[*Exit GERTRUDE, R.*]

What a *recherché* idea!

Enter MILLINETTE, R.

Here Millinette, take this basket. Place yourself there, (*C.*) and distribute these *bokettes* as the company pass in to supper; but remember not to stir from the spot until supper is over. It is a French fashion you know, Millinette. I am so delighted to be the first to introduce it—it will be all the rage in the *bow-monde!*

Mil. Mon Dieu! dis vill ruin all! (*aside*) Madame, Madame, let me tell you, Madame, dat in France, in Paris, it is de custom to present *les bouquets* ven every body first come—long before de supper. Dis would be *outré!* *barbare!* not at all la mode! Ven dey do come in dat is de fashion in Paris!

Mrs. Tif. Dear me! Millinette what is the difference? besides I'd have you to know that Americans always improve upon French fashions! here, take the basket, and let me see that you do it in the most *you-nick* and genteel manner.

[*MILLINETTE poutingly takes the basket and retires up stage, L.* A MARCH. *Curtain hung at the further end of the room is drawn back, and discloses a room, in the centre of which stands a supper table,**

beautifully decorated and illuminated; the company promenade two by two into the supper room; MILLINETTE presents bouquets as they pass; COUNT leads Mrs. TIFFANY.

True. (encountering FOGG, who is hurrying alone to the supper room) Mr. Fogg, never mind the supper, man! Ha, ha, ha! Of course you are indifferent to suppers!

Fogg. Indifferent! suppers—oh, ah—no, Sir—suppers? no—no—I'm not indifferent to suppers!

[hurries away towards table.

True. Ha, ha, ha! Here's a new discovery I've made in the fashionable world! Fashion don't permit the critter to have *heads* or *hearts*, but it allows them *stomachs*! (to TIFFANY, who advances) So it's not fashionable to *feel*, but it's fashionable to *feed*, eh, Anthony? ha, ha, ha!

[TRUEMAN and TIFFANY retire towards supper room. Enter GERTRUDE, followed by ZEKE, R.

Ger. Zeke, go to the supper room instantly,—whisper to Count Jolimaitre that all is ready, and that he must keep his appointment without delay,—then watch him, and as he passes out of the room, place yourself in front of Millinette in such a manner, that the Count cannot see her nor she him. Be sure that they do not see each other—every thing depends upon that. *[crosses to R. H.*

Zeke. Missey, consider dat business brought to a scientific conclusion.

[Exit into supper room. Exit. GERTRUDE, R. H.

Pru. (who has been listening) What can she want of the Count? I always suspected that Gertrude, because she is so merry and busy! Mr. Trueman thinks so much of her too—I'll tell him this! There's something wrong—but it all comes of giving a ball on a Friday! How astonished the dear old man will be when he finds out how much I know!

[advances timidly towards the supper room.

SCENE II.

Housekeeper's room; dark stage; table, two chairs. Enter GERTRUDE, with a lighted candle in her hand.

Ger. So far the scheme prospers! and yet this impru-

dence—if I fail? Fail! to lack courage in a difficulty, or ingenuity in a dilemma, are not woman's failings!

Enter ZEKE, R., with a napkin over his arm, and a bottle of champagne in his hand.

Well Zeke—Adolph!

Zeke. Dat's right, Missey; I feels just now as if dat was my legitimate title; dis here's de stuff to make a nigger feel like a gemman!

Ger. But is he coming?

Zeke. He's coming! (*sound of a champagne cork heard*) Do you hear dat, Missey? Don't it put you all in a froth, and make you feel as light as a cork? Dere's nothing like the *union brand*, to wake up de harmonies ob de heart.

[*drinks from bottle.*

Ger. Remember to keep watch upon the outside—do not stir from the spot; when I call you, come in quickly with a light—now, will you be gone!

Zeke. I'm off, Missey, like a champagne cork wid de strings cut. [*Exit R.*

Ger. I think I hear the Count's step. (*crosses L., stage dark; she blows out candle*) Now if I can but disguise my voice, and make the best of my French.

Enter Count, R. H.

Count. Millinette, where are you? How am I to see you in the dark?

Ger. (*imitating MILLINETTE'S voice in a whisper*) Hush! *parle bas.*

Count. Come here and give me a kiss.

Ger. Non—non—(*retreating alarmed, COUNT follows*) make haste, I must know all.

Count. You did not use to be so deuced particular.

Zeke. (*without*) No admission, gemman! Box office closed, tickets stopped!

True. (*without*) Out of my way; do you want me to try if your head is as hard as my stick?

Ger. What shall I do? Ruined, ruined!

[*she stands with her hand clasped in speechless despair.*

Count. Halloa! they are coming here, Millinette! Millinette, why don't you speak? Where can I hide myself? (*running about stage, feeling for a door*) Where are

all your closets? If I could only get out—or get in somewhere; may I be smothered in a clothes' basket, if you ever catch me in such a scrape again! (*his hand accidentally touches the knob of a door opening into a closet, L. F.*) Fortune's favorite yet! I'm safe!

[*gets into closet and closes door. Enter PRUDENCE, TRUEMAN, Mrs. TIFFANY, and Colonel HOWARD, R., followed by ZEKE, bearing a light; lights up.*]

Pru. Here they are, the Count and Gertrude! I told you so! [*stops in surprise on seeing only GERTRUDE.*]

True. And you see what a lie you told!

Mrs. Tif. Prudence, how dare you create this disturbance in my house? To suspect the Count too—a nobleman!

How. My sweet Gertrude, this foolish old woman would—

Pru. Oh! you needn't talk—I heard her make the appointment—I know he's here—or he's been here. I wonder if she hasn't hid him away!

[*runs peeping about the room.*]

True. (*following her angrily*) You're what I call a confounded—troublesome—meddling—old—prying—(*as he says the last word, PRUDENCE opens closet where the Count is concealed*) Thunder and lightning!

Pru. I told you so!

[*they all stand aghast; Mrs. TIFFANY, R., with her hands lifted in surprise and anger; TRUEMAN, R. C., clutching his stick; HOWARD, L. C., looking with an expression of bewildered horror from the Count to GERTRUDE.*]

Mrs. Tif. (*shaking her fist at GERTRUDE*) You depraved little minx! this is the meaning of your dancing with the Count!

Count. (*stepping from the closet and advancing L. H.*) I don't know what to make of it! Millinette not here! Miss Gertrude—oh! I see—a disguise—the girl's desperate about me—the way with them all. (*aside*)

True. I'm choking—I can't speak—Gertrude—no—no—it is some horrid mistake! (*partly aside, changes his tone suddenly*) The villain! I'll hunt the truth out of him, if there's any in—(*crosses L., approaches Count threateningly*)

do you see this stick? You made it's first acquaintance a few days ago; it is time you were better known to each other.

[as TRUEMAN attempts to seize him, Count escapes, crosses R., and shields himself behind Mrs. TIFFANY, TRUEMAN following.

Count. You ruffian! would you strike a woman?—Madam—my dear Madam—keep off that barbarous old man, and I will explain! Madam, with—aw—your natural *bon gout*—aw—your fashionable refinement—aw—your—aw—your knowledge of *foreign customs*—

Mrs. Tif. Oh! Count, I hope it aint a *foreign custom* for the nobility to shut themselves up in the dark with young women? We think such things *dreadful* in *America*.

Count. Demme—aw—hear what I have to say, Madam—I'll satisfy all sides—I am perfectly innocent in this affair—'pon my honor I am! That young lady shall inform you that I am so herself!—can't help it, sorry for her. Old matter-of-fact won't be convinced any other way,—that club of his is so particularly unpleasant! (*aside*) Madam, I was summoned here *malgré moi*, and not knowing whom I was to meet—Miss Gertrude, favor this company by saying whether or not you directed—that—aw—aw—that colored individual to conduct me here?

Ger. Sir, you well know—

Count. A simple yes or no will suffice.

Mrs. Tif. Answer the Count's question instantly, Miss.

Ger. I did—but—

Count. You hear, Madam—

True. I won't believe it—I can't! Here you nigger, stop rolling up your eyes, and let us know whether she told you to bring that critter here?

Zeke. I'se refuse to gib ebidence; dat's de device ob de skilfullest counsels ob de day! Can't answer, Boss—neber git a word out ob dis child—Yah! yah! [*Exit.*]

Ger. Mrs. Tiffany,—Mr. Trueman, if you will but have patience—

True. Patience! Oh, Gertrude, you've taken from an old man something better and dearer than his patience—the one bright hope of nineteen years of self-denial—of nineteen years of—

[throws himself upon a chair, his head leaning on table.

Mrs. Tif. Get out of my house, you *owdacious*—you ruined—you *abimé* young woman! You will corrupt all my family. Good gracious! don't touch me,—don't come near me. Never let me see your face after to-morrow. Pack.

[*goes up.*

How. Gertrude, I have striven to find some excuse for you—to doubt—to disbelieve—but this is beyond all endurance!

[*Exit, R. H.*

Enter MILLINETTE in haste, R.

Mil. I could not come before— (*stops in surprise at seeing the persons assembled*) Mon Dieu! vat does dis mean?

Count. Hold your tongue, fool! You will ruin everything, I will explain to-morrow. (*aside to her*) *Mrs. Tiffany*—*Madam*—my dear *Madam*, let me conduct you back to the ball-room. (*she takes his arm*) You see I am quite innocent in this matter; a man of my standing, you know,—aw, aw—you comprehend the whole affair.

[*Exit Count leading Mrs. T., R. H.*

Mil. I vill say to him von vord, I will!

[*Exit, R.*

Ger. Mr. Trueman, I beseech you—I insist upon being heard,—I claim it as a right!

True. Right? How dare you have the face, girl, to talk of rights? (*comes down*) You had more rights than you thought for, but you have forfeited them all! All right to love, respect, protection, and to not a little else that you don't dream of. Go, go! I'll start for Catteraugus to-morrow,—I've seen enough of what fashion can do!

[*Exit, R. H.*

Pru. (*Wiping her eyes*) Dear old man, how he takes on! I'll go and console him!

[*Exit, R. H.*

Ger. This is too much! How heavy a penalty has my imprudence cost me!—his esteem, and that of one dearer—my home—my— (*burst of lively music from ball-room*) They are dancing, and I—I should be weeping, if pride had not sealed up my tears.

[*She sinks into a chair. Band plays the polka behind till Curtain falls.*

ACT V.

SCENE I.

Mrs. TIFFANY'S Drawing Room—same Scene as Act 1st.

GERTRUDE seated, R. at a table, with her head leaning on her hand; in the other hand she holds a pen. A sheet of paper and an inkstand before her.

Ger. How shall I write to them? What shall I say? Prevaricate I cannot—(*rises and comes forward*) and yet if I write the truth—simple souls! how can they comprehend the motives for my conduct? Nay—the truly pure see no imaginary evil in others! It is only vice, that reflecting its own image, suspects even the innocent. I have no time to lose—I must prepare them for my return. (*resumes her seat and writes*) What a true pleasure there is in daring to be frank! (*after writing a few lines more pauses*) Not so frank either,—there is one name that I cannot mention. Ah! that he should suspect—should despise me. (*writes*)

Enter TRUEMAN, L.

True. There she is! If this girl's soul had only been as fair as her face,—yet she dared to speak the truth,—I'll not forget that! A woman who refuses to tell a lie has one spark of heaven in her still. (*approaches her*) Gertrude, [GERTRUDE starts and looks up. What are you writing there? Plotting more mischief, eh, girl?

Ger. I was writing a few lines to some friends in Geneva.

True. The Wilsons, eh?

Ger. (*surprised, rising*) Are you acquainted with them, Sir?

True. I shouldn't wonder if I was. I suppose you have taken good care not to mention the dark room—that foreign puppy in the closet—the pleasant surprise—and all that sort of thing, eh?

Ger. I have no reason for concealment, Sir! for I have done nothing of which I am ashamed!

True. Then I can't say much for your modesty.

Ger. I should not wish you to say more than I deserve.

True. There's a bold minx! (*aside*)

Ger. Since my affairs seem to have excited your interest—I will not say *curiosity*, perhaps you even feel a desire to inspect my correspondence? There, (*handing the letter*) I pride myself upon my good nature,—you may like to take advantage of it?

True. With what an air she carries it off! (*aside*) Take advantage of it? So I will. (*reads*) What's this? "French chambermaid—Count—impostor—infatuation—Seraphina Millinette—disguised myself—expose him." Thunder and lightning! I see it all! Come and kiss me, girl! (*GERTRUDE evinces surprise*) No, no—I forgot—it won't do to come to that yet! She's a rare girl! I'm out of my senses with joy! I don't know what to do with myself! Tol, de rol, de rol, de ra! [*capers and sings.*]

Ger. What a remarkable old man! (*aside*) Then you do me justice, Mr. Trueman?

True. I say I don't! Justice? You're above all dependence upon justice! Hurrah! I've found one true woman at last? *True?* (*pauses thoughtfully*) Humph! I didn't think of that flaw! Plotting and manœuvring—not much truth in that? An honest girl should be above stratagems!

Ger. But my *motive*, Sir, was good.

True. That's not enough—your *actions* must be good as well as your *motives*! Why could you not tell the silly girl that the man was an impostor?

Ger. I did inform her of my suspicions—she ridiculed them; the plan I chose was an imprudent one, but I could not devise—

True. I hate devising! Give me a woman with the *firmness* to be *frank*! But no matter—I had no right to look for an angel out of Paradise; and I am as happy—as happy as a Lord! that is, ten times happier than any Lord ever was! Tol, de rol, de rol! Oh! you—you—I'll thrash every fellow that says a word against you!

Ger. You will have plenty of employment then, Sir, for I do not know of one just now who would speak in my favor!

True. Not *one*, eh? Why, where's your dear Mr. Twinkle? I know all about it—can't say that I admire your choice of a husband! But there's no accounting for a girl's taste.

Ger. Mr. Twinkle! Indeed you are quite mistaken!

True. No—really? Then you're not taken with him, eh?

Ger. Not even with his rhymes.

True. Hang that old mother meddle-much! What a fool she has made of me. And so you're quite free, and I may choose a husband for you myself? Heart-whole, eh?

Ger. I—I—I trust there is nothing *unsound* about my heart.

True. There it is again. Don't prevaricate, girl! I tell you an *evasion* is a *lie in contemplation*, and I hate lying! Out with the truth! Is your heart *free* or not?

Ger. Nay, Sir, since you *demand* an answer, permit me to demand by what right you ask the question?

Enter HOWARD, L.

Colonel Howard here!

True. I'm out again! What's the Colonel to her?

[*retires up.*]

How. (*crosses to her*) I have come, Gertrude, to bid you farewell. To-morrow I resign my commission and leave this city, perhaps for ever. You, Gertrude, it is you who have exiled me! After last evening—

True. (*coming forward c. HOWARD*) What the plague have you got to say about last evening?

How. Mr. Trueman!

True. What have you got to say about last evening? and what have you to say to that little girl at all? Its Tiffany's precious daughter you're in love with.

How. Miss Tiffany? Never! I never had the slightest pretension—

True. That lying old woman! But I'm glad of it! Oh! Ah! Um! (*looking significantly at GERTRUDE and then at HOWARD*) I see how it is. So you don't choose to marry Seraphina, eh? Well now, whom do you choose to marry? [*glancing at GERTRUDE.*]

How. I shall not marry at all!

True. You won't? (*looking at them both again*) Why you don't mean to say that you don't like—

[*points with his thumb to GERTRUDE.*]

Ger. Mr. Trueman, I may have been wrong to boast of my good nature, but do not presume too far upon it.

How. You like frankness, Mr. Trueman, therefore I will speak plainly. I have long cherished a dream from which I was last night rudely awakened.

True. And that's what you call speaking plainly? Well, I differ with you! But I can guess what you mean. Last night you suspected Gertrude there of— (*angrily*) of what no man shall ever suspect her again while I'm above ground! You did her injustice,—it was a mistake! There, now that matter's settled. Go, and ask her to forgive you,—she's woman enough to do it! Go, go!

How. Mr. Trueman, you have forgotten to whom you dictate.

True. Then you won't do it? you won't ask her pardon?

How. Most undoubtedly I will not—not at any man's bidding. I must first know—

True. You won't do it? Then if I don't give you a lesson in politeness—

How. It will be because you find me your *tutor* in the same science. I am not a man to brook an insult, Mr. Trueman! but we'll not quarrel in presence of the lady.

True. Won't we? I don't know that—

[*crosses R. H.*

Ger. Pray, Mr. Trueman—Colonel Howard, (*crosses to c.*) pray desist, Mr. Trueman, for my sake! (*taking hold of his arm to hold him back*) Colonel Howard, if you will read this letter it will explain everything.

[*hands letter to HOWARD, who reads.*

True. He don't deserve an explanation! Did'nt I tell him that it was a mistake? Refuse to beg' your pardon! I'll teach him, I'll teach him!

How. (*after reading*) Gertrude, how have I wronged you!

True. Oh, you'll beg her pardon now?

[*between them.*

How. Her's, Sir, and your's! Gertrude, I fear—

True. You needn't,—she'll forgive you. You don't know these women as well as I do,—they're always ready to pardon; its their nature, and they can't help it. Come along, I left Antony and his wife in the dining room; we'll go and find them. I've a story of my own to tell! As for you, Colonel, you may follow. Come along, Come along!

[*Leads out GERTRUDE, R., followed by HOWARD.*

Enter Mr. and Mrs. TIFFANY, L. U. E. MR. TIFFANY with a bundle of bills in his hand.

Mrs. Tif. I beg you-won't mention the subject again,

Mr. Tiffany. Nothing is more plebeian than a discussion upon economy—nothing more *ungenteel* than looking over and fretting over one's bills!

Tif. Then I suppose, my dear, it is quite as ungenteel to *pay* one's bills?

Mrs. Tif. Certainly! I hear the *ee-light* never condescend to do anything of the kind. The honor of their invaluable patronage is sufficient for the persons they employ!

Tif. *Patronage* then is a newly invented food upon which the working classes fatten? What convenient appetites poor people must have! Now listen to what I am going to say. As soon as my daughter marries Mr. Snobson—

Enter PRUDENCE, R., a three-cornered note in her hand.

Pru. Oh, dear! oh, dear! what shall we do! Such a misfortune! Such a disaster! Oh, dear! oh, dear!

Mrs. Tif. Prudence, you are the most tiresome creature! What is the matter?

Pru. (*pacing up and down the stage*) Such a disgrace to the whole family! But I always expected it. Oh, dear! oh, dear!

Mrs. Tif. (*following her up and down the stage*) What are you talking about, Prudence? Will you tell me what has happened?

Pru. (*still pacing, Mrs. TIFFANY following*) Oh! I can't, I can't! You'll feel so dreadfully! How could she do such a thing! But I expected nothing else! I never did, I never did!

Mrs. Tif. (*still following*) Good gracious! what do you mean, Prudence? Tell me, will you tell me? I shall get into such a passion! What is the matter?

Pru. (*still pacing*) Oh, Betsy, Betsy! That your daughter should have come to that! Dear me, dear me!

Tif. Seraphina? Did you say Seraphina? What has happened to her? what has she done?

[*following PRUDENCE up and down the stage on the opposite side from Mrs. TIFFANY.*

Mrs. Tif. (*still following*) What has she done? what has she done?

Pru. Oh! something dreadful—dreadful—shocking!

Tif. (*still following*) Speak quickly and plainly—you

torture me by this delay,—Prudence, be calm, and speak! What is it?

Pru. (stopping) Zeke just told me—he carried her travelling trunk himself—she gave him a whole dollar! Oh, my!

Tif. Her trunk? where? where?

Pru. Round the corner!

Mrs. Tif. What did she want with her trunk? You are the most vexatious creature, Prudence! There is no bearing your ridiculous conduct!

Pru. Oh, you will have worse to bear—worse! Seraphina's gone!

Tif. Gone! where?

Pru. Off!—eloped—eloped with the Count! Dear me, dear me! I always told you she would!

Tif. Then I am ruined!

[stands with his face buried in his hands.]

Mrs. Tif. Oh, what a ridiculous girl! And she might have had such a splendid wedding! What could have possessed her?

Tif. The devil himself possessed her, for she has ruined me past all redemption! Gone, Prudence, did you say gone? Are you *sure* they are gone?

Pru. Didn't I tell you so! Just look at this note—one might know by the very fold of it—

Tif. (snatching the note) Let me see it! *(opens the note and reads)* “My dear Ma,—When you receive this I shall be a *countess*! Isn't it a sweet title? The Count and I were forced to be married privately, for reasons which I will explain in my next. You must pacify Pa, and put him in a good humour before I come back, though now I'm to be a countess I suppose I shouldn't care!” Undutiful huzzy! “We are going to make a little excursion and will be back in a week

“Your dutiful daughter—Seraphina.”

A man's curse is sure to spring up at his own hearth,—here is mine! The sole curb upon that villain gone, I am wholly in his power! Oh! the first downward step from honor—he who takes it cannot pause in his mad descent and is sure to be hurried on to ruin!

Mrs. Tif. Why, Mr. Tiffany, how you do take on!

And I dare say to elope was the most fashionable way after all!

Enter TRUEMAN, R., *leading* GERTRUDE, *and followed by* HOWARD.

True. Where are all the folks? Here, Antony, you are the man I want. We've been hunting for you all over the house. Why—what's the matter? There's a face for a thriving city merchant! Ah! Antony, you never wore such a hang-dog look as that when you trotted about the country with your pack upon your back! Your shoulders are no broader now—but they've a heavier load to carry—that's plain!

Mrs. Tif. Mr. Trueman, such allusions are highly improper! What would my daughter, *the Countess*, say!

Ger. The Countess? Oh! Madam!

Mrs. Tif. Yes, the Countess! My daughter Seraphina, the Countess *dee* Jolimaitre! What have you to say to that? No wonder you are surprised after your *recherché*, *abimé* conduct! I have told you already, Miss Gertrude, that you were not a proper person to enjoy the inestimable advantages of my patronage. You are dismissed—do you understand? Discharged!

True. Have you done? Very well, it's my turn now. Antony, perhaps what I have to say don't concern you as much as some others—but I want you to listen to me. You remember, Antony, (*his tone becomes serious*), a blue-eyed, smiling girl—

Tif. Your daughter, Sir? I remember her well.

True. None ever saw her to forget her! Give me your hand, man. There—that will do! Now let me go on. I never coveted wealth—yet twenty years ago I found myself the richest farmer in Catteraugus. This cursed money made my girl an object of speculation. Every idle fellow that wanted to feather his nest was sure to come courting Ruth. There was one—my heart misgave me the instant I laid eyes upon him—for he was a city chap, and not over fond of the truth. But Ruth—ah! she was too pure herself to look for guile! His fine words and his fair looks—the old story—she was taken with him—I said, “no”—but the girl liked her own way better than her old father's—girls always do! and one morning—the rascal robbed me

—not of my money, he would have been welcome to that—but of the only treasure I cherished—my daughter!

Tif. But you forgave her!

True. I did! I knew she would never forgive herself—that was punishment enough! The scoundrel thought he was marrying my gold with my daughter—he was mistaken! I took care that they should never want; but that was all. She loved him—what will not woman love? The villain broke her heart—mine was tougher, or it wouldn't have stood what it did. A year after they were married, he forsook her! She came back to her old home—her old father! It could'nt last long—she pined—and pined—and—then—she died! Don't think me an old fool—though I am one—for grieving won't bring her back. (*bursts into tears.*)

Tif. It was a heavy loss!

True. So heavy, that I should not have cared how soon I followed her, but for the child she left! As I pressed that child in my arms, I swore that my unlucky wealth should never curse it, as it had cursed its mother! It was all I had to love—but I sent it away—and the neighbors thought it was dead. The girl was brought up tenderly but humbly by my wife's relatives in Geneva. I had her taught true independence—she had hands—capacities—and should use them! Money should never buy her a husband! for I resolved not to claim her until she had made her choice, and found the man who was willing to take her for herself alone. She turned out a rare girl! and it's time her old grandfather claimed her. Here he is to do it! And there stands Ruth's child! Old Adam's heiress! Gertrude, Gertrude!—my child!

[GERTRUDE *rushes into his arms.*

Pru. (*After a pause*) Do tell; I want to know! But I knew it! I always said Gertrude would turn out somebody, after all!

Mrs. Tif. Dear me! Gertrude an heiress! My dear Gertrude, I always thought you a very charming girl—quite YOU-NICK—an heiress! I must give her a ball! I'll introduce her into society myself—of course an heiress must make a sensation! (*aside*)

How. I am too bewildered even to wish her joy. Ah! there will be plenty to do that now—but the gulf between us is wider than ever. (*aside*)

True. Step forward, young man, and let us know what you are muttering about. I said I would never claim her until she had found the man who loved her for herself. I *have* claimed her—yet I never break my word—I think I *have* found that man! and here he is. (*strikes HOWARD on the shoulder*) Gertrude's your's! There—never say a word, man—don't bore me with your thanks—you can cancel all obligations by making that child happy! There—take her!—Well, girl, and what do you say?

Ger. That I rejoice too much at having found a parent for my first act to be one of disobedience!

[*gives her hand to HOWARD.*]

True. How very dutiful! and how disinterested!

[*TIFFANY retires up—and paces the stage, exhibiting great agitation.*]

Pru. (*to TRUEMAN*) All the *single folks* are getting married!

True. No they are not. You and I are single folks, and we're not likely to get married.

Mrs. Tif. My dear Mr. Trueman—my sweet Gertrude, when my daughter, the Countess, returns, she will be delighted to hear of this *deenooment!* I assure you that the Countess will be quite charmed!

Ger. The Countess? Pray Madam where *is* Seraphina?

Mrs. Tif. The Countess *dee* Jolimaitre, my dear, is at this moment on her way to—to Washington! Where after visiting all the fashionable curiosities of the day—including the President—she will return to grace her native city!

Ger. I hope you are only jesting, Madam? Seraphina is not married?

Mrs. Tif. Excuse me, my dear, my daughter had this morning the honor of being united to the Count *dee* Jolimaitre!

Ger. Madam! He is an impostor!

Mrs. Tif. Good gracious! Gertrude, how can you talk in that disrespectful way of a man of rank? An heiress, my dear, should have better manners! The Count—

Enter MILLINETTE, R., crying.

Mil. Oh! Madame! I will tell everyting—oh! dat monstre! He break my heart!

Mrs. Tif. Millinette, what is the matter?

Mil. Oh! he promise to marry me—I love him much—and now Zeke say he run away vid Mademoiselle Seraphina!

Mrs. Tif. What insolence! The girl is mad! Count Jolimaitre marry my *femmy de chamber*!

Mil. Oh! Madame, he is not one Count, not at all! Dat is only de title he go by in dis country. De foreigners always take de large title ven dey do come here. His name à Paris vas Gustave Tread-mill. But he not one Frenchman at all, but he do live one long time à Paris. First he live vid Monsieur Vermicelle—dere he vas de head cook! Den he live vid Monsieur Tire-nez, de barber! After dat he live vid Monsieur le Comte Frippon-fin—and dere he vas le Comte's valet! Dere, now I tell everyting I feel one great deal better!

Mrs. Tif. Oh! good gracious! I shall faint! Not a Count! What will every body say? It's no such thing! I say he *is* a Count! One can see the foreign *jenny says quoi* in his face! Don't you think I can tell a Count when I see one? I say he *is* a Count!

Enter SNOBSON, L., his hat on—his hands thrust in his pocket—evidently a little intoxicated.

Snob. I won't stand it! I say I won't!

Tif. (rushing up to him) Mr. Snobson, for heaven's sake—*(aside)*

Snob. Keep off! I'm a hard customer to get the better of! You'll see if I don't come out strong!

True. (quietly knocking off SNOBSON'S hat with his stick) Where are your manners, man?

Snob. My business aint with you, Catteraugus; you've waked up the wrong passenger!—Now the way I'll put it into Tiff will be a caution. I'll make him wince! That extra mint julep has put the true pluck in me. Now for it! *(aside)* Mr. Tiffany, Sir—you needn't think to come over me, Sir—you'll have to get up a little earlier in the morning before you do *that*, Sir! I'd like to know, Sir, how you came to assist your daughter in running away with that foreign loafer? It was a downright swindle, Sir. After the conversation I and you had on that subject she wasn't your property, Sir.

True. What, Antony, is that the way your city clerk bullies his boss?

Snob. You're drunk, Catteraugus—don't expose yourself—you're drunk! Taken a little too much toddy, my old boy! Be quiet! I'll look after you, and they won't find it out. If you want to be busy, you may take care of my *hat*—I feel so deuced weak in the chest, I don't think I *could* pick it up myself.—Now to put the screws to Tiff. (*aside*) Mr. Tiffany, Sir—you have broken your word, as no virtuous individual—no honorable member—of—the—com—mu—ni—ty—

Tif. Have some pity, Mr. Snobson, I beseech you! I had nothing to do with my daughter's elopement! I will agree to anything you desire—your salary shall be doubled—trebled—

[*aside to him.*

Snob. (*aloud*) No you don't. No bribery and corruption.

Tif. I implore you to be silent. You shall become partner of the concern, if you please—only do not speak. You are not yourself at this moment.

[*aside to him.*

Snob. Aint I though. I feel *twice* myself. I feel like two Snobsons rolled into one, and I'm chock full of the spunk of a dozen! Now Mr. Tiffany, Sir—

Tif. I shall go distracted! Mr. Snobson, if you have one spark of manly feeling—

[*aside to him.*

True. Antony, why do you stand disputing with that drunken jackass? Where's your nigger? Let him kick the critter out, and be of use for once in his life.

Snob. Better be quiet, Catteraugus. This aint your hash, so keep your spoon out of the dish. Don't expose yourself, old boy.

True. Turn him out, Anthony!

Snob. He daren't do it! Aint I up to him? Aint he in my power? Can't I knock him into a cocked hat with a word? And now he's got my steam up—I *will* do it!

Tif. (*beseechingly*) Mr. Snobson—my friend—

Snob. It's no go—steam's up—and I don't stand at anything!

True. You won't *stand* here long unless you mend your manners—you're not the first man I've *upset* because he didn't know his place.

Snob. I know where Tiff's place is, and that's in the

States' Prison! It's bespoke already. He would have it! He wouldn't take pattern of me, and behave like a gentleman! He's a forger, Sir!

[TIFFANY *throws himself into a chair in an attitude of despair; the others stand transfixed with astonishment.*

He's been forging Dick Anderson's endorsements of his notes these ten months. He's got a couple in the bank that will send him to the wall any how—if he can't make a raise. I took them there myself! Now you know what he's worth. I said I'd expose him, and I have done it!

Mrs. Tif. Get out of the house! You ugly, little, drunken brute, get out! It's not true. Mr. Trueman, fu' him out; you have got a stick—put him out!

Enter SERAPHINA, L., in her bonnet and shawl—a parasol in her hand.

Sera. I hope Zeke hasn't delivered my note.

[*stops in surprise at seeing the persons assembled.*

Mrs. Tif. Oh, here is the Countess!

[*advances to embrace her.*

Tif. (*starting from his seat, and seizing SERAPHINA violently by the arm*) Are—you—married?

Sera. Goodness, Pa, how you frighten me! No, I'm not married, *quite.*

Tif. Thank heaven.

Mrs. Tif. (*drawing SERAPHINA aside, L.*) What's the matter? Why did you come back?

Sera. The clergyman wasn't at home—I came back for my jewels—the Count said nobility couldn't get on without them.

Tif. I may be saved yet! Seraphina, my child, you will not see me disgraced—ruined! I have been a kind father to you—at least I have tried to be one—although your mother's extravagance made a *madman* of me! The Count is an impostor—you seemed to like him—(*pointing to SNOBSON*) Heaven forgive me! (*aside*) Marry *him* and save *me.* You, Mr. Trueman, you will be my friend in this hour of extreme need—you will advance the sum which I require—I pledge myself to return it. My wife—my child—who will support them were I—the thought makes me frantic! You will aid me? You had a child yourself.

True. But I did not *sell* her—it was her own doings. Shame on you, Antony! Put a price on your own flesh and blood! Shame on such foul traffic!

Tif. Save me—I conjure you—for my father's sake.

True. For your *father's* SON'S sake I will *not* aid you in becoming a greater villain than you are!

Ger. (c.) Mr. Trueman—Father, I should say—save him—do not embitter our happiness by permitting this calamity to fall upon another—

True. Enough—I did not need your voice, child. I am going to settle this matter my own way.

[*Goes up to SNOBSON—who has seated himself and fallen asleep—tilts him out of the chair.*

Snob. (*waking up*) Eh? Where's the fire? Oh! it's you, Catteraugus.

True. If I comprehend aright, you have been for some time aware of your principal's forgeries?

[*as he says this, he beckons to HOWARD, c., who advances as witness.*

Snob. You've hit the nail, Catteraugus! Old chap saw that I was up to him six months ago; left off throwing dust into my eyes—

True. Oh, he did!

Snob. Made no bones of forging Anderson's name at my elbow.

True. Forged at your elbow? You saw him do it?

Snob. I did.

True. Repeatedly?

Snob. Re—pea—ted—ly

True. Then you, Rattlesnake, if he goes to the States' Prison, you'll take up your quarters there too. You are an accomplice, an *accessory*!

[*TRUEMAN walks away and seats himself, R. HOWARD rejoins GERTRUDE. SNOBSON stands for some time bewildered.*

Snob. The deuce, so I am! I never thought of that! I must make myself scarce. I'll be off! Tif, I say Tif! (*going up to him and speaking confidentially*) that drunken old rip has got us in his power. Let's give him the slip and be off. They want men of genius at the West,—we're sure to get on! You—you can set up for a writing master, and teach copying *signatures*; and I—I'll give lectures on

temperance! You won't come, eh? Then I'm off without you. Good bye, Catteraugus! Which is the way to California? [steals off, L.]

True. There's one debt your city owes me. And now let us see what other nuisances we can abate. Antony, I'm not given to preaching, therefore I shall not say much about what you have done. Your face speaks for itself,—the crime has brought its punishment along with it.

Tif. Indeed it has, Sir! In *one year* I have lived a *century* of misery.

True. I believe you, and upon one condition I will assist you—

Tif. My friend—my first, ever kind friend,—only name it!

True. You must sell your house and all these gew gaws, and bundle your wife and daughter off to the country. There let them learn economy, true independence, and home virtues, instead of foreign follies. As for yourself, continue your business—but let moderation, in future, be your counsellor, and let *honesty* be your confidential clerk.

Tif. Mr. Trueman, you have made existence once more precious to me! My wife and daughter shall quit the city to-morrow, and—

Pru. It's all coming right! Its all coming right! We'll go to the county of Catteraugus.

[walking up to TRUEMAN.]

True. No you won't,—I make that a stipulation, Antony; keep clear of Catteraugus. None of your fashionable examples there!

JOLIMAITRE *appears, L. H. 3 E., in the Conservatory and peeps into the room unperceived.*

Count. What can detain Seraphina? We ought to be off!

Mil. (*turns round, perceives him, runs and forces him into the room*) Here he is! Ah, Gustave, mon cher Gustave! I have you now and we never part no more. Don't frown, Gustave, don't frown—

True. Come forward, Mr. Count! and for the edification of fashionable society confess that you're an impostor.

Count. An impostor? Why, you abominable old—

True. Oh, your feminine friend has told us all about it,

the cook—the valet—barber and all that sort of thing. Come, confess, and something may be done for you.

Count. Well then, I do confess I am no count; but really, ladies and gentlemen, I may recommend myself as the most capital cook.

Mrs. Tif. Oh, Seraphina!

Sera. Oh, Ma! [they embrace and retire up.

True. Promise me to call upon the whole circle of your fashionable acquaintances with your own advertisements and in your cook's attire, and I will set you up in business to-morrow. Better turn stomachs than turn heads!

Mil. But you will marry me?

Count. Give us your hand, Millinette! Sir, command me for the most delicate *paté*—the daintiest *croquette à la royale*—the most transcendent *omelette soufflée* that ever issued from a French pastry-cook's oven. I hope you will pardon my conduct, but I heard that in America, where you pay homage to titles while you profess to scorn them—where *Fashion* makes the basest coin current—where you have no kings, no princes, no *nobility*—

True. Stop there! I object to your use of that word. When justice is found only among lawyers—health among physicians—and patriotism among politicians, *then* may you say that there is no *nobility* where there are no titles! But we *have* kings, princes, and nobles in abundance—of *Nature's stamp*, if not of *Fashion's*,—we have honest men, warm hearted and brave, and we have women—gentle, fair, and true, to whom no *title* could add *nobility*.

EPILOGUE.

Pru. I told you so! And now you hear and see. I told you *Fashion* would the fashion be!

True. Then both its point and moral I distrust.

Count. Sir, is that liberal?

How.

Or is it just?

True. The guilty have escaped!

Tif.

Is, therefore, sin

Made charming? Ah! there's punishment within!

Guilt ever carries his own scourge along.

Ger. Virtue her own reward !

True. You're right, I'm wrong.

Mrs. Tif. How we have been deceived !

Pru. I told you so.

Sera. To lose at once a title and a beau !

Count. A count no more, I'm no more of *account*.

True. But to a nobler title you may mount,

And be in time—who knows ?—an honest man !

Count. Eh, Millinette ?

Mil. Oh, oui,—I know you can !

Ger. (to audience) But, ere we close the scene, a word
with you,—

We charge you answer,—Is this picture true ?

Some little mercy to our efforts show,

Then let the world your honest verdict know.

Here let it see portrayed its ruling passion,

And learn to prize at its just value—*Fashion*.

DISPOSITION OF THE CHARACTERS.

L. Count. Millinette. Howard. Gertrude. Trueman.

Mrs. Tiffany. Tiffany. Seraphina. Prudence.

THE END.

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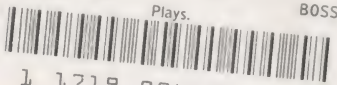


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