

FRENCH'S
AMERICAN DRAMA.

The Acting Edition.

No. XXIX.

ROMANCE AND REALITY.

OR,

THE YOUNG VIRGINIAN.

AN ORIGINAL COMEDY,

IN FIVE ACTS.

BY JOHN BROUGHAM.

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 THE BROADWAY THEATRE.

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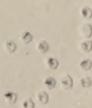
Cast of the Characters,—(ROMANCE AND REALITY),

AS PERFORMED AT THE BROADWAY THEATRE, N. Y.

<i>Oliver Manly,</i>	- - - - -	Mr. Vaché.
<i>Asper Manly,</i>	- - - - -	" Blake.
<i>Frank Meredith,</i>	- - - - -	" Fleming.
<i>Lavender Kydd,</i>	- - - - -	" Dawsou.
<i>Jack Swift,</i>	- - - - -	" Brougham
<i>Tom Badger,</i>	- - - - -	" Hadaway.
<i>Williams,</i>	- - - - -	" Thompson
<i>Rosabel,</i>	- - - - -	Miss Wallack.
<i>Barbara Manly,</i>	- - - - -	Mrs. Winstanly.
<i>Blossom,</i>	- - - - -	Mrs. Watts.
<i>Betty,</i>	- - - - -	Miss Carman.

Guests, by Ladies and Gentlemen of the Ballet.

PRESENT TIME.



Costume.—ROMANCE AND REALITY.

OLIVER MANLY.—*First*: Morning gown. *Second*: Black dress.

ASPER MANLY.—Blue dress coat and bright buttons, large double-breast vest, shepherd's plaid pantaloons, and gaiters.

FRANK MEREDITH.—*First*: Fashionable morning dress. *Second*: Shooting-jacket, breeches, and long leather gaiters. *Third*: evening dress.

JACK SWIFT.—*First*: Green cutaway coat, plaid pantaloons, light gaiter boots. *Second*: Fashionable morning suit. *Third*: Evening dress.

BADGER.—*First*: White jacket, striped pants. *Second*: Black suit.

LAVENDER KYDD.—Morning dress, extreme of fashion.

ROSABEL.—*First*: White, trimmed with cherry-colored ribbons. *Second*: Plain muslin morning dress. *Third*: Elegant wedding dress.

BARBARA MANLY.—Dark paletot and pantaloons, man's hat, umbrella and green glasses.

STAGE DIRECTIONS.

EXITS AND ENTRANCES.

L. means *First Entrance, Left*. R. *First Entrance, Right*. S. E. L. *Second Entrance, Left*. S. E. R. *Second Entrance, Right*. U. E. L. *Upper Entrance, Left*. U. E. R. *Upper Entrance, Right*. C. *Centre*. L. C. *Left of Centre*. R. C. *Right of Centre*. T. E. L. *Third Entrance, Left*. T. E. R. *Third Entrance, Right*. C. D. *Centre Door*. D. R. *Door Right*. D. L. *Door Left*. U. D. L. *Upper Door, Left*. U. D. R. *Upper Door, Right*.

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

ROMANCE AND REALITY.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*Library in the house of OLIVER MANLY. An enclosed scene, c. opening, back'd by conservatory windows, in flat; doors, E. L. 2 E.; a bust of Milton, on pedestal, R.; ditto of Byron, L.; large round table, c. with white cloth, and bell on chair, R. C., of table; tables and chairs, R. L.; books on each table. Bell rings, R. 1 E., at rise of curtain.*

Enter BLOSSOM, L. 1 E., with a book.

Blossom. Well, I never did; it ain't a second since that dreadful bell, as the forgotten Shakspeare says, frightened me almost out of my propriety. [*bell.*] Coming, miss. [*bell, long and loud.*] Now, that's so like the sweet impetuous creature. Isn't it enough to try one's patience? Just as I had got to the most heart-breaking passage in the "Benevolent Pirate, or the Merciful Murderer," the dear good natured soul has stopped—bless her.

Enter TOM BADGER, with a bundle of papers, L. 1 E.

Tom. Ah, Miss Blossom—hopes I sees you in a convalescent state of exuberance this morning.

Blossom. Thank you for the compliment, Mr. Badger. What elegant words he uses.

Tom. Has old Porcupine rung for breakfast, yet?

Blossom. Not yet, Mr. Badger, but Miss Rose has.

Tom. Why did you not go to her?

Blossom. For private considerations, to make her learn respect, and feel that she is wholly dependent on me for her comfort.

Tom. Phew! good! I likes that ere—them sentiments is equality, and no mistake. Look here—here's heaps of literary amusemong, as my French, without a master, says. They say too much cookery spoils the soup: I think so much newspaper teaching as this amounts to, would be likely to confuse the hintellect. Look over this ere fellow's columns, and you'd think government was a conglomeration of all the virtues, while this chap proves logically that its a ninny hammer.

Blossom. Politics is a great thing, Mr. Badger.

Tom. Ain't it. There's a summut in the hair of this ere country that makes a man a politician, in spite of his teeth—I ain't been long from hold England—and I feels it all over me like the laughing gas. You should hear me at our hassociation for the hextension of liberty—how I walks into the hupper ten. My speech, last night, was von of my grandest efforts: I'm going to publish it in a himpartial newspaper, hexclusively devoted to our hinterests. Shall I read you a hextract?

Blossom. If you would be so condescentious, Mr. Badger.

Tom. [*Takes manuscript out of his pocket, and begins with a flourish.*] Recollect I'm haddressing the chair.

Blossom. Here's one, Mr. Badger. [*places chair, c.*]

Tom. [*gets on chair and reads.*] Hem! "Sons of freedom! Patriarchs and libertines: let us call up all our anarchies for the present great and delirious crisis, the country, with its Argus eyes ——"

Blossom. (R.) What, Mr. Badger?

Tom. (L. C.) Argus had a jolly lot of eyes, had not he?

Blossom. Law, no; he had only one, in the middle of his head.

Tom. Well, then, I must sacrifice the similitude—fact before figures. Now, then: "Shall we tamely submit to be dictated on by a vile factitious and innocuous party, whose honly hambition is to embroil themselves in their own hextermination, and in the tyranical aggrandisement of the people. What man is there amongst us so futile as to be stopped in a career by a—[*bell, R.*] to be stopped by a——" [*bell.*] Confound it, there's old Capsicum's bell.

[*Throws his manuscript in the confusion on the c. table.*]

Asper. [*within, R. 2 E.*] Whose making that frightful noise out there?

Tom. Ain't got no appreciation for horatory. [*takes up another paper, instead of his own, and crosses to R. D.*] Only me, sir.

Asper. Who's me?

Tom. Tom.

Asper. Tom! I'd Tom you, if I had hold of you. Is breakfast ready?

Tom. (R.) Yes, sir; that's a crusty old customer! Since his own man got sick, I have to watch his vagaries. He ain't bad when you come to know his ways, though. Now, his brother, Mr. Oliver, is what I calls a real trump. For my part, I've found people is just like horses—the biting's everything. Find out what sort of a mouth a man's got, and you can manage him comfortable. There's some is quiet and some is vicious, and some skittish and some wild; some goes slow and sure; others, 'specially the young ones, goes wery fast; some's always in a canter, and others never goes out of a walk. Now, I'll stir old sulky up with a long pole. [*knocks at R. D. 2 E.*]

Asper. Who's there?

Tom. Me, sir! [*winks at Blossom.*]

Asper. What the deuce do you want?

Tom. Shall I ring for breakfast, sir?

Asper. Yes—yes.

Tom. Mr. Oliver ain't down yet, sir.

Asper. I don't care—it's time he should.

Tom. So it is, that's a fact. [*laughs—then knocks again.*]

Asper. What now?

Tom. Tea, coffee, or chocolate, sir?

Asper. Both! All.

Tom. Steak, cutlets, and all the rest, sir?

Asper. Of course.

Tom. How many eggs do you think, sir.

Asper. Confound you, don't keep prating there.

Tom. Master told me to wait on you, 'ticularly. Did you say six eggs, sir?

[*Crash inside* R. D. *BLOSSOM* rushes off L. 1 E. *TOM* runs over to L. corner, and begins dancing. *ASPER* rushes out, and throws boot-jack at him.

Tom. Nail, sir—through the floor, sir—stepped on it, sir—went in an inch and a half sir. Take care, sir; here it is; careless those chambermaids are, to be sure.

Asper. Tom! I think you are a scoundrel.

Tom. Thank you for your good opinion, sir. Quick, Betty. [*Enter BETTY, L. 1 E., with breakfast. TOM* takes them of her, and puts them on table, c.] Did you cook the eggs as I told you, three minutes and a half, just set—steak hold the gravy—ham just frizzled.

[*BETTY* helps to lay table, and exit L. 1 E.

Asper. Don't chatter, give me a paper. [*ASPER* sits R. of c. table.

Tom. Ain't particular which, I suppose. Any political partiality?

Asper. No! [*TOM* gives paper.] Go!

Tom. Oh! [*Exit TOM, L. 1 E.—Enter OLIVER, L. 2 E.*

Oliver. Good morning, brother. [*Sits L. of c. table.*

Asper. Morning, brother Oliver!

Oliver. What's the matter? What has vexed you?

Asper. You have.

Oliver. How so?

Asper. Why didn't you get up?

Oliver. I have been up these two hours, waiting for you.

Asper. Your man lied, then.

Oliver. I can't help that.

Asper. Well, who says you can? Good gracious, can't one make an observation. How is your gout?

Oliver. Better, thank you.

Asper. No particular thanks to me, that I am aware of—rather prudent of you, galloping about the damp grass all the morning. I'll lay a wager you'll be on your bed before the day's over; let me tell you, you'll get no sympathy from me.

Oliver. Oh yes, I should.

Asper. That's right, contradict me—you know I love it.

Oliver. You are so seldom wrong, you can afford to be told of it when you are.

Asper. Now, that's what I call confounded flattery, which you know I hate worse than anything else. Seldom wrong! Pooh!—human nature is wrong—we're born wrong, bred up in wrong, live in wrong, love wrong—all wrong: nothing's right.

Oliver. Strange, how differently we think. Now, I can see no wrong in you.

Asper. Can't you, then you must be confoundedly blind, that's all. I can see plenty in you. In the first place, you are an old fool, not to make that girl Rose come and give us our breakfast in a Christian-like manner. I hate to see two men slobber a teapot about. I never know how much sugar to put in. Have you given your attention to the state of the country?

Oliver. Can't say that I have.

Asper. Of course not. The storm may burst over your devoted house, and you won't have even a lightning conductor to divert the flash.

Oliver. My dear brother, I consider myself a mere fly upon the wheel, whose insignificant weight would neither retard nor accelerate its motion. Private men, in my opinion, have no right to meddle with public affairs.

Asper. Have'n't they? but I say they have—at all events I mean to meddle with them, and pretty strongly too! I've written a letter.

Oliver. You have?

Asper. Is there anything wonderful in that? There it is—a concise, sober, but strenuous word or two of admonition. [*Throws letter on table.*] Such advice as I give may not be palatable, but I shall print it.

Oliver. May I look over it?

Asper. Why, of course you may. [*OLIVER takes up Tom's Speech, and quietly looks over it.*] Strong, isn't it?

Oliver. Very.

Asper. And to the purpose, I flatter myself.

Oliver. Decidedly satirical.

Asper. Decidedly *fiddlestick!* What do you mean by satirical.

Oliver. What do you mean by Patriarchs and Libertines?

Asper. What, [*rises, snatches paper, tries to suppress his rage*] Brother, let me ask you one simple question.

Oliver. What is it?

Asper. Do you imagine that I wrote this stuff?

Oliver. How can I imagine otherwise?

Asper. Tom! (*rings bell*) very complimentary. I'm an idiot [*rises.*

Enter TOM L. 1 E.

Hat and coat.

[*Crosses to c.*

Tom. Yes, sir.

Asper. Pack up my trunk.

Tom. Yes, sir.

Oliver. Don't do anything of the kind.

Tom. No, sir.

Asper. I tell you he shall. Here, come back, what rubbish is this!

[*Crosses to c.*

Tom. Which, sir?

Asper. This sir, this [*pokes paper in his face.*]

Tom. My horation, by jingo. [*Aside.*] This, sir—love-letter, I should think, sir—to be delivered by hand, or go by the post, sir—take it directly, sir. [*Tries to take it.*]

Asper. Come back, sir—there [*tears paper and throws it down.*] Brother, this is the last time you shall tell me to my face that I am a fool—good day. [*ASPER rushes out, L. 1 E.*]

Tom. Tearing passion the old gentleman's in this morning, sir.

Oliver (R.) Leave the room, Tom, and don't make any remarks.

Tom (L.) Mum's the word, sir. I'm dumb. No wonder, for I've lost my speech. [*Exit TOM L. 1 E*]

Oliver. Poor Asper, what a pity that excellent heart of his is fenced about with such a hedge of briars.

Re-enter ASPER L. 1 E.

Asper. Brother, did you really think I wrote that rigmarole?

Oliver. No.

Asper. Give me your hand. I was hasty, pardon me—God bless you. I'm a brute, Oliver.

Oliver. No you are not.

Asper. I tell you I am; a confounded, heartless, unfeeling savage; but I'll reform, Oliver—I'll try and imitate your kindness of feeling. I'll triumph over this cursed temper, that sweeps like a destroying tempest over my heart. I'll become a pattern of gentleness.

[*Crosses to R. and sits at table.*]

Enter TOM L. 1 E.

Tom. Hallo! it's all right, sun's up again Never mind, I'll have a dig at sulky; trunk ready—all's right, sir.

Asper. You lie, you scoundrel, it is not all right. [*rises.*]

Tom. Well, then it ain't, sir, anything for a quiet life. Where is it to go, sir?

Asper. Ah! no—speak to him, Oliver.

Oliver. Take it back, Tom. You are rather too officious this time.

[*Crosses to c.*]

Tom. It is not often you have that complaint to make; but if the gentleman knew his own mind it would save a heap of trouble—that'll make him smart.

Asper. Why, you confounded—but, I'll keep my temper. [*breaks tea-cup.*]

Tom. If it's the one you had this morning, I wouldn't give it house room, if I was you, sir.

ASPER takes the kettle and runs after TOM, who rushes off L. 1 E.

Asper. Oliver, that's a victory—hurrah! I have hopes. Give me your hand; come, let us go out, and—

[*Crosses to L.*]

Oliver. No, thank you, Asper, I want to write

Asper. That's always the way with you; I never ask you to do the simplest thing but you want to write. Hang it, what are you eternally writing about? It's enough to vex a ———

Oliver. Brother!

Asper. I know I'm wrong—I'll go and see Brown.

[*Exit ASPER L. 1 E.*]

Oliver. My blessings go with you, Asper, for a testy, wayward, im-

petuous, quick-tempered, glorious-hearted fellow as you are, you are worth a thousand such milk-and-water nonentities as I am.

[Exit L. D. 2D E.]

Enter TOM L. 1 E. with BETTY.

Tom. Here, Betty, clear away the things. [Exit BETTY with breakfast tray.] Ha! Ha! I rather think I gave old pepper-corn a touch on the raw for insulting my speech; such a houtrage on hintellect is not to be endured. I'd rather be a dog, as the poet says, and live on the vapors of a dungeon, than such a Roman. [Picks up fragments of his speech, and commences] Patriarchs, freemen, and libertines; [Gate Bell,] More hinterruption!

Enter SWIFT L. 1 E.

What name, sir?

Swift. Swift, John Swift, Mr. John Swift. [Tom exits.] Well, I've passed the rubicon of the door-mat, and I'm in the house of a man I don't know from Adam! They say hunger breaks through stone walls,—just that very burglarious appetite has driven me here! What excuse shall I make for coming in? Pooh! never mind; it's a poor invention that is obliged to meditate. If the owner of this house is a decent-looking fellow, I'll borrow a breakfast from him! Jack! Jack! when will that most implacable of maiden ladies, Miss Fortune, cease to trouble you with her unwelcome attentions?

Re-enter TOM L. D. 2D E.

Tom. We've just gone to dress, sir—will be here in a few moments.

Swift. Oh! pray don't let him hurry himself on my account! I can wait. Meantime, I shall indulge in a morsel of luncheon—my walk has given me an appetite; anything handy—crackers, cheese, glass of wine—I'm not particular!

Tom. Yes, sir, certainly, sir—easy going horse that, wants a bit in his mouth, though.

Exit TOM L. 1 E.

Swift. Good! there's the atmospheric legacy of a confoundedly comfortable breakfast hanging about this apartment, particularly tantalizing to a vacuous interior! I hope my friend will take a long time over his toilet! Ah! here comes the sweetest tableau vivant I have seen for a month. [SWIFT sits R. of table—Re-enter TOM with refreshments. Thank you, Bob.]

Tom. At your service, sir.

Swift. Thank you! My service to you, in return; sit down, Tom—take a glass of wine, Tom—Sherry, prime, nutty, and oleagenous! No rinsings there, Tom! I can't shew such wine as this, Tom—I must conscientiously commend your cellar,—I'll take another glass. Absurd inventions, these small glasses! Tom, there ain't such a thing as a cold fowl, roosting on the larder shelf, is there? flanked by a morsel of tongue, or a knuckle of the unclean, eh?

Tom (L.) Can't say there is, sir. This is market day—regularly cleaned out last night; had a few hungry friends from the club.

Swift. No consequence, this will do till dinner.

Tom. Beg pardon, but do you dine here to-day, sir?

Swift. Have'nt made up my mind yet, Thomas? What's his name there, up stairs—

Tom. Mr. Oliver.

Swift. Yes, Oliver,—has asked me several times, but there has always been some trifling thing or other to prevent it; indeed, he's a young man I have a great respect for.

Tom. Do you call him young, sir?

Swift. For his age, decidedly,—whatever that is! Now, Tom, what would you suppose Oliver's age to be?

Tom. Well, sir, I should say about sixty.

Swift. You're not far off! Fifty-nine and some months: he won't be long dressing? [*Aside*] I remember his birth—

Tom. Sir!

Swift. Being a subject of debate, when he was about to be married—

Tom. He never was married.

Swift. Of course not! It was broken off by means of an anonymous letter. I remember the circumstance produced a remarkable change, and he has never been the same man since.

Tom. I don't know that I ever saw a more lively gentleman.

Swift. That's the extraordinary circumstance: from being as grave as a church-yard, and sedate as a tomb-stone, he became the life and spirit of society! The delight of everybody who came near him,—that's what made it remarkable

Tom. I never heard that before.

Swift. You have'nt been long here, Tom, I see: he does'nt live alone, I expect: I must pursue my researches! By the bye, are the family quite well?

Tom. Pretty flourishing, sir.

Swift. Now, Tom, between you and me, which do you like best?

Tom. Of the ladies, sir?

Swift. Hem! yes.

Tom. Well, about much of a muchness, sir; they're verry good-tempered, as they run wild about; but I don't think either on 'em would run kindly in harness.

Swift. Unmarried?

[*Gate Bell Rings.*]

Tom. Hallo! my wig, here comes old Pepper. I say, sir, do you know Mr. Asper?

Swift. Have'nt the honor.

Tom. Then I'll leave you to make the acquaintance. All I can say, is, West Indian pickle is a snow-ball to him. [*Exit TOM, L. 1 E.*]

Swift. Now, who the devil can this Asper be? Here he comes, whoever he is.

Asper. [*Without.*] There's that door open again; a thorough draught running all over the house.

Swift. [*Seated R. of table.*] He speaks too loud for a poor relation; he looks about as rough as a rasp! I expect he's some blunt friend of the family, or eccentric relative, who has a right to give himself airs, having something to leave them.

Enter ASPER, L. I E.

Asper. Who's this, I wonder? Takes it easy, whoever he may be. Some friend of Oliver's, I suppose.

Swift. Good morning, Mr. Asper.

Asper. Servant, sir. Knows my name, I see.

Swift. Don't recollect my face, I perceive.

Asper. Never saw it before, to my knowledge.

Swift. That's very singular! Pray, sit down! Don't stand upon any ceremony with me. The fact is, I have just called to see Oliver, and—

Asper. Oh, you're a friend of Oliver, eh!

Swift. Sir, I've no reason in the world, to be upon any but the most friendly terms with him.

Asper. Enough, sir; any friend of my brother's must be mine, equally.

Swift. Brother, eh? I am very proud to make your acquaintance, sir. Your excellent brother is dressing just now; but with his usual forethought, knew that I should be less lonely with this companion! Do you taste wine? Mr. — allow me the pleasure.

Asper. Ah! I hear Oliver coming.

Swift. [*Aside—taking ASPER forward.*] The deuce you do! Then here goes for a coup de main! [*Aloud.*] My dear sir, will you do me a favor? Your face belies you, or your heart is the home of benevolence! Ah, sir! did you but know the particularly painful peculiarity of my position, you would not refuse one small request.

Asper. What is it?—Don't make such a fuss.

Swift. I have a matter of importance to confide to my good friend, Oliver! Family considerations of personal and inexplicable delicacy demand that our interview should be private! A moment or two will suffice.

Asper. I see, I see! A roundabout way of saying get out. [*Crosses to R.*] Well, I don't want to intrude. [*Exit ASPER, 2 E.*]

Swift. [*Follows him to D.*] In the name of the widow and the orphan, I thank you, [*Enter OLIVER*] my most excellent friend, Asper.

Enter OLIVER, L. D. 2 E.

Oliver. Oh! then it was Asper he wanted, after all. Confound that stupid Tom. [*Aside.*]

Swift. [*At door.*] Admirable man! how much they malign you, who call you harsh, morose, or miserly!

Oliver. That they do, sir. [*SWIFT starts.*] Don't make any apologies, sir. I perceive you know Asper thoroughly.

Swift. It doesn't take long to know him, sir; I give you my honor, sir, the very first five minutes I was in his society I knew him as well as I do at this moment. And although personally unacquainted with you until now, yet the warm estimation in which I hold your excellent brother, thaws the ice of etiquette, and I feel as though I knew you for very nearly the same length of time.

Oliver. Believe me, sir, I am proud to take the hand of one in friendship who has so just an estimation of Asper's worth.

Re-enter ASPER; R. D. 2 E.

Asper. Well, is that delicate matter settled?

Swift. Settled, yes sir, most satisfactorily. [*All three have a hearty laugh.*] But, Mr. Asper, your brother's goodness of heart requires no eulogium from me.

Asper. No, sir, nor from anybody. Well, I've seen Brown.

Swift. Ah! by the bye—how is poor Brown?

Asper. Poor Brown, as you are pleased to call him, sir, is better.
[*OLIVER goes up and sits L. of table.*]

Swift. I'm delighted to hear it—excellent man. Brown.

Asper. One of the best servants, sir, a man ever had.

Swift. I know it, sir; I have observed him thoroughly. A most invaluable domestic is Brown; and if you should feel disposed to part with him—

Asper. Sir!

Swift. You wouldn't be the man I take you for. [*ASPER turns up with a grunt.*] Your worthy brother is just as quick as ever, I find. He puts me in mind of a bottle of prime old port—dusty, crusty, and rough upon the palate, but rich in quality, warm and generous in spirit. By the way, I just recollect an appointment.

Oliver. [*Comes down L.*] Here come the women.

Swift. But I won't go just yet.

Asper. Yes, here comes our brotherly sister, Barbara. Half a dozen such people would bring calamity on a whole community—one of your she philosophers, who think it is just as easy to demolish the fabric of society with their breath as though it were a child's castle, built of cards. Oliver, I can't endure her until after dinner—then she's not a bad opiate.

Barbara. [*without, L.*] Tom, bring me some cigars.

Asper. Ah!

[*runs off R. D. 2 E.*]

Swift. Asper! why he has left the room, I declare. I feel remarkably awkward.

Oliver. How so.

Swift. Why I did hope he would have introduced me to the ladies

Oliver. Won't I do as well?

Swift. My dear sir—will you be so obliging.

Oliver. I have but one objection.

Swift. And that is—

Oliver. I don't know you, myself.

Swift. Is it possible that Asper didn't mention my name; singular remissness, knowing me so well himself, I presume he thought you knew me as a matter of course. Swift, sir; John Swift, A. B., bachelor of arts.

Oliver. Enough!

Swift. Now, old Aunty Fortune, thou hast turned up nothing but ill-luck upon thy cursed wheel as yet: change the color of my destiny, capricious goddess, for there has been a confounded run upon the black.

Enter BARBARA MANLY, L. 1 E., tight stuff dress, man's hat, dark pantaloons, and men's boots, umbrella, octavo volume, and green spectacles.

Oliver. (c.) This is Miss Barbara Manly

BARBARA nods.

Swift. (R.) Barbara! primitive name. Now for some little rosebud of existence, some—[*turns and sees her.*] Curious specimen of the antique—one of the Manhattan tribe. Hem! fortune, you are at it again.

Oliver. What have you done with Rosey?

Barbara. The frivolous creature is gone to indulge in the foolish vanity of dress; my counsel, advice and example are all thrown away.

[*OLIVER goes up, sits, L.*] Mr.—what's your name—

Swift. Swift—John Swift—Mr. John Swift, bachelor at arts.

Barbara. For fear you should expect to meet in me one of the poor dependent drudges your sex would make of ours, know that I belong to those few but strong-minded individuals, who are endeavoring to effect a much-needed reform in that particular, and are determined to establish that equality of social position to which we are by nature's law entitled.

[*crosses to R.*

Swift. Madam, it is the very subject, which for years has been my darling study. Often have I said, that the diviner portion of humanity are treated with more than oriental barbarity! Elevated as they naturally are, above the other sex, it should be man's endeavor to exalt them in the domestic relations of life!

Barbara. [R.] Swift, you're a man of sense—give me your hand. Then you have a congenial contempt for the present ridiculous usages of that chaos which men call society.

Swift. I despise it! I reject it! We are on the eve of a mighty mental and social revolution.

Barbara. We are—Swift, we are.

Swift. I yet hope to be permitted to see society thoroughly regulated! to behold the sexes in their proper position—the kitchen and the nursery—left to such as are by nature fitted to take care of them; the bar and the senate in the possession of those who can shed a luminous effulgence upon their respective benches.

Barbara. That's enthusiastic, and I like it. Come, sit down, let us have a talk. Stay—have you breakfasted? You must come and breakfast with me, [*rings bell*] Tom!

Swift. With all my heart.

Barbara. That's right—well said. You are the first male creature who didn't express some astonishment at my usurpation of his privileges! You'll get no dishwash in the shape of tea at my table.

Enter TOM, L. 1 E.

Breakfast ready?

Tom. All right, sir: ma'am I mean.

Barbara. Do you drink ale?

Swift. Rather partial to it.

Barbara. Come along, then, After breakfast, I'll read you my last lecture—*thirty* pages sound sense—conclusive argument. Now, Tom.

[*Exit BARBARA, R. 1 E.; exit TOM, L. 1 E. OLIVER laughs and comes forward, L.*

Swift. (R.) Is she dangerous?

Oliver. (C.) Not very—you can trust her: she's only about half demented.

Barbara. (*without*, R. 1 E.) Now, then, what's your name—come along.

Swift. No harm in seeming to fall in with those little eccentricities. I'm coming! [*Exit SWIFT*, R. 1. E.]

Oliver. Very pleasant fellow that friend of Asper's.

Frank [*without*, L. 1 E.] Never mind announcing me, I'm in a hurry.

Enter FRANK L. 1 E.

Frank. My dear friend, give me your hand; I am here first to abuse you terribly, then to ask your pardon humbly, and above all, to have a fling with the dice of destiny, for a glorious stake. Don't look frightened; I'm not insane, though standing on the utmost verge of sense. I have been dressed for two hours to make the call, and remained fidgetting and biting my nails for fear I should be too early; listen, but don't expect rationality; you know me, my father, pretensions, expectations, position, and all that sort of thing; can't you expect what's coming?

Oliver. I believe——

Frank. You're right, I'm in love, deeply, desperately.

Oliver. Not with me.

Frank. Don't interrupt me. Where in the name of all the sphynxes have you hidden that charming ward of yours? I saw her for the first time on Saturday at the opera; I have'nt been to bed since; hovered about the house all night, imagined the apartment blessed by her presence, saw a fluttering of the window-blind, a flitting shadow, and was happy, intensely happy.

Oliver. Imagination is a dependable painter; you saw our cook retiring for the night.

Frank. Hang the cook; she's not engaged, is she?

Oliver. What—the cook?

Frank. Don't, my dear friend, don't. I'm serious, frightfully serious. Is she free?

Oliver. Is who free? You forget I don't know who you are talking about.

Frank. Your ward.

Oliver. (R.) I presume you mean Rosey.

Frank. Yes, Rosey—charming name, go on.

Oliver. Well, as far as my knowledge goes, she has no engagement.

Frank. Hurrah! there's a tun weight off my heart; she shall be mine. I'll make her love me, if perseverance and all-powerful affection have any influence.

Oliver. But this fiery love of yours seems rather sudden, Frank.

Frank. So much the better; the softened feeling which creeps sluggishly, after years of friendship, is but a love of sufferance, not the bright soul-flash that once appears: one word for all, you know my ardent Virginian temperament. I love your niece, do you object to me as her suitor? Let her heart be but untouched, I care not how many foplings may have fluttered round her.

Oliver. My dear Frank, seriously, I am sorry that you feel thus strongly about Rosey; for she's a most extraordinary girl.

Frank. I hate ordinary girls.

Oliver. In the first place, you don't know her.

Frank. But I shall, with your permission, of course, not otherwise.

Oliver. You are aware her fortune is not large.

Frank. But mine is, thanks to fate and a prudent papa. So say no more about it. When can I see her?—will you introduce me now?—where is she?

Oliver. One moment—let me describe to you her characteristics.

Frank. Pshaw, don't talk to me about characteristics. If a woman have but a heart, it is in man's power to influence it for good or evil.

Oliver. Her mind is full of romance.

Frank. I love romance.

Oliver. Titles, wealth, and comfort she despises.

Frank. So do I—to a certain extent.

Oliver. When she marries, she says, it shall be some honest, independent son of toil.

Frank. I honor her choice. I'll be a son of toil. Stay, I have it: Will you suffer me to try and win her in my own way? If I fail, and she should repulse me, on the honor of a man, I shall fall back on my philosophy, and retire with dignity. [Crosses to R. H.]

Oliver. Son of my old friend, I need not say you shall have my most cordial support; Rosey is a girl of excellent principles, if one could but knock off that devilish incrustation of Romance; but she's so Bulwerized and bewitched, that I hardly know what to think of her—egad, here she comes, absorbed in some tale of enchantment.

Frank. Then away; desperate cases require desperate remedies. I shall attempt the cure.

Oliver. How, boy, how?

Frank. Poisons are frequently their own antidotes.

Oliver. I think I guess your intention. Depend upon my assistance.

[Exit OLIVER L. D. 2D E.]

FRANK throws off his neckcloth, turns down his collar, and throws himself into an extravagant attitude before the bust of Byron, (L. H.) as *Rosabel* enters, reading. (C.) She starts as he speaks, and watches him intently.

Frank. Now for a touch of the sublime. Oh! thou undying one, upon whose ample brow stupendous intellect doth sit enthroned, and thou wert of that tinsel throng men bow to and call Lord, I cannot call thee so; thy genius lifts thee up to higher eminence than wealth or ancestry could e'er bestow—spirit of the vast and beautiful, towering above thy fellow-men, as high as lifts the Alps (thou hast immortalized) their sky-crowned heads above the hills of earth. I will not name thee other than thou wert, a man, spurning the gauds of title and of name—a great, inspired, most persecuted man!

Rosa (C., rushing forward R.) You're right, sir, he was persecuted—vilely, shamefully. I—I beg your pardon—it was impulse.

Frank. She here?—unlooked for happiness! And yet, oh! cruel fate—one instant—ah! do not snatch the glorious vision from my eyes, ere they have rested on it for a moment's space.

Rosa. What an exceeding nice young man. I wonder who he is?

Frank. Ah! did you know—'tis well thou dost not—the painful risks I ran, to snatch this brief yet blissful interview. Didst thou but know it, then wouldst thou feel a thrill of pity, for one so stricken and despairing.

Rosa. Was this visit meant to me, sir?

Frank. To thee—and thou dost listen! As well might I have hoped the stars would quit their spheres.

Rosa. Would it be too presuming, sir, to inquire who you are?

Frank. To you of all persons breathing would I reveal, but it is not yet the time. A mantle of deep mystery doth wrap me round; time alone can strip it from me. Suffice it to say, I am not what I seem, but still I am.

Rosa. No!

Frank. Yes! In the deep shadowing forth of youth I have pictured a form like unto thine, found the reality and in secret worshipped; now I've dared the empyrean, to tell thee of my love, even should I plunge from hence into an ocean of despair.

Rosa. Sir—I—don't know how to act. I feel that I am very wrong in suffering you to remain; and yet your accents have the semblance of sincerity: but language with your sex is too often used to cloak deception. Could I but be certain of your truth! What am I saying?—Pardon me—how gained you admittance?

Frank. By yonder open window; the grape-vine trellis gave me fragile footing. Hark! methinks I hear footsteps approaching. Must I then tear myself away from this extatic vision?

Rosa. Yes, indeed you must. I would not have you discovered here for worlds.

Frank. Before I dare the dangerous declivity—ah! bless me with one word of hope.

Rosa. Away—away! I dare not.

Frank. Then shall I remain, and brave the contempt and punishment I deserve.

Rosa. No, no—for my sake, begone.

Frank. That word would send me to the jaws of death.

Rosa. Pray don't hurt yourself.

Frank. Say but I may hope to see thee once again.

Rosa. Yes, yes—anything—but go.

Frank. Ten thousand thanks for that sweet sentence; it will be my solace during the dark hours of absence. Farewell! light of my life and everlasting hope farewell.

[*He goes up to window, as if to get out, and whilst ROSA'S back is turned, slips off* L. 1 E. *SWIFT runs on from* R. 1 E., *in time to see FRANK go off.*

Swift. Hallo, a small trifle of amateur house-breaking, I perceive.

Rosa. I don't know whether I ought to be pleased or angry—angry, I think. He's very handsome. My soul tells me he is the very kind of lover I had half hoped yet never expected, in this age of formality, to meet with. My destiny is changed, I feel it is; and this unknown stranger is linked with it. How absurd I am—I may never see him again.

Swift. That would be a pity.

Rosa. What shall I do? I feel as though I were the heroine of a living romance, and this as the first chapter—and indeed the reality is much better than to read it in books.

Swift. I should think it was.

Rosa. I must have a confidant.

Swift. I should say so decidedly.

Rosa. Blossom?—No, she's too talkative.

Swift. A regular parrot.

Rosa. (L.) A confidant I must have: now, who shall it be?

Swift. [R. *advancing.*] If you'll take my advice, Miss, it will be your humble servant, because he happens to be in the secret already!

Rosa. Sir!

Swift. [*Coming forward, R.*] Don't be alarmed! I'm only one of the characters. Confide in me—I'm trustworthy.

Rosa. Are you then his friend?

Swift. Intimate—have been acquainted with the unknown ever since he was a baby.

Rosa. Indeed! then you can tell me of him.

Swift. Honor—not a syllable on oath—registered, bound to secrecy.

Rosa. The mystery grows still more intense—and you are——

Swift. A mutual friend, always ready to oblige!—On terms of very remarkable intimacy with your family,—that is to say, the male portion of it,—your excellent, but somewhat eccentric aunt, included—whose thirty pages of Domestic Reform digested wonderfully with our mid-day meal. She called it breakfast; I called it dinner! A mere difference of opinion. It was a most delightful repast, however—I eat, and she read. Fortunately she's a slow reader, which accounts for my superior edification.

Rosa. Then, I may look upon you as my friend?

Swift. Indubitably; and remember, if you should ever want to fight a duel, or get another husband, Jack Swift will be proud to be your second.

Oliver. [*Without, in conservatory.*] Halloo! there he is; give me the gun.

Rosa. What's that? My sinking heart tells me he is in danger!

Swift. What, the unknown?

Rosa. Yes, yes. Oh, save him!

Swift. They shan't ruffle a feather of him.

Enter OLIVER, who goes to window L. with gun.

Oliver. It's that fellow who has been stealing our peaches.—See, he's clambering over the wall; but I'll have a pop at him before he's across.

[*Levels gun.*]

Rosa. [*Rushing up to OLIVER.*] No, no, Uncle, hold! don't fire!

Oliver. It's all right. Frank's made a good beginning.

Swift. [*Sketching, R.*] Awfully grand domestic tableau.

ROSA faints in OLIVER'S arms. SWIFT, with his tablet and pencil, is sketching in R. C.

QUICK DROP.—END OF ACT I.

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*Handsome drawing-room well furnished; lounges, tables, &c., two screens. SWIFT, discovered enveloped in a handsome morning-gown, Greek cap, seated in a rocking-chair.*

Swift. Now, this is what I call a remarkably pleasant shifting of the scenes of life, which, to say the truth, have been somewhat sombre in the dreary scenes of my hitherto existence, and I should take it as a particular favor, if the greater prompter, Fate, wouldn't trouble himself to whistle this one off in a hurry. Two days ago, I was wandering in a desert, with ventilating habiliments, and an appetite as sharp as the East wind, fed on the bitters of the world, without its sweets; now, I revel in a Palace, arrayed like a magnifico:—the perfume of exotic plants saluting my nostrils, and hunger a thing of chronology! Oliver insists upon my remaining here an unlimited time, as the friend of Asper, while Asper abuses me with amiable cordiality, out of compliment to his brother. Some prejudiced people would designate the instrument with which I work by the name of impudence. No such a thing!—Coolness and sagacity, those are my weapons, the intellectual pick-axe and shovel, with which the wise man digs the foundation of his fortune! To be sure, I have dug a good many foundations in my time, but never could get higher than the cellar!

Frank. [*Without, L. H.*] Never mind, I'll find him.

Swift. Ah! that voice has a familiar sound! By all that's *mal à propos*, my old acquaintance Frank. He was the Romeo, no doubt, who gave us a new version of the Balcony scene the other night. He knew me in my halcyon days. What's to be done? Shall I divulge, or mystify? The latter comes most natural.

Enter FRANK MEREDITH. L I E.

Frank. My dear sir, I have called thus early—can I believe my eyes!

Swift. That depends, sir, entirely on the nature of their communication.

Frank. They tell me that I see a scapegrace before me, whose name used to be Swift.

Swift. Then, sir, they exemplify the truth of the adage: you should never believe more than half you hear! *Swift*, you see, but no scapegrace! *Frank*, my old friend, how are you? You are, no doubt, astonished to see me here?

Frank. Indeed, I am Jack. How does it happen?

Swift. Merely a shuffling of the cards of life, and Jack is on the top of the pack! I believe the last time we had the pleasure of meeting, I was endeavoring to negotiate a loan, for the limited amount of half a dollar. By the bye, I owe you a trifle, don't I?

Frank. Never mind: it's quite a pleasure to be your creditor, Jack.

Swift. Then, far be it from me to deprive you of so innocent a gratification!—The fact is, the governor, here, I find, was an old friend of my honored Papa's. Some time ago, they came to the determination to consolidate the interests of the Swifts and the Manlys by a tender

junction of the younger branches,—hem! for further information, I refer you to the marriages intended!

Frank. Married, you? And to whom?

Swift. Why, to whom do you think? You don't suppose I'm going to marry old Social Reform, do you? No, no! You recollect what old Herrick says?

“Of all the flowers the garden knows,
Commend me to the dainty Rose.”

Frank. Rose! You marry Rose?—Impossible!

Swift. Not in the slightest degree.

Frank. It's false! I know it is.

Swift. It is, you're right! Don't fidget! keep cool! Confound it! do you imagine that I didn't know who had found favor in her sight? I'm not the man to cherish a sentiment which ought to flow spontaneous for you, my friend! I give her up for ever! Indeed, the sacrifice is not very tremendous; for, to say the truth, I have conscientious scruples on the score of consanguinity; so, let us form an alliance. Don't say a word to Oliver about my juvenile scrapes, and I'll do all in my power to bring you and cousin Rosey together.

Frank. Cousin!

Swift. Yes, a kind of cousin, at least, such ambiguous relationship as will prevent my interfering with you: her mother was third cousin, on the maternal side, to my grandfather's aunt.

Frank. My good friend Jack, although I go beyond the adage, and don't believe the quarter of what you tell me, yet, as you may be of essential service, I am glad to have encountered you.

Swift. Proud of the compliment! Always ready to assist my friends. Command, and I obey.

Frank. Well, then, you know that I love Rosa?

Swift. Yes, I know, sub Rosa!

Frank. For the present: now—

Barbara. [Without, R. 1 E.] I tell you it is disgraceful, and I, for one, revolt against the indignity.

Swift. Hallo! here comes old Social Reform, like a locomotive, in a state of excitement. Let us get off her track! Come up to my apartment, and let us hold a council of war. [Exeunt, C. R.]

Enter ASPER and BARBARA, R. 1 E.

Asper. Confound it all! Can't you let me alone? What do you keep following me about from room to room for?

Barbara. I want to impress upon your mind, brother, the inhumanity, the crime of apathy, the necessity for action, action!

Asper. Good gracious, what about?

Barbara. What about? Is it not frightful to reflect upon our position! What are women, I ask the question, according to the present one-sided dictum of society? What are they but slaves to the selfish tyranny of man?

Asper. I can't see it—and even if I did—how could I help it. What have I to do with it?

Barbara. Oh, dignity of human nature! have you no compassion for

an entire sex, endowed with the same natural gifts, subject to the same variety of feelings, yet forced to endure an existence of social slavery?

Asper. Social humbug! Sister Barbara, listen to me. You are like a great many more people, who are unfortunately too well off in the world; you have lived so long without a care, that you are obliged, in self-defence, to call up an imaginary annoyance to keep your nerves in a wholesome state of excitement and agitation.

Barbara. Is it imaginary to be reduced to the second place in all the relations of life—to be scarcely removed from an article of household furniture—to have a male nonentity lord it over you with humiliating condescension?

Asper. Who lords it over you, for gracious sake?

Barbara. Every two-legged animal, privileged to wear a beard, thinks itself my superior.

Asper. Pooh! nonsense. You look at your own sex and its condition through the wrong end of the telescope, wilfully inverted.

Barbara. Now, brother, I'll argue the case with you.

Asper. No, you won't.

Barbara. There! can there be a more convincing proof of the contempt in which you hold us. You'd argue with a man, but you despise the words of a woman. What right have they to exercise the intellect, however powerful with which they may be gifted? No, no: keep them down—tie them to the cradle and the distaff—blunt their sensibilities, and brutalize their intelligence; but I tell you, sir, sneer as you may, a small cloud is rising, which will darken the sky of man's destiny. The time is coming when we shall seize upon the pen and the sword, and demand the acknowledgment of our social rights. [*crosses to L.*] See, here are the cunning devices by which you tame the female soul into subserviency—the worsted and the needle—vile emblems of humiliation—unworthy fetters of the mind—we'll sweep ye away, along with the other relics of our slavery.

[*BARBARA thrusts her umbrella through the tambour work—crosses to R. H.*

Asper. Barbara! I don't like to see you suffer. Let me inquire if they have a comfortable suite of apartments, unoccupied, at the lunatic asylum. Tom,

Enter TOM, R. 1 E.

Run to the nearest lunatic asylum, and engage a comfortable suite of apartments, directly.

Tom. Yes, sir.

Asper. For one.

Tom. I wonder which one.

[*Exit TOM, R. 1 E.*

Barbara. I have a mission to perform, brother.

Asper. Well, fulfil it, and don't make a fuss.

Barbara. You're a perfect brute.

Asper. I don't agree with you.

Barbara. Man! I can't call you a worse name than that, I leave you to the communings of your own heart.

[*crosses to R.*

Asper. You couldn't do me a greater favor. Come, Barbara, don't

let us quarrel about a difference of opinion ; you think you're right, no doubt—well, so do I ; perhaps we're both right : at all events, it's not for me to say that you are wrong. Shake hands, Barbara ; I honor a conscientious opinion, even in a Turk, why should I not find excuses for a sister ?

Barbara. Now you speak like a good, kind brother, as you are : and if I could only get you to agree with me, that there is some necessity for a social reform.

Asper. I won't !—You enthusiastic old fidget—isn't it enough for me to say that I shall look over your absurdities, but you must force me to believe them ?

Barbara. There you go—what a temper you have !

Asper. And if I have, why do you torment it ? Is it my fault that I wasn't born a rhinoceros ? If nature made me cross and you foolish, we can't help it, either of us.

Barbara. Nature didn't give you the right to domineer over me, and you shan't do it.

Asper. Don't raise your voice.

Barbara. I have as much right to exercise my lungs as you have.

Enter OLIVER, C.

Oliver. Heyday ! what's the matter now ! demonstrating the rights of women, sister ?

Barbara. Ridicule is the fool's argument ; so I despise and leave you to your folly.

[*Exit BARBARA, R. 1 E.—ASPER goes up to B. table, and sits down.*]

Oliver. Poor Barbara ! Now that's a woman who would forgive any personal injury except contradiction.

Asper. Stupid old woman ! she very nearly made me angry.

Oliver. Is it possible.

Asper. None of your jecering ; but what's the matter ? you seem inflated with intelligence.

Oliver. I have heard a little news certainly.

Asper. I thought so. What is it ? Don't keep me in suspense—you know that worries me.

Oliver. Our young friend Kydd has arrived from Europe, and will pay us a visit in the course of the day.

Asper. Well, upon my soul, brother, you have learnt the art of ingeniously tormenting, with a vengeance. Here was I stretched on the tiptoe of expectation, and your mountain of intelligence brings forth a Kidd.

[*Rises, and crosses to L.*]

Oliver. Where are you going ?

Asper. Out.

Oliver. Would it not be kind to wait at home ?

Asper. No, if I meet the lad, I'll give him a hearty shake of the hand ; and if I like him, it shan't be the last ; to say the truth, I don't think I shall ; and I'm sorry to learn that Rosa permitted herself to be engaged to him before he left.

Oliver. Is that so ?

Asper. Yes, it leaked out, one day ; but, as I did not consider myself entitled to direct her actions, I never spoke of it.

Oliver. I wonder would it be an impardonable crime to ask where you are going?

Asper. I'm going to see Brown, if you must know : a good, faithful, honest, serviceable friend to me for many a year ; and hang me if I'll neglect him now for all the kids that ever skipped, or monkeys that ever saw the world. [Exit ASPER, L. 1 E.

Oliver. Go along, you strange mixture of honey and lemon.

Enter FRANK, C. D.

Frank. Hist ! is the coast clear ?

Oliver. Hallo ! Frank, my boy, is that you ? Have you seen her this morning ?

Frank. Bless you ! yes. Have had a most delicious stolen interview in the disguise of a gardener. How do matters look in the house ?

Oliver. Encouraging, decidedly. She's as happy as a heart full of mystery can make her.

Frank. I've found cousin Swift a famous auxiliary.

Enter SWIFT, C. D.

Oliver. Cousin ! Are you his cousin ?

Swift. You heard him say so.

[FRANK puts on disguise cloak and beard.

Oliver. By the way, friend Swift, how is it we did not see you at breakfast, this morning ?

Swift. My dear sir, I have had a highly intellectual and thoroughly satisfactory meal with your worthy sister. There is one point on which we agree famously : we neither of us like to get up, until the world has been comfortably aired, hung up before the sun for an hour or two, to take the damp off of the morning. By the way, are we not engaged to finish that game of chess : we couldn't have a better opportunity.

Oliver. Hallo ! who's this ? Egad ! I didn't know you, Frank : that's a sudden transformation. Another dose of romance, eh ? Well, Doctor, I hope you will be able to congratulate yourself on a thorough cure.

Frank. This is about the time Rosa's French teacher comes, is it not ?

[Crosses, sits R. of C. table.

Oliver. Yes ; I'll send her.

Swift. Chance is a quicker messenger : she is coming here.

Oliver. So she is. Sit down, Monseer : your pupil will be here directly.

Enter ROSA, L. 1 E.

Egad, here she is.—Rosey, your French master has sent an excuse ; there he is. Did you ever see such a scarecrow ? Ha ! ha !

[Exit OLIVER and SWIFT, C ; FRANK watches them off mysteriously, then advances.

Frank. (R.) Rosa !

Rosa. That voice—Francisco ! Oh, what a delicious disguise ! And

hast thou, my Francisco, really eluded the vigilance of my guardian, and, in this strange garb, obtained admittance?

Frank. It is even as thou sayest, beloved of my soul! Let us, then, snatch a few moments of blissful communion ere fate inexorable dooms us to separation!

Rosa. Oh, how sweeter far are these unexpected interviews than the dull common place routine of life!

Frank. Who would exchange, for such delightful intercourse of soul, the cold formalities with which the world is hedged about? What, compared to this independence of thought and action, would be the sober introduction?

Rosa. The interminable courtship?

Frank. During which love falls asleep.

Rosa. Or, tired of the perpetual sameness, takes wings, and flies to more congenial scenes. No startling obstacles to give excitement to the scene!

Frank. No delicious poverty to test the truth of each other's love!

Rosa. No soothing sorrows!

Frank. No sensibility!

Rosa. No variety!

Frank. No sentiment!

Rosa. No romance!

Frank. No! Nothing!—Who could consent to carry such a hopeless load of life? Not I!

Rosa. Nor I!

Frank. Alas! how dare I tempt my peerless bird to break the bars of her golden cage, and leave a certainty of comfort for the precarious gifts that fickle fortune may allot?

Rosa. Would it not be liberty, sweet, precious liberty?

Frank. Wouldst thou, then, my Rosa, leave a life of luxury, and cleave to one who can but offer thee the sole devotion of his heart, and the enduring protection of his arm?

Rosa. I feel it is my destiny to share thy fate!

Frank. But have you thought of the privations you must encounter in a simple cottage life?

Rosa. To me, it will be charming from its very novelty!

Frank. That may wear off.

Rosa. Love shall make it ever new! It has been the very dream of my life! the realization of my fondest wish!

Swift. [Without, c.] Hem!

Frank. Ha! the signal! Some one approaches. We are interrupted. Voices this way!—What's to be done?

Rosa. Here, the screen! in, in! Good fortune shield thee, my Francisco! Was there ever so sweetly romantic a dilemma?

[FRANK goes behind L. screen.]

Enter OLIVER and SWIFT, c.

Rosa. [Aside, to SWIFT.] Can't you get Francisco away?

Swift. Francisco! Is he here? Can't you keep the Governor employed?

Rosa. How?

Swift. Oh, find fault with his cravat! Quick, you've no time to lose!

Rosa. Uncle, dear me, how very slovenly you have become! let me fix this everlasting cravat of yours.

Oliver. Hey day! This is the first time you ever evinced any solicitude for my personal appearance. Why, what on earth are you fidgeting about, Rosey? You are blushing.

Rosa. I, uncle?

Oliver. You, niece. There's something on your mind, I'm sure there is.—Ah! don't choke me you villain, don't!

[*SWIFT leads FRANK off, L. 1 E., mysteriously.*

Rosa. There, uncle, it's all right, now.

Swift. [*During Swift's speech, FRANK steals in again, L. 1 E., and goes off c.*] Most presuming puppy!—Perfectly right, sir; strange dog on the stairs, sir.

Enter KYDD, L. 1 E.

Kydd. Alluding to me, sir?

Swift. Bless my soul! no, sir: wouldn't pay the brutes so bad a compliment!

Kydd. Why, Rosey, don't you know me? [*Crossing to ROSA.*

Rosa. Haven't the felicity, sir. [*Goes up, and sits R. of c. table.*

Kydd. (R.) I'm perfectly delighted.

Oliver. (L.) Hallo! here's another French master.

Kydd. Am I so altered, that you do not recollect me?

Oliver. (c.) Indeed, sir, the small portion of your face which you condescend to make public is not at all familiar to me.

Kydd. (R.) I'm enchanted; you couldn't have paid me a more welcome compliment. Why, bless your simplicity, I'm Kydd!

Oliver. (c.) My gracious! I do believe it is!—What an alteration!

Swift. (L.) A very natural one, sir. Permit me to observe kids will become goats, in time.

Kydd. (R.) Ah! yes; that's a joke, I suppose. We don't patronize jokes.—Who's your friend, Oliver?

Oliver. (c.) Swift,—Kydd. Kydd,—Swift.

Kydd. How do?

Swift. Better than you.

Oliver. I can't help looking at that crop you've got on your face.

Kydd. Yes; we don't patronize the razor, now: it's obsolete—gone out with the tinder boxes and stage coaches.

Oliver. Don't you intend to get civilized, and have all that stuff taken off?

Kydd. Good gracious! no!

Swift. Perfectly right, sir: farmers let everything grow on ground which is good for nothing.

Kydd. Ah! yes. I suppose you mean something smart; happily, I don't understand that sort of thing. [*Retires up with OLIVER.*

Rosa. [*Down, R.*] Pity my agitation, friend of the unfortunate! In a moment of folly, I permitted myself to be engaged to yonder unsympathizing creature!

Swift. It cannot, it shall not be!—Honor, sensibility, all the finer feelings of our common nature forbid the sacrifice! The insatiate altar shall be cheated of its victim! Spirit of invention! arise! Ha! it dawns! it breaks! it shines! Dissemble—feign a mighty and uncontrolable affection for yon razorless animal!

Rosa (R.) Impossible!

Swift. (R. c.) Not at all! You'll find it excellent practice! They return!—I positively don't agree with you, Miss Rosa. I appeal to our friend Kydd.

Kydd. (L.) You'll excuse me: I didn't fatigue myself by listening to the argument. In point of fact, we never indulge in that sort of thing.

Oliver. (L. c.) What's the matter in debate, Swift?

Swift. Merely a slight difference of opinion with regard to vegetables. I thought, and I think so still, that dandelion is a very indifferent substitution for spinach. What do you think? [*To Rosa.*] Recollect what I told you! Give him the sentimental, with forty Juliet power. [*To OLIVER.*] Are you fond of mischief?

Oliver. Very.

Swift. [*Going up c. with OLIVER.*] I'll give you a treat presently.

[*Exit SWIFT and OLIVER, c.*

Rosa watches them off, then rushes over ardently to KYDD, whose toilette she unpleasantly deranges.

Rosa. Ah, light of my life!—sunshine of my soul!—has the treacherous element, in pity to the absent heart, forgot its malignity? and, on its billowy bosom, bore thee back?

Kydd. Don't distress yourself, Rosey. There's no occasion to make such a fuss! Where's the use? there's no one to see us!

Rosa. And dost thou love me still?

Kydd. Yes!

Rosa. And wilt thou love me ever?

Kydd. Yes, yes, of course, most indubitably! But, pray, don't be violent! love me as much as you please, but don't disarrange my toilette!

Rosa. How's this? So cold! so altered! Ah! weak, foolish, fond, confiding, deceived and disappointed one! Is it thus thou toyest with my love? And, like the rude rock, stern and impassable, smilest grimly at the heart wreck you have occasioned!

Kydd. What have I done?

Rosa. What have you done? He scatters the little cargo of my hopes upon the ocean of despair, and coolly asks, "What have I done?"—What have you done? Listen to the phrase whose desolating sound falls on a woman's ear like the flappings of the wings of death! You love another!

Kydd. No, no, really, upon my soul, Rosey! This is positively delicious! Why, Rosey, are you jealous?

Enter, at back, FRANK, OLIVER and SWIFT, c.

Rosa. Jealous! oh, that's a poor and insufficient word! He to whom I would devote every thought, must, in return, give every thought to me! I must have a whole heart, or none! Hast thou such a one?

Kydd. (c.) Upon my soul, I can't say! Really—a—I—

Rosa. Answer! and truly!

Frank. [*Advancing, L.*] Surely, sir, nothing can be easier than to find a pleasing answer to such a question.

Rosa. (R.) Oh, ye malignant fates! my Francisco!—What a delicious dilemma!—Here's a beautiful bit of misery! What shall I do?

Swift. What do you want done?

Rosa. Get him away.

Swift. What, young Capricornus?

Rosa. Yes.

Swift. Do me the favor to faint; it will save you the trouble of thinking. [*ROSA shrieks and falls in SWIFT'S arms.*]

Swift. Ah! what do I see? 'Tis as I suspected! My worst fears are confirmed.

Kydd. What's the matter?

Swift. Oh, thou unrelenting scourge of beauty! why couldst thou not leave one victim unmarked by thy pestilential influence?

Kydd. What do you mean?

Swift. Stand off! or you'll be in danger. I am professionally armed against the infection.

Kydd. The what! You terrify me! You don't mean to say that Rosa has caught the—the—

Swift. Varioloid! sir, in one of its most contagious forms!

Kydd. Gracious, me! how dreadful! Excuse me, Doctor: self preservation is the first law of nature. I am very sorry for poor dear Rosa; but I was never vaccinated.

Swift. Don't delay an instant, then!—

Kydd. Thank you, I won't—

Swift. If you would rather keep your complexion than your sweet-heart.

[*KYDD rushes off, L. I. E.; SWIFT, OLIVER and ROSA go up stage laughing.*]

QUICK DROP.—END OF ACT II.

ACT III.

SCENE I. *Same as Act 2d.* TOM L. and BLOSSOM B. discovered, the latter reading.

Blossom. "Instinctively closing her angelic eyes, the noble horse dashed headlong down the cataract, and was instantaneously swept into oblivion; the stranger was Huberto." There, Mr. Thomas, that's what I call sweet.

Tom. Perdigious!

[*Ready Bell, R. I. E.*]

Blossom. That's the great scene out of the last new novel, called the Beautiful Buccaneer, or the Conscientious Assassin, by the author of those ducks of books, "The Treacherous Tomahawk or the Bewildered Blacksmith," and the "Rival Rowdies," full of such sweet instructive murders, delicious piracies, and all that sort of thing, so interesting

and improbable, you can't help feeling as though you were a duchess while you read them.

Tom. Ah! them's the books, them is—makes a chap long for a life on the ocean wave, piratical exhibitions, prizes and plunder, cutlasses and pistols—them's the books to teach the young idea how to shoot.

Blossom. To be sure, one does mope a little after them, to think they have to eat the bread of servitude instead of breathing the ambrosial air of exotic palaces.

Tom. Well, it is rather hard to be obliged to watch the vagaries of a couple of old fogies instead of treading the quarter-deck of a flying schooner, all whiskers and ear-rings, singing pirates' glees and drinking the blood-red wine out of golden goblets as big as flower-pots.

Blossom. Aye, aye, sir—hold up the bow-sprit and reef the weather-guage. I declare, Mr. Thomas, you talk like a book.

Tom. Thank you Miss Blossom, but that ain't a overpowering compliment, as books goes. [*Bell* R. 1 E.] By jingo, that's Miss Barbara's bell; I shall catch it; she sent me for some cigars; she and the hirishman is having a philosophical confab together.

[*Barbara calls angrily from R. 1 E.*]

Barbara. Badger!

Tom. Say I'm gone out.

Blossom. He's gone out, mum.

Barbara. Where?

Tom. To get some cigars.

Blossom. I think I heard him say, to fetch some cigars, ma'am.

Barbara. He ought to have been back; you bring me a pair of foils.

Blossom. Yes, ma'am.

Tom. Foils! Lady-like amusemong, as my French without a master says. [*Exit TOM and BLOSSOM L. 1 E.*]

Enter FRANK C.

Frank. She's not here; you may come in. [*Enter OLIVER C. down R.*]

Oliver (R.) Well Doctor, you dog, how is your patient to-day?

Frank (L.) Approaches the very crisis of her fate and of mine; her heart, I think, is won.

Oliver. The proof.

Frank. Shall I confide in you?—Of course I shall, my old friend and counsellor will not object to an apparent irregularity to produce so happy and satisfactory a result; in short, prepare for a surprise, and above all things, presume not to interfere with professional conduct. Rosey has consented to elope with me.

Oliver. Elope!

Frank. This very evening.

Oliver. I shall never forgive her.

Frank. Certainly not, people never do at first, and I would'nt have you depart from the conventional rule for the world.

Oliver. Frank, I cannot consent to this step.

Frank. Of course not; it would be no elopement if you did. I would test Rosey's affection by taking her away despite of every obstacle. She's coming this way: now, my kind old friend, you know that

her ultimate happiness is my sole object; will you assist me to obtain it?

Oliver. What do you want me to do?

Frank. Turn me out: get into a Sir Anthony Absolute kind of passion; shake your stick over my head, and above all things, refuse to let me see her.

Enter ROSA L. I E.

Ah, sir! do not be obdurate; have pity on two loving hearts.

Oliver. Get out of my house, you scoundrel!

Frank. [*Aside*] That's right—louder.

Oliver. A pretty thing indeed, a fellow not worth sixpence aspire to my ward's hand!

Frank. [*Aside*] Bravo! Go on; a little more pepper.

Oliver. Get out of the house, sir, before I break my stick over your head.

Rosa. [*Rushing forward c.*] Hold, sir! listen to me for an instant.

Oliver [*R.*] Ah, Rosey! I'm glad you're come to see the punishment of presumption; here's a poor devil has the folly to solicit a place in your heart.

Rosa. He has no need to solicit, sir.

Oliver. How so, pray?

Rosa. He has it already; not a place only, uncle, but its sole and whole mastery.

Oliver. Upon my word, that is excellent; you don't suppose I am going to consent, do you?

Rosa. I hope you are, sir; my heart's choice is made, and if you withhold your consent, I shall be under the necessity of loving him without it.

Oliver. Then you shall have to feed upon love, for not a sixpence do you get from me.

Rosa. I am content, if my Francisco is.

Frank. Bear witness, all ye powers of good, I am content to take you as you are, rich in all the priceless gifts of nature; my life, my love, and only hope.

Rosa. My dear Francisco.

[*They embrace.* FRANK telegraphs OLIVER to separate them.]

Oliver. [*Separating them.*] Come, this won't do.

Frank. Pshaw! you are not angry enough.

Oliver. Be off, you scapegrace; I've endured this long enough.

Frank. One parting embrace—remember, this evening!

Rosa. Farewell!

Frank. Oh! farewell!

Oliver. What unparalleled impudence, before my very face! Away to your room, you undutiful girl; and you, sir, skip, jump, before I make you acquainted with this.

Rosa. Dear uncle, hear me but a moment!

Oliver. Well, I will listen.

Frank. [*Aside*] Don't!

Oliver. (*R.*) I won't hear a word! begone, I say. Ah! would you

[FRANK telegraphs. OLIVER pushes her out R. U. E.] Ha! ha! how was that, eh? Get out. I won't hear a word—go to your room.

Frank. (L.) Capital, capital!

Oliver. Shall I follow, and continue my lecture?

Frank. No! but I'll tell you how you can facilitate my plans: see Asper, you know his weakness is opposition, so you must take the side of Kydd strongly.

Oliver. I see. I understand, Frank; you're a great physician, he'll be in a fury, though—I know he will; but I'll do it—I'll do it. [Exit c.]

Frank. That's my good friend. Now, if Swift has only followed my directions, I think everything will be in excellent train.

SWIFT runs on from R. 1 E.

What's the matter?

Swift. Meredith, my dear fellow, congratulate me on my escape! Did you ever see Van Amburg, tete-a-tete with a tigress? Did you ever see a fly struggling in a spider's web? Did you ever see a tantalizing cat make her last sortie upon the appetizing mouse? Pooh! all are pleasant and agreeable compared to mine, within the last half hour! Old Social Reform has been making savage love to me.

Frank. The deuce.

Swift. Lamentable fact! One of the evil consequences of falling too readily into peoples' peculiarities. I admired her arguments, and her beefsteaks, until she fancied my admiration extended to herself! Praised her pamphlets, and her bottled porter, until she thought she was included in the category. At last, from discussing the excellences of general associations, she rapidly descended to individual and domestic ditto, and declared I was the very man destined by nature, to assist her in working out her great scheme of Social Reorganization, by making a dutiful and obedient husband.

Frank. Ha! ha! ha!

Swift. Upon my soul, it was no laughing matter! She put a sudden check upon my risibilities.

Frank. How so?

Swift. When I contrived to stammer out something about the honor being too great, and all that sort of thing, hang me if she didn't call for a pair of foils, and deliberately breaking off the buttons, challenged me a l'outrance, for insulting her generosity!

Frank. Well.

Swift. Now don't laugh! You know she fences like a master of arms, whilst I don't know carte from tierce—so she drove me into a corner, and if I had'nt suddenly followed the example of the sagacious animal that came down the tree, to escape being shot, I should have been pinned into the wall, like a butterfly in a glass case.

Frank. You thought better of her offer then?

Swift. To be sure I did! It's for the conqueror to dictate terms;—I was carried at the sword's point, and consequently was at the mercy of the victress! I'm now only on parole, but if I don't be even with her, my name's not Jack!

Frank. But now to come to more interesting matters, my affairs.

Swift. Thank you.

Frank. Have you been to the cottage?

Swift. Yes, and I flatter myself, the lady will find it as romantically inconvenient, and delightfully uncomfortable as she could wish! Allow me;—I have an idea, and as such visitors are rather strangers to me, I must entertain it. [*Writes.*] Talk away. I can listen.

Frank. Have you discovered a confidential assistant?

Swift. Yes. I have my eye on one.

Frank. Where?

Enter BLOSSOM L. 1 E.

Swift. [*Seated at right of table.*] Come here, Blossom; you're a ladies' maid, are you not?

Blossom. That are my station in this sublunareous spear.

Swift. And consequently like a little amusement.

Blossom. Profitable amusement I does'nt object to, sir.

Swift. We want you to assist us.

Frank. Do you see what we mean?

Blossom. (L.) Can't say as I does, sir.

Frank. Now do you see? [*Holding up two half eagles.*]

Blossom. With such a pair of spectacles as that I can see any distance, sir.

Swift. Do you think you could transform yourself into the appearance of an Irishman of all work, of the most primitive description?

Blossom. The sort of a domestic one sees a top of the stage.

Swift. And never any where else; exactly, I see you understand.

Blossom. Our Thomas has a great red wig, which he wore at a fancy ball.

Swift. That will do famously, run and bring it; then you shall have further instruction.

Blossom. Yes, sir, that I will, sir: oh! this is delightful—it will be exactly like playing in a play.

Swift. Precisely, and if you act your part well I'll give you an engagement.

Blossom. Thank you, sir. I have one already—with our Thomas; but it would'nt break my heart to break it, if I thought you were in earnest.

Swift. Get along, and don't chatter. [*Exit BLOSSOM R. 1 E.*]
Another edition of old social reform.

Barbara. [*Without R. 1 E*] Are you there, you Swift?

Swift. Confound it, here comes the old Tiger—come along.

[*Enter BARBARA R. 1 E.*]

Barbara. Here, Swift.

[*SWIFT telegraphs to table, where he has deposited the letter, and then hurries off with FRANK C.*]

Barbara. What does the male creature mean by that? If he has been deceiving me I'll shoot him. [*Sees letter.*] A letter, and addressed to me. Be still, my agitated heart. [*Reads.*] "Beloved Barbara." Dear me, what strange emotions that phrase calls up; but I must'nt be womanish. "If thy love be as ardent as mine, you will not hesitate to adopt the means I have arranged to facilitate our mutual wish. Com-

mon place individuals, controlled by the stupid formalities of every day life, might say the time was too short; but to a person whose strong mind crushes beneath it such paltry obstacles, no such excuse is necessary. There will be a vehicle outside the garden-wall at ten to-night, if you have the courage to show still further your contempt for the one-sided rules of society; leave your answer here, where it will be impatiently waited for by your devoted slave. For fear of accident, do not put any direction." A very sensible and discreetly-worded epistle—now will I have an opportunity of ruling as a wife should rule, and of placing one of these self-styled lords of the creation in the dependant position for which they were by nature intended. I'll go to my apartment and answer this directly.

[Exit BARBARA R. 1 E.]

Enter ASPER and OLIVER c. angrily.

Oliver. (L.) I can't see what objection you can possibly have.

Asper. Can't you? Then you must be a greater fool than he is: but I've no right to interfere. Marry her—marry her to that scented coxcomb, and have the satisfaction of seeing her made miserable for life.

Oliver. What can I do! They are evidently attached to each other.

Asper. Attached to a fiddlestick! The girl don't know her own mind. A pretty kind of a guardian you are: you see her about to do a stupid, a mad thing, and you complacently hurry it on, instead of setting your face firmly against it. You may depend I shall.

Oliver. I knew you would, just out of opposition.

Asper. That's right—that's right! Oh, there's nothing so intensely amusing as a smiling contradiction; nothing so pleasant as a smooth, placid, soft-voiced provocation; confound it all, I'd rather be overwhelmed at once by a cataract of abuse, than thus be drowned piecemeal by a gradually rising tide of aggravation.

Oliver. I never aggravate you, Asper.

Asper. You're doing it now—you're as mad as I am, if you'd only the honesty to let it out. I can see the stifled rage working in your face: why don't you give it vent as I do! No, no, there it lies blazing in the very centre of your heart, like a suppressed volcano! Hang it, Oliver, you're a kind of animated Etna—all flowers without and fire within; but I know what the result will be, you'll burst a blood-vessel some day—and then——

Oliver. You'll be glad.

Asper. I-me—Oliver, how dare you say that, you old fool you—you know me better.

Oliver. I do, brother, I do; so let us say no more about it.

Asper. And this ridiculous match?

Oliver. I'll compromise the matter with you—if you can find her a better husband, (stop, I forgot that I promised I should stick to Kydd,) but no, on second thoughts, I believe I'll have to give her to Kydd: I dare not wait for the explosion!

[Runs off c.]

Asper. And if you—gone; his conscience would'nt let him stay! What, give our favorite, affectionate, intelligent Rosey to such a be-whiskered numscull, not if I can prevent it! It's time for me to be up and doing: I'll find the girl myself, and——

Enter BLOSSOM L. 1 E. with wig.

Blossom. Here it is, sir, is'nt it a beauty?

[Sees ASPER, screams, and runs off L. 1 E.

Enter SWIFT, C.

Swift. Well, Blossom—I beg pardon!

[Runs off C. D.

Enter BARBARA R. 1 E. with letter.

Barbara. Now for the answer—my brother; provoking!

[Runs off R. 1 E.

Enter ROSA., R. U. E.

Rosa. I thought I heard my Francisco—my uncle!

[Screams, and runs off R. U. E.

Enter FRANK, C.

Frank. 'Twas Rosa's voice—no it was'nt.

[Going to run off, ASPER catches him by the coat-tail; FRANK slip away and runs off.

Enter TOM, L. 1 E.

[ASPER seizes TOM, shakes him, and runs off C. TOM imitates him, then runs after him.

Re-enter BARBARA with Letter, R. 1 E.

Barbara. He's gone! Lie there, thou manacle for one man's liberty.

[Exit BARBARA R. 1 E.

Enter SWIFT C. He reads letter.

Swift. Capital! just the thing. Thanks, exquisite and venerated gudgeon, for having so promptly swallowed my bait. Now to give this a local destination, and a name. It's a pity so tender an epistle should be wasted. *[Writes.]* "Lavender Kydd, Esq." must be made acquainted with his good fortune. *[Sees ASPER coming C. Goes off R. U. E.*

Enter ASPER and FRANK C.

Asper. (L.) Yes, I knew you instantly, and of all men living you are the one I most wished to see.

Frank. (R.) Sir, you did me infinite honor; to what am I indebted—

Asper. Hold your tongue, I have no time for compliments. I'm in a deuce of a dilemma, and you must assist me out of it.

Frank. With all my heart, sir, if I can.

Asper. You can, you will, you must; are you married?

Frank. Thank my good fortune, no sir.

Asper. Thank your good fortune, indeed! I've got a wife for you—you don't know what's in store for you, you young dog. Come, tell me, do you want a wife? a good, a glorious one?

Frank. I must play this old trout. Ah, sir! marriage is a lottery!

Asper. Well, suppose it is; if you're sure of a prize, who would'nt dip in it? But, in this case, it is not a lottery, sir; but a spontaneous, open-eyed gift of fortune.

Frank. Is it not rather essential I should know who the lady is?

Asper. Egad that's true! I forgot! Can't you guess?

Frank. I believe the only one of the female portion of your family un-engaged is your sister Barbara?

Asper. Thunder and Mars! Who's thinking of her—did you ever see my niece Rosey?

Frank. Very frequently, sir.

Asper. And were not struck with her?

Frank. Where would have been the use, sir, is she not engaged to—

Enter SWIFT and KYDD, c.

Swift. Folly and stupidity!

Asper. That's true enough.

Swift. I tell you, I heard it from her own lips!

Asper. There, look at that perambulating show-block for a draper's patch work, and say would you not stretch forth a hand to save a glorious woman from such a goose—such a confounded tailor's goose?

Frank. I would, sir—I will.

Asper. Bravo!—not a word.

SWIFT and KYDD advance.

Kydd. (R.) Then the varioloid was a mistake.

Swift. Entirely.

Kydd. Delightful! and now I can approach the dear one without fear.

Swift. Or affection.

Kydd. (R. c.) Then am I superlatively happy! eh! no! yes, surely that is our predestinated uncle! he never liked me much! but I don't care! he was always a sour crab! and I suppose age hasn't softened his heart.

Asper. (L.) That's more than I can say for your head, jackanapes!

Kydd. (c.) Come, you mustn't let ill-nature ruffle that amiable countenance of yours—demn'd old porcupine—not that I mind your ebullitions of temper; gray hairs are privileged.

Frank. [*Crosses to KYDD*] But folly, sir! is not privileged to insult them.

Swift. [*down R.*] I would'nt stand that.

Kydd. What the devil do you mean?

Frank. I mean, sir, to intimate to you as delicately as I can, that if you do not yield the proper respect to those gray hairs, I shall be under the disagreeable necessity of enforcing it.

Swift. You can't let that pass!

Kydd. And pray sir, who may you be?

Frank. Your rival, sir! your open and acknowledged rival.

Asper. Bravo, Frank!

Kydd. The deuce, you are?

Frank. And the very particular one who shall carry the lady from you.

Asper. Is that prudent?

Frank. Just said so to annoy him.

Kydd. Did you hear that, Swift, he'll carry her away from me? that's very likely!

Swift. I should think so—very likely!

Kydd. [sees letter.] What's this?—a billet, and addressed to me no doubt—written by her sweet hand! Mr. what's your name, will you permit me—all's fair in love. [reads]—[kisses note.] Darling creature! your wish shall be obeyed—ten o'clock this evening: there will be very little time for preparation, but the triumph will recompense me for the exertion. Swift, you have proved yourself my friend, and I'll permit you to share in my happiness—there, take it!—follow me, I shall want your assistance. Ha! ha! you'll carry off my charming Rosey! I dare say you will! eh, Swift? [Exit KYDD, c.]

Swift. Hav'nt the remotest doubt of it [throws letter to Frank] from old social reform. [Exit SWIFT, c.]

Frank. (c.) Ha! I understand.

Asper. Meredith, I'm uneasy in my mind. I wonder what was in that note of Rosey's?

Frank. Don't wonder any longer, sir; but read, my good friend Swift threw it to me as he left the room.

Asper. Give it to me—and yet this is hardly fair.

Frank. He said himself that all was fair in love.

Asper. Egad! so he did: and so we'll turn his words against himself. [Reads.] "My first and only love." Hem! rather romantic, but just like her. "When two infatuated hearts beat in responsive unison, no chemistry in the world can prevent them from blending together in the crucible of affection." What on earth does she mean by that?

Frank. Rather abstruse, sir,—go on.

Asper. "The torrent of an impetuous love will break down the feeble barriers of custom, humanity's puerile attempt to imprison nature." Hang me if she has'nt been bitten by old Barbara. I knew what would be the result of letting that mad old woman run free about the house.—"Therefore," what's this? here's a sequitor. "Therefore I'll fly with you to-night at the hour of ten!" Will you, hang me if I don't clip your wings? Fly to-night, eh?

Frank. (R.) Then, sir, all our hopes are crushed!

Asper. (L.) Not a bit of it; we must countermine.

Frank. What do you mean, sir?

Asper. Where's your chivalry, what has become of your ardent Virginian temperament—he's to be here at 10.

Frank. Well, sir?

Asper. Well, sir! can't you contrive to be here a quarter of an hour earlier?

Frank. [Quickly.] What, sir, and elope with her instead of him? Delightful!

Asper. Come, come, Frank, I did'nt mean that.

Frank. I know, sir; I only meant to say, it would be a delightful trick on him.

Asper. Yes, just to take her a pleasant moonlight drive, and when she finds out her mistake, tell her I managed it all in order that she

should be preserved from falling into the hands of a fool, eh—ha! ha! ha! You'll undertake this for me, then?

Frank. With pleasure, sir; since it is to do you a service.

Asper. But come, it's approaching the time. Run and get yourself ready; remember to be here before Kydd. Ha! ha! ha! how Oliver will storm! You won't flinch?

Frank. To serve such a friend, not for an instant, sir.

Asper. Thank you, thank you—I won't forget your kindness, believe me—poor Oliver! [Exit ASPER L. 1 E.]

Frank. I'll do it, be assured! Poor Asper! but all's fair in love.

Enter SWIFT C.

Well, carriage ready?

Swift. [Down R.] All right! A pair of two-forty's will be at the small gate in a quarter of an hour! The Reverendissimo will wait on you at ten to-morrow, and your cottage residence is in a most delectable state of discomfort, which I mean to help on a little myself.

Frank. How so?

Swift. I shall put myself into the shape of a newly imported Paddy, and if that don't try her temper, why she deserves commiseration, that's all! Away! You must not be seen here before the time.

[Exit FRANK, C.]

Egad! nor I either; however, I shall take the liberty of becoming a spectator of the parting scene! Hallo! here comes old Snapdragon!

[Hides behind arm-chair, up L. C.]

Enter ASPER, L. 1 E.

Asper. Ha! ha! ha! I declare, my sides ache at the anticipation of Oliver's defeat! Ho! ho! the old fool, to think he could outwit me! He little knows the surprise I have in store for him—by Jove, I must hide myself somewhere—ha! ha! ha!

[Gets behind screen, L. H. Lights down.]

Enter OLIVER, R. 1 E.

Oliver. Ha! ha! No one here; all quiet—ho! ho! what a state of mind poor Asper will be in, and what a laugh I shall have against him. But I must ensconce myself somewhere, and watch the proceedings.

[Hides behind screen, R. H.]

Enter ROSA, R. U. E.

Rosa. How terribly oppressive is this loneliness; the solemn silence seems to wrap my heart as in a shroud! What am I about to do? To pay back years of unceasing tenderness and care by an act of black ingratitude! [Sinks into a chair, and buries her face in her hands.]

Oh, I have passed too many hours of content and joy within these beloved walls to leave them without a pang of regret: but 'tis my destiny, and the deep love that fills my heart drowns every other feeling! My happy, happy home—there's not a single household thing but seems to me now doubly dear.

Enter FRANK, c. down R.

Frank. My beloved Rosa—come, dearest, all is prepared for our departure.

Rosa. I cannot—I did not know the weakness of my heart! Oh, an instant—one lingering instant, ere I give up all my past life has endeared. Farewell! dear, dear uncles! my sweet, happy home, farewell!

[Exit FRANK and ROSA, c.]

Asper. *[Looking over screen and sobbing.]* Poor Rosey—God bless her! *[BARBARA coughs outside, R. 1 E.]* Hallo! who's this? Barbara, by all that's wonderful, in travelling costume. Is there anybody going to run off with her? By Jove, that would be too delightful!

Enter BARBARA, R. 1 E., with fowling-piece in case, fishing-rod, cigar-case, and all the etceteras of a man's travelling gear.

Barbara. Heigho! the blessed moment is at length approaching; where's my cigar-case? Oh, here! The moment I have wished for in solitude for so many long years is at last at hand. I'll rule him with a rod of iron; but I must move softly at first, and hide my claws.

Enter KYDD, c., down L.

Kydd. Where is she—where is the delicious creature!

Barbara. Be still, my fluttering heart; be still, you little trembler! Where's my gun?

Kydd. Art thou prepared, sweet bud of excellence—come, beloved, be quick, I'm going to drive myself, at present, to prevent any suspicion—come!

Barbara. Take this then, dearest. *[Gives gun.]*

Kydd. What on earth is this? *[dropping it,]* but never mind, come along. *[She loads him with gun, fish-rods, &c. &c., and then goes off c.]*

[OLIVER looks over screen, and pops down—ASPER the same; then both look over at each other.]

Asper. How are you, Oliver?

Oliver. How are you, Asper? I say, Asper, what the deuce is old Barbara about?

Asper. How should I know? About her own business, I suppose. You've lost your Kyd—ha! ha!

Oliver. And you your niece—ha! ha!

[Both throw down their screens—SWIFT looks over back of chair.]

Swift. All's fair in love—ha! ha! ha!

QUICK DROP.—END OF ACT III.

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—*Interior of a plain cottage. Practicable fire-place and chimney, c. D. F. L. used. Lattice window R. F., furnished en suite. Log of wood burning in fire-place. FRANK discovered in plain shooting-dress, and gaiters.*

Frank. Upon my life, I begin to think my system is not so certain to

effect a cure as I anticipated ; Rose has not only endured, but absolutely enjoyed, her fortnight of inconvenience with the very wildness of a liberated bird. I'm determined to make a bold effort to-day. I'm pretty certain that I saw a satisfactory shade of discontent just now. [*Rosa sings and laughs outside, R. 1 E.*] Pooh, here she comes, singing away my hopes.

Enter ROSA, R. 1 E.

Well, Rosey, are you still contented with our humble cottage ;

Rosa. Contented ! happy, happy, beyond all that my early wishes sought or hoped ; there is a joyousness and freedom in this blessed country life, to me as new as beautiful. My soul, hitherto chained to the dull mill-wheel of existence, rejoices in its liberty.

Frank. Hang it, this will never do ; but don't you miss your old friends, Rosey ?

Rosa. I have found new—not honey-lipped and bitter-hearted worldly friends ; but the sweet birds and flowers. I no longer listen to the words of folly or of malice—to the utterance of insipid small-talk or the smiling whisperers away of reputation ; but to the enduring song of thankfulness and praise. Oh, this charming rustic life—I feel that I shall never tire of it.

Frank. That's agreeable, upon my soul.

Rosa. But come, Frank, I want you to take a walk with me through that beautiful wood which skirts yonder estate.

Frank. Now for a bold effort. [*Aside.*] I must refuse you, Rosey.

Rosa. Nay, that's unkind—refuse me so small a request !

Frank. My dearest love, honor compels me to tell you all. You knew that I was poor.

Rosa. Yes, to be sure, of course I did.

Frank. But your ignorance of poverty prevents you from knowing the extent of my destitution.

Rosa. Whatever be thy fate, dear Frank, have I not sworn to share it ? Let me bear half the cares, 'twill make the burden lighter.

Frank. Nay, my poor Rosey, you have ere now but heard of privation, you have yet to endure it.

Rosa. And you will find I shall endure it. Tell me the worst, and see, that if in thought or action I shall swerve from the duty of a true wife : but what has this to do with our walk ?

Frank. We must have food, Rosey.

Rosa. Why certainly : of course we must.

Frank. But how ?

Rosa. How ? Buy it—send to market.—I believe that's the way.

Frank. It is impossible to buy without money. No, I must try my luck at fishing.

Rosa. What ! fish for our dinner ! Oh, delicious ! To tread the margin of some silvery rivulet, or in the shade of some ancestral tree, beguile the finny tribe.

Frank. Rosey, anglers for food seldom indulge in poetry ; the glorious sport, as idlers call it, becomes then a very business-like transaction.

Rosa. But much more praiseworthy. The wealthy victim of ennui

who makes it the means of pleasurable excitement has no excuse for his cruelty.

Frank. How good you are, dear Rosey, not to repine at so vast a change in your condition.

Rosa. How unkind you are to think I could repine at this the crowning of my most ambitious hopes. And so, Frank, get to your fishing, and I to my walk; whatever be our fate, the first shade of sorrow shall not be found upon your wife's brow.

Frank. I believe it, Rosey—don't venture far, dearest, the clouds are heavy.

Rosa. Only to the little walk which overlooks that beautiful estate. Au revoir, mind and catch some fish, for I have a shrewd suspicion that I shall be immensely hungry. [Exit ROSA, L. D. F.]

Frank. She little knows that she is mistress of that very estate! Would I might tell her so; can it be that she really does prefer this rustic life, or has the charm of novelty not quite worn off yet. [SWIFT sings outside, L. D. F.] Here comes my Hibernian assistant and adviser.

Swift. [Looking in door.] Is the mistress in the way?

Frank. (R.) No, Swift, doff your brogue and come in.

Enter SWIFT, disguised as an Irish servant.

Swift. Well, how goes on the plot—is she getting uncomfortable?

Frank. Not in the remotest degree, but happier if possible every day.

Swift. Why, then, if poverty agrees with her so well, it's a thousand pities for her own comfort's sake that she is'nt my wife instead of yours.

Frank. What am I to do?

Swift. Just leave the matter to me; how can you give lessons in poverty, who never studied it. Now, I was brought up in the school, and know its moods and tenses grammatically, and mighty hard lessons they are, I tell you.

Frank. What do you advise? You see the prospect of privation don't alarm her.

Swift. Then try what a touch of reality will do; for instance, she knows the very common-place complaint of hunger only from newspaper report; let her feel the least taste in life of it.

Frank. No!

Swift. A very slight attack.

Frank. No, no, no—not for worlds.

Swift. You have no idea how delicious the next meal would be.

Frank. Never! I could'nt bear to give her a moment's real uneasiness!

Swift. Oh, if the doctor's afraid to prescribe, the case is hopeless! Depend upon it, if you physic your patient with sugar candy, she'll fall in love with the sickness for the sake of the medicine.

Frank. I have a great mind to do violence to my feelings and let you have your way, for however charming this mode of existence may be to Rosa, I confess myself prodigiously tired of it.

Swift. To tell the truth, so am I! It's rather difficult to support a character through a month's masquerade,—as for Blossom, if it were not for

a little amateur love making, and the 125 last new novels, there would be a desertion in the camp.

Frank. What would you really advise me to do ?

Swift. What you've been doing all along,—nothing ! And yet, you may as well go and catch a fish or two,—leave the coast clear for an hour or so, and I'll bet the fee-simple of all I am worth against an infected potatoe, (about an even wager,) that her ladyship will undergo a slight change of opinion, with regard to love in a cottage.

Frank. I'll trust you, Swift ; but you must promise me that she shall have no needless annoyance.

Swift. Man alive, do you think I'm a Turk ? Not a bit more than the exigencies of the case may demand. I wish all practitioners were equally mindful of their patient's patience. [*FRANK exits.*] Now, then, I must begin with some piece of palpable discomfort,—but what ? I'll consult with Blossom,—if there be one piece of mischief more ingenious than another, she's sure to know. [*calls.*] Here, Beauty ! [*Enter BLOSSOM.*] Why, what the deuce are you snivelling about ?

Blossom. Nothing, I'm sympathizing with the miseries of poor human nature,—I'm reading a story of unrequited love, Mr. Swift.

Swift. You don't say so ?

Blossom. Yes, I am ! Oh ! what a dreadful thing it is to let concealment worm itself into the bud, to prey upon the damaged cheek. I have a wonderful sight of sympathy—Mr. Swift.

Swift. I want you to descend from the attic of romance to the kitchen of common sense—I suppose you have worn that disguise long enough for one of your chapters ?

Blossom. Too long !—too long ! [*Gate bell rings outside, L. D. F.*

Swift. The only way to get rid of it, is to bring matters to a climax of discomfort, which must be done this very day ! Just think, how we can best strip off a few rose leaves, and expose a thorn or two. [*Gate bell.*] Here she is, don't let us hear the bell. [*Bell.*] She's getting angry,—that was an intemperate pull. [*Bell.*] Bravo ! Let's receive her with a jig.

[*SWIFT and BLOSSOM commence a jig.—Barbara enters L. D. F., and comes down between them.*]

Barbara. (c.) Is this a lunatic asylum ?

Swift. (L.) Aunt Barbara, by all that's disagreeable ; what the deuce brought her here ?

Blossom. (R.) I humbly axes pardon, Ma'am,—me and my young man was a practising the poker for our next assembly.

Barbara. Assembly,—well—hold your tongue. Young man, come here !

Swift. If she recognizes me, I'm a doomed individual.

Barbara. Why don't you obey me ?

Swift. Do you want me, ma'am ; if you please, I'm a little hard of hearing.

Barbara. I want you to assist me in a work of deadly revenge : too long have we poor serfs of society been the jest and plaything of those self-elected sovereigns, the men.

Swift. That's true for you, ma'am, whatever you mean.

Barbara. Did you ever see a duel fought?

Swift. Millions of them, ma'am,—I come from Ireland.

Barbara. Do the women fight duels in Ireland?

Swift. Men, women and childher down to the very pigs, ma'am. Did'nt I see my Lord Blazes brought out to fight a duel in his nurse's arms?

Barbara. You're just the man for me. I don't want to commit murder,—so you shall be my second.

Swift. Husband! ma'am? I ax pardon.—The old woman's getting madder than ever.

Barbara. See that those pistols are properly loaded.

Swift. How many bullets, ma'am?

Barbara. How many do they usually put in?

Swift. It depends greatly upon the state of the feelings, ma'am—one or two for a trifling difficulty, and about six for a deadly animosity.

Barbara. I'll have seven.

Swift. These matters, ma'am, is regularly regulated. If a fellow chates you out of your fortune at cards, calls you a liar, or runs away with your sweetheart or your wife, why you can pop at him, with one or two: if he treads on your corns, you might slap three or four into him; but if he didn't happen to agree with you in politics, you can tickle him up with a dozen! There you are, ma'am; them loaded to hit anything in the world, whether you aim at it, or not! May I make bold to ax who it is that's going to have the honor of being peppered by so illegant a lady as yourself?

Barbara. A fellow—a scoundrel, whose name is Swift.

Swift. Who did you say, ma'am—my ears is bad?

Barbara. Swift, the unmitigated reprobate.

Swift. Indeed, and you're right! I know him, and the devil a greater blackguard is there between this and himself.

Barbara. Is he here? I have traced him to this very cottage.

Swift. Poor devil! bad as he is, you'd pity him, if you knew the distractitude that's over him, and all about a deluder of a famale.

Barbara. The villain!—I'll shoot him.

Swift. Indeed, and it would be a mercy would anybody do that same, for he seems to be tired of his life,—hunting after some darling creature that he said was clandestently stole away from him! Oh! it would melt the heart of a butter-boat to hear him cry,—“Where has he carried her, the charming crature!”—Didn't he, Biddy?

Barbara. The ingrate! Did you hear the name of her he was so attached to?

Swift. It didn't stay wid me, ma'am!—What was it, Biddy?

Blossom. Oh! myself disremembers it, too.

Swift. I have it,—it was something about a Barber.

Barbara. Barbara?

Swift and Blossom. That's it, sure enough.

Swift. Maybe you know—The barbarous lady, ma'am?

Barbara. Yes, yes!—can it be possible? How we may be deceived! It must be so; I can understand it all. I'll shoot that Kydd.

Swift. [*Aside.*] Murder! Here comes the missus running in out of

the shower! If you please, don't go to mention what we've told you, or we'd lose our places; besides, she's a poor, weak woman, and hasn't your fine strength of mind! It's a mighty great secret entirely.

Barbara. I never speak, I act. Silence shall be my counsellor until my revenge is complete.

Swift. Isn't she a Trojan? Listen at the sense coming out of her mouth! That you may never die 'till I marry you, and then you'll have a mighty fine chance of living to an extremely old age! Come, Biddy, around!
[*Exit SWIFT and BLOSSOM, L. 1 E.*]

Rain continues.—Enter ROSA, L. D. F.

Rosa. What a delightful shower. My dear aunt, how kind of you to find out our humble, but happy retreat

Barbara. Don't come near me; you've brought a pretty disgrace on your family. This is the elegant habitation—this is the delectable life for which you have given up your kindred and your home: I really must congratulate you,—where's the worthy ploughman, your husband, digging potatoes?

Rosa. No, madam, they are all dug for to-day.

Enter FRANK, L. D. F.

My husband! Madam!

Frank. (R.) The horrible spectre—I'm delighted.

Barbara. Don't trouble yourself, my good man, you must not look upon this as a visit,—we cannot countenance vulgarity,—go and attend to your vegetables—hah!

Rosa. Why do you look so sadly, Frank? [Crosses to L

Frank. Ill luck, my Rosey; I fear we shall have but a scanty meal.

[Rings bell on table.

Rosa. You will share it.

Enter BIDDY and SWIFT quarreling, L. 1 E.

Swift. It was for me.

Blossom. No, it wasn't.

Swift. It was my turn to answer.

Blossom. No, it was mine.

Frank. What's the matter?

Swift. It's Biddy, sir, there's no takin' the conceit out of her.

Blossom. No, sir, it's Pat, he knows that I always attend to the drawing-room except when there's company.

Swift. Now listen to the likes of that.

Frank. Silence—here Pat.

Swift. There, I knew it was for me.

Blossom. It wasn't.

Rosa. Here, Bridget.

Blossom. There, you see you were out this time, though you think yourself so knowledgeable.

Frank. Will you be quiet there?

Blossom. It's impossible, sir, where he is, there's no bearing that tongue of his.

Swift. It's Bidy, sir, she will have the last word.

Blossom. If ever there was an aggravater.

Swift. There, you're at it again. Didn't you hear the master tell you to be quiet?

Blossom. That was you.

Barbara. Oh, what a house! Oh, what domestics!

Rosa. Here, Bridget, take my cloak.

Blossom. I can't, ma'am, my hands is all black leady.

Barbara. A most exquisite lady's maid. [*Puff of smoke down chimney.*]

Rosa. Oh! how dreadful—pooh!

Frank. My poor Rosa, I knew our cottage would be but a sorry home for you.

Rosa. What, do you suppose I care about a little smoke; no, indeed, don't you know it's the most wholesome thing in the world?

Frank. Oh, bah!

[*Another puff.*]

Barbara. I shall be smothered! Pooh! I shall be smothered! some air—air!

Frank. Permit me to see you to the door?

Swift. There's an elegant breeze outside of the house, ma'am, indeed the chimbleys about here has got into mighty bad habits.

Frank. Take my gun, Pat.

Swift. Yes, sir.

[*SWIFT takes gun.*]

Blossom. Everybody smokes now, and why shouldn't the chimney, poor thing?

Barbara. You're a fool.

Blossom. Indeed, I believe I'm not far off one, ma'am.

Barbara. Now, is this impudence or simplicity?

Frank. No more talk, Bridget; here, take this game and have it dressed for dinner.

[*Gives game bag.*]

Blossom. [*Taking snipes out of bag.*] And is it dressed?

Swift. Yes, dressed of course, put something on them.

Blossom. You mean, what am I to put on them trouser loons?

Frank. No, no; go and get them cooked for dinner.

[*Exit BLOSSOM, L. H.*]

Barbara. A beautifully regulated establishment.

Frank. Will you permit me to observe, madam, that this is my house.

Barbara. House! ha! ha! hovel, you mean.

Swift. Get ready for a fight.

Frank. What do you mean?

Swift. Who do you think is coming? our fashionable friend Kydd.

Frank. What has brought him here?

Swift. Coming to claim his bride I suppose—here he is.

Enter KYDD, L. D. F.

Kydd. Sweetest of thy incomparable sex, have I found thee at last—come to the longing arms of thy devoted Kydd.

Frank. [*Interposing.*] Not so fast, sir permit me to have the pleasure of introducing my wife.

Kydd. Wife! that must be an egregious mistake.

Swift. [*To Barbara who is looking off L. H.*] Wouldn't you like to see the gentleman that took away Mr. Swift—there he is.

Barbara. [*Goes to Kydd.*] I have a word or two to say to you, sir.

Kydd. Bless my soul, what's the matter?

Barbara. What have you done with him, you concentrated essence of nothing at all, you half-animated lump of nonentity? what have you done with him?

Kydd. What does this extraordinary person mean? who are you talking about?

Barbara. Swift, where is he?

Kydd. Don't bother, apocryphal individual, how do I know anything about Swift—damn Swift.

Barbara. Listen to me, sir; for some vile purpose you presume to trifle with my reputation, carried me from my home, and in accordance with the wonted tyranny of your sex, deserted me at the very church door, but I am not one of those enduring slaves who tamely submit to man's injustice. My wrong must be avenged.

Kydd. How?

Barbara. If Swift don't marry me you must.

Kydd. What, marry you! not while there's a razor sharp enough to cut my throat. [*Exit KYDD, L. D. F.*]

Barbara. Fool, you know not the spirit you have aroused; I'll follow you through the world.

[*BARBARA rushes out after KYDD, L. D. F., meeting OLIVER as he enters.*]

Oliver. Hollo! What on earth's the matter, Barbara?

Rosa. My uncle! I dare not see him.

[*Exit ROSA, R. 1 E.*]

Oliver. Off she is, at the rate of a hunt

Frank. It's only a love chase, uncle.

Oliver. I didn't know that she was aware of your hiding place, Frank.

Frank. Nor did she, she came on the track of Swift.

Swift. That's not so easy to find out.

Oliver. Who may you be?

Swift. To plague folly is one of the things I do like.

Oliver. Swift, by Jove, then there's no need of further ceremony—Asper's coming here—I wanted to see you first, so made some excuse, and hurried on

Frank. The deuce he is. What's to be done?

Swift. The old plan, fiery opposition; confound it, we haven't time to arrange a definite plan of operation; here he comes with a face like a thunder cloud. Fire up, Oliver, attack him for deceiving you. Stay, suppose I act as lightning conductor, and in the process worry him a little at first.

Frank. Do.

Swift. I will, it's one of things I like.

[*Exit SWIFT, L. D. F.*]

Oliver. Tell me, Frank, how is my darling, Rosey?

Frank. Oh, frightfully comfortable.

Asper. [*Without L. D. F.*] Nobody at home—it's a lie.

Frank. Here he comes—begin.

ASPER enters angrily, stops short when he hears OLIVER.

Asper. I've found him at last—eh! what's that.

[*Aside.*]

Oliver. Never expect my forgiveness or that of my brother.

Asper. Answer for yourself, Oliver.

Oliver. You here! a pretty business you have done—see the pleasant home you have provided for your niece.

Asper. (c.) That's right, make my endeavor to secure your niece's happiness a crime, it's kind and brotherly. If you had not insisted on her marrying a fool, I never would have interfered. I must confess that I didn't think master Frank was going to carry the joke so far.

Oliver. You thought he was wealthy, so did I.

Asper. Well, he turns out to be poor; what of that, is it a crime? shall I turn upon the son of an old friend because of his poverty? Even as it is I give the girl credit for marrying a poor *man*, instead of a rich baboon.

Oliver. They shall never get any assistance from me.

Asper. I don't believe that—it's a lie.

Oliver. No, it aint.

Asper. I say it is a wilful, peevish, unnatural, and impossible lie.

Oliver. [*Aside*] He knows me.

Asper. You know you will assist them, I'll assist them; confound it, everybody shall assist them.

Oliver. But, Asper—

Asper. Don't contradict me.

Oliver. Such conduct

Asper. Don't interrupt me.

Oliver. Premium on disobedience.

Asper. Will you hold your tongue, let's hear what the fellow has got to say for himself—Frank, my boy—I mean you scoundrel, how came you to do it?

Frank. If you remember, sir, I acted entirely by your advice and direction.

Asper. No—yes—confound it, I believe you did, don't say a word of it to Oliver.

Oliver. What does he say?

Asper. What's that to you; leave him to me, I'll manage him.

Frank. Impossible, sir.

Asper. No, it isn't; I say, Oliver! Brother, come, come, hang it, although Frank is poor, I'll answer with my life that he'll make Rosey a good husband. [*Oliver shakes his head.*] You stupid old fool, don't you think I love the girl as well as you do—why do you annoy me then—Oliver, relent?

Oliver. No!

Asper. Conquer the enemy—do violence to your abominable temper for once, for my sake—for the sake of brother Asper. Hang it, I never said so much before.

Oliver. Confound that Frank, what a task he has given me—I shall cry like a child if Asper goes on in that way.

Asper. What are you grumbling about—will you forgive them?

[FRANK telegraphs OLIVER.]

Oliver. No.

Asper. No! Then Frank, my boy, I don't like to countenance contradiction—but in this case we have no other resource. We'll e'en do without it.

Oliver. What's that?

Asper. By Jove, we will.

Frank. Stay, sir; perhaps, when time shall have proven the sincerity and heart-depth of my devotion—when my pupil as well as wife shall own herself cherished by my affection, and exalted by my instruction, then may I trust, the hope will not be futile which would rejoice in the expectation of a free forgiveness.

Asper. Come, you old stony-hearted block of granite, there's a compromise for you—you'll agree to that, won't you?

Oliver. Yes, yes, I'll agree to that.

Asper. Prodigious condescension—and now where's Rosey? I want to see her—I have a thousand things to say to her.

Frank. My good kind friend, let me ask you to postpone your visit to her until to-morrow.

Oliver. Why till to-morrow?

Asper. Is that any business of yours? I dare say he has sufficient reason.

Oliver. Well, but I don't see—

Asper. Of course you don't—no one ever suspected you. Good bye, Frank, to-morrow I shall call on you and Rosey.

Oliver. For my part, I should like—

Asper. Come along, you blundering old hippopotamus; you have no more delicacy than a dried haddock. [*Exit OLIVER and ASPER, L. D. F.*]

Frank. So far so good—now for Rosey—Rosey!

Enter ROSA, R. I E.

Rosa. Dear Frank, I trembled so while my uncles were here—it is the first really unhappy moment I have had; how did they look—what did they say—will they, I dread to ask it, forgive us?

Frank. That is all ensured, my dearest one.

Rosa. Oh! that assurance has moved a mountain-load from my heart, and my spirits soar again.

Frank. Let us see about dinner—if our meal can be dignified with such a title. Do you feel hungry, Rosey?

Rosa. Not now, Frank—my anxiety banished all thought of the kind, but don't be alarmed, I soon shall—[*Puff of smoke down chimney*] Pooh! that chimney again; and what a draught comes from that window!

Frank. [*Anxiously.*] You are then beginning to feel uncomfortable?

Rosa. Forgive my momentary selfishness, Frank. I am your wife, and will share your destiny without a murmur, whether it be for good or evil.

Frank. Come, come, Rosey, deal openly with your husband: say, dearest, this humble cottage life—so far removed from that in which you shone before—has it altogether answered your expectations? You pause—it has not.

Rosa. (R.) My husband, deceit is foreign to my nature, and I cannot stoop to prevarication. I own that the reality does not quite equal the painting of my imagination. Think you that I shall shrink from the consequences of my own voluntary act—no, whatever may betide, with a hearted cheerfulness shall I embrace my destiny.

Frank. My beautiful, my trusting wife, right worthy are you of the

proudest state. I have a somewhat better house than this, but fearing your romantic nature, I dared not take you thither—what say you, shall we go there?

Rosa. Oh, yes! You cruel man, had we no other habitation, you should not have heard the semblance of complaint from me.

Frank. But now—

Rosa. I care not how quickly we make the exchange.

Enter BLOSSOM and SWIFT, L. 1 E.

Swift. Oh, sir!

Blossom. Oh, ma'am!

Swift. It was all Biddy's fault, sir!

Blossom. It was nobody but Pat, ma'am!

Frank. What's the matter now?

Swift. Oh sir, the snipes!

Blossom. Yes, the beautiful birds, ma'am!

Frank. What of them?

Swift. The murdering cat!

Blossom. The thief of the world!

Swift. I'll tell your honor the rights.

Blossom. No, sir.—hear me!

Frank. Be quiet, Biddy,—Pat, go on.

Swift. Well, you see, sir, the snipes was on the string doing beautifully, and Biddy was watching them—reading a book.

Blossom. Listen to the likes of that!—me that can't tell a letter!

Swift. Well, you were pretending thin! All at once there was a tremendous fight in the kitchen—a fight between the cat and the snipes—an somehow, the snipes got the worst of it, for whin we tried to separate them, the divil a bit of snipe the murdering cat had left.

Blossom. Yes, yer honor, barring this trifle, that I didn't think it was worth while to put afore yez. [*Holding up leg of bird all picked.*]

Frank. My poor Rose, never mind, dearest! we shall dine a little later,—that's all. [*Business with SWIFT and BLOSSOM.*]

QUICK DROP.—END OF ACT IV.

ACT V.

SCENE.—*Lawn and handsome villa decorated for a fete Champetre.—Parties promenading.—Music at rise of curtain.—BADGER discovered dodging among the company, as if looking for some one.*

Tom. My precious vig.—here'll be a wrong counter, or I ain't profit-ed much by my French without a master.

Enter SWIFT, OLIVER and ASPER, U. E. L.

Oliver. (L.) How d'ye do? Glad to see you! [*to the company.*]

Swift. (R.) Ha! ha! What's the matter, old boy? You seem to be astonished?

Tom. (R. c.) So will you be presently.

Asper. (L. c.) I am perfectly bewildered! Whose charming place is this we are so unceremoniously trespassing upon? Yours? [*to SWIFT.*

Swift. No, sir, not altogether—never—but the residence of an excellent friend, who no doubt will make you welcome.

Tom. Beg pardon, sir,—but Miss Barbara is within.

Asper. Barbara?

Swift. The devil!

Asper. Then, this is Barbara's place—eh, Oliver?

Oliver. I'm in the dark.

[*Retires up.*

Asper. If it be, I vote we go home.

Swift. Come here, you black cloud upon our enjoyment!—What did you say,—is old Social Reform here?

Tom. Seed her with my own hindivi'dual eyes.

Swift. How did she get here?—What does she want?

Tom. A justice of the peace, she says.

Swift. What on earth for?

Tom. To get a search warrant to find you out.

Swift. Oh!

Tom. And to arrest your friend Mr. Kydd for habduction—so the footman told me, sir.—Ain't it a good joke?

Swift. Doubtful! If it wasn't personally inconvenient, it might be! Have I, then, like a second Frankenstein, raised up this monstrous love, to crush me in the end? They say, crime is sure to bring its own punishment—and listening to that old griffin's insanities, has fastened this phantom to my skirts.

Oliver. (L.) What's the matter?—Anything wrong?

Swift. (c.) Oh! nothing particular! Your delectable sister insists upon bestowing her heart and hand upon your humble servant; and your humble servant doesn't sufficiently estimate the value of the gift.

Oliver. Upon you! Why I thought Kydd was the favored swain?

Tom. Here she comes, vicious as a wild colt.

[*SWIFT runs off, R. 2 E.; OLIVER off, L. 2 E.*

Asper. What on earth is the meaning of this mystery?

BARBARA enters—*ASPER sees her and rushes off, R. 1 E.*—*TOM dodges BARBARA, C. runs off.*

Barbara. Here you, Badger. Is'nt that Badger? They told me this house belonged to a magistrate, and see him I am determined, if I remain until midnight; there's some stupidity or another going on in the shape of a fete and he must be here soon; they'll find I am not to be trifled with.

[*WILLIAMS comes from house down L.*

Williams. Did you wish to see the 'Squire, madam?

Barbara. I told you so before.

Williams. He requests me to say, madam, that if you will have the kindness to walk into the library he will wait upon you as soon as he can.

Barbara. Where is it? Show me the way.

[*Exit WILLIAMS, followed by BARBARA, in house, C.*

Re-enter SWIFT.

Swift. Here, Tom. Didn't you tell me you saw Mr. Kydd in the neighbourhood?

Tom. Yes, sir. There he is now, sir.

Swift. Run and tell him that a lady wishes to see him in the house yonder. [*Exit TOM.*] Away with you. Ha, ha! if I can only manage this, I think I shall be sufficiently revenged upon old social reform. Well, Tom?

[*Ready crash at house, R. U. E.*]

Enter TOM.

Tom. He's coming, sir. Swallowed the bait like a hungry gudgeon.

Swift. Send the footman, Tom.

Tom. Yes, sir. My eye, won't there be a hexplosion!

[*Exit TOM into house*]

Enter KYDD L. 1 E.; WILLIAMS from house.

Kydd. So, she is here; let me rush and offer the dear creature the protection of this arm. Fled for shelter to the house of a magistrate! I thought she never could have resigned me from choice. Where is she?

Williams. Do you wish to see the lady, sir?

Kydd. Anxiously—rapturously—Ah, lead me to her without a moment's delay.

[*Exit KYDD, following WILLIAMS into house.*]

Enter ASPER and OLIVER, SWIFT whispers to OLIVER and both laugh. ASPER laughs doubtingly.

Asper. A very good joke, no doubt. Upon my life this is very agreeable.

Swift. What do you think she'll do with him!

Oliver. Knock his brains out, no doubt.

[*Loud crash in house, KYDD jumps out of window.*]

Kydd. Somebody protect me from this mad woman. Has any body a smelling-bottle!

[*Faints; OLIVER shakes him.*]

Oliver. Sir, the honor of an old family has been insulted, and must be avenged.

[*Shakes KYDD.*]

Asper. I don't know what it's about, but no matter.

Oliver. Where have you conveyed your victim?

Blossom. Our poor infatuated sister.

Oliver. Whom you stole clandestinely from her house.

Kydd. (L.) Upon my honor I'm innocent. Your sister stole me, by the veracity of a gentleman.

Oliver. (R.) Shameless and unprincipled equivocation. Come, sir, I challenge you to the sanguinary field upon the instant.

Asper. (R. C.) And if Oliver don't succeed in putting a little more lead into your skull, I'll try my hand at it.

Kydd. (L. C.) Oh, my good friend, Swift.

Swift. (L.) It's all in order! I regret to say that nothing else can be done, and as a friend of the family whose honor is as dear to me as my own, I feel bound to inform you, that if they both fail to reach a vital spot in your anatomy, you will have the honor of making your

exit from a hand that out of a thousand shots, has yet to make it's first miss.

Kydd. Then like Cæsar at the base of Pompey's pillar. I'll cover myself with the cloak of courage and die with decency. By the veracity of a gentleman, I will fight the whole three of you.

Swift. You will? give me your hand

Oliver. And me.

Asper. And me.

Swift. That one speech, sir, opens the door of my heart,—if you'll only take the trouble to walk in. Courage, like Charity, covers a multitude of sins! Upon my soul I sincerely hope so, for of the limited stock of virtues with which I began business in life, it's about the only one left.

Oliver. (R.) And now, we may as well tell you that it was all a joke.

Asper. Yes, all a joke; but hang me if I know what it is yet.

Kydd. (L. c.) I can't say that I feel flattered by being made the subject of your badinage, however I sincerely congratulate myself on my escape both from your sister and your fire-eating friend here, whom I shrewdly suspect has a prior claim upon her tender regards.

Swift. How can I sufficiently thank the benignant fates!

Oliver. Marry her, Swift—she's rich.

Asper. And accomplished.

Oliver. A capital talker.

Kydd. And, altogether, a most gentlemanly woman.

Swift. This revenge is savage—don't, don't!

Asper. Now I shall know all about it.

[*TOM enters mysterious down L., whispers to SWIFT, who crosses over to OLIVER and whispers him, and goes up. OLIVER then crosses over to KYDD and whispers him in the same way, and goes up. SWIFT, OLIVER and KYDD then steal off exclaiming: Oh, indeed! ASPER watches the whole of the above in complete perplexity, gradually working himself up into a great passion.*]

Asper. I ask any sensible person if such proceedings would'nt stir up the bile of a whole colony of Quakers. [*Sees TOM—rushes over and shakes him*] Here, you Tom Badger, what is all this mystery about?

Tom. (L.) Not knowing, sir, can't tell with that degree of veracity which one gentleman expects from another.

Asper. (R.) You walking epitome of impudence and slang, you are deceiving me, I know you are.

Tom. A'int capable of such an unworthy dodge, sir.

Asper. Whose grounds are these?

Tom. They belong to the house, I believe, sir.

Asper. But to whom does the house belong?

Tom. To the family as vegetates therein, sir.

Asper. What family?

Tom. Well, sir, it's a new family—at this ere moment of time, they consists of two individuals at the head—then there's ladies' maid, housemaid, cook, kitchen women, laundress, coachman, footman, gardener,

stable-keeper, and a very insignificant young creature as hacts in the capacity of tiger.

Asper. Confound it —

Tom. Oh, it's a very correct hestablishment, sir.

Asper. But the name, that's what I want to know.

Tom. I'm awful sorry, sir, that I can't afford you the hinformation that you require ; the name a'int in this here directory yet, sir. (*Points to his head.*) [Exit TOM, R. 2 E.

Asper. It's a conspiracy amongst them all to drive me mad ; none of those people know where we are, or what we are here for—as for Oliver, I'll never forgive him as long as I live—never, never.

Enter BLOSSOM from house cautiously down L.

Why, gracious me, can I believe my eyes, here, Blossom.

Blossom. Hush !

Asper. Hush ! more confounded, tantalizing mystery ! Never mind, I may find out something—well, Blossom !

Blossom. Is everything prepared ?

Asper. What for ?—I mean—oh, yes—all right !

Blossom. Won't it be a surprise for her, sir ?

Asper. It's more than probable—well, go on.

Blossom. They'll both be here presently.

Asper. Will they ? Both, you say—that's gratifying intelligence.

Blossom. She looks so beautiful—you have no idea, sir.

Asper. Not the remotest—you're quite right ! Well, and does Mrs. What's her name—I mean will she—confound it—I can't wait in suspense any longer. Blossom, you are a worthy, discreet person ; I have a great regard for you, Blossom.

Enter TOM, R. 2 E.

Blossom. Oh ! my ! what's coming I wonder ?

Tom. Hang me if old Pepper box aint making strong love to my Blossom.

Asper. And, to come to the matter at once.

Blossom. Don't, sir, don't, it's too sudden, sir, altogether.

Asper. What do you mean, you goose ? all I want is for you to tell me who's coming here ; what's her name, and why all this mystery ?

[TOM telegraphs BLOSSOM, who exits with him, both laughing. BARBARA re-enters from house.]

Asper. (L.) I do conscientiously believe that the world is gone mad, or else I am stricken with a sudden and most perplexing insanity myself.

Barbara. [Down, R.] Brother !

Asper. (L.) Barbara ! she's mad ; we're all mad.

Barbara. How did you discover me ?

Asper. I didn't discover you—you discovered me.

Barbara. Whose house is this, then ?

Asper. Barbara, don't ask impertinent questions.

Barbara. They told me it was the residence of a magistrate, which was all that I wanted to know. Of course you are aware that I have been grossly insulted.

Asper. I am aware that you sowed for yourself a precious crop of folly, and you are now reaping the harvest.

Barbara. Then you will not protect your injured sister.

Asper. I was going to ask you to protect me.

Barbara. Never mind, I'm determined, if my own kindred shrink from the performance of their duty, I shall throw myself upon the generosity of strangers; here shall I remain until I see this magistrate, whoever he may be.

Asper. So shall I, for between you and me, I have a mighty curiosity to know who the deuce he is.

[MUSIC, L. U. E., till all on. Enter all the company, U. E. R., and range on each side. Afterwards enter L. U. E., SWIFT and OLIVER, followed by FRANK and ROSA.]

Barbara. Now, then for justice.

Asper. Now, to find who this place belongs to. } Spoken together.
[They see FRANK and ROSA.] }

Asper. Frank!

Barbara. Rose!

Swift. [To *Barbara.*] Hem! [*BARBARA turns round and sees SWIFT.*]

Barbara. Brute!

Kydd. Bravo!

Barbara. [Turns round.] Fool!

Oliver. Brother!

Asper. Oh! proceed. I'm nobody; I wont offend any one, I presume, by quietly waiting to be enlightened. [Turns up L.]

Barbara. What is the meaning of this absurd riddle?

Frank. Madam, it is readily solved. This house is mine, where those who did not desert me in my apparent poverty shall ever be welcome.

Barbara. I understand the hint, sir, but you need not flatter yourself that it was wanted.

Frank. I am, moreover, a magistrate, madam, and have the power of uniting two loving hearts, and shall be happy to serve you in that capacity.

Oliver. Yes, take your choice, *Barbara*, there are the two rivals for your hand, throw the handkerchief, and be married instanter. Come *Swift*, come *Kydd*,—assert your claims.

Swift. Far be it from me, sir, to let selfish considerations triumph over friendly interest, although I confess the struggle will be terrible,—yet I must do violence to my own feelings, and smothering the intense flame that rages in my heart, resign my claims in favor of a more successful suitor.

Kydd. My dear friend, don't make such a sacrifice for me. I should never forgive myself.

Barbara. You domestic tyrants, go on, triumph in your barbarity!—It is the system that should be blamed, not you; in your ignorant blindness you know not that ye are trembling on the verge of ruin,—such insolent aggressions as these must cause the down-trodden slaves of society, the poor wretchedly-used oppressed and degraded women to rise, and asserting their equality, produce a social revolution which

must place them in their proper sphere and rectify whole centuries of wrong. [BARBARA goes up stage.

Oliver. Poor Barbara! We have gone too far.

[KYDD and SWIFT go up.

B.	FRANK.	ROSA.	OLIVER.	ASPER.	L.
	0	0	0	0	

Asper. Especially as she's too mad to receive a lesson from any schooling.

Frank. Well, my dear Rose, can you patiently bear this small accession to your comforts?

Rosa. It is more, much more than I deserve; through your kind teaching I have learnt the folly of romance, and you shall find my future life will show that I have profited by the lesson.

[OLIVER crosses to ROSA, L. C.

Oliver. Well, Doctor, how is your patient?

Frank. A perfect cure!

Rosa. I dare not meet my uncle's eye.

Oliver. Come, Rosey, look up my girl, you are forgiven.

Rosa. Oh, blessings on you for that word,—but, uncle Asper!—will he forgive me?

Oliver. (Goes up.) I don't know; ask him.

Rosa. I scarcely dare.

[Goes to ASPER.

Asper. (R. C.) I'm almost afraid to speak to her. Don't upbraid me, Rosa. I know I deserve all you can say, but I ask your forgiveness, my poor child, believe me, I didn't know how far—

Rosa. Forgiveness for what, dear uncle?

Asper. For tearing you away from him;—from your Kydd.

Rosa. Did you then advise Frank to—

Asper. Run off with you. Yes; it was all my fault, and for fear of the consequences here's a provision sufficient to take you out of that miserable place I saw you in.

Frank. A thousand thanks, my generous good friend, but our beloved Rosey is sufficiently recovered from her romance now to hear without danger that this house and estate are hers, where may she enjoy many happy years.

[ROSA crosses to FRANK.

Asper. Oh! then my little gift is despised, very well; I'll be revenged for the slight—I shall let it accumulate for the benefit of relations in prospective.

Oliver. Ha! ha! Rosey! you didn't know that we were all in the plot?

Rosa. What! you too, uncle Oliver?

Swift. [down L. of ROSA.] If you please, ma'am, it's Bidy, spoiling the snipes.

Blossom. [down L. of SWIFT.] No, it's Pat, ma'am, that wants me to take off the feathers.

Rosa. So that when I thought I was deceiving all, I was myself the only one deceived. But ah! how kind a deception! How well deserved a lesson!

R.				C.						L.
	BARB.				TOM.	BLOS.				
	0				0	0				
KYDD.	FRANK.	ROSE.	SWIFT.	ASPER.	OLIVER.					
0	0	0	0	0	0					

EPILOGUE.

Rosa. If to Romance, young ladies you're inclined,
Remember the old proverb, *Love* is blind—
And may lead those who hunt him, to their cost,
Into *such* snares that love *itself* be lost.
Take heed, for prudence happiness insures,
And though love's eyes are closed, keep open yours ;
Never elope whate'er your promised lot,
Unless Pa, Ma, or Uncle's in the plot.

Oliver. Guardians! if any such there here should be,
I don't advise you to behave like me ;
'Twas not exactly proper, I must say,
In me, to let the young folks run away.
And yet, to serve the son of my old friend
The means are justified, behold the end.

Frank. Aspiring lovers, you must side with me,
I've given you hints that may of value be
In the heart-siege, this tact, success insures,
Find out its sympathies and make them yours ;
When those are won, the heart is thine indeed,
For good or evil, as you strive to lead.

Barbara. [*Rushes forward, pushing aside KYDD, down R. C.*]
Poor ill-used women, slaves to men's caprice,
When will a servitude so galling cease ?
Rebel—rebel—don't let your hearts be caught,
Ensnared by love, or else by riches bought ;
The way to force our tyrants to retreat,
Is—[*all listen*—]I'll tell you the next time we meet.

Asper. Uncles ! a word—if any here we spy
Who know as little of these plots as I,
Don't spare them now, but if they did beguile
A tedious hour, reward them with a smile.
You must confess that I've been vilely used,
Completely hoodwinked, cozened and abused ;
But henceforth I shall be a perfect lamb,
I'm naturally cross ——

Oliver. You're not.

Asper. I say I am.
But I'll reform.

Kydd. And not before 'tis time.

Asper. Sir, you're—the very next step from the sublime.

Kydd. Bravo !

Asper. Be quiet, sir.

Kydd. Encore!

Asper. Here, Tom. [*Rushes up, seizes Tom, brings him forward and commences shaking him; OLIVER interposes.*

I,—ah!

Oliver. Brother!

Asper. Yes I know—I'm wrong.

Such provocation did one ever see?

Tom. My French without a master might say—*oui!*

Bloss. No matter, Tom, as long as you and I agree.

Asper. Ah! well, 'tis vain our tempers to estrange—
We may correct them, but we cannot change.

Swift. Impartial judges, you have heard our case,
If through it's various windings you can trace
Aught to approve, before you now adjourn,
A verdict in our favor pray return.
In this eye-pleasing, superficial age,
When sense is nearly banished from the stage,
E'en the attempt may not unwelcome be,
To raise the curtain on life's comedy.
The thought towards harmless pleasures to entice,
Not folly feed, or pander to a vice.
This object only is our end and aim,
You may condemn us, but you cannot blame.
Be our ROMANCE, then, judged by lenient laws—
And our REALITY—your kind applause!

R.

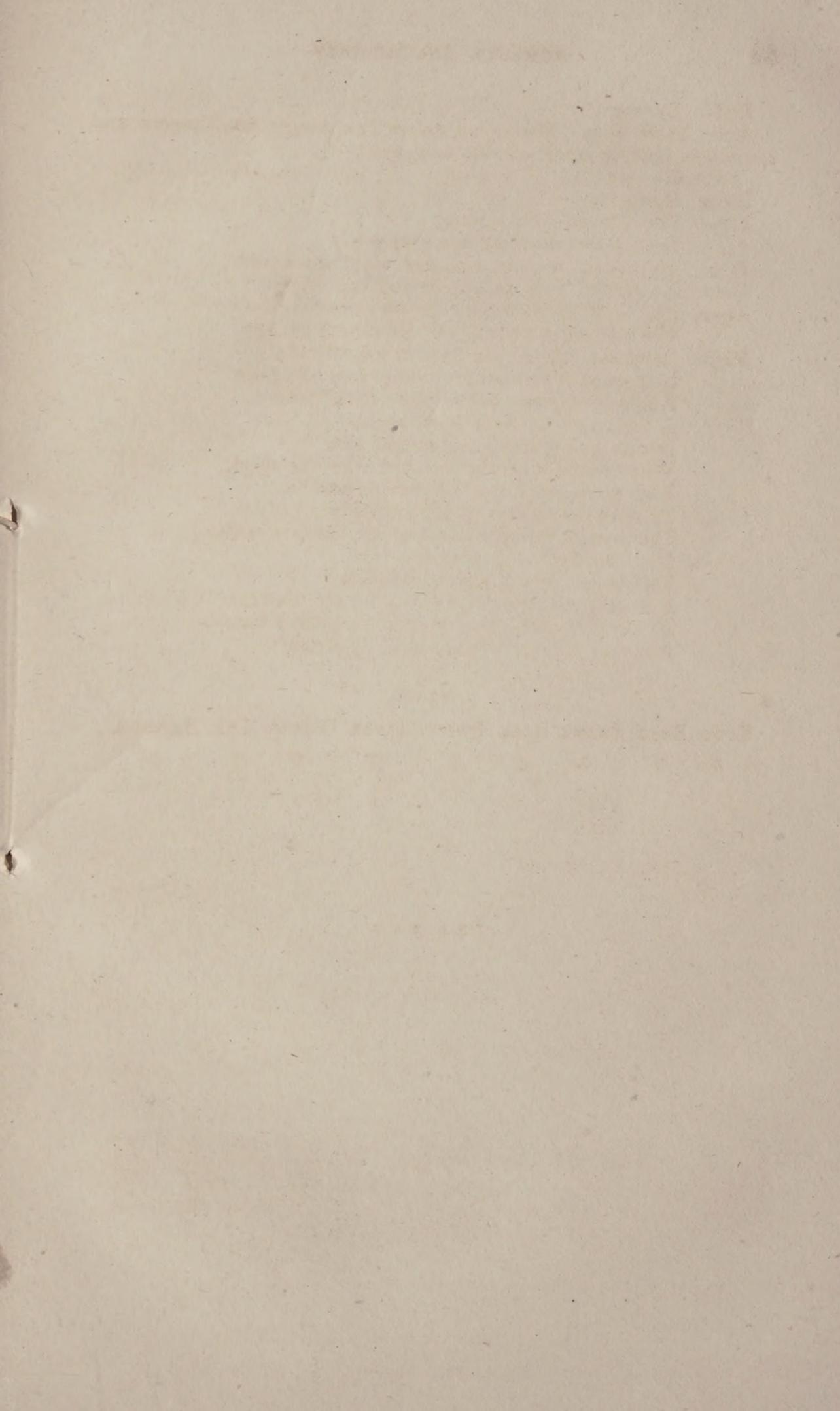
CURTAIN.

L.

KYDD. BARB. FRANK. ROSA. SWIFT. ASPER. OLIVER. TOM. BLOSSOM.

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THE END.





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