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FRENCH'S
AMERICAN DRAMA.
NO. 10.

THE
GAME OF LOVE.

AN ORIGINAL COMEDY,

IN FIVE ACTS.

BY

JOHN BROUGHAM, ESQ.

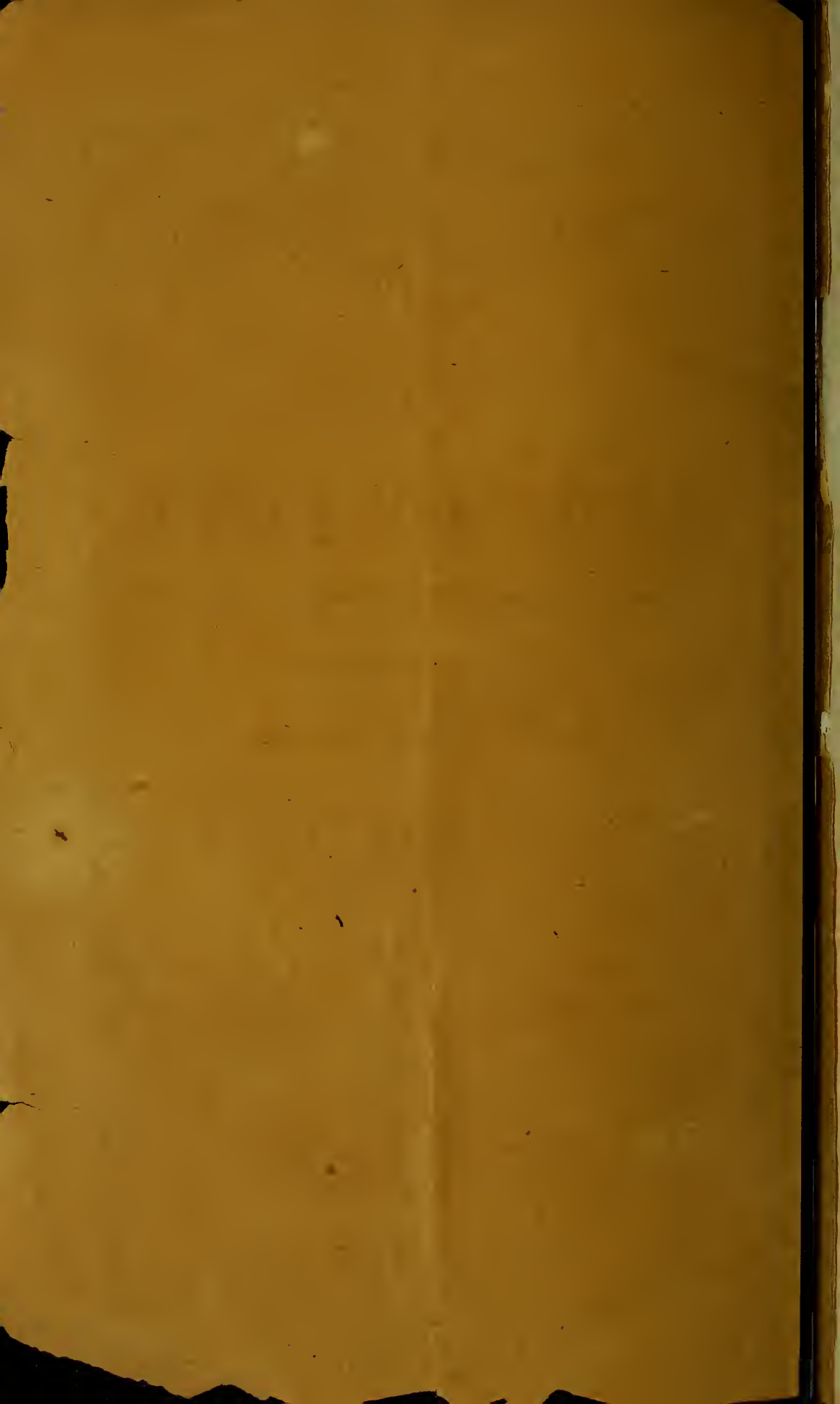
*With Cast of Characters, Stage Business, Costumes, Relative
Positions, etc. etc.*

AS PERFORMED AT WALLACK'S THEATRE.

NEW-YORK:
SAMUEL FRENCH,
121 NASSAU-STREET.

PRICE,

12½ CENTS.



FRENCH'S
AMERICAN DRAMA.

The Acting Edition.

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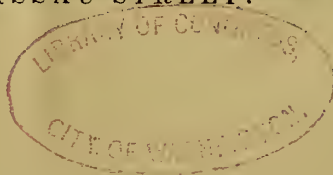
TO WHICH ARE ADDED,
A Description of the Costume—Cast of the Characters—Entrances and Exits
—Relative Positions of the Performers on the Stage, and
the whole of the Stage Business,

AS PERFORMED AT WALLACK'S THEATRE, N. Y.

Entered, according to Act of Congress, in the year one thousand eight
hundred and fifty-five,

By JOHN BROUGHAM,
In the Clerk's Office of the District Court of the United States, for the
Southern District of New York.

NEW-YORK:
SAMUEL FRENCH,
121 NASSAU-STREET.



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Cast of the Characters,

As first Performed at Wallack's Theatre, N. Y., Sept. 13th, 1855.

<i>Paul Weldon</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	Mr. Lester.
<i>Counsellor Corydon Foxglove</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	" H. Placide.
<i>Ted Murphy</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	" Brougham.
<i>Mr. Grace</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	" Stewart.
<i>Lawrence De Merfie, Esq.</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	" Stoddart.
<i>Jacob Chubb</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	" Holland.
<i>Captain Slim</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	" Colly.
<i>Major Doolittle</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	" Oliver.
<i>Alice Devcreaux</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	Mrs. Hoey.
<i>Miss Phæbe Tangle</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	Mrs. Vernon.
<i>Mrs. Lawrence De Merfie</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	Mrs. Brougham.
<i>Perkins</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	Mrs. Stephens.
<i>Mary</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	Miss Carman.

Guests, &c., &c., &c.

STAGE DIRECTIONS.

EXITS AND ENTRANCES.

R. means *Right* ; L. *Left* ; F. *the Flat, or Scene running across the back of the Stage* ; D. F. *Door in Flat* ; R. D. *Right Door* ; L. D. *Left Door* ; S. E. *Second Entrance* ; U. E. *Upper Entrance* ; M. D. *Middle Door*.

RELATIVE POSITIONS.

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

R. RC. C. LC. L.

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

Costume.

PAUL.—*First Dress*: Rough jacket and dark pantaloons—red shirt. *Second Dress*: Fashionable walking-dress.

FOXGLOVE.—Black dress-coat—white double-breast vest—black pantaloons—white neck-tie.

TED MURPHY.—*First Dress*: That of an Irish emigrant. *Second Dress*: Full fashionable suit. *Third Dress*: Blue dress-coat, with bright buttons—flowered vest—gray pantaloons, turned up at bottom.

MR. DE MERFIE.—*First Dress*: Black suit. *Second Dress*: Spanish costume.

GRACE.—*First Dress*: Gentleman's walking-dress. *Second Dress*: Evening-dress.

SLIM.—Fancy-costume.

DOOLITTLE.—Do.—do.

CHUBB.—Page's livery.

ALICE.—*First Dress*: Morning-costume. *Second Dress*: Visiting-costume.

MRS. DE MERFIE.—*First Dress*: Visiting-costume. *Second Dress*: That of a Turkish Sultana.

MRS. FOXGLOVE.—*First Dress*: Gray silk. *Second Dress*: Showy visiting-dress.

PERKINS.—Dress of a lady's-maid.

GUESTS.—Fancy-costumes.

A. M. P., Sept. 27, 1920

THE GAME OF LOVE.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*A handsome Apartment.*

Enter PERKINS, with a box, from R. D.

Per. (2 E. R.) Come in, girl. [*Enter girl, c.*] You're to take this back too, and just be good enough to say, with Miss Devereaux's compliments, that's not a bit like what she ordered, and you needn't trouble yourselves any more, as she's changed her mind. [*Exit girl, c.*] And that's a thing she has done pretty often lately!—I don't know what's vexed her, for my part. I only wish she'd get married to this Mr. Emerson, at once, for then, I suppose we'd have the barometer of her ladyships's temper stick at set fair, for at least a month or so. He has been four years courting her, though, to be sure, he hasn't been so often here lately.

Enter MARY, 2 E. R., from room, with a tray.

Mary. It's not my fault, mem,—if you waits till it gets all cold, I ain't to blame!

Per. What's the matter now? [*Takes a slice.*]

Mary. [*Eating as she goes.*] Sorra bit of me knows! My heart's bruk intirely with her contrariness. It's too much money that she has, I b'leeve. Why, she ate no more breakfast nor a Canary-bird! In troth, if riches took away the strength of my appetite, I'd rather stay poor, and keep my relish for vittles! [*Bell rings.*] Lor save us; there's a tug!

Per. I'm not supposed to be so close,—ring away. [*Bell louder.*] There's the real Creole temper,—I must let it disperse a little. She's coming!

Enter ALICE.

Al. Perkins, why do you annoy me this way? If I hadn't the best temper in the world, I should be seriously angry with you. Where are the letters? Why don't you answer me? the letters?

Per. What letters, mum?

Al. Are there no letters?

Per. No, mum.

Al. Then why did you not say so, at once? Bear with me, Perkins, I have much to perplex, to anger, nay, to madden me!

[Crosses L.

Per. Indeed, mum! Yes, I know, mum!

Al. You know! How dare you say that? What do you know?

Per. Oh, nothing, mum!

Al. Did any but my own heart imagine that heart's inquietude, the shame would kill me! [*Aside.*] Perkins, leave me now, and if you have any desire to retain your present home, and my protection, forget all you see or hear, except your immediate duties.

Per. Certainly, mum! [*Aside.*] Rather peppery to-day!

[Exit, 2 E. R.

Al. Why, why does Alfred remain so long absent? I dread to ask myself the question! no reason—no letter: from time to time I have fancied a studied effort in his tone and manner, words of affection, with eyes unquiet, and averted, and yet, whenever I hinted at this apparent change, his assurance calmed and quieted my throbbing heart! Three weeks have past, since last I saw him,—three weeks! When I remember that scarce so many hours parted us, in the bright morning of our loves, what must I think, but that he no longer holds me in his thoughts,—that some other has displaced me?—no, no! that cannot, shall not be; at least, I will not live to see it! [*Opens workbox, L., and takes letters.*] Here are his letters, all of them,—here the rose-bud, which was his first gift, and here a lock of his hair!

Phæ. [*Without.*] I will not have it! I must be obeyed! Do you suppose I'm nobody?

Al. There's my strange companion, Miss Tangle! She mustn't see my perturbation, or I should have to answer countless questions! [*Puts up letters, &c.*] She has established herself in perfect authority here, even over me, and yet, the thought of what she would do, were I to part from her, makes me endure the singular despotism.

Enter MISS PHÆBE, and JACOB, a Page, c.

Jac. (c.) [*Whimpering.*] I didn't go to do it, mum!

Al. What's the matter?

Phæ. Matter enough! This great overgrown boy won't keep his fingers out of the preserves!

Jac. It was the cat, mum,—indeed it was—I seed him a feedin'!

Phæ. Oh, my! You ought to be ashamed of yourself, sir, at your time of life! By the bye, what is your age? there is no guessing at it, to look at your impudent face!

Jac. Thirteen, and eleven months, mum! Mother's a hard-working woman, with twelve more, all younger than me, and father's a seafarin' man, an' we all has to work for our livin'.

Al. You are the lad whom Mrs. Singleton recommended—you look older than you say!

Jac. Looks is deceptive, mum. I grow'd fast—besides, poor folks' children has a way of lookin' old, at a werry early age, mum.

Phæ. (*Crosses c.*) You'd do me a very great favor, Miss Devereaux, if you would inform the domestics of your establishment, that I am to be looked up to as something more than a dependant. My devotion to your interests surely demands such a concession! They seem to consider me nobody in the house!

Al. Most assuredly, I wish them all to obey you.

Phæ. [*To JACOB.*] Why do you stand there like a fool? Go about your work! [*JACOB going*] Stop, hand me a chair! [*JACOB does so.*] Go!

Jac. [*Aside, and going.*] I only wish I was a careless engineer, and you was walking on the Harlem track, if you wouldn't switch off suddent, I'm a Dutchman! [*Exit, c.*]

Phæ. This would be a nicely regulated household, were it not for my constant care!

Al. Indeed, I'm very much obliged to you for taking so much trouble.

Phæ. I'm glad to hear you say that. You look sad! What ails you?

Al. Nothing particular.

Phæ. Don't tell me that! There *is*, and, moreover, I *know* what it is:—you think it very strange that Mr. Emerson hasn't been here lately. For my part, I'm glad of it. [*ALICE rises, and crosses R.*] Don't wince—like the Doctors, I probe your wound, only to cure it. Pooh! What do you want to marry for? Give up your free will and independence, to be the life-slave of a male tyrant! Follow my example and advice; defy and despise the selfish creatures, as I do. [*ALICE crosses L.*] There, now, don't fidget about the room, for gracious sake! Sit down, and listen to reason! you know it's all for your good. Shall I draw a picture of married life for you,—the female view, I mean?

Al. No,—how *can* you, never having been married?

Phæ. Thank my good fortune, never; but nature has gifted me with eyesight, and faces are books easily read. Oh! what volumes of misery I have perused in such matrimonial records!

Al. You are unjust! I have seen many happy couples

Phæ. My dear, you only saw their visiting countenances. I have followed them home. You have merely looked at the pictures, thinly scattered here and there amongst the pages, but I have read the melancholy prose, from the fulsome preface to the blank conclusion!

Al. You certainly have selected a most agreeable topic for conversation.

Phæ. I'm sorry if it annoys you, but I can't help it. It's my duty when I see young people heedlessly rushing——

Al. You will oblige me by changing the conversation—you *must!* [*Rises also.*] Pray, pardon me. I have had my own way so long, that I am selfishly pettish when crossed. It is unworthy of me, I know,—your kindness deserves a better recompense!

Phæ. You're a good girl! you'll do what I ask you with regard to the establishment, won't you? there's a dear!

Al. I don't know what you wish; they all seem to me to be very respectful and willing.

Phæ. To *you*, of course, my love; because you are known to be the wealthy source from which they derive their support.

Al. I cannot believe that so mean a spirit exists even amongst the humblest.

Phæ. Your excellent heart judges as its own promptings would dictate; but I, who have to endure their insolence, know to the contrary. Now, suppose, just to test the correctness of my estimate, you would suffer them to fancy that I had equal claims upon their respect with yourself; let them imagine me to be rich also: it would do you no harm, and would make my life comparatively a happy one.

Al. With all my heart. Say what you choose; I sha'n't contradict it.

Phæ. You are an angel! I only ask the privilege for a very few days, when, [*aside*] if I don't make a substance out of the shadow, I'll be content to go back to my house-keys for life.

[*Bell outside.*]

Al. It must be he! My heart rings out his name, and the sweet echo thrills through every sense! How slow they are! [*Rings bell.*] Yes, 'tis his footstep, and all his truancy is forgiven—forgotten.

Enter MR. CORYDON FOXGLOVE, C. D.

Fox. Excuse this unceremonious call, but I have business of importance.

Al. You, sir—only you! How dare you? [*Crosses R.*] Oh, what a miserable fate is mine! You've made me very unhappy, sir; you have destroyed my peace of mind for ever!

[*Exit, in tears, 2 E. R.*]

Fox. The devil I have! Stay a moment, Miss!—How do you do, ma'am? Have you any idea what she means, for I hav'n't:—but, who the deuce could ever make out a woman's meaning? they're all alike,—old and young, spinsters and school-girls—riddles, sphynxes, enigmas, and conundrums. I pity the insane individual who wastes his time in the vain endeavor to guess at them.

Phæ. Sir, you're complimentary!

Fox. Madam, I'm sincere.

Phæ. The confidential friend and legal adviser of a lady might be a little more gallant.

Fox. Would if I could, ma'am. Non est inventus—can't be summoned. I wish you would be good enough to let Miss Devereaux know that I have a letter of some importance to read her.

Phœ. Certainly. Ring that bell.

Fox. Cook! must do it, I suppose. [*Rings bell, L.*] Excuse the remark :—are you not Miss Devereaux's housekeeper?

Phœ. Sir! don't be insolent!

Fox. [*Aside.*] Whew! On the wrong track—made a mistake. Singular enough, though—always thought she was! Poor relation, I suppose.—Indignant indigence!

Enter JACOB, C.

Jac. Me, mum? [*PHŒBE motions towards FOXGLOVE.*

Fox. Tell Miss Devereaux, I am anxious to see her, on a subject of importance.

Jac. Yes, sir.

Phœ. And beg of her to send me the check-book. I want to discharge my jeweller's account.

Jac. Your what, mum?

Phœ. Stupid boy! My check-book! Go!

[*Exit JACOB, 2 E. R.*

Fox. Jeweller, eh? Error in the pleadings again!

Phœ. To judge from your conversation, Mr. Foxglove, you must be a terrible woman-hater!

Fox. Bless you! not at all, madame. I admire womankind artistically, just as one does a beautiful landscape,—at a distance, telescopically. My love for the sex, madame, is extreme. In a multitude, they are magnificent; but a single specimen is only interesting to me, so long as she remains so.

Enter JACOB, 2 E. R.

Jac. Miss Devereaux's compliments, sir,—and she'll see you in a few moments;—and here's your check-book, mum. [*Aside.*] Didn't know the old 'un had an account before. Deceptious world, this!

[*Exit, C.*

Fox. [*Crosses R.*] If she knew what I have to communicate, she'd be a little more anxious.

Phœ. [*At table, L. writing several checks.*] My niece informs me—

Fox. [*Starting.*] Madame!

Phœ. I say, *my niece* informs me that you have shown extraordinary care in the management of her pecuniary matters. I have a great mind to—and yet, your sentiments are so singular with regard to our sex, Mr. Foxglove, that I should hesitate to trust *my* property to your custody and supervision.

Fox. [*Aside.*] I smell a rich client! Figures of speech merely, madame; that's all, I assure you. I entertain the profoundest respect, as in duty bound, for the sex, *per se*, as a sex—all and singular; *quantum valebant!*

Phæ. Before I proceed any further, permit me to ask what your opinion is with regard to matrimony?

Fox. A delicate question, madam. But to speak truly, I greatly prefer to look on at the uncertain game, than to take a hand in it myself.

Phæ. Then, sir, we agree perfectly, and if you could only influence Miss Devereaux——

Fox. No exertion of mine shall be spared, madame. rest assured! I hold in my hand a communication which quashes the present suit irrevocably!

Phæ. My dear sir, you please me beyond expression! From henceforth, pray consider yourself my legal adviser, and may I hope, friend!

Fox. Oh, madame! need I say that my heart and hand are at your service?

Phæ. Sir?

Fox. Professionally, of course, and without prejudice, *non damnificatus!*

Phæ. My niece is coming from her apartment! You fully understand the conditions upon which I consent to entrust you with the supervision of my pecuniary affairs?

Fox. Distinctly, madame! I have the honor to wish you a good day!

[They bow formally. Phæbe exits with a heap of checks and book, c.]

Very good morning's work! By the shade of Justinian, if I know any thing of my ground, I spy a glorious harvest from this seed-sowing! How easy it is to know a person of ample means! No one can deceive me! There were thousands of acres in the sweep of her glance, the responsibility of millions seemed to swell within her chest! Her eye flashed diamonds of the first water—real tangible Tiffany's,—and the rustle of her heavy silk dress was as crisp and satisfactory, as though it were fashioned out of new bank-bills of the largest denominations!

Enter ALICE, 2 E. R.

Al. My dear friend, I owe you an apology for the thoughtless words I let drop when you entered. I was disappointed, agitated, foolish, but I've had a good cry, and now I feel better.

Fox. I'm glad of that, for I bring you somewhat startling intelligence.

Al. Of him! I mean of——

Fox. Don't be so precipitate, but prepare yourself——

Al. For what?—Good news, or bad? It can't be bad, for you smile! Go on—you torture me!

Fox. Well, then, Mr. Emerson——

Al. Ah! stay! that word has killed me!

Fox. Oh, no! not quite, you'll survive it!

Al. Go on, for mercy's sake! Some terrible misfortune has occurred to him!

Fox. Not an uncommon one.

Al. What do you mean?

Fox. He has gone the way of all fools.

Al. Dead!

Fox. Married! Cake and cards in my pocket. [*ALICE faints in Fox's arms.*] Pleasant, 'pon my life! expected it, though! I'm not exactly used to this sort of thing, and I can't get at the bell! Hollo! here, some one! [*Calls.*]

Al. [*Suddenly starting up.*] Hush! don't call!

Fox. Hem! A little vitality left yet, I perceive!

Al. Sufficient to restrain me from exhibiting my mortification to the world! Can this be true? Let me see the letter.

Fox. That's right! I applaud your spirit and resolution! Here—no, that's the cake. There! [*Gives letter.*] Concise, but conclusive—

Al. Alas! the pitiless bolt has fallen, and my heart is shattered for ever! Oh, that I knew how to be revenged upon him for this unpardonable slight!

Fox. Nothing so easy! An action for "Breach," highly popular amusement—Court crowded—damages certain! You have all his letters, have you not?

Al. I have.

Fox. Full of admiration and sentiment, I hope! Pleasant reading for a jury; delicious pickings for a vulpene cross-examiner! glorious pastime for the newspaper reporters! Astonishing how fantastical the private affections look on public parade! to see golden thoughts transmuted into leaden type; to find the beautiful artificial flowers nothing but waste paper and old rags; and all those burning sentences, that used to set the soul on fire, quietly extinguished by a cup full of printers' ink. Hem! When shall I commence proceedings?

Al. [*Walks about agitated.*] Never!

Fox. Beyond the statute of limitation.

Al. [*Crosses, L.*] Henceforward, the world to me is nothing but a blank—a hopeless, cheerless, melancholy blank!

Fox. Bright look-out ahead; but some people think when it rains, that there never can be any more sunshine.

Al. I have too much pride for tears; but they flow inwardly upon a heart whose fires are quenched forever!

Fox. Then, what a waste of time it is to play upon the ashes! The real state of the case is this: The firm of Cupid and Company is burnt out; and as there was no insurance on the premises, all you have to do is, to clear away the rubbish, build up a more comfortable internal establishment, and take care you don't admit any such incendiaries again.

Al. It is worse than cruel,—it is unmanly to jest thus with misfortune and bereavement. Pray, leave me. I yearn to be alone with my gloomy thoughts. [*Sits.*] I can combat them best by myself.

Fox. You're sure you won't do anything desperate? Poor girl! I know she feels keenly this fellow's conduct; but a little caustic burns beyond the wound, which else might kill.—Good day, Miss Devereaux. I leave with you both my condolence and my congratulation. You can take which you please. Excuse the remark.

[*Exit FOXGLOVE, C.*]

Al. Oh, Alfred, Alfred! my girlhood's idol, my woman's pride,—come back, and I will forgive all. Fool that I am!—is he not wedded?—false, worthless, despicable! Yet, in spite of *all*: the love he taught me—spurned, rejected—my own self-respect quenched in a sea of shame,—this fatal passion is so blent with life, that with life only can it be destroyed. What is to become of me? How arise from the soul-depth of this degradation? [*Reads.*] “*There is that within my breast which forbids me to become the slave of any woman.*” Oh, for some sudden, startling, absolute revenge, not upon him alone, but upon his whole detested sex. I won't have *one* in the house! [*Kings bell.*] Not one! I'll never look upon another! I'll live in some retired and undiscoverable place—collect around me none but the deceived and deserted of my own sex, and mingle our sorrows and our maledictions together.

Enter JACOB, C.

Jac. Ring, mum?

Al. [*Crosses, R.*] Yes! Leave my house directly!

Jac. Don't go to say that, mum! What for, mum? What have I done, mum?

Al. Don't answer me, but go! Send William up to me, and James.

Ja. William's very sick, indeed, to-day, mum.

Al. Well,—he needn't go till to-morrow.

Ja. We expects he'll be worse then, mum!

Al. He can wait until he is able to move—but James—

Ja. Poor James, mum, is more to be pitied nor William!

Al. Is he ill, too?

Ja. Oh, yes, mum, to his heart! You know his sweet little child as was sick, mum? Well, mum, he's gone away forever; and a great part of poor James's mind and spirit has wandered away with him!

Al. And his life was wrapped up in that boy! This is a *real* grief, to which mine is as nothing. I have been hasty and unjust. I have changed my mind, Jacob; you can remain.

Ja. Oh, thank you, mum. I'm so delighted—

Al. That will do—go. Once more to bedew his letters with my agonizing tears, and then prepare my soul for its eternal solitude!

[*Takes out letters, weeps, &c.*

Jac. [*Imitating.*] Once more, with my agonizing tears,—to dash my buttons—I've forgot the rest. [Exit, 2 E. R.]

CURTAIN.

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*A Street.*

Enter PAUL, 2 E. R.

Paul. (2 E. R.) Well, ill luck has set its seal upon my destiny with a vengeance. No way left in which to earn a meal! This, then, is the home of philanthropy, the hive of industry, the readymart, wherein exertion may find a channel. Oh, my poor father! when, after so many sacrifices, you educated your children, you thought, in the simplicity of your affection, that *knowledge* was the *open sesame* which would compel the world-caverns to yield up their treasures. Lo the result! a thousand theoretical pathways to eminence float dream-like through my imagination, but not one practical usefulness can I command, to lead me to a dinner. [*Going towards wing.*

Enter FOXGLOVE, 2 E. L.

Fox. Confound that loitering rascal! Ho, my friend! Will you condescend to earn a shilling by carrying a box for me across the street?

Paul. Willingly.

Fox. Step in, then. It's a little too much for me, but you are young and strong.

Paul. I attend you, sir. [*Exeunt, 2 E. L., in house.*

Enter TED MURPHY, 1 E. R.

Ted. Be me soul, and this Ameriky's a bigger place than I thought, for I've gone through a mile of streets already, and there's no end to them yet! Av I could only find Larry, I'd be the happiest man that iver stood in shoe leather! [*Rings at Foxglove's house, L. 2 E.*] I wonder if they've got any tobaccy here?

Enter Footman, from door, 2 E. L.

Foot. Well, fellow, what do want?

Ted. I'm in the purshoot of knowledge, av you please, yer honor! Do you happen to know one Larry Murphy, from the parish of Dunduckedy, near Mud Island—a son of ould Murphy, the reapin' hook maker, and a brother of me own, that kem to Ameriky in the ship Shamrogue, the spring of the year Anno Dominy 1825, from Waxford?

Foot. How the deuce do I know?

Ted. Well, I didn't know but you might, sir! There's no harm in axin'. Good mornin' to you, sir!

[*Footman shuts door in his face.*]

Re-enter FOXGLOVE, from House, 2 E. L., and PAUL, with a box.

Fox. There's the house yonder, do you see? No. 64. Let them know that I will call myself, in half an hour. My clerk has gone out, and I have no one to attend to the office.

Ted. [*To Fox.*] You didn't know one Larry?—

[*Fox goes in, L. 2 E.*]

Paul. It tasks me beyond my failing strength.

Ted. Good morning to you, sir! Maybe, sir, you might have met in yer travels wid one Larry Murphy, from the parish of Dunduckedy, near Mud Island. &c.? Why, murther alive, it's goin' to faint ye are! Give me a howld of that box, my poor fellow, you're not used to this kind of thing, I can see that! Sit down a bit. it ain't life and death! I heerd the master say, he wouldn't be over for half-an-hour. You never heard tell of Larry Murphy? No? There, don't trouble yerself; I'll carry it for you, if you take care of my bundle.

Paul. Then the shilling is justly yours—here, take it.

Ted. The divil a take! A bargain's a bargain, all the world over! Well, if yer proud, and want to earn your money, lay a howld of the other side, and we'll carry it betune us.

Paul. You're a good-hearted, worthy fellow!

Ted. None of yer blarney! If you could only tell me where to light on Larry Murphy, I'd make a Prince of ye, for he's as rich as King Solomon's Temple!

[*Exeunt, 2 E. R.*]

SCENE II.—MISS DEVEREAUX'S *Drawing-room*—ALICE, R., *discovered with PERKINS, L.*

Per. You are ill, Miss, very ill! If you'll take my advice, you'd have your physician.

Al. What! expose my wretchedness to the eyes of the prying world? You must be mad! Get me some opium, and leave me: and, remember, if you breathe a word of my almost distraction, you do not remain with me another instant! I would have them fancy that I laughed at what has occurred!

Per. I'll tell everybody that I left you singing and dancing, if you wish it. I am all yours, even to my conscientious scruples! This storm's too violent to last long! [*Aside.*] [*Exit, 1 E. L. H.*]

Al. The long, sleepless, agonizing night has but increased my wretchedness! I would kill myself, if I could only view what effect my death would have on him. [*Rises.*] But no! I must wring his heart living! I'll marry, immediately, any one, the first who offers, the first man I meet, the more unworthy the better,—that

he may see the miserable grade in which my memory associated him! I will have a husband, but he must be a serf, a slave, an image, set up to sustain my dignity! I'll buy some servile creature, and be his tyrant! If I cannot attract, my money will; no matter, be he what he may, I must despise, detest, and loathe him.

Paul. [*Outside.*] Into this room, you say?

Al. Who is this? To my wish, here comes a poor wretch, whom fate is tired of torturing, or perhaps, would torture more!

Enter PAUL and TED, C. D.

Ha! there are two! Well, let fortune decide!

Paul. A box, madame, from Councillor Foxglove, who requested me to say that he will do himself the pleasure of calling in half an hour.

Al. [*Not looking.*] Very well. Come here, one of you.

Ted. (L.) She wants to give you a thrifle. Why don't you go, you fool?

Paul. (c.) No, it's your turn now. I mustn't be paid twice. Go you.

Ted. The devil a toe! It isn't my job, and right's right, all the world over!

Al. Do you hear me?

Ted. There, go along! And just ax her, for me, if she knows any thing about Larry.

Paul. [*Advancing.*] What is your pleasure, madame?

Al. Send your companion away,—I wish to speak with you alone.

Paul. Certainly, madame—my friend—

Ted. Oh! I heerd her, an I'll make myself scarce in two two's! You didn't ax her about Larry. If you please, mam, did you ever come across one Larry Murphy?

Al. Go, sir!

[*Exit TED, C. D.*]

Al. Pardon me for a moment. [*Brings down chair, R. C.*] Sit down.

Paul. I thank you, madame.

Al. Do as I order you!

Paul. Undoubtedly, madame! [*Sits aside.*] What a lovely vision! but, heavens, how cold and proud!

Al. [*Aside*] In spite of myself, I feel abashed in this man's presence! What am I about to do! To violate those nice proprieties which should invest woman with the sanctity of respect, forever to annihilate my own esteem, and yet *he* must be made to suffer, through my grief! I am resolved! [*To Paul.*] Are you poor?

Paul. Yes, madame, very poor.

Al. So much the better!

Paul. And honest,—up to the present.

Al. I did not ask you that.

Paul. I am aware that it is a most plebeian virtue.

Al. How would you like to be rich ?

Paul. Madame !—

Al. Did you not hear me ?—How would you like to be rich ?

Paul. The novelty of the sensation would doubtless be agreeable. Thus having answered jest for jest, madame,—I wish you a more commendable amusement, than to mock at those whom fortune has denied the power to retaliate. [*Going.*

Al. Stay ! I insist upon it ! You misunderstand me. I am strangely situated, and am about to make to you a strange and singular proposal ! I wish to bestow wealth upon you—to make you rich. What are you ?

Paul. A man !

Al. I can make you more,—a gentleman.

Paul. Excuse my ignorance, madame,—I have hitherto thought, they were synonymous terms.

Al. What's your occupation ?

Paul. Nothing.

Al. You have been unfortunate ?

Paul. Any change would better my condition.

Al. Perhaps !—don't speak to me, but listen ! I may surprise you, but after this preparation, I should imagine not. Don't interrupt me ! I have told you that it is in my power to give you wealth and station. Do you comprehend *how*,—or must I be more explicit ?

Paul. It would be much more satisfactory.

Al. Insensible !—You must become my husband ! [*A pause.*] Why are you silent ? Am I rejected ? Speak !

Paul. Madame, as I told you, I am poor—miserably poor ! but I have that within my keeping, which is better in the sight of Heaven than rank and wealth without it. I mean, madame, the honor of a man ! I think I understand you, at last ;—but no, madame, no ! My own poverty is irksome enough. I cannot bear the burden of a fine lady's shame !

Al. How dare you, sir ! Insolent—begone !—No. [*Aside.*] He will deem me that which he has spoken. I must explain ; the thought was prompted by no unworthy impulse. Listen, sir ! You are very bold, but you are mistaken. He who sought my hand and fortune, and whom I loved from girlhood,—is false—is wedded to another. My soul burns to be revenged ; but the name of man is hateful to me ; in reality, I will never take upon myself the duties and affections of a wife ; it is for this that I resolved to marry the first individual I met. You are he : you are poor ; it will be something for you to be raised out of poverty. In the eyes of the world, you will be my husband ; but you must bind yourself by a solemn oath, never to be more to me than you are at this moment,

standing there. Now, I presume, you thoroughly understand me. I shall leave you to consider on the subject. If you think favorably of it, I shall find you here on my return; if *not*, go forth at once, and forget all that you have seen and heard. [*Exit*, 2 E. R.]

Paul. Phew! Talk of the Arabian Nights! In truth, the Tempter has put on his most enticing garb. How must I resolve? There is but one course to pursue—flight upon the instant. Independence and poverty will far outweigh the empty gauds of station, joined with such soul-slavery! How beautiful she is! there's fascination in her passionate glance. What a priceless treasure would be such a woman's earnest love! Why do I linger here? She is now in the full phrensy of her disappointment, and might not the respect and true devotion which, I feel, are born within my heart, in time relax the chain? Alas! poor human nature! She's here—it is my fate. Let come what may, I will embrace it. [*Re-enter ALICE*, 2 E. R. H.] Madame, I will spare you the mortification of a question. I am ready. The conditions, to be sure, are somewhat unpalatable; but—

Al. (R.) You consent; that is sufficient. What is your name?

Paul. Paul Weldon. It is the first time in my life I blushed to hear it uttered.

Al. Your feelings are immaterial to me. You will there receive [*pointing to table*, R. H.] the first instalment of your salary.

Paul. [*Aside.*] That stabs home like a knife. No matter.

Al. Remember, I retain, and pay you, as I would any other of my hired servants, and the slightest deviation from our solemn compact restores you to your poverty! You must purchase clothes more fitting for the situation you are about to fill. Attend me here, as quickly as you can; in the meantime, I shall have the contract prepared, and ready for signature. The marriage will follow after the usual delay. Now, leave me!

Paul. [*Aside.*] Most business-like and satisfactory, I must say! A kind of desperation urges me through this shameful bargaining of soul and manhood! Be still, my throbbing heart! [*Aloud.*] Madame, your most obedient, very humble servant! [*Exit*, C. D.]

Al. Weldon,—I'm glad the creature has a name I needn't be ashamed to hear pronounced! I feared some humbler cognomen,—he's good-looking enough to hand me to my carriage, and carry my fan in public. To attend me to the Opera, and to wring the heart of *him*,—the false, the vile, with indignant envy!

Enter FOXGLOVE, C.

Fox. Well, my dear, here I am, and here, I see, are all the papers connected with your estates. Now, what is this curious emergency you hint at in your note, that makes it necessary they should be looked over so particularly?

Al. Simply this, my dear friend,—I am about to be married.

Fox. Lunatic asylums are wonderful institutions. You'll excuse the remark!

Al. (R.) I sent for you to draw up the contract and settlements; and as they are to be somewhat peculiar, you must promise to execute them as I dictate, or I shall withdraw my affairs from your hands, and employ some stranger, who will neither question my will nor my judgment.

Fox. (L.) Bless your dear, obstinate heart,—it's nothing to me whom you marry! Fashion the knot, as you please, of silk or hemp, you are at liberty to sign your own death-warrant, if you choose! I'll officiate as executioner, with due decorum! It's no act of mine! *Damnum absque injuria!* Excuse the remark!

Al. Enough, sir! We may be interrupted here. [*Rings.*] Pray attend me to the library.

Enter JACOB, C.

Jacob, take that box into the library. [*Exit, E.*]

Jac. Yes, mam! Oh, Mr. Foxglove!—Miss Tangle bade me tell you, she would be happy to see you before you go, as she has something important to consult you about. Getting a little shaky, and wants to make her will, I think! Hope she'll remember me when her hand's in! [*Aside.*] [*Exit, C.*]

Fox. With the greatest of pleasure! I thought I couldn't be deceived!—Will, eh?—Testamentary, I hope.—Executors in demand—slice in reversion—very probable! Ready for such kind of work. *Toties Quoties!* [*Exit, C. R.*]

Re-enter JACOB, C. L.

Jac. What a poor, miserable, badgered, and bewildered walking falsehood I am! I ought to be ashamed of myself,—but how can I help it? There's a run on pages, in the fashionable world, and if I were to confess my real age, I'd be bowled out sudden! I've stuck at eleven and a half for eleven years and more. It's jolly lucky that I don't grow! The worst of it is, I'm head and ears in love with Perkins, and she aggravates me, by petting me for a child, while I love her like a man! Oh! it's dreadful! I sometimes determine to burst through my buttons, and make a clean breast of it, but I'm afraid she'd ruin my prospects! Here she comes! I declare, looking like Flora, or Aurora, or some of those Heathen delicacies, that make a fellow's mouth water. Nor could I pour forth the hidden flames that agitated my bosom like a small Vesuvius! but instead of that I must talk jam and candy, and play the tom-boy

Enter PERKINS, I E. L. H.

[*Jacob tries to tumble, stand on his head, &c.*]

Per. Well, if ever I saw such a great baby in all my life! Be quiet, do, child! Where's Miss Alice?

Jac. She's gone into the library, with old Buzwig, and mustn't be disturbed. We can have a jolly romp!—Give us a kiss, Perky!

Per. Indeed I shan't! You're too forward entirely, for your age!

Jac. Boo hoc! I'll cry if you don't kiss me!

Per. Well, there!

[*Kisses him.*]

Jac. Golly! ain't that good?

Per. I never did see such a boy for kissing.

Jac. Oh, Perkins! divine, darling, beautiful, bewitching Perkins! If I dared to trust you, what a secret I would tell you!

Per. What's the child talking about?—A secret! Tell me, there's a dear boy!—I'm as discreet as a politician!

Jac. Oh, Perkins!—I don't care—I can't keep it concealed any longer!—I love you! Oh, you don't know how I love you!

Per. [*Laughing heartily.*] I know you do, because I take care you get plenty of pie!

Jac. It ain't pie, Perkins! Sweet Perkins! Angelic Perkins!—no!

Per. What a boy it is, to be sure!

Jac. Intoxicating Perkins,—that's it. Listen. Alas! I'm not a boy!

Per. No! Then, what, in the name of gracious, are you? A girl?

Jac. Short-sighted Perkins, no! Hear me make the terrible acknowledgment:—I'm a—

Per. What?

Jac. A man!

[*Falls on his knees.*]

Per. Ha, ha! Why, I'll box your ears, you forward little crop!

Jac. Incredulous Perkins! feel my beard, and be convinced. Believe the evidence of the steel, Perkins. I shave—don't betray me, or I'm a torn-out page!

Per. Get up, sir; do.

Jac. Never,—until you promise to be mine!

Enter Miss TANGLE and FOX, c. d.

ox. There's a raging epidemic; all mad as Bedlamites.

Miss T. (R. c.) Perkins, what kind of conduct is this?

Per. (L.) I don't know, ma'am; it's the boy.

Miss T. For shame! leave the room. [*Exit PERKINS, L. 1 E.*] Boy, go. [*Exit JACOB, R. 1 E.*] Ah, counselor, did you receive my message?

Fox. [*Assisting her to chair.*] I did, most worthy client, and am here at your service. Allow me to assist you. [*Places cushions, &c.*]

Miss T. Thank you; you're very good. Ah, I feel my strength failing rapidly. As your time is doubtless exceedingly valuable, we shall come to the point at once.

Fox. Amiable consideration! I am all ears.

Miss T. Alas! what a grievous burden are worldly possessions, counsellor!

Fox. Onerous and most responsible.

Miss T. I sincerely pity those to whom the heavy weight that I have long endured, will fall.

Fox. Charitable demonstration!

Miss T. If it were not a bounden duty to make a clear disposition of my property, believe me, I would not aid in fastening so much care upon my successors.

Fox. A prudent and praiseworthy precaution. [*Aside.*] She talks ingots and money-chests.

Miss T. These few remarks are intended, counsellor, to prepare you for, perhaps, an unusual departure from common usage.

Fox. [*Aside.*] Oh, Lord! she's one of the family. What the devil does she mean to do with her money?

Miss T. You have understood what I require?

Fox. To make an abstract of your will and testament, as it appears to me.

Miss T. Precisely. Please to take your pen.

Fox. I am ready, madame.

[*Goes to table, L.*]

Miss T. What time can you give me?

Fox. Let me see—Chambers at two—about half an hour, madame. That will be sufficient, I presume? [*Sits and writes.*]

Miss T. Well, then, you had better only make a memorandum of the items I mean to bequeath, and fill up the document, at your leisure.

Fox. [*Aside.*] Shade of Cræsus! what a prologue!

Miss T. My niece, having an ample property of her own, I shall remember by a small legacy only—say, ten thousand dollars.

Fox. Small! Good gracious! what will the large ones be?

Miss T. Item,—to the Society—

Fox. Society? Oh, Lord! She's bitten!—Society, ma'am?

Miss T. To the Society for the Relief of Local Distress, one hundred dollars.

Fox. Come,—that's not out of the way!

Miss T. Item,—to the Society for Ameliorating the Condition of the Hottentots, ten thousand dollars.

Fox. Egad! that *is* out of the way! [*Aside.*] Yes, madame?

Miss T. Item,—towards the establishment of a school in this immediate neighborhood, ten dollars, per annum.

Fox. Right and honorable, madame! A good example!—Ten dollars, per annum.

Miss T. Item,—for the establishment of a fund, to be applied to the conversion and civilization of the entire Japanese people, now in ignorance and idolatry, fifty thousand dollars.

Fox. Ma'am!—It's too much! Excuse the remark! [*Aside.*] Oh,

it's frightful to see so much money wasted in foolishness! Fifty thousand dollars! it gives me a pain in my chest! [*Aloud.*] Go on, ma'am!

Miss T. I believe I won't trouble you much longer.

Fox. [*Aside.*] I'm devilish glad to hear it! I couldn't have stood the persecution!

Miss T. I will make an equal division of the rest. Say, if you please, to all the Home Charities, without distinction—

Fox. Of the city only, of course?

Miss T. One hundred dollars each.

Fox. I congratulate the recipients!

Miss T. One or two items more, sir, if you please. To all the foreign missions,—to be equally distributed,—one hundred thousand dollars.

Fox. [*Rises.*] What, ma'am! It's criminal! I wash my hands of it! A hundred dollars for the real destitution that is within your eyesight, and a hundred thousand for the imaginary wants of the Lord knows who, the Lord knows where, and who would get it, the Lord knows when, after having been filtered through the sticking fingers of the Lord knows how many agents, clerks, collectors, commissioners, *et hoc genus omne!* Flesh and blood couldn't stand such a reprehensible flinging away of precious property!

Miss T. Have I not a right to do as I please with my own?

Fox. Indubitably, madam!—but amongst the rest of your endowments, you'll have to found an asylum for lunatic lawyers, if you proceed in this way!

Miss T. One more item, only, sir, and I have done. To my executor, Counsellor Foxglove, in token of my esteem for the disinterested probity of his character, I give and bequeath the sum of five thousand dollars.

Fox. Ma'am!—I can't take it,—it's contrary to all usage—all precedent.

Miss T. [*Rising.*] Don't distress me, Mr. Foxglove! Be kind enough not to mention this to my niece; I would rather she didn't know my weakness! Don't oblige me to be more explicit! Heigho! [*Rises.*] Pray lead me to the door.

[*She gives him a look as she goes off, c.*]

Fox. I'm petrified! What a singular look she gave me! Hang me, if I don't begin to believe that she is struck with my personal appearance. Hem!—sensible woman! She's as rich as a gold mine, that's evident enough. Ah! I must brush up a little, take more pains in my toilet! Dam' me! I feel as light as a feather! Who'd have thought it! Why shouldn't she fall in love with me? I have undervalued myself all my life! I begin to discover that I'm a devilish elegant fellow!

[*Hums and dances.*]

Enter ALICE, 2 E. R.

Al. Counsellor! —

Fox. Excuse the demonstration—a slight touch of the epidemic!

Enter JACOB, c. D.

Jac. [*Announces.*] Mr. Paul Weldon!

Fox. Paul Weldon! Who is he?

Al. No one:—he is only my husband who is to be! Have you the contract ready?

Fox. Yes, but I protest vehemently against it! It's preposterous, insane, and unnatural!

Al. Enough, sir! It is my will! [*Crosses to L.*

Enter PAUL, elegantly dressed, c. D.

My solicitor, sir. [*They bow.*

Paul. [*Aside.*] The devil! My late employer!

Fox. Sir, your servant! I think I have had the pleasure of seeing you before?

Paul. We have met.

Al. Jacob, tell Miss Tangle that I would be glad to see her.

Jac. Yes, mum! Something curious going on! [*Aside.*

[*Exit, c. D.*

Al. We shall require two witnesses, I presume?

Fox. Better have two. [*Aside.*] He's a fine-looking fellow, upon my soul! It's a thousand pities that he should be thus sacrificed! Hang me, if I don't give him a chance! There is a slight omission, I perceive, here, which I must correct. [*Crosses to table, L. H.*] [*To ALICE.*] Merely a formality, that's all. [*Writing.*

Enter MISS TANGLE, c.

[*Aside.*] Auspicious moment!—Glorious example, madame, if some people were not so averse to the arrangement.

Miss T. What arrangement, sir?

Fox. Simple matrimony, madame.

Miss T. (L. c.) My feelings have undergone a remarkable change, recently, sir.

Fox. You don't say so? Singular coincidence! so have mine!

Al. (R.) You will please to lose no time.

Fox. (L.) Excuse the delinquency! One moment, if you please,—just for my own satisfaction. Do you know the absurd,—I mean the conditions of this contract, you are now called upon to sign?

[*To Paul.*

Paul. (R. c.) Perfectly, sir!

Fox. But are you sure? shall I read them to you?

Paul. It is unnecessary. Whatever they are, I am prepared to substantiate them.

Fox. But you'll be no husband at all; a mere shadow, a pretext, a nullity!

Paul. I am quite aware of it, sir.

Fox. Then confound it; sign your name! You get no pity from me!

Paul. When I ask you for it, sir, it will be time enough for you to interfere.

Fox. Now, sir, your signature.

Al. [*Aside.*] Oh! Heavens! he can't write! What a mortification!

[*Paul smiles, and writes his name.*]

Fox. A good, bold hand, at any rate!—No nervousness about that!—Now, madame—

Al. [*Signs.*] Now for the witnesses. [*They sign.*] Everything in order,—it only remains to name the day for the interesting ceremony to take place. When shall we say, Mr. Weldon?

Al. This day week.

Fox. Nothing like dispatch!—Ah! if I could only induce a certain charming,—eh, ma'am! It's contagious—the epidemic is spreading—propitious moment,—say yes!

Miss T. How can I do otherwise?

Fox. Extatic avowal!

Al. Miss Tangle, you will remain with me—no arrangement that I can make will interfere with—

Miss T. Ah! she'll destroy all!

[*Faints.*]

CURTAIN

ACT III.

SCENE I.—*Elegant Drawing-room in MR. DE MERFIE'S House.*

MR. (R.) and MRS. (C.) DE MERFIE, and MR. GRACE (L.) discovered.

Mrs. De M. Nonsense, Mr. De Merfie! Now, we're among the tip-tops, we must do as the tip-tops do. Don't you think Mr. Grace knows the proper way to get up a party—who to invite, and who to not—and him so knowledgable of everybody in the city? It won't be no use, unless we has a crowd;—eh, Mr. Grace?

Grace. Indispensably necessary to make an elegant thing of it, madame.

Mr. De M. But, I thought your invitations were all out long ago?

Mrs. De M. Haven't a lot of 'em come back? Here's one just come from the Fitznugginses, as if they had any right to be so particular. Just listen to this: "Mrs. Fitznuggins presents her compliments to Mrs. De Merfie, and begs to return her cards for her ball-costume, as she doesn't remember when she had the pleasure of an introduction." As if that mattered a pin's point; eh, Mr. Grace?

Grace. Not at all, madame; you both move in the same set.

Mrs. De M. To be sure! Fashionable people, as we are now, always goes in sets, like china;—eh, Mr. Grace?

Grace. Most assuredly, madame; and to keep vulgar earthenware from becoming intermingled amongst them, is my peculiar province.

Mr. De M. Well, I confess I don't know much about it.

Mrs. De M. Then, perhaps, you'll be good enough to leave it to them as do? How shall we manage to fill up the list, Mr. Grace?

Grace. Nothing is easier, my dear madame. Would you like to look over my list of 'availables'?

Mrs. De M. Oh, if *you* warrant 'em—that's enough.

Grace. Ladies, one can always get; but my young men are the great difficulty.

Mr. De M. And yet there doesn't seem to be a scarcity of them, Mr. Grace. The city swarms with consumptive-looking anatomies, with miraculous neck-ties and impracticable pantaloons, reduced to this fashionable standard of attenuation, so rumor has it, by the fatiguing exercise your despotic regulations exact.

Grace. I confess, sir, that the ball-season is somewhat tasking upon slender extremities; but the quiet of Lent, however, is a great invigorator.

Mrs. De M. I must have my rooms chock-full, mind!

Mr. De M. Of course, my dear; the more uncomfortable, the better.

Mrs. De M. Good gracious, Lawrence! who thinks of comfort at a ball! Why, at Mrs. Hauton's soirée, they positively hadn't room to dance. There's neither fun nor fashion in the thing, if it ain't a squeegee!

Mr. De M. Yes, yes; quantity, not quality, is the desideratum. I only wish to Heaven it was over!

Mrs. De M. I wish to goodness you'd go out. [Rises.]

Mr. De M. Presently, my dear, when I have finished reading the paper.

Mrs. De M. Well, then, be quiet and don't talk.—Mr. Grace, perhaps you had better take a lot of envelopes, and direct them yourself.

Grace. Certainly, madame. May I inquire who are we to meet—you'll pardon me, but I mean, to what social stratum do you belong,—whom do you visit?

Mrs. De M. Why, anybody that asks me, of course.

Grace. May I request you to name one or two?

Mr. De M. There's the Fitznugginses.

Grace. Very new people, but showy; they'll do.

Mr. De M. And the Weldons,—they're just married, you know?

Grace. Indeed! Extreme bon ton! Husband mythologic, but presentable.

Mrs. De M. Then, there's the Foxgloves.

Grace. Professional, but on this occasion, perhaps, admissible.

Mrs. De M. He married Miss Devereaux's housekeeper.

Grace. Indeed! She was reported to be a wealthy party. That's awkward! do you particularly wish to have them?

Mrs. De M. Why, certainly I do!

Grace. That's sufficient, madame,—we must wink, we have to do it sometimes. You needn't mention any more. I know to an armorial bearing, the material which must compose your Fete, a little mixed, but all the better for that. You see, by skillfully bringing two or three grades of society together, the hilarity of the occasion is considerably heightened by the little jokes and witticisms they make against each other.

Mr. De M. [*With paper.*] Oh! law!

[*Groaning.*]

Mrs. De M. Lawrence!

Mr. De M. Something in the paper, dear!

Mrs. De M. We must have a wonderful grand supper, I suppose?

Grace. It is an institution, my young men advocate strongly, madame.

Mrs. De M. With plenty of bouquets,—it's nothing unless flowers is flush.

Grace. Expensive, madame, but I regret to say, indispensable.

Mr. De M. [*Groaning.*] Oh!

Mrs. De M. Lawrence!

Mr. De M. Another melancholy article! Heavy failure down town.

Mrs. De M. Never mind that, as long as there are none up town.

Grace. No such expression heard of within the sphere of my usefulness, madame,—but there is one most essential point we have, as yet, lost sight of.

Mrs. De M. What may that be, Mr. Grace?

Grace. Have you selected your lion!

Mrs. De M. Lion! I don't exactly—

Grace. Some particular individual, to serve as an attraction,—a notoriety, no matter how obtained. There are many different species of the genus. There used to be a good run upon political exiles, when they were scarce, but the market is overstocked, and they are no longer sought after. A literary name, no matter how obscure, if foreign, would be a card,—our *own*, we never think of! Perhaps I had better hunt something up for you?

Mrs. De M. If you will take the trouble.

Mr. De M. [*Throwing down paper, and rising.*] I'm going, my dear! If I stay any longer, I shall certainly be entirely too much enlightened respecting the minutiv of your entertainment, to derive any enjoyment from it. Good morning, Mr. Grace.

Grace. Sir, your most obedient! [*Exit MR. DE MERFIE, R. 1 E.*]

Mrs. De M. What tiresome creatures husbands are, to be sure, Mr. Grace!

Grace. I have no doubt, madame, but they seldom come within the sphere of my usefulness.

Enter JACOB CHUBB, with cards, R. 1 E.

Chubb. There's a gentleman and a lady——

Mrs. De M. How often have I told you not to speak, didn't I tell you when I took you off Mrs. Devereaux's hands, that you mustn't talk?

Chubb. I know, mum, but——

Mrs. De M. Hold your tongue!—Dear me, Mr. Grace, it's the Weldon's! How provoking, just at this moment! I declare, I'm not fit to be seen. There's a good soul, won't you step into the library, and finish the invitations?—Give me a book!—Mind you don't stint 'em, Mr. Grace! [*Exit GRACE, D. L. F.*] Where's that book, you stupid? [*CHUBB nods.*] Why don't you speak?

Chubb. You told me not to, mum!

Mrs. De M. Why don't you do as I desire you?

Chubb. Cos there ain't no book, mum.

Mrs. De M. The paper, then, quick! [*CHUBB hands her paper.*] Go, say I'm at home!

Chubb. Yes, mum! Oh, I forgot! [*Exit CHUBB, R. 1 E.*]

Mrs. De M. What a time for people to come visiting! I declare I'm so angry, I could——

Enter ALICE and PAUL, R. 1 E.

Ah! my beautiful, dear darling! You don't know how delighted I am to see you! Don't look at me, I'm all in my dishabille! How lovely you are looking, to be sure! What a duck of a dress! You certainly have the greatest taste!

Paul. [*Who is laden with shawls, &c.*] Hem!

Mrs. De M. Oh, I beg a thousand pardons! This is your husband, I presume! [*Crosses to c.*]

Al. Yes, that's my husband.

Mrs. De M. I must congratulate you! [*ALICE turns away.*] And you, too, sir, I'm sure.

Paul. Madame, you do me honor!

[*Turns away, always watching ALICE.*]

Mrs. De M. Curious capers for a new-married couple, but I suppose it's the extreme high tone to appear indifferent, if so, they carry it out to miraculous perfection! [*Aside.*]

Al. My fan. [*PAUL gives it.*] This is merely a visit of ceremony, Mrs. De Merfie. It is essential that I should present my husband to society, in order that I, or rather I should say *we* may be flattered, blamed, or ridiculed, just as it may jump with the humor of our very dear friends.

Mrs. De M. Oh, you are so amusing! [*Aside.*] Haughty thing!

Enter CHUBB, R. 1 E., with card on salver.

Chubb. (L. 1 E.) There's another.

Mrs. De M. Hem! [*CHUBB presents card.*] What a singular coincidence! "At home" certainly, show them in!

Chubb. There's only one!

Mrs. De M. That will do, Chubb! show up—

Chubb. She's up a-ready!—Beg pardon, mum,—forgot!

Enter Mrs. Counsellor FOXGLOVE, R. 1 E.

Mrs. Fox. Ah, good people! Here I am, [*Crosses to c.*] you see, back again, I and the counsellor! Ah! my dear Alice, this is an unexpected pleasure! Is this yours? Fine-looking young man enough. Mine is at business,—professional man, you know,—exemplary creature! How is yours, my dear Mrs. De Merfie?

Mrs. De M. Very well indeed, Mrs. Foxglove! Chubb, chairs!

Chubb. The new un's, mum?

Mrs. De M. Silence! leave the room

Chubb. Yes, mum.

[*Exit CHUBB, R. 1 E.*

Mrs. De M. Pray sit down! Mr.—a—do take a seat.

Paul. Thank you, I would rather—

Al. Sit down.

[*PAUL drops into chair.*

Al. On what evening do you give your ball, Mrs. De Merfie? Dear me! I have left my tablets in the carriage.

Mrs. De M. My servant shall—

[*Rising.*

Al. There's no occasion. [*To Paul.*] Go and bring them to me. [*PAUL goes out, R. 1 E.*] What evening did you say?

Mrs. De M. Wednesday. I hope and trust you will come, Mrs. Foxglove!

Mrs. Fox. It depends altogether, my dear, upon the counsellor. His time is so occupied, and I, myself, find so much to attend to in my new sphere of duty, the fact is, I can do nothing, positively nothing, without the counsellor's consent. It is the province of a wife, to submit everything to her husband, I think.

[*PAUL enters, R., with tablets, which he gives to ALICE, then resumes his seat.*

Mrs. De M. Unquestionably!

Al. Don't you feel a little chilly here?

[*PAUL starts up, and arranges her shawl.*

Mrs. De M. What an attentive creature!

Mrs. Fox. Very! I wish I could induce the counsellor to flit about in that way! [*PAUL resumes his seat.*] but, being a man of business—I believe yours is in business too, Mrs. De Merfie?

Mrs. De M. For the present. He's the first of his family that ever was. His noble connexions in the old country are outrageous with him, for lowering the dignity of the name!

Al. The De Merfies are of Gallic origin, I presume?

Mrs. De M. Oh, no, my dear; French, pure French. So the heraldry man told me, when I went about our coat of arms for my Brougham.

Al. It is not usual to have arms on a Brougham, I believe?

Mrs. De M. Mine has, and a crest over them.

Mrs. Fox. What is your crest, Mrs. De Merfie?

Mrs. De M. Oh! the heraldry man was very obliging. He said, as they had forgotten to put my name in the book, I might take my choice, so I picked out the prettiest thing I could find.

Al. [*Rises, PAUL also.*] You'll excuse this terribly long call, Mrs. De Merfie.

Mrs. De M. Pray don't go yet; sit down a little longer. [*ALICE sits—PAUL sits.*] Dear me, she is sitting! Mr. Grace must be tired of his imprisonment.

Mrs. Fox. I must go, my dear; the counsellor will be home shortly, [*Crosses R.*] and I have a family disclosure to make, which may possibly need some preparation. Good morning.

Mrs. De M. Good morning, my dear. Be sure and call soon again. Chubb, door. [*Exit MRS. FOXGLOVE, R. 1 E.*] What a sudden marriage that was of our dear friends! [*To AL.*]

Al. [*Rising—PAUL also.*] Very, and a singular one also. Both of them such railers against matrimony. [*To PAUL.*] Carriage.

[*PAUL exits R. 1 E.*]

Mrs. De M. What a dear, quiet, attentive creature your husband is! One would suppose he was your servant, instead of your lord and master.

Al. Lord and master! He is my servant! His mean, despicable, and cringing sex is fit for no higher occupation. [*Re-enter PAUL.*] Your arm, sir.

[*PAUL offers arm to her, bows formally, and they exit, R. 1 E.*]

Mrs. De M. Chubb, door. What a grand sweep she has with her head, and with what contemptuous pride she treats that poor young man—but it's quite right. Oh! how I wish I had spirit enough to treat Mr. De Merfie in the same way. "Your arm!" I think I'll try. Bless me! I was forgetting poor, dear Grace. Mr. Grace, you may come out, there's no one here now. [*Enter GRACE, D. F. L.*] Beg ten thousand pardons!

Grace. Not at all, madam. I have filled up the time, I trust, satisfactorily. Chubb, bring those invitations.

[*CHUBB goes into library, D. F. L., returns with trayful of envelopes, &c.*]

Mrs. De M. Oh! thank you, Mr. Grace. You have been industrious. Take those to the post-office directly, Chubb.

Grace. And pay for them, don't forget that. I have the honor to take my leave. [*Exit I. E. R.*]

Chubb. Oh, Perkins! this cruel separation is a killing me by inches. I knew how it would be, when my extensive affection got

too big for my continuations ; I was discharged—this here is a good place enough, but it ain't no place without Perkins. I s'pose I must take these to the post office, so I'll go get my hat at once.

[Exit D. F.]

Enter TED.

Ted. Bad luck to me, if I'm not gettin' footsore as well as heart-sick, beatin' the streets in search of Larry. Where the devil could he have hid himself? I've axed ivery mortal soul I've met wid, and he can't be of much account here, for niver a one of them knows anything about him. I must say, however, that the folks trate me wid the greatest respict, and indeed there must be something wonderfully classicle about me personal appearance, for a good many judges of human natur even went so far as to call me a Geeek, and a mighty fine complimint it is to the antiquity of my ancestors, for wasn't the Phenecians the first founders of Ireland, and they were real ould original Greeks, and more betoken, made a flourishing full-grown country of it, when the rest of them was out at nurse, and the half of them wasn't born or thought of.

Re-enter JACOB.

I ax pardon, sir, but maybe you might be acquainted wid one Murphy, &c., &c.

Jac. Don't bother, Greek.

Ted. Well, now, isn't that queer? He sees it, too!

Jac. I say, Greek, did you come here after a place?

Ted. Under government, sir?

Jac. No, you fool.

Ted. I didn't know, sir. I was towld that promotion was quick here, if one only knew the right way to set about it,—and the best pair of crutches a fellow could use upon the road, was either to sell grog or politics.

Jac. What the deuce do you know about politics?

Ted. Faith, not a great deal; but they tell me that's no great disadvantage, and them that talks most about it knows the least: an' as I know just nothing at all, I have as good a chance as any of them. Hurra! Didn't Molly O'Donahoo, that tells fortunes by the cards, say, the other night, that if I was born under a lucky planet, I'd be a pleeceman in a month, and wud have nothing to do but wear an iligant uniform, wid a star like a Grand Duke, on me breast, 'scorting beautiful ladies across dirthy streets, and cracking whips at omnibus-horses!

Jac. What's that you're flourishing about in your hand?

Ted. Indeed, an' I can hardly tell ye. You see I was taught readin' an' writin' by word o' mouth.

Jac. You mean, I suppose, that you can do neither, and you're ashamed to confess such benighted ignorance?

Ted. I wud be, sir, if it was any fault of mine. It was a hard school I went to, sir,—one that niver has a holiday, the school of necessity. Whin a fellow's hands gits used to howlding a pick, it's little use to try and stick a pen in it. You see, it was a gentleman that gave me this, as he was rowling' along in his carriage, and told me to take it to the direction, and may be I mightn't be sorry. I axed my way this far, and I'm thinking it must be near this.

Jac. Let me see it. Why, it's for Lawyer Foxglove! It was he as got me out of my place, and separated me from my Perkins. Hang me, if I don't pay him off for it!

Ted. What does it say, sir, av you plase?

Jac. Only a few words. "This is the man."

Ted. Meaning me, sir? Who knows but he may be able to tell me something about Larry?

Jac. I shouldn't be surprised; most likely a recommendation for a place. Listen to me, furrener! There's the house that Lawyer Foxglove lives in. I know him like a book, and can give you a word of advice.

Ted. Indeed? and may long life to you for taking so much trouble about a poor stranger.

Jac. In the first place, he's very eccentric

Ted. What may that be, sir?

Jac. Queer in his notions. You know this is a land of liberty, I suppose?

Ted. So I've heard, sir, but you see I don't exactly know what that manes.

Jac. It means that you can take whatever liberty you like—one man's just as good as another.

Ted. And a thrifle better, maybe?

Jac. Exactly. You understand me, I see. Now, if you talk low, and look sheepish, and carry your hat in your hand, they'll think you're an ignorant fool, but if you boldly claim your rights, cock your hat on your head, swagger and talk loud, and elbow people about, you'll soon get into notice.

Ted. You don't tell me that, sir?

[*Puts on his hat.*]

Jac. To be sure! Many a chap has been kicked into consequence by following that plan, who would otherwise have passed his life in mere quiet usefulness.

Ted. Bedad it's meeself that likes the idea of that sort of thing mightily—it's easy and lazy, and that's the heart's blood of a gentleman's life, all the world over.

Jac. You're exactly the kind of man the lawyer loves. Show him you're somebody, and he'll be the making of you.

Ted. Leave me alone for that.

Jac. He may talk angrily to you, just to try if you have the right stuff in you, but you must give it to him back, or you're a goner

Ted. Maybe I won't, nabocklish. If he gives me any of his lip, I'll wallop him.

Jac. I'm going there, too: let us go in. [Going.]

Ted. [Flings him round.] Where's your manners, you blaggard? That's free an' asy, ain't it?

Jac. Oh, you Greek! [Cries.] [TED. kicks tray.]

CURTAIN.

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—FOXGLOVE'S Apartment.—MRS. FOXGLOVE discovered.

Mrs. Fox. I am about to pass through an ordeal, from which there are few of my sex but would shrink, and yet, like a brave soldier before the conflict, my heart beats exultingly at the anticipation!

Enter FOXGLOVE and servant, L. 1 E.

Fox. [Opening note.] Ha!—the invitation to Mrs. De Merfie's Grand Ball?

Serv. There's a very rude kind of a man, sir, below, who insists upon seeing you.

Fox. He must wait. Tell him I am very busy, but will attend to him as quickly as I can. [Exit servant, L. 2 E.] Now, my dear, I have dismissed all sublunary thoughts for a while, shut out the law, and all its dry details, and am ready to listen to this secret matter, which you tell me you have to communicate.

Mrs. Fox. You can't imagine what it is, I suppose, dear?

Fox. Haven't an idea, darling!—To alter and amend that foolish will, of course? [Aside.]

Mrs. Fox. My dear husband, I'm going to make a great trial of your disinterested affection!

Fox. Wife of my bosom, can you doubt it for an instant? Open your case!

Mrs. Fox. What induced you to marry me so suddenly?

Fox. Hem!—that's a pistol-shot kind of a question!—[Aside.] What induced me? Why, multifarious considerations.

Mrs. Fox. But the principal ones?

Fox. Um! Unison of sentiment, coincidence of opinion, the happy spiritual and intangible wedlock of thought and sympathy, the in-existent fusion of mental idiosyncrasy! I hope that's transcendental enough. [Aside.]

Mrs. Fox. And what may all that amount to; when set down in the figures of common sense?

Fox. Hang me if I know to a fraction! But, come, we haven't been married long enough to talk about common sense, yet.

Mrs. Fox. Just long enough. Can you think of no other inducement you had to stimulate you to matrimony?

Fox. None that I can call to mind at this moment.

Mrs. Fox. No worldly consideration,—um?

Fox. What can you possibly mean?

Mrs. Fox. No mercenary motive?

Fox. Dear me! how unpleasantly matter-of-fact she is! How can you ask me such a question?

Mrs. Fox. Merely to elicit a reply:—I believe that is the purport of all questions. In a word, did you marry me for myself, or for my money?

Fox. God bless me! What a preposterous idea! This is a regular domestic cross-examination! What act, or word, or deed of mine, could induce you to harbor so unjust, so poor, so inimical a thought?

Mrs. Fox. That's a professional reply. I want a plain yes, or no!

Fox. Well, then, confound it,—no!

Mrs. Fox. I'm delighted to hear it, for it has removed a terrible load from my mind!—I have *none*, dear!

Fox. No what, love?

Mrs. Fox. No money, darling!

Fox. Mercy on me, what an abominable swindle!—Madam! don't you know that your conduct is statuteable, obtaining money, I mean marriage, under false pretences?

Mrs. Fox. And what was yours?

Fox. Ah, that was a totally different thing! I infringed no law!

Mrs. Fox. You *did*,—the law which should precede *all* law, the law of moral honesty, and honorable truth!

Fox. And that precious document, that you made my mouth water over for an hour, was all a flam?

Mrs. Fox. I can't deny it.

Fox. What on earth induced you to imagine such a tantalizing piece of deception?

Mrs. Fox. I was tired of my dependence, and wished to change it,—besides, strange as it may appear, I liked you, knew your weak point, assailed and carried it!

Fox. Don't imagine that I am going to submit tamely to this swindle! Were it not for your relative, Mrs. Weldon—

Mrs. Fox. She is no relative of mine,—I was simply her house-keeper.

Fox. Oh, Lord! Oh Lord! You called yourself her aunt!

Mrs. Fox. And you called yourself my lover!—Come, be reasonable:—There's an equal amount of turpitude on both sides. We played for different stakes, and I have won.

Fox. A devilish nice kind of game, I must say! But I'll have a divorce!

Mrs. Fox. I think not.

Fox. Why?—pray!

Mrs. Fox. You're too fond of your money, and I can live here for less than the law will allow me, as separate maintenance.

Fox. Upon my life you're a great woman! I could almost forgive you, for your superb sang froid,—but I won't! No, we must part!

Mrs. Fox. With all my heart!—I sha'n't care for the stories they will get up at the clubs,—I sha'n't notice the jeering and the fun, with which your dear friends will relate the particulars of the counsellor's marriage!

Fox. Confound 'em, so they will!—I'm utterly, and unequivocally sold, past redemption! [*Aside.*

Mrs. Fox. I shall leave your house immediately. [*Going.*

Fox. Stop a minute! there's no occasion for such precipitancy. [*Mrs. Fox.* I thought not.] I've thrust my neck into the yoke, and egad, I must wear it, though it should gall me to the quick. I don't want the miserable, sneering world to talk. So, if you please, we'll be on the best possible terms, when there are overlookers, but the privilege is left us to cordially despise each other in private. One comfort is, we sha'n't be singular in that respect. Do you agree to that bargain?

Mrs. Fox. I do, and promise you your full share of home comfort.

Fox. Which I shall pay back with compound interest, be assured. [*They make faces at each other as PAUL enters, c.*] A little pardonable pleasantry, Mr. Weldon—not long married, you know.

Paul. Pray excuse this unceremonious intrusion. Mr. Foxglove, can I venture to ask for a short interview?

Fox. Certainly, my dear sir. My sweet Phœbe. [*Crosses to c.*

Mrs. Fox. Dear Corydon.

Fox. The sunshine of our felicity must be eclipsed for a few moments, by the intervention of busy circumstance. *Au revoir, darling!* [*Leads her to door, and kisses her hand.*] Swindler!

Mrs. Fox. Adieu—hypocrite! [*Exit, L. E. H.*

Fox. Ah! who would be a bachelor, if he could know, as I now do, the blissful harmony of wedded existence? [*Crosses to R. H.*

Paul. (L.) Why did you suffer one who wore the form of man, to bind his soul to such an abject slavery?—Despised by my fellow-men, I know I am, although they dare not show it openly, for I have that within me from which insolence recoils. What am I to do? You, who have helped to rivet these fetters on my life and hopes, assist me now to rend them off.

Fox. Don't be intemperate. Keep cool. You're not the worst used individual in the world; other people's shoes pinch as well as yours. What would you have me do?

Paul. Anything to break this terrible monotony of degradation.

I knew not, when I made this shameless bargain, that I was meant perpetually to feed the flame of her undying love, to be the daily sacrifice upon the altar of her insatiate passion. Openly, and without disguise, she weeps over each memento—nay, the very brooch which she wears, incloses a lock of his hair!

Fox. I have noticed the straw-colored memorial, but, dear me, look at the matter calmly. Pray, what did you suppose induced the lady to take so sudden and unaccountable a step? Did you think she was fascinated by your irresistible attributes?

Paul. No, no. I could not, I dared not think. Blindly, and all regardless of consequence, I yielded reason up to the delirium of the moment. I had another motive, a holy one, that I imagined might redeem the meanness of my conduct. My father, while yet a young man, was left a widower. The memory of his lost wife, and the care of two dear children, remained to reconcile him to life, and to the world. My sister, a lovely girl, became his heart's idol. His means, already scant enough, would perish with him, and he hoped, with a father's pardonable pride, that her gentleness and extreme beauty would, one day, win for her a wealthy as well as a fond husband. Circumstances called him to some distance from the city. She accompanied him. During the journey, one of those occurrences (so frequent now as almost to be miscalled accidents) took place. My father was severely hurt. My sister maimed for life. His injuries, added to the shock of seeing his adored child, senseless and bleeding by his side, acting upon a frame already enfeebled, were beyond his strength, and—he bequeathed to me a sacred legacy—a helpless and crippled sister. By his death-bed I vowed to devote my life to her support. Heaven knows how I have toiled and struggled to keep the oath: but fate and the hard world were against me, and I was all but desperate when chance threw me in your way, sent me also to the presence of Miss Devereaux. Then came the offer. My sister—my darling sister—my father's pride. The sun-ray of my good fortune would warm and solace her, even though its first piercing beams should burn the shame into *my* cheek, as with a brand. Now, sir, you know my motive.

Fox. My dear young poetical friend, you take this matter a great deal too seriously. Do you know what I should do were I in your place?

Paul. What?

Fox. Hang me, if I shouldn't travel without baggage, for a while.

Paul. I could not live away from her.

Fox. What's that?

Paul. Despise or pity me for the avowal, I could not. I love her, sir. [Crosses to R.

Fox. That's a pretty business.

Paul. I know it is presumptuous, and madly vain, dog as I am,

—beaten hound—to lift my eyes from earth up to the heaven of her face, and yet, if the heart that gives me life, be not a throbbing lie, better than life I love her. Oh! that it were my destiny to die in guarding her from some great peril, that with my last of breath I might say, “ Thus it was I loved you, Alice ! ”

Fox. Oh! you’re incurable, I’m afraid. A monomaniac, lunatic, to all intents and purposes. I don’t know what to advise. It would be a pity to shave your head, but I suppose that’s what it must come to in the end, and yet, any one to look at you, would judge that you had a fair share of brains. There, don’t be offended, perhaps I may have a private reason to be rather acidulated. To sum up, you love your despotic wife, and are afraid to tell her so. What you want is for her to love you, and make no secret of it.

Paul. It is impossible !

Fox. I quite agree with you, so long as you offend her sight, or that of any high-spirited person, by remaining in contented servitude, paying for the privilege of gazing at her scornful eyes, (when they are not looking in your direction,) by the sacrifice of all manly dignity and self-esteem ! This plain-speaking breaks upon you like a shock of electricity ?—Well, lightning is very useful in clearing away fogs sometimes. The atmosphere about your heart is thick, and if I didn’t firmly believe it was a good one, hang me, if I should take the trouble of thundering at it !

Paul. You have, indeed, sir, transferred the blush from my cheek into my very soul ! Am I then become so despicable a thing ?—You are right, she must loathe me !

[*Throws himself into chair, much moved.*]

Fox. Well, there’s no knowing exactly ! Womankind is an inscrutable institution. [*Enter servant, L.*] Well, what’s the matter ?

Serv. That man says he can’t wait any longer.

Ted. [*Entering.*] There, don’t make a long goster of it, but get out ! [*Exit servant, L.*] The top of the morning to you, sir !

Fox. What the devil to you want, eh ?

Ted. I want to buy somethin’ !

Fox. What ?

Ted. I’d like to buy a small parcel of politeness, but I’ve come to the wrong shop.

Fox. You impudent scoundrel !

Ted. It’s easy seen you’ve got none to spare.

Fox. You might take off your hat, when you come into a gentleman’s house !

Ted. I always do.

Fox. Why, you confounded——

Ted. Well there ! [*Takes off hat.*] Anything for a quiet life !

Fox. Perhaps you’ll condescend to tell me what brought you here ?

Ted. I wasn’t brought at all, I kem !

Fox. Oh, you kem, did you? What for, pray?

Ted. I want to get some work, for to kape me, until I find Larry. You don't happen to know Larry Murphy? There was a boy outside that towld me you had a vacancy for a gintleman to wait on you, and more betoken, gev the house the heart's blood of a fine character, four regular meals, and permiscuous ating through the day, with a barrel of strong beer running all over the house, and as that just suits my book, I'd like to take the place for a beginning!

Fox. I dare say you would, you hungry-looking shark, you wolf-stomach, you walking appetite, you confounded ever-masticating swallow-all!—leave the house!

Ted. Bad luck to yer house! Who's going to touch it?

Fox. Get out, I say!

Ted. Maybe you'd like to look at a few lines I got from a young gentleman to give you, by the way of a recommend?

Fox. Go to the devil, you and your recommend!

Ted. Maybe you'd take it there yerself, as you seem to be traveling the road!

[Throws down card, and exits, 2 E. L.]

Fox. What the deuce is the meaning of this? Weldon, this card is yours! Is this the fellow for whom you asked me to write that letter of recommendation?

Paul. Yes,—he has a good, kind heart. Put him into some small business, but on condition that he never inquires the name of his benefactor.

Fox. Hollo! You come back! [Enter TED, L.] Come here! Tell me the truth, who told you to call on me?

Ted. It was a boy: a sort of a puzzlin' kind of a chap. I couldn't be on my oath whether he was an ould-looking young boy, or a young-looking ould man.

Fox. Did he tell you to behave in the insolent way you have done?

Ted. He towld me that nobody'd think me anybody, unless I showed 'em I was somebody.

Fox. I thought so! Give me your hand!

Ted. Indeed, and I will, sir, wid my heart in it, if it's in earnest you are!

Fox. Now listen to me, sir! It is by implicitly putting faith in the lying statements of interested schemers, and blindly following the sound of any bell-wether cry, that your countrymen, impulsive, generous, devoted, and unselfish though they are,—run counter to the views of reasoning men, and, believe this, my friend, that until they begin to see, hear, and think, for themselves, so long will they remain dupes and tools, mere instruments in the hands of those who despise, while they use them, and (their turn served) laugh at the simplicity which was so easily cajoled!

Ted. Bedad, sir, you talk like a book; and there's somethin' in it too, if I only had the sense to spell it out.

Fox. [*Giving one of the ball invitations instead of letter he has written.*] There, take that to the direction, and you'll probably hear something that won't be unpleasant

Ted. Anything about Larry?

Fox. You'll see.

Ted. Long life to you, sir, and a good wife to you, sir, wid lots of wealth, health, and prize-babbies all over the tiniment!

[*Exit*, L. 1 E.]

Paul. [*Starting up.*] The die is cast, my friend. That fatal obligation which makes us strangers to the end, shuts off all hope. My sister! were it not for *thee*—

Fox. I will see to her.

Paul. That word has opened my prison-gate. I will give up the sordid hire which now clothes my free action in the livery of dependence.

Fox. Don't be rash; not that I disapprove of your design,—it does you credit, and I love you for it. I have a whim:—leave me some memento,—a lock of hair, for instance,—you mustn't refuse me, I will have it.

[*Takes scissors, and cuts off lock.*]

Enter Servant.

Serv. Mrs. Weldon would like to have an interview with you, sir, if perfectly convenient.

Fox. Your wife!

Paul. Wife!

[*Bitterly.*]

Fox. I beg pardon. [*To servant.*] Show the lady up.

[*Exit servant*, L. 1 E.]

Paul. I cannot see her now; my emotion, mastered usually, is now too apparent. Where can I retire to until she is gone?

Fox. No place but my cabinet. I can't put you out of ear-shot, but you have a right to hear all that passes.

Paul. A listener, I detest!

Fox. The adage is unfavorable, but there's no alternative. In!

[*Puts him in closet*, R. 1 E.]

Enter ALICE, L. 1 E.]

Madame, your most obedient.

Al. I wish to see you on business, Mr. Foxglove. I hope I don't interrupt you?

Fox. Not at all; pray proceed.

Al. I want you to pay Mr. Weldon one year of the allowance I have made him. I understand that he has a near relative, in poverty and sickness, and would relieve her. Here is a check; perhaps it will be more delicate should it come through your hands, than through mine.

Fox. I applaud your consideration, madame, but, unfortunately, it is not needed. He won't take a penny of it.

Al. But it is my pleasure that he should. He must,—I insist upon it.

Fox. I am sorry, madame, but he told me so himself

Al. Insolent! He dare not refuse!

Fox. Oh, yes, he dare. I advised him to it.

Al. You, sir!

Fox. I, madame.

Al. For what reason, sir?

Fox. Because I find that he is in possession of an exceedingly rare article, in the way of personal property, which I would fain preserve.

Al. What may that be?

Fox. A *heart*, madame.

Al. Indeed! sir, I congratulate you on the discovery, but, pray, of what possible interest can the knowledge be to me?

Fox. None whatever, thanks to your own mad folly! Were it the noblest that ever beat within the breast of man, you've placed it out of your reach, but, mark my words, you'll wish your arms were long enough, by-and-bye.

Al. Never!

Fox. We shall see. I met your old lover to-day, looking as happy and rosy as a May morning.

Al. [*Walking about angrily.*] Why, sir!—Oh, why do you lacerate my soul, by such an observation?

Fox. Lacerate, pooh! You can't be under the singular delusion that this undignified exhibition of temper has an atom of love in it? Not a bit. You are simply suffering extreme annoyance from the fact that you expected to harrow up his soul by your self-inflicted distress, but he, like a sensible fellow as he is, laughs and gets fat, under the dispensation, while you, excuse the homely metaphor, have cut your own nose off, to the serious detriment of the rest of your countenance.

Al. You are a most unsentimental barbarian, thus to vulgarize the finest feelings of the soul into mere common-place.

Fox. I like to rub the flimsy plating off, and expose the hard iron beneath.

Al. With me your efforts are all fruitless for my love is indestructible.

Fox. I see that clearly, but I never thought your pride would have been sacrificed to keep it alive.

Al. What do you mean?

Fox. I mean that no captive that ever graced the conqueror's car, exhibited a more pitiable spectacle to a gazing world than you do, with that evidence of your humiliation in your bosom. For my part, I thought you had sufficient fire, even in the ashes of your heart, to singe the ostentatious shame into a crisp. Why there's hardly a school-going miss who doesn't shrug her shoulders at your lack of spirit!

Al. Do they?—I'll never wear it again!

[*Throws locket on table, L. H.*

Fox. Right! Egad, I begin to have some hope for you.

Al. None, none! No—desolate, and still lonely, I shall pursue my gloomy way, lighted only by the torch of pride, your words have re-illuminated.

Fox. Ri tum ti tum ti tum ti! That must be something from Bulwer. Ah! if you had a *real* husband now.

[*Enter PAUL from closet, R. 1 E.*

Paul. I can no longer descend to be an eaves-dropper.

Fox. [*Aside.*] Bravo! most honorable idiot, you've done it now. I wash my hands of the whole affair.

Al. You here, sir! Was this a preconcerted scene? If so, you have wasted your ingenuity to little purpose.

Fox. Ah! the pride is blazing up with a vengeance.

Paul. One moment, madam—I will detain you but an instant. Pardon me, but I find I have over-estimated the strength of my endurance; I can no longer live this life—I can no longer subsist on your bounty—it may be the last time you shall ever hear the sound of my voice. In parting, as in death, the truth may be uttered without a question. And should you ever deign to cast a thought upon so poor a wretch as I, think then of one, whom a pure, holy, and unselfish love has suddenly ennobled, silent and hopeless though that love must be—nor would I dare to unburden thus my soul, and make confession of its great presumption, but that a moment more removes me from your sight forever. Farewell, my good, kind, generous friend. And you, madam, may propitious heaven encompass your footsteps with that joy and happiness, that I shall never see again on earth. Farewell! farewell!

[*Exit.*

Al. He must not go!

Fox. He's gone! Like a wayward child, you've played with your toy until you broke it.

Al. I did not deem him capable of so much feeling.

Fox. Of course not. We never know the value of anything until we lose it: however, there are plenty of poodles and parrots to be had cheap.

Al. Pshaw! you have no soul.

Fox. [*Goes to table L., and brings down locket.*] Not a bit. [*A pause.*] You're right, he is a noble fellow.

Al. How do you know I thought so?

Fox. (L.) I'm pretty well studied in looks, my dear. Lord, how much better his fine raven hair would show here than this tawny worsted! I have a lock of it.

Al. (R.) Have you? [*Takes it.*] Not that I want it.

[*Places it in her bosom.*

Fox. I'm very glad he's gone, for my part.

Al. And so am I.

Fox. I see you are. You must forget him.

Al. I will.

[*Exit ALICE, L. 2 E.*]

Fox. Will you? not if I'm any judge of female nature. Hey? What's this? The note of introduction which I thought I gave to that Irishman. What could he have got instead? As I live, my invitation to the ball to-night. No matter, I should not have gone, and he'll be sure to turn up again.

[*Sits down to write, L. H., closed in.*]

SCENE II.—*Antechamber in De Merfie's house.—Guests arriving. Music, as scene changes.—Music very piano.—MR. GRACE announced.*

Enter GRACE, R.

Grace. Mr., Mrs. and Miss Bronderburgh. [*They pass, R.*] Colonel Slim! [*SLIM goes in.*] Major Bluster, and Captain Doolittle.

Ted. [*Outside.*] Is it that gentleman at the door, where all the quality is goin' in? [*Enter TED, L. 1 E.*] Av you plase, sir, is this corric't?

Grace. [*Laughing.*] Certainly, sir. Very well disguised indeed! Permit me to remark that you'll be one of the most original characters in the saloon.

Ted. Maybe I will, sir. The gentleman tould me that I'd hear something that 'ud plase me. If it's you that's to tell it, out with it at once! Is it about Larry, sir?

Grace. I have no doubt, sir, but they'll inform you in the ball-room. Pray, walk in.

Ted. What! Is it in there? Oh, murther! Sure, I'd never have the face to go in amongst all them people.

Grace. Very good indeed, sir! Very well conceived, and I may say executed. Name, sir, if you please?

Ted. Ted Murphy.

Grace. Yes, I know,—but your own name?

Ted. Why, who the divil else's name do you think I have?

Grace. I see you are determined to carry it through. Shall I announce you by that name?

Ted. Indeed you may do as you like.

Grace. [*Opens door.*] Mr. Ted Murphy!

Ted. If I thought I could hear anything about that Larry!

Grace. I have no doubt of it, sir! Ha, ha!

Ted. Here goes then wid a blessin'! [*Exit through door.*]

Grace. Some eccentric friend of the family, I suppose. [*Exit, R.*]

SCENE III.—*The fancy ball.—Louis Quatorze Quadrille, finishing.—COLONEL SLIM, DOOLITTLE, TED MURPHY, MRS. DE MERFIE, MR. DE MERFIE, and several ladies and gents discovered.*

Mrs. De M. This is really delightful and rechurchy. It puts me

in mind of my young days, at Dublin Castle, when I was surrounded by my noble relatives.

Mr. De M. Nelly, take care!

Mrs. De M. Oh! don't bother! Nobody knows us here! Won't you take some refreshment, ladies? Now, John, don't be lazy.

[*Crosses.*]

Ted. Well, of all the crazy-looking geniuses that I ever saw, these beats them! but it's the custom of the country, I suppose.

Slim. [*Aside to DOOLITTLE.*] That's a singular character, for an elegant party. Do you know who he is?

Doo. Can't recognize him through the disguise. Very good, though! Quite a picture! [*To TED.*] Well, Paddy, how are you? Glad to see you.

Ted. The same to you, sir.

Slim. Ha! ha! When did you come over, Paddy?

Ted. My name's not Paddy, sur!

Doo. Not Paddy, eh? What may it be then?

Ted. Ted, sur, if you please!—Ted Murphy, at your sarvice! I kem over in the &c., &c. You didn't happen to know one Larry Murphy, sur, from the Parish of Dunduckedy, near Mud Island, a son of ould Murphy, the reaping-hook maker, &c., &c.

Slim. Haven't had the honor of his acquaintance, [*Enter servant with refreshment.*] sir. Here's the servant. Won't you join us, Mr. Ted Murphy?

Ted. Wid all the veins of my heart, sir!

Slim. What will you have?

Ted. Whatever's goin', sir, I'm not particular. [*Drinks.*] Bedad, that's pleasin'! I don't mind if I repate the dose. What may be the name of this, sir?

Slim. You'd rather have whiskey, I suppose?

Ted. Indeed, and it wouldn't break my neck to crack a bottle of the same.

Slim. It would be supporting the character very naturally to punish a little of it.

Ted. A little of it! Well, I don't know that—only give me the chance.

Doo. A pleasant fellow! Come, let us explore among the drinkables.

Ted. I'm wid you! Hurroo! This is the sort of house I've been lookin' for ever since I kem home from nursing!

[*They go up, and all regard TED.—Business with waiter.*]

Mrs. De M. Dear me! I wonder who that can be? I have a faint recollection of his countenance! Lawrence, love, do you know that gentleman's name, who is so capitally disguised? Very impertinent to visit us in that dress! if he should know!—Who is he?

Mr. De M. I didn't see his face. Indeed, I am positively

ashamed to look around me, for fear of seeing the ridicule which my foolish appearance must excite! I wish to heaven it was all over.

Mrs. De M. Now don't be absurd! I'm sure everything is quite commy-fo, and tout-afay couler de rose. Here are some people—talk elegant, will you?

Mr. De M. Pooh! I'm disgusted with myself.

Mrs. De M. [*To one of the ladies.*] Magnific, indeed! Oh, my love, mon marry, and soi mem, were just praising up your charming appearance. You look exactly like a *dam de cour*, I protest.

Mr. De M. [*Aside to her.*] Don't swear, Nelly!

Mrs. De M. Was it our old friend, the Countess of—— what's her name, you said she put you in mind of?

Mr. De M. Have a care!

Mrs. De M. Taisey vous, if you please, and don't bother!

[*MR. DE M. goes up—TED, at back, sings.—All laugh.—He comes forward with bottle.*]

Mrs. De M. What an amusing creature. [*Aside.*] Rude brute!

Ted. If yer not the heart's blood of the decentest lot of lunatics I ever met wid in all my travels, you may shoot me wid a pistol the shape of this, and likewise loaded wid the same illigant charge!

Mrs. De M. Ha! Ha! Witty creature! [*All laugh.*] I wonder who he is?

Ted. I heerd ye, ma'am! I'll tell ye who I am, in a jiffey! My name's Teddy Murphy——

Mrs. De M. What!—The impudent fellow!

Ted. Who knows, ma'am, but ye, or some of yez, might be able to put me on my thrack in the regard of them, that I'm looking for! Did any of yes ever hear of one Larry Murphy, &c., &c., from Waxford?

[*MRS. DE M. screams. MR. DE M. comes down.*]

Mr. De M. What's the matter?

Mrs. De M. Nothing, love,—I——

Ted. I merely axed the lady if—[*she screams*]—she ever heard tell of—[*she screams*]—one Larry Murphy. [*She screams.*]

Mr. De M. [*Looks anxiously round.*] Ted!

Ted. Larry!

[*They embrace.*]

Mr. De M. Ted, there's your sister-in-law.

Ted. Come to my arms!

[*Embraces her.*]

GENERAL TABLEAU.

ACT V.

SCENE I.—FOXGLOVE'S *Drawing Room*—*MRS. FOXGLOVE discovered sewing, R. C.—Enter FOXGLOVE with papers, W. 2.—She takes work, bows, and exits.*

Fox. (*Paces stage.*) This state of matrimonial infelicity—this wedded unblestness is intolerable! Confound the woman!

She has grown upon me in spite of her delinquency. So quiet, so submissive, so considerate, and so very useful, but, Oh! the double burglary by which she broke into my house and heart together! Can I compound such a moral felony? It would be most injudicial. Hang the women! I mean Heaven bless them! What a pleasant perplexity they are to us male nonentities! One comfort is, I'm not the only individual who has been bothered and befooled by a woman. I must see her, and settle it one way or another! [*Rings and walks about. Enter Servant, r.*] Tell Mrs. Foxglove, I wish to see her, if she is disengaged. [*Exit Servant.*] What the deuce am I to say to her? If she'd only do something to make me hate her, what a service she would render me? Ah, here she comes! [*Enter MRS. FOXGLOVE, R. I. E., followed by servant, who crosses behind and exits L. H.*] Mrs. Foxglove, your most obedient.

Mrs. Fox. Mr. Foxglove, your servant.

Fox. No, you're not;—though I'm well aware that you make yourself one.

Mrs. Fox. It is my duty.

Fox. Yes, I know! Sit down. [*They sit.*] Hem! I suppose you are aware that we cannot lead this negative kind of existence forever?

Mrs. Fox. I don't complain of it.

Fox. But I do! I presume that you have the grace to be ashamed of the abominable ruse by which you established yourself here?

Mrs. Fox. Not in the least, nor should you harshly condemn that which, after all, must only be flattering to your self-esteem.

Fox. Well, upon my life, that's cool! How so, pray?

Mrs. Fox. The value of an object is in the same ratio to the means employed to attain it, is it not?

Fox. Granted.

Mrs. Fox. Surely you wouldn't have me say more?

Fox. You're very delicate all of a sudden! Come, I'll ask you one question. Did you feel any regard for me before the—attack?

Mrs. Fox. None whatever. Did you?

Fox. Not a morsel! Frank on both sides. You could have calculated on nothing but discontent from such an alliance?

Mrs. Fox. Not at all. The bitterest of foes may sometimes make the sweetest of friends. It is with individuals as with nations. Who that remembered Waterloo, could ever have dreamt of Inker-mann?

Fox. You intend then to maintain your position?

Mrs. Fox. If I'm not dislodged.

Fox. Bayonets wouldn't dislodge you!

[*Crosses R.*]

Mrs. Fox. You compliment me.

Fox. I should like to know what would!

Mrs. Fox. Really?

Fox. Positively!

Mrs. Fox. Nothing!

Fox. Phew! I've run my head into a pretty yoke!

Mrs. Fox. There are *two* heads in it, be good enough to recollect, and however galling it may be to either party, the most *convenient* mode of proceeding on the road of life, will be to pull together.

Fox. Egad! that's true enough; and if a man *is* to be humbugged, why it might as well be done comfortably. I'm half inclined to look over your misdemeanor, if it be only from sheer indolence. So as we *are* to travel together, let it be.

Mrs. Fox. In friendliness, nothing more.

Fox. Zounds! But I say you *shall*, if I choose! I don't mean that! Your many good qualities have entirely obliterated that one questionable act! By Jove! I'm in earnest. We are past the season for romance, perhaps, but for a good, old-fashioned fire-side affection, there is yet time.

Mrs. Fox. Pardon me, sir, but that can never be! There can be no affection without respect, and after my conduct——

Fox. Confound it! Wasn't I the worst of the two? Didn't those deuced legacies captivate my mercenary soul? I was the miserable, mean pettifogging scoundrel! Come, let us forgive each other, and forget the past.

Mrs. Fox. I would if I could, but——

Fox. Zounds! do you want to bring me to my knees like Sir Charles Grandison?

Mrs. Fox. I could not, dare not expect such a humiliation!

Fox. Because if you do—there—[*kneels*]. Now are you satisfied?

Enter GRACE, L. E. Mrs. Fox retires with dignity, R. I. E.

Help me up, Grace! This is a pretty position for a man to be found in, after six months' marriage!

Grace. I saw nothing—never see anything—we never do.

Fox. I'm glad of it, there's no necessity for explanation; moreover, I'm glad you've come. How goes on my scheme about the Weldons? The dearest wish of my heart is to see those two fine young people together. That she loves him, I am pretty well assured—if we could only break down that terrible barrier of pride. Have you gained him access to all those parties?

Grace. Certainly, it was but to speak. Here are half-a-dozen more invitations to the most *recherché réunions* in town.

Fox. How does he conduct himself?

Grace. Admirably! He was at Mrs. Hautton's last night, the observed of all observers, as the immortal somebody observes. By-the-bye, Mrs. W. was there also.

Fox. Did they speak?

Grace. Not a word, though they were in the same cotillon together; but that's not unusual, you know, although, as the general report is that they are finally separated, there's no reason why they should not.

Fox. Leave those notes here—he lives with me now—I'll give them to him. Tell me, Grace, did he appear to be attentive to any particular lady?

Grace. Not remarkably so, as I observed. To be sure, he danced twice with Miss Meredith.

Fox. Did he? Is she pretty?

Grace. Beautiful!

Fox. Describe her.

Grace. She has 10,000 a-year.

Fox. That's enough—I'm satisfied!

Grace. But Mrs. Weldon has made the greatest conquest! Young Bradish, the wealthy and elegant Southerner, is irretrievably stricken. Indeed, one of my reasons for seeing you, was to find out for him if a divorce were practicable.

Fox. Um! Nothing more easy. By the way, how does that Irishman get on, I sent a note to you about?

Grace. I don't remember having received any such note!

Fox. Some time back. Egad! now I remember! I gave the fellow an invitation card to Mrs. De Merfie's Fancy Ball instead. So it is that some folk miss their good fortune.

Grace. So it is that other folk hit it. I saw him at the ball. Haven't you heard the particulars? Bless you, it made a great sensation in our set! Mr. De Merfie turns out to be the brother Larry that he was so continually inquiring about, to the terrible annoyance of his lady wife, whose aristocratical relations in Ireland were unceremoniously reduced to blacksmiths and plough-drivers.

Fox. What have they done with him, for gracious sake?

Grace. The first annoyance of the exposure over, Mrs. De Merfie insisted upon decorating him in the highest style of fashion, and not exactly liking the fiery color of his hair, she positively insisted upon his wearing a curly black wig, very much to his perplexity, I'm told; but he is somewhat impracticable, and as you may imagine gets into all kinds of difficulties in our quarter.

[*Enter Servant with card on salver, L. 1. E.*]

Fox. [*Crosses c.*] Singular coincidence! Talk of, &c., [*reads*] "T. Murphy, Esq." Show him in, by all means!

Servant ushers in TED, and MRS. DE MERFIE, L. 1. E., bows and exits.

Mrs. De M. My dear Mr. Foxglove, I'm delighted to see you looking so charmingly! Grace, you know my dear wild brother—you [*To Fox.*] do not. Allow me to have the pleasure—I hadn't

the opportunity before. My brother-in-law, Counsellor Foxglove. [*Aside to TED.*] Bow, you Hottentot, will you?

TED takes off hat—his wig comes off with it, and he places hat on the table with wig in it.

Ted. To be sure! Hollo! Why, if it isn't my ould friend that gev me the ticket when—

Mrs. De M. [*Aside to TED.*] Hold your tongue!

Ted. It's meself that's proud of shaking your illigant fist, for it's the hoyth of good fortune that it brought me! Mother o' Moses! there's the chap that passed me into your grand party the night I—

Mrs. De M. [*Aside to him.*] Do be quiet, you dreadful creature! [*Aloud.*] And how is my delightful friend, Mrs. Counsellor Foxglove? I haven't had the pleasure of seeing her for this many a day. Quite a pleasant duty this of mine, to chaperone an inexperienced creature, fresh from the bosom of his family. So great a favorite with his distinguished relatives at home, that they allowed him to grow up in his beautiful native wildness, the darling!

Ted. Arrah! Howld yer whist! Shure, don't these know all about Larry? Didn't I ax them, before I had the luck to——

Mrs. De M. What have you done with your head——

Ted. Oh, murther! is the thing off? It's gone down me back.

[*Looks about for it.*]

Mrs. De M. Hold your tongue! You knew, then—ha! ha! Curious incident! Quite romantic! You remember how admirably he was disguised at our ball—done on purpose to give us all a surprise!

Ted. It's no use! the ould gentleman saw me in me breeches!

Mrs. De M. He will insist upon carrying on the innocent joke.

Enter PAUL, L. I. E.

Paul. Pardon me, sir. I didn't know you had visitors.

Fox. Stay, Paul, we are all friends.

Mrs. De M. To be sure, Mr. Weldon. I'm delighted to see you looking so charmingly. My brother-in-law, Mr. Weldon.

Ted. Hallo, sir, is it there ye are? The earliest and the best friend I met! It's proud that I am to see you this day! Sure an I've found Larry—indeed an I have, an it's lashins of money that he has, and pockets full I've got too, and empty them all ye may as bare as a beggar-man's wallet, if ye like! Here, won't you take a fist full?

Paul. Thank you, my good friend—I am not in want of any.

Mrs. De M. Do for gracious sake behave yourself! You'll be the death of me, you intractable savage!

Ted. Well, I can't help it, if you will dress me up like a tailor's block, putting these things on me. Be my soul, they're so tight on me, body and breeches, that bad luck to me if I ain't afraid to

let out my muscles. I told you I'd rather have an acre of ground and a pig.

Mrs. De M. Oh! What plebeian' ideas! Excuse him, pray! Come home with me, do—you're worse than ever. Good morning to you all. We have a multitude of places to call at. [*Aside to TED.*] Now leave the place like a gentleman.

Ted. I dunno how—I'll lave it like a man, may be that'll do as well. God bless you, sir, for puttin' me on the road to good luck, and you too, and you, with the best drop in my heart, for it's kind you were to the poor devil that——

Mrs. De M. There, that will do! Your arm. Where are the gloves that I told you to get?

Ted. Stop a bit till I get me hat. [*Takes hat from table, L.*] Oh! here's the thing! [*Takes wig from hat, puts it on, and exits L. with MRS. DE M.*]

[*Business, and exit L. 1 E.*]

Grace. Mr. Weldon, I have much pleasure in being the bearer of a few select invitations.

Paul. Indeed, sir, has the discriminating world found out my worth—in dollars?

Grace. Excuse me sir, not at all. Our world hopes to acknowledge your availability.

Paul. Infinitely obliged to it, sir, but the sentiment is not mutual. Pray, pardon me, you are very good.

Grace. [*Crosses.*] Not at all; proud to be of service, especially to one who is so distinguished an ornament to our immediate set. Good day, sir. [*Crosses.*] Good day, Mr. Foxglove. [*Exit, L. 1 E.*]

Fox. (R.) What's the matter, Paul?

Paul. (L.) What? Can you ask me such a question—you who know that every moment of my miserable life is a reproach? The sense of obligation that I see no hope of returning, weighs upon my soul like an ever-present terror.

Fox. What obligation, and to whom, Paul?

Paul. To you, sir.

Fox. None, man! My proceedings are strictly professional, my young friend. A profitable speculation, that's all.

Paul. How can I do otherwise than blush, when I meet your glance? Am I not a living deception? The money which I carry, nay, the very clothes which I wear, are not my own.

Fox. Pooh! I discounted your notes in the way of business, and shall exact a brave commission for the accommodation, don't you fear that. And as for your clothes, a fashionable tailor would be insulted if you paid him under a couple of years. You'll find a sufficient margin in the charge, when your bill comes in.

Paul. Ah, sir, you cannot hide your benevolence from me, behind so worldly a mask.

Fox. I'm glad you think so well of me, it assists my game. In

playing yours, my friend, I play my own, and that we both shall win, I'll stake my life, but you must not interfere with my *modus operandi*.

Paul. Remember, sir, though you have so signally befriended me, I will have no act or part in this *game*, as you call it. I would rather die a thousand deaths, than condescend to win position, even love, by trickery.

Fox. Since you will be so obstinately disinterested, I may as well give you a little unpalatable intelligence. Your lady-wife is half-inclined to marry again.

Paul. To marry again! Ah! sir, this is cruelly sudden.

Fox. But perfectly reasonable. You can hardly be so selfish as to thwart her wish.

Paul. Not for an instant. If her freedom depends upon my consent, she has it.

Fox. That's all very fine, but will you sign a paper to that effect? [PAUL crosses to R.] The veil of dissimulation then is dropped. I now see that for some designing purpose of your own, you have snared me to my utter ruin.

Fox. I thought your eyes would be opened at last. But that has nothing to do with the signing.

Paul. Indignation and contempt restrain my tongue!

Fox. But they needn't paralyze your fingers. [PAUL signs.] I'm very much obliged to you—ah! that's her carriage. She comes for the blessed paper which restores her to her liberty. Do me the favor to call in half-an-hour, and the final document will be ready for your signature. *Au revoir!* [PAUL looks at him, and exits, L. 1 E.] Confound the fellow, he looks dangerous. He won't do anything until he has been here again.

Enter ALICE, excited, L. 1 E.

Al. Why was I subjected to this mortification, sir?

Fox. What, my dear madam?

Al. Could you not by some congenial subterfuge have prevented me from meeting *him*?

Fox. Him? Whom?

Al. Whom? My *husb*— Paul—I mean Mr. Weldon.

Fox. Your husband, Paul, and Mr. Weldon—my dear madam, that Cerberian personage is my client. He was with me on business, very particular business.

Al. Might I know what?

Fox. Certainly. It is unfortunately of such a nature that you *must* know it.

Al. Well, sir, I am all attention.

Fox. I see you are,—pray sit down.

Al. Excuse me, I'd rather not! Go on, sir! What is this very particular business?

Fox. I presume, from all appearances, that it is a matter you have long secretly wished might take place, although, perhaps, not exactly in the mode suggested.

Al. To what, sir, does all this tend?

Fox. Don't be precipitate—take everything coolly, as I do. You were at Mrs. Hautton's ball the other night?

Al. Well, sir, and what of that?

Fox. Did you observe nothing of interest thereat? Think.

Al. Since you will probe my heart, I'll tell you what I saw! That he, whose name I blush to bear, was beneath the lowest thought of any woman who had within her soul the smallest particle of woman's pride.

Fox. To be sure, that's it exactly! You saw him dancing with Miss Meredith, that's the common-place translation of your highly poetical outburst.

Al. How do you know that?

Fox. Professionally! She's very lovely!

Al. Sir!

Fox. And very rich! Can you *now* imagine what his business was with me just now? Although I am aware that you care nothing for him, yet, you see, I approach my subject with proper delicacy.

Al. What can you mean? You torture me!

Fox. If one person should undervalue an article of personal property, and another should endeavor fairly to obtain it,—it would be but natural.

Al. You don't mean to say that she dares to aspire—that *he*—let me know plainly what you want. I am in no mood to be irritated by hints and metaphors.

Fox. I want nothing but my fees. What *he* wants, to speak plainly, is to *marry again*.

Al. He *does!*—Oh! that I were a man, or that it were not unwomanly to take a man's revenge on him and her, and all of ye!

[*Crosses R.*

Fox. Towards him and me, you might have, perhaps, the shadow of a reason for this warmth of expression, but why to *her*? Was it not plain to the world how little store you set by him, with what crushing haughtiness you cast him off?

Al. Ah!—You must have known, have seen, or else your perception was of little value,—no matter,—it is now too late,—but not too late to frustrate your base purpose. Do you suppose that I do not see beyond this transparent veil of legal sophistry? For mere personal advantage, for some miserable bribe, you have concocted this scheme! Fool! had I known your price, you might have trebled it.

Fox. I *might* have made a better bargain, perhaps,—but I am satisfied.

Al. Traitor! but *my* consent she shall *never* have! [*Crosses L.*

Fox. She? She don't want it,—but he *will*.

Al. Never!

Fox. Why, in the name of all that's inconsistent, you don't mean to infer that you *love* this man?

Al. I do! I do!—I dared not whisper to myself how much,—but now the barrier of pride is overthrown,—and I am humbled,—humbled to the very dust.

Fox. Well, this *is* a pretty business! Who *would* have imagined such a thing! not that I believe it for an instant. Don't flash your eyes at me, as if you wished they were loaded. Prove it,—in our business, proof is everything.

Al. You forget, sir, that there is nothing left for me now, but the sacredness of my own sorrow.

Fox. Why should you make *him* wretched as well? True love is ever unselfish.

Al. Answer me this, sir!—Does *he* wish it?

Fox. He docs.

Al. But if he knew the confession I have just made—

Fox. It wouldn't alter his desire.

Al. Then be it so. [*Crosses to table, R. H.*] Whatever motives may influence you, I have but myself to blame! [*After a pause she signs.*] And now, sir, however I may suffer, I have yet pride enough left to beg that you'll be silent. Save me, at least, from the degradation of pity.

Fox. Play your game as you choose, you'll soon have an opportunity of giving your own impression to the world.

Al. How so?

Fox. He is coming to receive your decision.

Al. Coming! And *must* I see him?

Fox. I think it would be advisable. [*A ring.*] Ah! that is he, no doubt,—exactly to his time.

Al. Ah! he's in haste, indeed, to break his fetters off!

Fox. It looks like it,—don't it?

Enter PAUL, L. He starts on seeing ALICE. They salute coldly.

Paul. [*To Fox.*] I trust I haven't kept you waiting?

Fox. Oh, not at all.

Al. [*Bitterly.*] I must say, sir, that your punctuality is beyond all praise.

Paul. Madame, I am entirely at your disposal.

Al. Thank you! You are exceedingly considerate.

Paul. I presume, sir, the sooner this matter is brought to a termination, the better. The lady, I imagine, will hardly wish to prolong the interview.

Al. [*Aside.*] His coolness is insufferable. Certainly, the sooner the better.

Fox. Nothing like dispatch. [*Bell rings, L. H.*] Who can this be? Oh! the witnesses, I suppose.

Paul and Al. Sir! witnesses!

Fox. To be sure! I've summoned them here. The original contract must be rescinded in the presence of those who saw it made.

Al. This mortification is unendurable!

[*Walks about passionately.*]

Paul. I trust, sir, that this day's work will bring pleasant reflections to your after-years.

Fox. I hope so—I hope so.

[*Comes down laughing. They approach him at each side, and simultaneously turn away angrily—he still laughs, to their great annoyance.*]

Enter, L. 1 E., MRS. DE M. and MR. DE M.

Fox. How do you do, Mrs. De Merfie? Mr. De Merfie, how are you, sir?

Mrs. De M. What's the broolery? What is it all about? Ah! ma chère Mrs. F.—my darling Mrs. Fox, there you are, looking as lovely as a bucket of roses.

Fox. Pray be seated, [*All sit. Business.*] Hem! I took the liberty of inviting you all here to witness an interesting ceremonial. [*To PAUL*] I really wouldn't betray so much irritation. [*To ALICE.*] Pray let me have your serious attention for a few moments. [*Reads.*] "Whereas, we, the undersigned, having become entirely and completely disgusted with each other's society—"

[*PAUL and ALICE start up.*]

Paul. Adhere to truth, sir, if you please!

Alice. I sanctioned no such observation!

Fox. Pardon me, I proceeded from inference.

Enter GRACE, L. 1 E.

Ah! Mr. Grace, glad to see you! Just in time! [*To PAUL, who scowls at GRACE.*] The agent for the prospective intended.—The friend of the lady. [*To ALICE, who astonishes GRACE with a look.*]

Grace. Have we any hope?

Fox. You shall see.

Paul. I protest against the continuance of this disgraceful scene!

Alice. So do I! There can be no necessity for so much publicity.

Fox. As you please.

Mr. De M. We had better retire. I certainly cannot compliment you on the delicacy of your conduct, Mr. Foxglove!

Mrs. De M. It's dreadful! it's too bad! Come, let us go!

Fox. Business is business.

[*Laughing.*]

Alice. Heartless!

Paul. Treacherous!

Mr. De M. Disgraceful!

Mrs. De M. Unpardonable!

Fox. Stop one moment, pray! Perhaps it would be more delicate, under the circumstances, to allow the young people to take leave of each other. All annoyances and incompatibilities, I have no doubt, will be forgotten in the parting. [*Goes up with the rest, and appears to explain to them the actual state of things.* PAUL and ALICE approach each other.]

Paul. [*Aside.*] What can I say to her? Did I suppose she had one atom of feeling for me, or knew the heart-pang of this instant, it were some alleviation. But no, 'tis I alone must suffer!

Alice. [*Aside.*] Now would I give half my life, even at this last moment, could I but let him know how my soul yearns to humble itself before him! He loved me once, and I, fool, fool that I was, contemned and spurned him! My thoughts are drifting towards a sea of breakers, and he stands before them, stern, cold, and impassable as a rock! Yes, my own self-respect alone can save me now! One effort to escape the shame, and then to drown, alone and silently!

Paul. Alice! I beg pardon—Miss Devereaux.

Alice. Sir!

Paul. Still so proud and unbending? Yet if she wishes to wed again, why should I humble myself by any exhibition of weakness? I see you are impatient—pardon me for this last demand upon your kindness—but as we shall never meet again, will you not grant me—that is, you won't refuse me [*Alice turns to him*] one—I mean—won't you—won't you shake hands with me?

[ALICE turns from him.]

Paul. Is it too much to ask of you, Alice?

Alice. Ah! no, no!

[*They shake hands.*]

Paul. Farewell, farewell, dear, dear Alice!

[*They involuntarily fall into each other's arms.*]

Fox. [*Coming down.*] Hollo! Stop! Confound it, this will never do!

Paul. Off! off! base trafficker in hearts! This instant is my own, the proudest, meanest, happiest, saddest, in my miserable life!

Alice. Paul—beloved! Must we part?

Fox. Why, certainly you must!

Paul. It is too late! Had we but known this, Alice!

Fox. But you see you didn't. I did! [*They both turn suddenly.*]

Paul. You!

Alice. Can such perfidy exist!

Fox. There, there! Take a respectful leave of each other, and don't waste time.

Paul. 'Tis a proper hint, sir, although a heartless one. Alice, may you be happy in your choice! [*Crosses c.*]

Alice. I thank you for restoring me to myself. May your wedded life be all you hope for!

Paul. [Starts] Mine! [Looks alternately at ALICE and at FOXGLOVE.] Ha! there's a gleam of sunlight! Alice, are you about to be married?

Alice. No, are you?

Paul. No, no! Where is that document? let me see it!

[Takes paper, reads, and expresses relief and embarrassment.]

Fox. Read it.

Paul. I cannot! my sight is dimmed!

Fox. Then I will. "Mr. and Mrs. Paul Weldon present their compliments to their good friends Mr. and Mrs. Counsellor Foxglove, and will be happy to receive them at their home, on—you see, I leave a blank for the day and date—being their first reception party since their marriage. [PAUL and ALICE both rush to him.]

Mrs. De M. I declare, quite romantic! What a dear, good creature he is!

Fox. Mr. Grace will be good enough to get up the affair, for it must be of the most stylish order, I tell you! Ha! ha! Mrs. Foxglove, embrace me! I forgive—I mean let me have your forgiveness! Do you take back all those complimentary observations, or must I bring my action for slander? You rogues! you poor blind blunderers, who would insist upon darkening your road of life, it's well I lighted a lamp to show you your way clearly! Ain't you glad your arms are long enough to reach him?

Paul. But one word! Forgiveness—

Alice. Dare we ask it?

[They embrace him.]

Fox. To be sure! Bless you both! I think you'll be happy now—you and all of us, I trust.

Grace. It shall not lack my aid to make it general.

Mr. De M. Nor mine.

Mrs. De M. Nor mine.

Enter TED MURPHY, L. R.:

Ted. Nor mine.

Mrs. De M. Oh you wretch! what have you done to yourself now?

Ted. Bedad, I've only got myself back to myself, a little the worse for the wear, may be, but it's welcome I am to myself, any way—I was in a quandary with them things you gave me—I couldn't use my arms or my legs, any way, and as scrimmages are mighty thick now, it's mighty hard when a man can't either fight or run away.

Mrs. De M. What on earth brought you here, you untutored Buffalo?

Ted. Bedad, I heard you were here, and I kem to show you my new shuit, and to ax you to air them wid me in a walk down the Broadway.

Mrs. De M. What! with you, you fright. There—you shall have your acre of ground, and the pig—you're only fit company for quadruples.

Enter CHUBB and PERKINS, in wedding dresses.

Chubb. I beg pardon for coming in without the bell, or rather with a belle. Oh, Perkins, my happiness is a swellin' within my waistcoat like——

Perkins. Like what ?

Chubb. Like too much puddin'.

Perkins. Have done, do—you mustn't talk like a boy now.

Mr. De M. Why, can I believe my eyes ? Is that the lad Chubb, decked out in such an antideluding style ?

Chubb. The lad ! no, mam, it's the man Chubb, the emancipated slave of buttons ; the bud has bursted into a blossom at last, the sucker has growed into a tree, in proof of which I am about to take upon myself the cares and the caresses, the blessings and the (*Perkins, ah !*) vissisitudes of a wedded life, and if the counsellor will only condescend to join our hands together in the handcuffs of harmony——

Alice. Is this true, Perkins ?—are you going to leave us ?

Perkins. I know, mum, that I didn't ought to, but hearts is hearts, mum, and Mr. Chubb was so exhuberatiuous.

Mrs. Foxglove. You see, counsellor, how dangerous is example. And as we all of us have something to forgive, if not to forget, let us determine so to regulate the future that the fulness of its present joys may thoroughly redeem the errors and the follies of the past.

EPILOGUE.

Fox. Now all has ended happily.

Chubb. Not yet ! Good gracious, we're not married—you forget.

Perkins. And if it's your intention to stand still

At this here point, I fear we never will.

Chubb. Oh don't say that—do, please, sir, join our hands.

Mrs. De M. Stay ! don't be hasty, I forbid the banns :

Do you forget how many hands and voices

Must here be joined before one heart rejoices ?

Grace. You wern't aware, perhaps, you were invited,

In the strong hope that you'd be all united.

Paul. Open the pleadings, counsellor.

Fox. You mean sum up the case, of course, ahem !——

We lean, may it please your honors, upon you,

You know the law upon this point, and practice too.

It's the first time I've pleaded in this court ;

Say, may I hope to find a good report ?

Mrs. Foxglove. I played a selfish game, I must confess.

You have forgiven me, but I yearn no less

To hear from you the kind admission made

That you approve the way in which we've played.

Mrs. De M. My game has been to keep up the repute

Of our grand relations.

Ted. Oh, bother !

Mrs. de M. Brute, you have no *sontimong* ! you stupid lout, why don't you say something ?

Ted. Arra, what about ?

Maybe the rich relations that I left behind
Might feel shamefaced to hear me speak my mind.
I don't know why I shouldn't ; the best way to jump
From any danger is to meet it plump.
I can't say much, like Mickey Roney's parrot,
That was as dumb as any other carrot ;
He never yet was known to speak a wink,
But then he was a wonderful great bird to think.
I'll hould my tongue, whatever thoughts may warm me,
And let my acts, such as they are, speak for me.

Al. What can I urge to justify my game ?

Nothing, except I'm really not to blame.

The cards were dealt to me just as they stood,

I had to play them the best way I could.

You held the stakes, and well have watch'd our pay ;

If we've won favor, then be pleased to play.

Don't be afraid to lead a hearty cheer —

Those hearts are trumps, they'll follow suit, don't fear !

Paul. Patrons and friends, with you remains the power

To fill the measure of this happy hour.

The cards are with you now, you understand ;

Just deal around, and give us all a hand :

Should your decision in our favor prove,

Our game will be indeed a GAME OF LOVE !

THE END.



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